

THOMAS J. MADDEN    AMY SEIMETZ

# Be Good

A TODD LOOBY FILM

*Obrigado*  
Productions



## SYNOPSIS:

Paul is a well-meaning guy who makes small, socially-conscious films. Mary is a social worker helping Guatemalan children. Pearl is their “spirited” 6-month old daughter. When Mary returns to work after her maternity leave, Paul is in charge. He struggles to adapt a book as he pacifies Pearl and is quickly ensnared in a web of fatherly duty, personal ambition, and social responsibility. Meanwhile, Mary misses Pearl terribly, but her benefits are the only security the family has. As Paul’s disinterest in his work grows, money becomes tighter and his attachment to Pearl intensifies, Mary is left out in the cold. It comes to a head one day when a Paul’s good nature gets the best of him and he quickly becomes the jerk he thought he’d never be.

“With plenty of wry observational humor but a lack of sitcom clichés, Looby perceptively explores the ironic dilemma faced by many young couples: “a mom feels guilty that she’s working; a dad feels guilty that he’s not.” –Gene Siskel Film Center

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## PRINCIPAL CAST



### **Thomas J. Madden as “Paul”**

Thomas is a Chicago native, professional actor and lifelong friend of Director, Todd Looby. Madden was the lead in Looby’s prior film, *LEFTY*. His performance was lauded in the *Kansas City Star*, *The Chicago Reader*, *The Redeye*, and *Chicago Tribune’s metromix*. Madden also stars in an upcoming episode of ABC’s “Final Witness”.



### **Amy Seimetz as “Mary”**

Amy was recently named one of the “Top 25 Actors of 2011” by *Indiewire.com*. The *Los Angeles Times* also named her “Indie-Film MVP” at Sundance 2011 for her breadth of high-profile work both in front of and behind the camera. She is one of the most buzzed-about young actresses and filmmakers working today.



### **Todd Looby as “TJ”**

Todd first acted while in Engineering Grad School at the University of Illinois. He then trained at Chicago’s iO in the early 2000’s while he taught himself filmmaking.



### **Introducing Tessa Day Looby as “Pearl”**

Tessa is director and co-star Looby’s daughter. She was eight months old when production began and proved to be a real ham when the camera rolled.



### **Joe Swanberg as Himself**

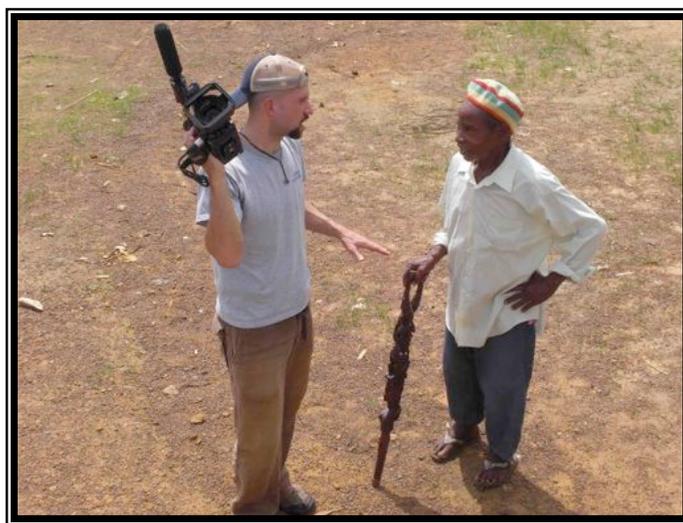
Joe is today’s most prolific and debated independent filmmaker. He directed fourteen films before he turned 30 and has screened his films at the world’s most celebrated festivals: Sundance, Berlin and SXSW. In *Be Good*, Joe cameos in a key scene, helping Paul put his frustration in perspective.



### **Billy Phelan as Craig**

Billy Phelan is a long-time player and coach at Chicago's iO (Formerly Improv Olympic). Billy played a returning Marine in Looby's previous film, *LEFTY*. He is also a high school English teacher in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood.

## **CREW**



### **Todd Looby: Producer / Writer / Director / Co-Editor**

Award-winning filmmaker, Todd Looby was born and raised on the Southside of Chicago. Todd took only two film classes at the University of Illinois while studying Environmental Sciences. He returned to Chicago and began taking classes at Chicago's "iO" (formerly Improv Olympic). The following year Todd acquired a DV camera and began making films. Initially making rudimentary documentaries and comedic shorts, Todd began tackling feature film work in late 2005 while working full-time as a commercial construction manager.

*LEFTY*, Todd's second narrative feature, screened at several fests across the country and was given "4-1/2 stars" and named among "The Top 10 Movies of 2009..." by the *Chicago Tribune's Metromix*. Looby is self-distributing *LEFTY* DVDs and streaming the film on [Indieflix.com](http://Indieflix.com). His follow-up, "Son of None", is a narrative short Todd shot in Liberia, West Africa. "Son of None" went on to win the Special Jury Awards at Slamdance 2011 and the Boston Film Fest.

Currently, Todd is adapting the book, *A Saint on Death Row*, by New York Times Best-selling author, Thomas Cahill. He is also editing a feature-length documentary, *Solo Madres: Stories of the Families Left Behind* – which he and his wife shot in Honduras.

Todd's work often blends off-beat humor and drama in character studies that aim to entertain, inform and challenge audiences.

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## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

“Your life is going to change!” warned each young parent my wife and I ran into before our daughter, Tessa Day, was born. We knew it would, but we also didn’t know which parts of our life would change. In the trying first months of Tessa’s life it was clear that our engagement with the outside world would be the first casualty. The emotional attachment to Tessa informed our every thought. Our work and social consciousness – the things that seemed so important just months prior - lost most of their meaning. We were committed to creating a loving environment for Tessa, but we struggled to figure out how to also provide her with material comfort and security. That’s where things get messy in today’s economy and in the life of a non-commercial artist. My wife had a physical connection to our daughter and wanted nothing more than to stay home, but her job and benefits were our security. I wanted nothing more than to work to provide for them both, but couldn’t find a decent job, nor could I find time and interest to create. This is the central dilemma I wanted to explore in *Be Good*: In this day of economic dog-eat-dog, how can you be a good parent while simultaneously having meaningful work and being charitable? And every parent’s dilemma – you seemingly need ego and ambition to be successful in this world, but at what point do these things impede you from being a positive role model for your child?

As is the case with many of my films, the concepts of the film and the means of production became intertwined. Since I was at home watching Tessa all day, I figured that I needed to be doing something that might advance my career. So I drew up a detailed script outline, a schedule, a meager budget and locations that would allow us to make the film while not compromising my parental duties. Over the course of two separate weeks in June and July of 2011, we shot the film mostly in my apartment and in the picturesque Ravenswood Manor neighborhood of Chicago.

Most of the production came together after a screening of Joe Swanberg’s *Uncle Kent*. Joe’s baby, Jude, and Tessa were born about a week apart at the same hospital, so there was no doubt Joe and Jude would be in the film. Joe also connected me with Amy Seimetz – named among *Indiewire*’s “Top 25 Actors of 2011” - who generously agreed to work within our budget. Joe also connected me with accomplished no budget Chicago filmmaker Frank V. Ross, who recorded the sound, who then connected me with filmmaker and cinematographer, Mike Gibisser. Finally, Thomas J. Madden, a professional actor, long-time friend and lead in my previous feature, *LEFTY*, enthusiastically agreed to play the part of Paul and help Produce the film. Working with a baby, without a budget on a tight schedule complete with nap allowances was extremely difficult, but then again...so is parenting.

- Todd Looby, Writer / Director: *Be Good*

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## MUSIC

Dan Macaluso is a Chicago-based independent composer and full-time welder. He composed the original score.

Quentin Hirsley, a Chicago-based musician and ad copywriter, makes a cameo in the film where he performs one of his songs, "Baby". He also contributes another song, "Around the Lake" to the soundtrack.

Chicago-based indie folk-rockers, The Blacks, contribute their song, "Young and Beautiful (Teresa's Song)" to the soundtrack. The Blacks contributed three songs to *LEFTY*'s soundtrack.

## SCREENINGS

Gene Siskel Film Center, June 22<sup>nd</sup> – June 28<sup>th</sup>, eight (8) screenings

## PRESS

To be updated as film is reviewed prior to screenings.

## FILM SPECIFICATIONS

ASPECT RATIO: 16:9

ORIGINAL MEDIUM: HD - DSLR

SCREENING FORMATS: HD CAM; BlueRay DVD

## CAST & CREW

CAST: Thomas J. Madden, Amy Seimetz, Tessa Day Looby, Todd Looby, Billy Phelan, Joe Swanberg, Paul Gordon, Quentin Hirsley, and Jim Jacob

WRITER / DIRECTOR: Todd Looby

PRODUCERS: Todd Looby & Thomas Madden

EDITORS: Ryan Gould & Todd Looby

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Mike Gibisser

SOUND RECORDING: Frank V. Ross

MUSIC: Dan Macaluso

## LINKS

<http://www.begoodthemovie.com>

<http://www.obrigadoproductions.com>

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2085756/>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/ObrigadoP>

## CONTACT

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