

RAM RELEASING

presents

FORGETTING THE GIRL

A film by Nate Taylor

"[A] nuanced, image driven film...
written with a poet's ear and directed with an artist's eye."

-Annlee Ellingson, The LA Times

"A psycho-sexual thriller [that's] a pleasant surprise!"

-Joe Leydon, Variety



USA / 2012 / Thriller / English / Not Rated

85 min / 2.35:1 / 5.1 Surround

Official Film Webpage

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FULL SYNOPSIS

Kevin is obsessed with finding a girl who can help him forget his unpleasant past. However, all his encounters with the opposite sex inevitably go afoul, creating more awkward experiences than he can cope with. As the rejections mount, Kevin's futile search for happiness and love becomes overwhelmingly turbulent, forcing him to take desperate measures. Shot in a variety of NYC locales, from Hell's Kitchen to Greenpoint, *Forgetting the Girl* is a gritty vision of the city and its denizens. The tightly-woven drama blends recollections with reality to craft an intense character study of the psychologically-scarred protagonist. As beautiful as it is dark, the tense narrative slowly boils under the surface until it unleashes an unsettling climax that will not be easily forgotten.

ASSETS

Official trailer for embedding/sharing:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XcHL5IF5UQg>

Downloadable hi-res images:

<http://www.ramreleasing.com/press>

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

I got chills up my spine the first time I read the *Forgetting the Girl* script. The characters embodied a desperate yearning for happiness which resonated very personally with me – moving me to the point where I knew I had to turn this story into a film. I wanted to translate the thrill I had at reading the script into a thrill for viewers through a dark but beautiful, fully immersive cinematic experience.

To me, creating the right visual mood was crucial for incubating the unsettling themes and intense emotions of the story – they simply would not have emotional potency if presented in the wrong environment. I felt viewers needed to see the entire movie through the eyes of the protagonist Kevin Wolfe, witnessing everything with the distinct vision of a photographer who's artistic sensibilities had been warped by a tortured past. This perspective combined with the crumbling and lonely atmosphere of my own Hell's Kitchen neighborhood, offered a rich visual palette from which we shaped the vividly textured and beautifully gritty film.

Over the last several years, I have had the pleasure of slowly bringing this story to life. It was a truly independent production, only made possible by the passion and dedication of the many individuals involved. These determined efforts yielded a final film that I am very proud of, and happy to finally be able to share with audiences. I hope you enjoy viewing it as much as I enjoyed making it.

Q&A WITH DIRECTOR NATE TAYLOR

How did this project start?

Not the typical place you imagine indie films being born, *Forgetting the Girl* had its genesis in the heart of the commercial advertising industry. Writer Peter Moore Smith and I both work in advertising and collaborate together on certain ads. While we were working on a spot, I showed Peter some gritty, no-budget web commercials I had just shot. He took one look and said, "I have a script that I think you would really love". I read his screenplay and sure enough, it resonated very strongly with me. I immediately knew I needed to make it into a film.

In order to get momentum for the project, I harnessed my industry network to get some amazing people attached. Nearly our entire postproduction team ended up consisting of my commercial contacts who took a break from million dollar ads to work on our film in their offhours. This project really benefitted from the fact that there are a ton of talented artists doing commercial work who are hungry to dig into something more creative and edgy.

What was the production like?

The project was very ambitious: 18 days of shooting, in six-day-weeks, covering 5 ¼ pages of script per day, spread out in 24 different locations all over New York City. With such demanding requirements were forced to work in some pretty extreme conditions.

We spent one week shooting on a set we built inside a warehouse in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. It was the middle of August and the place didn't have any air conditioning, so it was like working inside a huge brick oven. To make it worse, we had a ton of big, hot, tungsten lights running in there, which just pushed the temperature to unbearable levels. We could run fans between takes, but had to turn everything off for sound when we were rolling. It was brutal, especially for our cast who were just sitting under those lights, cooking. It made shooting out on the famously humid NYC streets seem pleasant in comparison.

Is it true you hid subliminal visuals in the film?

We imbedded a number of concealed images throughout the whole film. Mostly very brief flashes designed to create a subconsciously unsettling tone to the movie. For instance, we used short bursts of static as transitions between different time periods in the storyline. They each only last a few frames, but within them there are distorted shots foreshadowing tragic events later in the film. The opening credits and all the dream-like flashbacks have ghosted figures appearing in them. Most people in the theatre won't be able to see this stuff, but once the movie is on Blu-ray, fans will definitely hunt down all of these "easter eggs".

The footage has a beautiful look to it, what did you shoot on?

While our cameras were nothing special (two RED One cameras with Zeiss Master Prime lenses) we did have a unique rig to mount them on. Our cinematographer, Mark Pugh, built this cool, one-of-a-kind hybrid of a steadicam and a short jib, which I dubbed the "stegosaurus". It was basically a 5' arm stabilized by gyros, hanging from hook attached to a body brace. It gave a really fluid quality to shots, sexier than handheld, and with more range than a traditional steadicam. The only downside was, Mark would be hyper-focused on whatever he was shooting and would move the camera with no regards to what was happening to the backside of this rig. The rear end of the jib was covered with heavy counterweights and gyros, which would sweep wildly around behind him, invariably smashing anything fragile nearby. It reminded me of the spiked tail on a stegosaurus trashing everything in its wake.

Were any scenes particularly difficult to shoot?

There was a scene near the end of the movie that was really emotional and involved Lindsay Beamish having to sit in a bathtub for an extended period of time. We were shooting in a beautiful bathroom set we'd built in an empty warehouse, so as a set, it didn't have plumbing. We had to bring water in for the bathtub in big five-gallon jugs, which had to be heated first. However, the water heaters we got ended up malfunctioning, so all the water in the bathtub was freezing cold. And Lindsay has a phobia about drowning – to the point where she's never submerged her entire head underwater.

It was really hard asking her to sit in ice-cold water for an hour, and deliver some really intense emotions, all while dealing with the terror of being submerged. But of course Lindsay was undaunted. In fact, she sat in the water until her skin was so blue our stunt coordinator told us she needed to come out for her own safety.

As an editor, were you tempted to cut the movie yourself?

Not at all. Film is absolutely a synergistic craft, the best work comes from collaborating with talented artists at each step of the process. By the time I got to the edit suite, I had 5 years of mental baggage attached to every shot. I needed someone with a fresh perspective and impartial eye to help me make sense of it. Fortunately, I have a longstanding relationship with my editor Victoria Lesiw and we collaborate fantastically. The structure of the film was rather complex, with multiple storylines intertwining through several different non-linear timelines. Which meant that we could play with the order of scenes a lot. We spent many months crafting the right arc to the individual stories and the movie as a whole. You end up getting really close to the material, and need someone else to help you keep your perspective. I couldn't have done this movie without her.

Did your extensive background in post-production affect how you approached the post process?

We finished this film like it was a big budget national TV spot. With a 30 second commercial, it's so short you can really focus on every single frame and make sure

everything's perfect. We applied the same high-end craftsmanship to this film – obsessing over all the meticulous details. Since this was an 85 minute movie rather than a 30 second spot, it meant an exhausting amount of work for everyone involved. We spent about 8 months color-correcting the final film, spending time crafting the palette of each individual shot. We ended up doing VFX and clean-up work on over 200 shots in the movie. Which is a ridiculous amount for a dialogue driven drama. Even though most viewers probably wouldn't notice the little things we adjusted, I'm a firm believer that all the details add up to affect the whole. For this particular story to have the proper emotional impact on viewers, the mood needed to be carefully sculpted and controlled. All-in-all, it was a huge task for everyone involved, but imbued the film with an amazing visual atmosphere which accomplishes exactly what it needs to in terms of the viewer experience.

Your lead actor, Christopher Denham has worked with a lot of big name directors; Martin Scorsese, Mike Nichols, Barry Levinson, was that intimidating for you as a first-time feature director?

It was a little scary. Fortunately, I had insisted on two weeks of rehearsal time before production began. This gave me time to learn how Chris (and the other actors) worked and build a strong working relationship. We got to look at every scene in the movie together, so everyone was on the same page when we got to set.

I also read a number of pertinent books, including work by David Mamet, Sydney Lumet, Constantin Stanislavski, and Robert McKee. The book that had the most impact on me was Judith Weston's Directing Actors. It contained a wealth of wisdom about rehearsal techniques, scene analysis and utilizing the language of permission with other artists. It really helped mentally prepare me.

What were your influences for this film?

In terms of performances and tone, I watched Todd Fields's films Little Children and In the Bedroom a number of times. And Woody Allen's Match Point, which had a very effective transition from drama to thriller. Visually, I looked at a lot of dark films, including Clint Eastwood's Million Dollar Baby and David Fincher's Se7en and Fight Club. I pulled stills from some really lush and stylized films like Wong Kar Wai's 2046 and Baz Luhrmann's Moulin Rouge. Ultimately, the film that I ended up referencing the most was Adrian Lyne's Unfaithful. I really loved how it captured NYC and the visual mood it created.

Q&A WITH ACTOR CHRISTOPHER DENHAM

What attracted you to this project?

What initially attracted me to the project was the power of Peter's script. The elliptical, almost novelistic tone. It took its time and took me by surprise. Instead of offering easy answers, the script asked difficult questions. Can you ever forget your past? Should you? I also sensed Nate's excitement and vision for the project, which was contagious to everyone who came on board.

What was the most difficult part of your role as Kevin Wolfe?

In playing Kevin, I was playing someone who plays roles himself. He is a social chameleon, who presents a different face to different people. He's been wearing this face for such a long time, he's forgotten it's a mask. He doesn't really want to see what's underneath. Which is an interesting contradiction of character. A photographer who can't see. Who chooses to be blind to his own actions. It was important for Nate and I (and hopefully we pulled it off) to never convey any creepy tones. We really stressed Kevin's innocent and self-deprecating charm. The audience (like the characters) have to let their guard down around Kevin, otherwise Kevin could not exist.

Did you do anything unusual to prepare for the film?

In preparing to shoot *Forgetting the Girl*, we did something most independent films can't afford to do. We rehearsed. Coming from the theater, this was an immensely helpful bridge to build in approaching the character. Many actors are skeptical of rehearsal, because they think they are depriving themselves of some mystical spontaneity. For me, at least, rehearsals give your character an exoskeleton. They give you the chance to collaborate with the director, without the burden and expense of a film crew waiting for you to finish your existential conversation. I really credit Nate for fighting for rehearsal time. By the time we got to set, we had a collective consensus of what these scenes were about.

What was the production like?

There was a great sense of camaraderie on the set. When you don't have a lot of money, when you don't have a lot of time, all you have is effort. Everyone really gave a shit and gave it their all. It was a team effort. It was great to work with a great friend of mine, Paul Sparks. When you've worked with someone before, you sort of have a short hand. Paul likes to improvise and, unlike me, he can do it really well. You sort of hang on tight and see where Paul is going to take you. Some people always play themselves. Paul is somehow always someone else.

You seem to be drawn to dark roles, why is that?

People have claimed there is a common denominator of darkness under some of the characters I've played. I've never seen Kevin through that prism. I don't buy into that Manichean world-view where people fall into two camps: good or evil. No

person is one person. It depends on the day. Kevin wants what most of us want. Love. Forgiveness. Redemption. His self-imposed amnesia comes with a cost. That's Kevin's trajectory. By the end of the film, he remembers what he's forced himself to forget. He remembers who he is.

CREW BIOGRAPHIES

NATE TAYLOR, DIRECTOR

Born of a documentary filmmaker father and a modern artist mother, creativity is in Nate Taylor's blood. He writes, directs, edits and performs improvisational video art as a club VJ. He has worked as a commercial editor for the last decade, cutting national ads for the likes of Pepsi, GE, and Verizon. Harnessing the story-telling talents he refined in postproduction, Taylor directed a variety of short-form projects, ranging from music videos to spec commercials. One of his viral pieces, a mock movie trailer set in the popular World of Warcraft video game entitled "MMOvie", was a massive online success, garnering millions of hits around the globe.

Taylor got his start working in long-form by editing on the indie feature *Kissing Jessica Stein*. Inspired by the passion of the filmmakers, he set out to make his own film, *Forgetting the Girl*. He spent five years developing the project and raising financing, until the summer of 2008 when casting and pre-production finally began. Not two months later, the nation suffered a major economic crash, and the project ground to a halt as a majority of its financing evaporated. Undaunted, Taylor drastically reduced the budget, self-financed a portion of it, and found the remaining backing from Executive Producer Dennis Wallestad. Moving forward on a shoe-string budget, production resumed the following summer, and was successfully completed.

Taylor lives with his wife Talya and their son Grayson on Manhattan's upper west side. He is currently developing two new features; an animated family film, *The Boy & The Bat*, co-written with *Forgetting the Girl* writer Peter Moore Smith; as well as his first solo screenplay, *Tripping the Light*, a modern day fantasy set in NYC's gothic nightclub scene.

PETER MOORE SMITH, WRITER

Peter Moore Smith is the award-winning author of two novels, *Raveling* (2000) and *Los Angeles* (2005), both published by Little Brown. *Raveling* won Best Audio Book of the Year, was optioned for a three year period by Warner Brothers, and was also nominated for a prestigious Edgar Award (the Oscars of the mystery genre) in the Best First Novel category. Both novels were published internationally, with editions appearing in the United States, throughout the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Holland, Sweden, and Japan. Smith has also published short fiction in a number of literary magazines and journals throughout the U.S.. One of his stories, "Oblivion, Nebraska," received a coveted Pushcart Prize.

In film, Smith has extensive production experience and has written and creative-directed big-budget television commercials for Pepsi, Visa, GE, and many other national clients. He is an award-winning Executive Creative Director at Satchi &

Satchi, one of the world's largest advertising agencies. His work has garnered numerous awards, including Gold Lions from Cannes. *Forgetting the Girl* is his first screenplay.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

CHRISTOPHER DENHAM

(Argo, Charlie Wilson's War, Shutter Island)

Chicago native Christopher Denham was most recently seen in Ben Affleck's multiple Oscar-winning, *Argo* and the thriller, *The Bay* directed by Barry Levinson. He also starred in, *Sound of My Voice*, which debuted at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival. Other film credits include, *Shutter Island*, *Enter Nowhere*, *Restive*, *Duplicity* (alongside Julia Roberts and Clive Owen), *Charlie Wilson's War*, *Camp Hell*, *Bottleworld*, and *El Camino*. He made his feature directorial and writing debut with *Home Movie*, starring Adrian Pasdar. His second screenplay, *Attachment*, is currently in production, starring Sharon Stone with Tony Kaye directing. Television credits include "Rubicon", "Law & Order", and the movie of the week, "Two Families". On stage, Denham appeared on Broadway with Danny Glover in the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Master Harold and the Boys* and in Martin McDonagh's *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*. His Off-Broadway credits include *Wintertime* and Adam Rapp's *Red Light Winter*, for which Denham won a Lucille Lortel Award.

LINDSAY BEAMISH

(Short Bus, The Greatest, Scorched)

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Lindsay Beamish attended UC Santa Cruz, where she received her degree in Theater Arts. Soon after moving back to Los Angeles, she did guest starring roles on such shows as "The Pretender", "Strong Medicine", "The Gilmore Girls" and "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation". Lindsay started to make her mark on the indie film world when she starred in Miranda July's short film "Nest of Tens". She landed a number of roles in independent films, including the lead in John Cameron Mitchell's critically acclaimed film, *Shortbus*. She also appeared in *The Greatest*, with Susan Sarandon, Pierce Brosnan and Carey Mulligan. Lindsay took a brief hiatus to get her MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Wyoming. She is now back in Los Angeles and will soon be seen starring opposite Christopher Denham in *Forgetting the Girl*.

ELIZABETH RICE

("Mad Men", From Within, Odd Girl Out)

At the tender age of eight, Elizabeth Rice appeared in her first play, and was hooked on acting ever since. She continued to perform avidly, until at age fifteen she moved to Los Angeles, and her professional acting career took off. Since then, Rice has appeared in a variety of episodics, including "CSI", "Without A Trace", "Boston Public", and "ER". She also landing a recurring role on AMC's hit show "Mad Men". In film, she was drawn to the creativity and artistry of independent productions, starring in *From Within* with Thomas Dekker, and playing the romantic interest in *Forgetting the Girl*. Most recently, she wrapped the lead in *Samaritan* produced by Dan Dubiecki (*Juno*).

ANNA CAMP

(*Pitch Perfect*, *The Help*, "The Mindy Project") Southern beauty Anna Camp just wrapped production on *Goodbye to All That* with Heather Graham. She also recently appeared in the musical comedy *Pitch Perfect* and *The Help*, Tate Taylor's award-winning civil rights tale. In television, Camp has entertained as a co-star on "The Mindy Project" and with recurring roles on "The Good Wife", AMC's "Mad Men", and HBO's "True Blood". She has made appearances in a variety of other episodics including "Glee", "The Office", and "Numb3rs". Not confined to the screen, Camp has also graced the stages of Broadway, recently starring in Zach Braff's *All New People* and in *Equus*, where she appeared completely nude next to *Harry Potter's* Daniel Radcliff.

PHYLLIS SOMERVILLE

(*The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, *Little Children*, *Lucky You*)

Phyllis Somerville, daughter of a minister and a librarian, was born in Iowa City, Iowa. The acting dream came early when she sang songs and recited pieces at Holiday Pageants and covered dish dinners. This dream was expanded at age four by a trip to New York City where she remembered Yankee Stadium, the subway, and Radio City Music Hall. She decided then and there, that she wanted to be a Yankee, a New Yorker, and a Rockette. Somerville's most treasured roles include; Wilma in *Over Here* (Schubert), Hannah in *The Spitfire Grill* (Playwrights Horizons), Helen in *Happiness* (Lincoln Center), Jesse in *Night Mother* (National Tour), Andromache and Athena in *The Greeks* (Hartford Stage), Dorothy Russell in "NYPD Blue", May McGorvey in *Little Children*, Grandma Fuller in *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, Ruby in *Forgetting the Girl*, Marlene in "The Big C", and Mrs. McGarrick in *Stoker* with Nicole Kidman. Phyllis is a member of the Labyrinth and loves doing the kids' plays at the 52nd Street Project (and once got to play a New York Yankee). So she's been a Yankee and she's been a New Yorker 40 years, but Ms. Somerville has not been a Rockette... yet.

PAUL SPARKS

(*Boardwalk Empire*, *Rachel Getting Married*, *Synecdoche NY*)

Oklahoma-born Paul Sparks is an award-winning veteran of American theatre dubbed "mesmerizing" by the New York Times. In 2004, he worked with playwright Adam Rapp to originate the role of Baylis in the London production of *Blackbird*, a role he repeated in New York earning him a Drama Desk nomination. The play was then adapted into a film, and Sparks reprised the role a final time. In 2009 he appeared on Broadway opposite Mary Louise Parker in *Hedda Gabler*. In film, Sparks most recently completed work on the film *Mud*, Jeff Nichols's follow-up to the award-winning *Take Shelter*. Other upcoming film appearances include *Return* with Michael Shannon, and *Sparrow's Dance* with Marin Ireland. On television, Sparks stars as Mickey Doyle in HBO's award-winning series "Boardwalk Empire". He has also made appearances on the HBO miniseries "Mildred Pierce", all three NY versions of "Law & Order", "Brotherhood", and "Trinity."

CREDITS

CREW

Director	Nate Taylor
Screenwriter	Peter Moore Smith
Executive Producer	Dennis A. Wallestad
Producers	Brian Gosnar Victor C. Reyes Camiren J. Romero Nate Taylor
Casting Directors	Anne Goulder Gayle Keller Ann Teutschel
Cinematography	Mark Pugh
Editing	Victoria Lesiw
Composer	Robert Miller
Costumes	Naomi Wolff

CAST

Kevin Wolfe	Christopher Denham
Jamie	Lindsay Beamish
Beth	Elizabeth Rice
Tanner	Paul Sparks
Adrienne	Anna Camp
Derek	Joel de la Fuente
Ruby	Phyllis Somerville