

# lady in a box

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## SCREENINGS TO DATE

*Look for the movie to also be broadcast in the US, Europe and Russia on the Mini Movie Channel, and in Canada via Quat Media.*

### **Urban Mediamakers Film Festival**

October 16-18, 2009  
Norcross, GA  
USA

### **Industry Power Play**

January 13, 2009  
New York City  
USA

### **The Strand Film Festival**

November 12, 2008  
IMAX Theatre  
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina  
USA

### **Chashama Film Festival**

May 30th, 2008  
Chashama  
217 E. 42nd Street, Manhattan  
New York City  
USA

### **Propeller TV's World Cinema Programme**

Fridays at 10pm, May 3-June 7, 2008  
SKY Television Channel 195  
UK

### **Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Market**

February 1-9, 2008  
Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival  
FRANCE

### ***Through Her Eyes* Women of Color Film Festival**

November 9-10th, 2007  
Corona, Queens, New York City  
USA

### **Cannes Short Film Corner**

May 16-26, 2007  
Cannes Film Festival  
FRANCE

### **Reel Life Moviehouse**

May 15, 2007 at 8pm  
Galapagos Art Space  
Williamsburg, Brooklyn, New York City  
USA

### **Buffalo Black & Asian Film Festival**

October 22, 2006  
Battersea Arts Centre, London  
UK



mini movie \_\_\_\_\_

Luxembourg – Moscow – Paris – Beverly Hills

July 10, 2007

Jeffrey Stanley

Dear Jeffrey,

I am writing on behalf of MINI MOVIE, a newly created multi-media channel. A representative from our company recently saw your film, LADY IN A BOX, at the Cannes Short Film Corner and recommended it highly. We are interested in acquiring rights to your short film for commercial exhibition.

MINI MOVIE is an international cross-media project headquartered in Luxembourg and dedicated to short films. Our goal is to promote and draw attention to short films for as wide an audience as possible. Currently we are in the process of assembling a library of the world's best short films, to be exhibited on our channel both on the Internet and television. The launch of the Internet portal is planned for autumn/winter 2007-2008. The next stage involves entering other European markets and preparing for broadcast in the Western hemisphere and Asia and is scheduled for early 2008.

Please let us know whether your short film is available for licensing. We are interested in licensing worldwide rights to all broadcast television platforms, as well as rights to the internet/broadband and wireless devices. If you do not control the rights to the film, we would appreciate if you connect us to the legal owner of your film.

We look forward to hearing from you. You made an excellent film and we want it to be included in our library of best short films from around the world.

Best regards,

Carla Sanders  
Acquisitions Manager

**Subject:** Re: Lady in a Box

**Date:** Fri, 27 Apr 2007

**From:** Bobbie Stone

Jeffrey,

I watched the trailer to your film *Lady In a Box*, it is a fine production and the acting is professional. I assume you are seeking distribution for it. We are now accepting short films for release to broadband and mobile media buyers worldwide. They pay on a 'revenue share' basis, similar to pay per view. We split 50/50 with the producer all revenues we generate on your film's behalf. At this point in the mobile media distribution we can't say how much if any you will earn from the release. If this is of interest to you let me know.

Thanks,  
Bobbie Stone  
Indie Vision Films  
Show Box Networks

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**Subject:** Your film was recommended to our film festival by the Brooklyn Arts Council

**Date:** Sun, 30 Sep 2007 16:59:43 -0400

**From:** womenofcolorfilm

Greetings,

My name is Jacqueline Wade. I am the curator for the *Through Her Eyes* Women of Color Film Festival. Your film was highly recommended to be screened in our upcoming film festival in 2008 and our public screenings by the Brooklyn Arts Council. Please log onto our web site at [womenofcolorpro.citymax.com](http://womenofcolorpro.citymax.com). The upcoming film festival will be in New York City. Because your film was highly recommended, there will be no submission fee for you. There are prizes and awards in our festival. I look forward to hearing from you.

Best Wishes From Jacqueline Wade, Curator and Executive Producer



PONDEROSA PICTURES  
presents



a little movie by Jeffrey Stanley

*In this dark comedy, a bedeviled lawyer must stop a dysfunctional family's absurd feud over a macabre heirloom.*

**starring Sarita Choudhury, John Lordan, Sean Hayden, Luke Rosen**

featuring the global hit *Sweet Lassi Dub* by The Bhutan Philharmonic



**Written & Directed by Jeffrey Stanley**  
**Producer Matthew Myers**  
**Coproducer Tai Burkholder**  
**Director of Photography Peter Olsen**

**RUNNING TIME: 12 minutes**

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***AIVF-BVR Get  
It Made  
Package***

Acclaimed New York playwright **Jeffrey Stanley** is proud to present his motion picture directing debut, the short **LADY IN A BOX**. His comedy screenplay **JANE HENRY: A TRIBUTE**, which he will direct, has been optioned to Peter Farrelly, GreeneStreet Films & Charles B. Wessler Productions, and his screenplay **BRAIN ON FIRE**, which he will also direct, has been optioned to acclaimed indie producer Matthew Myers. His wartime stage play **TESLA'S LETTERS** (Samuel French, 2000) received its world premiere to rave reviews at The Ensemble Studio Theatre and numerous other productions around the world, including the 2007 Chicago premiere. He was commissioned by the Mill Mountain Theatre to write the play **MEDICINE, MAN** and he was commissioned by The Ensemble Studio Theatre to write the forthcoming play **FISHING WITH TONY AND JOE**. He wrote, directed and performed in his autobiographical comedy **THE GOLDEN HORSESHOE, A LECTURE ON TRAGEDY** at Don't Tell Mama. He directed a racially reimagined revival of Sam Shepard's **THE GOD OF HELL** at the Michael Chekhov Theatre. He has written for *The New York Times* and *Time Out New York*, and he teaches at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. He has lectured in Croatia at The Imaginary Academy sponsored by the Soros Foundation, and at Amherst College where he was a Copeland Fellow. He has also been a resident of Yaddo.



Actress **Sarita Choudhury** ("Ms. Pullman") first made a splash as Denzel Washington's costar in Mira Nair's **MISSISSIPPI MASALA**. She costars in M. Night Shyamalan's **LADY IN THE WATER**. Choudhury worked with Mira Nair again in **THE PEREZ FAMILY** and **KAMA SUTRA: A TALE OF LOVE**, in Spike Lee's **SHE HATE ME**, and in **A PERFECT MURDER** with Gwyneth Paltrow. Determined not to "go Hollywood," she resides in New York City focusing on independent film and theatre, appearing recently as Frida Khalo in **THE RISE OF DOROTHY HALE** and in Betty Shamieh's hit **ROAR**.

The global hit **Sweet Lassi Dub** by UK ambient trance duo The Bhutan Philharmonic, made up of legendary Blancmange frontman Neil Arthur and DJ Stoppa, is widely played on radio stations and in dance clubs around the world and has been featured on major commercials and an episode of HBO's *Six Feet Under*. It has been rereleased several times as a 12" single and has sold out every time. Securing the duo's permission to use their biggest hit in this short film was an exciting accomplishment.

Producer **Matthew Myers** most recently produced Helen Hunt's feature directing debut THEN SHE FOUND ME, the feature film GRIFFIN & PHOENIX starring Amanda Peet, and the feature film SPEAK for Showtime. For four and a half years he worked exclusively with writer-director Hal Hartley at True Fiction Pictures in New York, producing such award-winning films as HENRY FOOL (Best Screenplay, Cannes 1998), THE BOOK OF LIFE (released by Fox Lorber) and KIMINO (for German broadcaster WDR and Regina Zeigler), along with several shorts and music videos for such artists as Everything But The Girl and Beth Orton. In 1999 Myers started his own production company, P-Kino Films, with Thierry Cagianut. They developed, produced and sold three successful, award-winning feature films: DOUBLE PARKED, VIRGIL BLISS and MILK & HONEY. Myers has developed projects with Sidney Lumet, George A. Romero, Alan Rudolph and Stephen Frears. He has also worked with the industry's best cinematographers including Michael Spiller (Sex and the City, Scrubs) and Jim Denault (Boys Don't Cry). He has also worked with Hollywood studios Paramount, Warner Bros. and Disney for various intellectual properties in collaboration with producer Elliott Kastner. Myers has an excellent knowledge of foreign sales and international distribution, having produced and delivered films to the global marketplace. He has worked with many of the world's top distributors, including Sony Pictures Classics, ARP Selection, Canal +, Helkon, Kinowelt, Metro Tartan and BBC Films.

Director of Photography **Peter Olsen's** debut feature KAATERSKILL FALLS (co-directed with Josh Apter) on which he also served as Director of Photography received the Critic's Jury Prize for Best Feature at the 2001 IFP/West Los Angeles Film Festival, and was nominated for two 2002 Independent Spirit Awards. It can be seen on The Sundance Channel and was released on DVD and video. His work has also been seen on PBS, ABC, A&E, Showtime, The Sundance Channel and HGTV. He is currently developing and shooting a number of feature projects, both documentary and narrative. Other awards and honors include being a regional finalist in the Student Academy Awards, winner of the Warner Bros. Production Award, and nominee for the American Society of Cinematographers Greg Toland Heritage Award. Peter was also awarded a \$25,000 development grant from IFP/North and the Minnesota Independent Film Fund as co-writer of the feature film screenplay ICE NINE, now in development. Peter has taught filmmaking courses at the distinguished International Film & Television Workshops in Rockport, Maine, and at the Kochi University of Technology in Japan. He holds an MFA from the graduate film program at NYU-Tisch School of the Arts.



*“The roving digital camera of cinematographer Peter Olsen is crucial to the joke: Much of the comedy rides on reaction shots that capture the couple's faces frozen in every imaginable variation of mortified and abashed.”*

– Jan Stuart **NEWSDAY**

*“[Pak is] an uncannily assured visual storyteller, and his crew – particularly cinematographer Peter Olsen...matches his creative fervor. The result is a quietly impassioned, genuinely stirring indie rarity.”*

– Mark Holcomb **THE VILLAGE VOICE**

*“Robot Stories, shot on DV, was lensed by Peter Olsen with a conscious design adapted to what digital can do best... The end result is quite impressive.”*

– Ronnie Scheib **DAILY VARIETY**

Actor **John Lordan** ("August Helms") has starred in numerous films and TV shows including Robert Altman's *THE COMPANY*, *ER*, David Lynch's *THE STRAIGHT STORY* and F. Gary Gray's *THE NEGOTIATOR* among others. He previously played the role of August in *LADY IN A BOX* in the stage production at the Cherry Lane Theatre in 2005. He is also a stage actor and an award-winning playwright.

Actor **Sean Hayden** ("Jonny") created and starred in *CONFIDENTIALLY, COLE*, his one man musical which radically interpreted the music of Cole Porter and which played to critical acclaim in New York Off Broadway, at The Colony Theatre in Miami and The Tiffany Theatre in Los Angeles. He also performed and executive produced the original cast album of the musical. In his native Dallas, Mr. Hayden's dramatic work included principal roles with both the Dallas and Ft. Worth Shakespeare Festivals and as Joseph Pitt in the area premiere of *ANGELS IN AMERICA*. He also originated the role of Calvin Barker in Jeffrey Stanley's comedy *MEDICINE, MAN* at the Mill Mountain Theatre. He is at work on a new solo recording of blues music, and he is currently on the national tour of *THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA*. He admits to a past life as a lawyer.

Actor **Luke Rosen** ("Brian") has made numerous stage, TV and film appearances and is the co-artistic director of the Eastcheap Rep theatre company in New York where he co-wrote the hit plays *FRICTION* and *JUMPERS*. He often produces shows at Tom Noonan's Paradise Factory, and has previously acted in two stage productions of *LADY IN A BOX*. He also starred as the Teaching Assistant in Jeffrey Stanley's *THE GOLDEN HORSESHOE, A LECTURE ON TRAGEDY*.



## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Loosely inspired by the infamous Terri Schiavo case, the dark comedy LADY IN A BOX takes a satirical look at an American family's macabre desire to preserve the memory of a dead loved one. I hope these absurdly scheming characters, driven by a love which has decayed into malice, challenge your ethics, break your heart and make you smile. It started as a short play that I wrote in 2003 and directed three times with various casts over the following two years, most recently at the esteemed Cherry Lane Theatre in Greenwich Village in 2005. I then decided to adapt it into a screenplay and later that year it won the AIVF-BVR Get It Made Package as publicized in the January-February 2006 issue of *The Independent*. The award was an equipment rental donation to help reduce production costs. I scheduled the shoot for May 2006 and began assembling a top-notch cast and crew of enthusiastic professionals who liked the script, knew my work as a screenwriter and playwright and trusted me as a director. The movie was shot over two days using a Panasonic 24p AG-DVX100A mini-DV camcorder. I edited the movie myself, both picture and sound, at home on my laptop using Adobe Premiere Pro. I listed the editor in the end credits as Virgie Mae Whitworth (my great-grandmother's name) so that the movie didn't seem too horribly a vanity project with my name plastered all over it any more than necessary. I didn't bother crediting myself as Executive Producer but instead made up the name and logo Ponderosa Pictures even though I paid for the entire movie myself from meager personal finances. The entire cast and most of the crew were only paid in snacks and gratitude thanks to the *SAG Short Film Agreement*. [Update, March, 2008: all cast members have been paid in full thanks to profits from licensing the short.]



LADY IN A BOX was shot on location at the Abraham-Benziger House in Harlem, New York City. It used to be a private home, then a brothel and finally a nonprofit residence for the homeless. We shot in their community room. Initially the script called for the scene to be in August's own living room but we decided instead to place him in more of a nursing home situation. In order to help create that sense we threw some scrubs on our P.A. Greg Balla and had him walk down the stairs when Brian opens the door to let Jonny and Ms. Pullman enter.



I wanted this story to happen near water because it felt thematically important. Water to me represents the womb, birth; but a grimy urban waterfront also represents decay and death. I couldn't find an ideal house right on the waterfront so I tried to create the illusion by shooting some establishing shots of the New York City post-industrial shoreline. I belong to a canoe club based in Brooklyn so a few weeks after principal photography I went out in a canoe with Director of Photography Peter Olsen to get some shots of the wasteland off of Red Hook. We shot lots of stuff but I wound up using only the birds--we had happened upon these three black cormorants drying their wings and I whispered for Peter to shoot them as I tried to steady the canoe. I knew right away what I wanted to do with the footage. To me a black bird is a bad omen, a sign of death like a vulture. These birds weren't vultures but they look pretty similar and there happened to be three of them which was perfect: they'd symbolize the three men in my script fighting over the remains of a corpse. They became the bookend shots of my short. I also added in a tugboat horn sound effect at the opening as we dissolve from the first shot of the birds to the house. Hopefully it helps create the illusion that the house is indeed near the birds and the water.

**CLICK TO WATCH THE TRAILER:** [www.brain-on-fire.com/lady](http://www.brain-on-fire.com/lady)

For more information or to contact the cast and crew please email  
**lady [at] brain-on-fire.com**





**Brian (Luke Rosen) and August (John Lordan) mug for sympathy.**



**Jonny (Sean Hayden) defends his macabre creation.**



**Distorted by desire.**