

# **INERTIA**

## **LOG LINE**

Restlessness, doubt, desire, and regret are the main characters in writer-director Sean Garrity's "Inertia", his challenging and comical debut feature film. "Inertia" examines the complicated romantic inter-relations of four urban 20-somethings as they stumble into awkward infidelity and unrequited love in search of something more.

## **SHORT SYNOPSIS**

In **INERTIA**, the lives of four characters are sidetracked by desire into deception, adultery, and incest. Joseph cannot accept that Laura doesn't want him anymore. Laura is infatuated with Joseph's close (and married) friend, Bruce. Bruce finds himself attracted to Joseph's nineteen-year-old cousin, Alex. Alex, on the other hand, has come to the city to move into Joseph's, with ulterior motives...

## **LONG SYNOPSIS**

In **INERTIA**, the lives of four characters are sidetracked by desire into deception, adultery, and incest.

Joseph (Jonas Chernick) cannot accept that Laura (Sarah Constible) doesn't want him anymore. He believes they are still very much in love and all she needs is a little "space" to realize what they have together.

Laura wants to explore other options. She is currently infatuated with Joseph's married friend, Bruce (Gordon Tanner). Joseph believes, with Bruce's help, he can get Laura back. He is unaware that Laura and Bruce slept together when Joseph and Laura first started seeing each other.

Bruce, who recently married Yumi in an effort to leave his pleasure-seeking lifestyle behind, now finds himself attracted to Joseph's nineteen-year-old cousin, Alex (Micheline Marchildon).

Alex, on the other hand, is obsessed with Joseph. Joseph innocently believes she moved to the city to attend university but it doesn't take long for him to realize she has other things on her mind.

In this anti-romance drama, four people blindly follow their desires, and only realize where it has taken them, once it's too late.

## **THE CAST**

**Jonas Chernick** as JOSEPH

**Sarah Constible** as LAURA

**Gordon Tanner** as BRUCE

**Micheline Marchildon** as ALEX

**Mike Bell** as BOROWSKI

**Yumiko Sakamoto** as YUMI

**Garfield Williams** as DOUGLAS

**Jessica Scott** as CHERRY

**Allison Perlov** as ANGELA

**Steve Ratzlaff** as THE PRINCIPAL

**Elizabeth Marsh Mondoe** as MARGIE

**Robert Tetrault** as GUY

**Lyle Morris** as MURRAY

**Murray Pulver** as DJ JACK

and

**Scott Montgomery** as SCARY RAPIST GUY

**Jonas Chernick** as JOSEPH

Jonas has been acting since the age of seven when he started taking classes at the Manitoba Theatre for Young People (formerly Actor's Showcase). He graduated from the University of Manitoba with a Bachelor of Arts in theatre and film studies in 1995 and was a founding member of The Conspiracy Network, a theatre troupe which made its debut at the 1996 Winnipeg Fringe Festival with *In Vitro Stimulation or The Great Canadian Way*. Other theatre credits include *Cote Saint Joe* (Winnipeg Jewish Theatre/Persephone Theatre, Saskatoon) and *Incompletance* (Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, Toronto).

Jonas's film credits include an Ontario Media Development Corporation-funded short film *You Might Be The Youngest*, Miramax's *Paid in Full*, Regent Entertainment's *Nostradamus* and *A Woman is a Helluva Thing*, UPN's *Life in a Day* and *Roswell: The Aliens Attack*, Sean Garrity's short film *How Much for a Half Kilo* and an appearance in Guy Maddin's cult classic *Careful*. He has been featured on the YTV television series *The Adventures of Shirley Holmes* and Showtime's *Queer as Folk*. Jonas is currently working on the feature film *A Wilderness Station*, directed by Anne Wheeler.

Jonas has been an integral part of **INERTIA** since the script was written. He first met writer/director Sean Garrity during the filming of *How Much for a Half Kilo* and the two have worked together ever since. When Jonas heard Sean was interested in making a film based on actors' improvisations, he was immediately drawn to the project.

Jonas recently moved from Winnipeg to Toronto, which he now calls home.

**Sarah Constible** as LAURA

**INERTIA** is Sarah's first venture into the world of movie making. For the last six years she has been a member of the comedy troupe, The Royal Liechtenstein Theatre Company, where all seven members write, act and perform music. Sarah has also appeared in *Richard III* and *Odyssey: The Islands* for the Winnipeg theatre company Shakespeare in the Ruins. She will be joining them again in 2001 for their production of *The Tempest*.

Sarah's other theatre credits include *Godspell*, performed a Winnipeg's Prairie Theatre Exchange and two children's theatre tours. She has also performed in The Winnipeg Fringe Festival, appearing in the musical *Bad Girl's Jailhouse* and a collaborative effort entitled *Freakshow*.

Sarah is a Winnipegger and has plans to perform at The 2001 Winnipeg Fringe Festival.

## **Gordon Tanner** as BRUCE

Gordon's acting career began when he was working on his Master's degree in Biosystems Engineering at the University of Manitoba, when a wrong turn on campus led to auditions for a production of Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*. He was cast in a major role and loved it so much he never went back to engineering.

Gordon is a member of the Royal Liechtenstein Theatre Company, along with fellow **INERTIA** cast member Sarah Constible. Since forming in 1995, the seven members have collectively written and performed 14 full-length sketch comedy productions, which have been highly acclaimed by both critics and the public. In 1999 they produced a series pilot for the CBC with Winnipeg filmmaker John Paizs.

Gordon's theatre credits include an appearance with Ross MacMillan in *Endgame* in Winnipeg's Becket Fest 2000, and as Rosencrantz (and five other characters) in a national tour of *Hamlet* with the English Suitcase Theatre.

Gordon was one of the original actors who started working on **INERTIA** with Sean Garrity in 1999. Sean and Gordon had worked together on Sean's Prairie Music Award-nominated music video for Mark Reeves, as well as on a short film entitled "Buenos Aires Souvenir". When he was asked to join the project because of his years of experience in improvisational theatre, he jumped at the chance.

Gordon lives in Winnipeg where he and the other members of his theatre company are currently in negotiations with CBC to film a live sketch comedy special.

## **Micheline Marchildon** as ALEX

When Micheline Marchildon heard writer/director Sean Garrity was working on a film combining improvisation and acting, she felt like "it was a message from God" that she should be working on the project. She was thrilled to be able to combine her on-camera experience with her live improvisational skills.

Micheline's previous feature film credits include *The Cock Crew* (Virgin of Stamboul Productions), directed by Guy Maddin, *The Strike-Out King* (Punk Rock Roger Productions), and *Picture When* (Fulcrum Pictures). For television, Micheline has hosted a season of the wildlife series *Unique Au Monde* (Les Productions Rivard), performed in an episode of *Histoire Max* for Ontario's TFO, and has just completed a season with French CBC Television playing a wacky alien for the children's show *Clan Destin*.

Recently, Micheline wrote and performed the one-woman sketch comedy hit *She's Got it Sewed Together* for the 2000 Winnipeg Fringe Festival, and has performed with Winnipeg theatre groups Les Cercle Moliere, La Ligue d'Improvisation du Manitoba, Heritage Theatre, and Les Chiens de Soleil. If it's not obvious yet, Micheline performs fluently in French as well as English.

This is Micheline's first feature-length film, although she hasn't found it too much of a stretch from her other film roles. "Let's just say it's like running cross-country as opposed to sprinting down the block."

Micheline lives in Winnipeg, where in addition to acting, she enjoys playing the piano and flute, singing, songwriting and dancing.

## **THE FILMMAKERS**

Writer / Director **Sean Garrity**

Producer **Brendon Sawatzky**

Director of Photography **Michael Marshall**

Production Designer **Kim Forrest**

Music **Richard Moody**

Sound Coordinator **Russ Dyck**

Casting **Kathy Driscoll**

Production Manager **Tamara Mauthe**

1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Director **Dave Antoniuk**

Camera Operator **Brian Sanders**

Art Director **Simon Hughes**

Wardrobe **Wanda Farian**

Make-Up/Hair **Jen Machnee**

Editor **Sean Garrity**

Assistant Editor **Kristen Liu**

Sound Editor **Russ Dyck**

Sound Engineer **John Schritt**

### **Sean Garrity: WRITER, DIRECTOR, EDITOR**

"Inertia" is Sean's first full-length feature film and is the result of a two-year collaborative effort, which combined Sean's original story concept with input from Winnipeg's improvisational theatre community.

Sean first studied film production and theory at Toronto's York University and continued his studies at the Instituto de Arte Cinematografico de Avellaneda in Buenos Aires. There he produced and directed an experimental film, which was awarded prizes at film festivals in Avellaneda and Santa Fe, Argentina. After three years of living in Japan and traveling through Asia, Sean made a short abstract collage video, which was selected to participate in the PFA Film Festival in Tokyo.

After an 11-year absence, Sean returned to Winnipeg to begin a career as a filmmaker, quickly creating award-winning music videos for Winnipeg artists including The Wyrld Sisters, Mark Reeves and Richard Moody. He also completed a number of documentaries, and short films, including *Middle*, awarded at film festivals in Vancouver and Toronto, and *How Much for a Half Kilo?*, which won best film award at the Calgary Independent Film Festival and was nominated for a 2001 Blizzard Award. It recently had its network television premiere on CBC's Canadian Reflections.

Sean lives in Winnipeg where he also works as a musician.

### **Brendon Sawatzky: PRODUCER**

This is Brendon's first foray into the world of feature film producing. He originally became interested in filmmaking after signing up for what he calls a "fly-by-night video course" which significantly lightened the load in his wallet but increased his desire to explore the medium.

After some friendly advice from the staff at the Winnipeg Film Group, Brendon began studying film production, and created a black and white short about a Winnipeg city suburb called *The King of Transconia*. He quickly followed that project with the short film *Time*, which consumed almost two years of his life.

After getting his feet wet in the production side of the industry, Brendon then served on the Winnipeg Film Group's Board of Directors. Using organizational skills that were developed on his own short films, he decided to try his hand at helping other filmmakers. This resulted in producing a short film called *The Blue Bridge*.

Shortly after completing *The Blue Bridge*, Brendon met Sean Garrity, who was looking for someone to produce his feature film, **INERTIA**.

Brendon is currently the Winnipeg Film Group's Production Coordinator and has since completed his third short film entitled *Purgatory*, which he directed and co-wrote. *Purgatory* was recently nominated for Best Direction, Best Cinematography, and Best Art Direction at the Yorkton Short Film & Video Festival.

## PRODUCTION NOTES

"I had always been interested in making a film about relationships," states INERTIA Writer/Director Sean Garrity. "But I wanted to do approach it differently. In most movies, the theme is always the same, and in the end, everyone falls in love and lives happily ever after. I wanted to make a film without the heroics and the happy endings. I wanted to make a movie that people could watch and say, "That's me up there. That's my life".

The writing process for **INERTIA** was unique and came to be because of Sean's interest in the cinematic applications of improvisational theatre. Sean's background as a musician figured heavily into this method: "When I'm playing with other musicians, a lot of the best stuff that happens on stage is improvised. I became really excited about applying that approach to filmmaking". Sean came up with a concept, wrote the skeleton of a story and then collaborated with improv actors to develop the scenes and characters. He contacted the four actors who would eventually star in INERTIA, Jonas Chernick, Sarah Constible, Gordon Tanner and Micheline Marchildon. After providing them with the general outline, he directed improv sessions, and videotaped them, then spent a month in Japan transcribing, editing and rewriting the first draft of **INERTIA**.

"It was so easy to write the script because the characters were so real. It was almost impossible to write out of character with their input. It was like having four story editors, each specializing in one character."

Sean had known **INERTIA** Producer Brendon Sawatzky through the Winnipeg Film Group, and the decision to work together on this project came about after a conversation about the state of filmmaking in Winnipeg. Sawatzky, a filmmaker himself, remembers their initial meetings. "We were discussing the fact there weren't enough opportunities for new directors to shoot their first feature film, when I remarked that maybe I could help with development. The next week Sean walked into the Film Group with the first draft for **INERTIA**." Brendon quickly started filling out applications and proposals for the project and it wasn't long before he and Sean were selected for the 1999 National Screen Institute's Features First program. This influential program offers professional development for filmmakers, as well as project development services.

Through the NSI's Features First Program, Garrity and Sawatzky were able to meet with Toronto producer Alexandra Raffe (whose film projects have collectively won 11 Genie Awards) and story editor Peggy Thompson (*Better Than Chocolate*), who helped fine-tune the script. States Sawatzky, "Features First gave us both the big picture on the Canadian film industry and also introduced us to other filmmakers who were only too glad to help out."

As the Features First program wrapped up, more proposals and applications were sent out to funding agencies. What really got the ball rolling was a successful application to the Canada Council for the Arts. Soon after that the financial structure came together thanks to Telefilm Canada, the Manitoba Film and Sound Development Corp. and the Federal and Provincial Tax Credit programs. An initial broadcast license was acquired from Showcase Television, which was soon followed up by another pre-sale to The Movie Network.

In early January of 2001 pre-production began with the assembly of an eager cast and crew. Locations were scouted, film was ordered, equipment rented and filming began promptly on March 10th.

## QUOTES

### ...on the writing process

"Working with these talented actors was like having four story editors -each specializing in their own character. It was so easy to write, because the characters were so real." - Sean Garrity (Writer/Director)

"Being able to contribute to the script was an amazing process. It was the perfect venue for learning about acting for film." - Micheline Marchildon (Alex)

"I embraced the concept for **INERTIA** right from the start! How many times can an actor actually create his own character and write his own dialogue? What a fabulous opportunity for dramatic improvisation!" - Jonas Chernick (Joseph)

"Even though Sean wrote the final script, I have an incredible sense of confidence with this character because I helped create him." - Jonas Chernick (Joseph)

"Working as part of the creative team of **INERTIA** has been a high point for me. I'm used to comedic improv, but to attempt improvising a character is something all together different. It has been a great experience. I've been so immersed in the character of Laura that I'm really going to miss her when the project is over." - Sarah Constible (Laura)

"The concept for writing **INERTIA** sounded fantastic to me from the moment I heard it. And although it's been a long intense process, it's been lots of fun, and gave me the opportunity to create my own character. The collaborative effort with Sean was great!" - Gordon Tanner (Bruce)

"Being able to develop Alex from the beginning gave me a lot more creative confidence. Sean valued our opinions even when they were different from his." - Micheline Marchildon (Alex)

"I would have paid them (the production) to have a chance to work on something like this!" - Micheline Marchildon (Alex)

### ...the story

"I would describe **INERTIA** as an urban, twenty-something, cynical, Generation X, anti-romance drama. In many senses, it's a film that strives to give some perspective on the nature of love. Here we have these four characters obsessing and stressing over what is essentially a moral response to a biological imperative." - Sean Garrity (Writer/Director)

"The big question in **INERTIA** is what do we really mean when we say we're in love? What is the nature of attraction and how controllable is it?" - Gordon Tanner (Bruce)

"The script is definitely Sean's work, but it's exciting to hear lines from the original improv tape that were mine. It was a great collaborative effort --- intense and lots of fun, and the end result has a lot more depth and texture than when we started." - Gordon Tanner (Bruce)

## **SEAN GARRITY SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY**

### **“Inertia” 2001**

Feature film on 35mm  
Produced by Indian Snack Box Films  
Official Selection, 2001 Toronto International Film Festival  
Writer / Director / Editor

### **“Buenos Aires Souvenir” 2001**

6 minute abstract fiction on 35mm  
Produced by Cheeky wee Monkey Films  
Director / Producer / Writer / Editor / Camera

### **“The Way I Feel” 2001**

Music Video for Pop Act RICHARD MOODY  
Produced by Cheeky Wee Monkey Films  
Director / Producer / Writer / Editor

### **“Thunder” 2000**

30 minute documentary on Betacam  
Produced by Buffalo Point First Nation  
Writer / Editor

### **“As Long as the Sun Shines” 1999**

48 minute documentary on Betacam  
Produced by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs  
Writer / Editor

### **“Leon’s Lounge” 1999**

Music Video for blues act MARK REEVES  
Nominated for a Prairie Music Award 2000  
Produced by Cheeky Wee Monkey Films  
Producer / Director / Writer / Editor

### **“How Much for a Half Kilo?” 1999**

19 minute fiction on 16mm  
Best 16mm Film – Calgary Independent Film Festival 2000  
Selected for film festivals in Canada, Spain, Ireland, and Australia  
Produced by Cheeky Wee Monkey Films  
Producer / Director / Writer / Editor

### **“Wrapped in Plastic” 1999**

Half hour documentary on Betacam  
Produced by Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanaka  
Writer / Interviewer

### **“Night of Her Insistence” 1998**

Best Music Video - 1999 Blizzard Awards  
**Music Video for two-time Juno nominees, THE WYRD SISTERS**  
Produced by Channels Audio and Post Production  
Director / Writer / Editor

**“Middle” 1998**

Short Experimental Comedy on 16mm  
Best Comedy – Sea and sky Film Festival, Vancouver  
2<sup>nd</sup> Prize – Cabbagetown Film Festival, Toronto  
Director / Producer / Writer / Editor / Camera

**“Healing Hands” 1998**

Nominated for a Blizzard Award 1999  
Music Video for Pop Act RICHARD MOODY  
Produced by Cheeky Wee Monkey Films  
Director / Producer / Writer / Editor

**“Funky Morning” 1998**

Music Video for Pop Act RICHARD MOODY  
Produced by Channels Audio and Post Production  
Director / Writer / Editor