

“Top 10 Movies of 2009, so far” ★★★★★^{1/2}

Thomas Madden

Carrie Norris

Bill Phelan

Chicago Tribune's
metromix



LEFTY



A Todd Looby Film

Obrigado
Productions



LOGLINE:

Homecoming, home-wrecking, and home team are all themes in a wry drama set deep in the heart of Chicago's Irish American subculture. Prodigal son Danny Malone (Madden) comes home to his indulgent mother and bullying father after an absence of thirteen years as his best friend Fudd (Phelan) arrives home from Iraq. Danny, harboring a potentially fatal secret, and Fudd, with his dark memories, are pulled back into the boozy embrace of the old neighborhood, where the bonds of schoolyard loyalties have been loosened by adult failures, jealousy, and infidelity. Director Looby evokes the South Side milieu with the accuracy and affection of an insider, including the adrenalin-rush chaos of the St. Patrick's Day parade.

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SYNOPSIS: Danny Malone took off to Colorado to live the private, artist's life he found impossible in Chicago. His best friend, Tommy 'Fudd' Phelan also left, but did so as a Marine. Thirteen years later, Danny discovers that he may have cancer and leaves Colorado abruptly under the guise of re-connecting with Fudd, who is returning from his service in Iraq and Afghanistan. Knowing that he'll need health insurance, Danny asks his well-connected Father to help him find a job back in Chicago.

Throughout his stay, Danny doesn't share his dire news with friends and family in an attempt to hide his vulnerability. He soon finds that this secretiveness is dangerously alienating him from friends, family and the girl with whom he's falling in love. He comes to realize that true happiness can only be found through accepting harsh reality and being open.

Meanwhile, Fudd comes to find that the community to which he came home is no longer his and decides to return to the only place where he had found meaning.

LEFTY explores how denial breeds isolation and how the cure for loneliness lies in finding something worth living for...or dying for. Although containing heavy thematic content, *LEFTY* is a light and affecting independent narrative feature.

CAST



Thomas Madden as Danny Malone

Thomas Madden is making his feature film debut in *LEFTY*. Thomas has done considerable broadcast commercial work in Chicago for such products as Sears and Hyatt Hotels. Thomas has trained at Chicago's Act One Studios; Second City and iO (Formerly Improv Olympic). Thomas brings a reserved intensity and comedic sensibility to the title role in *LEFTY*.



Carrie Norris as Patty

Carrie Norris had never acted prior to taking on the romantic lead in *LEFTY*. She works as a massage therapist and waitress in Chicago. Carrie proved to have considerable natural talent. She brings a subdued realism and lightheartedness to the character Patty. Carrie is currently on tour with Green Day, work.

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Billy Phelan

as Tommy “Fudd” Phelan

Billy Phelan is a long-time player and coach at Chicago’s iO (Formerly Improv Olympic). Billy has collaborated with director Todd Looby on their award-winning comedic short, “Shifty”. Billy’s turn as a Marine in *LEFTY* is a significant departure from his previous work, however, Bill proves the depth of his acting ability.



Mike Houlihan as Bob Malone

Mike has acted in the Coen Brothers’ *The Hudsucker Proxy*; *Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer, Part 2*; and in *Losing Isaiah*. He recently starred in the independent film, *Tapioca*. Mike is also a writer, recently publishing the critically acclaimed book, *Hooliganism*. His turn as Bob Malone is a dark and comedic look at megalomania.



Lisa Dodson as Mrs. Phelan

Lisa’s acting career spans 25 years. Lisa has worked with directors Clint Eastwood and Martin Scorsese on such films as *Flags of Our Fathers* and *The Color of Money*. Lisa has performed at Chicago’s Steppenwolf, Goodman and Shakespeare Theaters. Lisa’s role as Fudd’s Mom is the emotional hook and centerpiece of *LEFTY*.



Cedric Young as Fr. Ced

Cedric has had significant supporting roles in films such as *Backdraft*, *Home Alone 2*, *The Paper*, *Big Shots* and *Joshua*. He has appeared in television series such as “Law & Order”, “E.R.”, and “Turks”. Cedric has also performed at Chicago’s Steppenwolf, Goodman, and Lookinglass Theaters. As Fr. Ced, he is the grounding force of the film’s second act.

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CREW



Todd Looby: Producer / Writer / Director / Camera / Editor

Award-winning filmmaker, Todd Looby was born and raised on the Southside of Chicago. He is a mostly self-taught filmmaker. Shortly after receiving his MS in Environmental Sciences in Civil Engineering in 1999, Todd 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. His first narrative feature, *THE SITE*, premiered at Henry Jaglom's Iowa Independent Film Festival in 2007. The film was cut further in the Fall of 2007 and was screened at Chicago's Facet's Cinemateque as part of IFP/Chicago's "Meet the Filmmaker" series in the Spring of 2008. Also in the Spring of 2008, Todd completed a 45-minute documentary, "Towering Above O'Hare" about the building of the new Air-Traffic Control Tower at O'Hare Airport.

LEFTY, was shot over the course of one year and stars many of Todd's friends from the neighborhood as well as accomplished comedic actors from Second City and iO. Todd was recently in Honduras shooting a feature-length documentary, *Solo Madres*, about the impossible plight of impoverished mothers in a society where 70% of fathers have left the family or have immigrated to the United States. Todd's work often blends off-beat humor and drama in character studies that challenge current societal norms.

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DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

“The main character in LEFTY is in the midst of a crisis. He has to decide whether to maintain control over his problems through dishonesty or to surrender that control to the help of others and, ultimately, to God. It is a decision between defensiveness and openness. It is a theme that mirrors the current state of American culture internally and in its exploits overseas. Must we continue to pretend that we can always fix our own problems, or can we begin to open ourselves to more mutual relationships with each other and the world?”

LEFTY directly tested this hypothesis in the process of its making. The actors were provided a complete script, though they were encouraged to improvise. Several of the principle actors and I are products of Chicago's iO Theater (formerly Improv Olympic). Everyone involved with the production was encouraged to follow iO's most important principle: To say “yes” to the scene as it develops by surrendering their own ideas.

Essentially, I was left with the same challenge as the lead character: How to accept and incorporate into the film the grace and/or complications provided by my collaborators? However challenging the process, the product exhibits a deep emotion because of the cast and crew's mutual investment. Additional collaboration by some of Chicago's best independent musical talent, featured throughout the film, further underscores its emotional impact. Through this process, I became a true believer in the power of letting go and trusting. “

- Todd Looby

Writer/Director: LEFTY

MUSIC

The recorded music and live performances in LEFTY perfectly supplement the emotional core of the film. Among the nine different artists featured on the soundtrack are:



The Blacks

The Blacks were formed in 1993 after Danny Black, an alt-country virtuoso met Gina Black, a classically-trained musician, who took well to the stand-up bass. They were quickly signed to Chicago's “Bloodshot Records” and developed the reputation as one of the better live acts of Chicago's indie-rock scene. They have three songs on LEFTY's soundtrack as well as a live performance in the film.

www.myspace.com/blackfamily

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Brighton, MA

“Brighton, MA has already made an album that should be recognized, not necessarily alongside other albums that are marveled over, but sharing quarters with prized literature, the pleasure and pain of solitude and mankind’s corrupt beauty.”

Words by Sean Moeller - www.daytrotter.com

Brighton, MA’s song “A Good Kind of Crazy” appears on the *LEFTY* Soundtrack.

www.myspace.com/brightonma



Leadfoot String Band

Leadfoot String Band is a 5 piece hot-pickin’ string band made up of mandolin, acoustic guitars, upright bass, banjo and vocals playing ‘Chicago-style bluegrass.’ What is Chicago-style bluegrass? It’s hard drivin’, sometimes soulful, sometimes acoustically experimental, sometimes lonesome, rooted in a traditional setting, and explored from there. “End of the Day” perfectly bookends the character arcs of Danny and Fudd in *LEFTY*.

www.myspace.com/leadfootmusic



For All the Sweet Children

Led by Singer / Songwriter, Quentin Hirsley, For All the Sweet Children is quickly becoming Chicago’s premiere folk lounge band. Quentin’s haunting voice perfectly suits his poetic lyrics in the vein of Morphine’s Mark Sandman. Quentin also collaborates often with The Black’s Danny and Gina Black. “I Have Seen” and “You Were Born” are both featured in *LEFTY*. This is the second time that Todd Looby and Quentin have collaborated on a film.

www.myspace.com/forallthesweetchildren

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SCREENINGS

Iowa Independent Film Festival, Clear Lake, IA: July 18, 2009 **WINNER! BEST FEATURE**

Gene Siskel Film Center, Chicago, IL: July 24, 28 & 30, 2009

Kansas International Film Festival, Overland Park, KS: September 24, 2009

Beverly Arts Center, Chicago, IL: October 9, 2009

Beloit International Film Festival, Beloit, WI: February 18 & 21, 2010

PRESS

★★★ ★ 1/2 **“Top 10 Movies of 2009, so far”**...quietly convincing...it’s remarkably natural like you’re observing real people with real problems...how often do you see a movie and say that?...**Now that’s how low-budget filmmaking is done”**- Matt Pais, *Chicago Tribune's metromix*

“My favorite drama of the [Kansas International Film] fest...the acting ...excellent. The movie has a genuine lived-in feel.” - Bob Butler *Kansas City Star*

FILM SPECIFICATIONS

TRT 01:28:00

ASPECT RATIO: 4:3

ORIGINAL MEDIUM: Mini DV

SCREENING FORMATS: Mini DV; DVD; VHS; Digibeta; DVCam

FINAL CUT: August, 2009

CAST & CREW

CAST: Thomas Madden, Carrie Norris, Bill Phelan, Mike Houlihan, Lisa Dodson, Mike Wylde, Bill Boehler, Cedric Young, Kymberly Harris, Francesca Peppiatt, Dan Antonucci, Eric Rutherford, Steve Flemming, Ella Rose Urbon, Jack Urbon, The Blacks, and Dyed in the Wool

WRITER / DIRECTOR: Todd Looby SCRIPT CONSULTANT: Thomas Madden

PRODUCER: Todd Looby EDITOR: Todd Looby

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Todd Looby

MUSIC: The Blacks; Brighton, MA; Leadfoot Sting Band; For All the Sweet Children; Dyed in the Wool; Moby; Healthy White Baby; Pat Hamilton; Mike Keeley

LINKS

<http://www.obrigadoproductions.com>

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1329387>

<http://www.myspace.com/obrigadoproductions>

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

CONTACT

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