

WOUNDED

A FILM BY MAX MCGUIRE



level

FILM

WOUNDED

Director's vision

SYNOPSIS

When a soldier returns home and tries to reconnect with her resentful sixteen-year-old son over their weekend hunting trip, a violent accident with their unpredictable neighbours forces her to find a way to get them both out of the woods alive. In the spirit of "Deliverance" and "A History of Violence", WOUNDED proves how far a mother will go to protect her son.



SUMMARY

Female Special Forces Operative, BREE STEWART, returns home from another tour hoping to reconnect with her resentful teenage son BURR over their once annual hunting trip. As the strong silent type who can't keep quiet, Bree keeps getting in her own way as she tries to impart years of lost wisdom over a single weekend.

Joined by Bree's father, JIM, a charged encounter with their off kilter and territorial neighbour's, THE JONES', sets the stage for a harrowing weekend of hunting and mother and son bonding in the bush.

When a stray bullet from one of The Jones' children kills Grandpa Jim, it sparks a dangerous turn of events that leaves the Stewarts on the run from The Jones', who will do anything to cover up the accident and protect their family.

Bree's earlier lessons on hunting, tracking and animal behaviour finally become relevant to Burr, as they discover how similar they are to the animals they hunted; first they run, then they hide and then attack when cornered.

Bree's talk seamlessly turns into action, when she's forced to use her lethal military training in order to get herself and her son out of the woods alive.

WOUNDED is a thrilling and heart pumping film in the spirit of DELIVERANCE and A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE, which proves how far both families will go to protect their children.

THEMATICALLY

Over the course of 24 hours, WOUNDED deals with some of the most universal and primal themes in cinema. Life and death along with the protection of your offspring are themes that transcend race, creed, geography and even species. One of the only reasons a person would put their own life at risk of death is for the protection of their young. Nature is littered with he-roic stories of parents, and even animals sacrificing their own lives for the sake of their off-spring.

These themes are the driving forces behind Wounded. Giving Burr the tools to survive in the woods and in the wider world are what inform all of Bree's actions and decisions. From the start of the movie where she pesters her son with seemingly benign driving lessons to the dramatic end where she's thrust into a terrible scenario where she must try to keep her son alive while being pursued by Joneses. The rifle lesson she gives her son in the first act is fore-shadowing for the shot that Burr must take in order to save his mother's life from the rational-ized evil the Joneses have fallen into.

Other themes the movie touches on are ethical hunting, war and its lasting effects, along with family bonds and ultimately love and forgiveness.

TONE

WOUNDED begins with a fraught mother and son relationship that ratchets up in intensity when Burr disobeys his Bree, ending up in a physical altercation in the first act. The tension escalates into life and death when Burr sneaks out of their cabin to chase his deer deep into their unforgiving neighbour's property, forcing his mother and grandfather to go and find him before being discovered by their neighbours who are in pursuit of the same deer. When an ac-cidental shot that fatally wounds Jim, Bree and Burr must work together in order to get out of the woods alive after the Joneses turn the hunters into the hunted.

The viewer will experience the intensity of a hunt through Burr's novice eyes. Though Burr is initially reluctant to go on the hunting trip, he gets caught up in its primal thrill once he shoots the mystical buck he's been hearing about since he was a child. A teenage act of rebel-lion throws him into peril and forces him to use the very skills his mother taught him in order to eventually save both of their lives.

I want the audience to feel Burr's 17-year-old heart pound as he draws his gun on the trophy buck. They will be thrilled with epic chases and then disgusted by the brutal violence that en-sues. Too often in movies violence is glossed over, but killing is dirty and as a war veteran and a woman, Bree knows this all too well after losing her husband. She teaches her son that in nature, animals take the path of least resistance. Like the animals they were hunting, Bree and Burr are forced to hide from their hunters before running for their lives, only to eventually be forced to attack or be killed themselves.

VISUALLY

The goal is to make this contained story feel enormous and impactful. Cinema Verite tech-niques such as hand-held camera work will make you feel like you're on the hunt with our characters and will be juxtaposed and intercut with epic wides and smooth solidly-composed shots that give you mise-en-scene.

Anamorphic lenses will enhance the dramatic mountain landscapes and gorgeous tree-lined vistas. Longer lens shots will isolate my protagonists as they navigate the forest, dodging branches as they come in and out of focus. Extreme wides will be contrasted by macro shots, highlighting details on their guns, bullets and expressions.

Composition will divide mother and son on the screen via clean unconnected shots, or sepa-ration with room or trees between them. Environmental lines will symmetrically frame our shots whether they be dirt roads, trees or split-rail fences as metaphors for order, separation and borders.

All perspectives and angles will be exploited as we highlight the settings and action of our scenes. Drones and cable cameras will help us capture the chase scenes as our heroes race through the barren trees in their fluorescent jackets, like wildebeest fleeing lions on the Serengeti. Steadi-cam and hand held shots will capture the rush of our heroes as they sur-vive the action they're forced into by the Joneses.

ACTION

Though at its heart WOUNDED is a dramatic story about a mother and son reconnecting after Burr lost his father, it's designed and structured as an exciting thriller.

From the moment we meet the Joneses breaking the law the night before the hunt officially starts, we know our heroes are in for a rough ride this weekend. Once Burr shoots his deer, the movie instantly becomes a chase film at the end of act one. First to track the deer, only to then lose it on their revenge seeking neighbour's property where the story then turns into a rescue mission as Bree and Jim are forced to chase Burr onto the Jones' property. It escalates into life and death when Bree and Burr are forced to run for their lives after Jim dies and the Jones boys try to cover up their crime. The film is littered with tension, fights and carefully designed kill shots.

No bullet is without consequence in Wounded. Long guns which limit the amount of bullets keep the movie grounded. When our characters run out of ammo they actually have reason to put their weapons down and fight hand to hand with whatever object is nearby. The combat scenes will feel as if a person and a shark were wrestling in the shallow end of a pool - dirty, bloody and cringe-worthy. Every strike will feel painful. Most importantly it will feel real, no flying arm bars as violence will have consequences.

Bree will use krav-maga, the actual techniques used by professionals in her trade. To ensure continued drama, we pit a mother against foe's with greater size and more firepower in order to force her hand and reveal to the audience what she is really capable of.

This will be highlighted by an unforgettable sequence where Burr watches his mother vis-cously crush in Angus' face with punches and a rock (think heels to face in elevator scene from DRIVE). The fights will draw your eyes like a car crash as you'll be unable to look away, even though you're disgusted with what you see.

SOUND DESIGN

The sound of silence in the forest can be deafening when you're waiting for a deer to appear. The surroundings come alive when you stand still. Birds chirp louder than ever, squirrels squawk directly at you and the trees start to sing as they gently rub together.

When the deer finally arrives, you have to slow your breathing and freeze your movements. You do everything in your power to not to alert the unsuspecting target. CLICK, you quietly flip the safety on your gun. You raise it to your eye carefully and take aim. BANG! The crack of the gunshot pierces the sky with the echo of your discharge. THUMP! The bullet strikes your target and the deer falls to the ground. CRASH! Your deer jumps up and thrashes through the woods again, running for its life.

The forest is a natural sound stage. Branches snap, and leaves crinkle as Bree and Burr walk through the woods. Water splashes as they sprint through the river, pausing as Burr catches his breath with heaving laboured breathing. Sounds will be isolated to maximize their effects to raise the tension in the story. The film will sonically echo the climactic kill shot back to Burr's shooting lesson, "Stop. Remove the safety. Breath. Aim and Fire", as Burr sprints down the dirt road searching through his scope, then takes the shot which saves his mother's life.

Score concepts include palm muted finger picking with an acoustic guitar, layered over in-creasingly intense percussion as they action picks up. The score will heighten the tension in the already dramatic settings. Source music will include Bree's music of choice, classic rock, as she attempts to foist nostalgia on her teenage son on the ride up to the farm before every-thing goes off the rails.







TEAM



MAXWELL MCGUIRE

As a writer and director, Max's projects have been financed, distributed by or aired by; Netflix, Bron Studios, Telefilm Canada, Hallmark, Ontario Media Development Corp, Lifetime TV, CBC tv, UPtv, Canada Council for the Arts, the Harold Greenberg Fund and a number other private international distributors.

FOREVERLAND, his most personal movie, was produced by Bron Studios and Screen Siren Media. It was theatrically distributed by Eone and sold internationally by Vision Films. It stars Max Thieriot (Seal Team/Bates Motel), Laurence Leboeuf (Transplant) and Oscar nominees Juliette Lewis (Cape Fear) and Demian Bichir (The Bridge), along with Sarah Wayne Callies, Matt Frewer and Thomas Dekker.

Max recently directed, MIDNIGHT AT THE MAGNOLIA starring Natalie Hall and Evan Williams for Marvista Entertainment which spent weeks as a TOP 10 worldwide most streamed Netflix movie.

Max is actively developing, WOUNDED, a wilderness thriller which was invited to the INTERNATIONAL FILM FINANCE FORUM at TIFF and the IFP NO BORDERS MARKET in New York with development funding from the OMDC and Telefilm Canada.

Max is currently working on a passion project with his father about the perils of retirement, currently entitled, FREEDOM 65, and has a number of other scripts in development.

MICHAEL BAKER

From Bunk11 Pictures has produced and executive produced more than 20 feature films, most recently the 2021 Sundance Film Festival competition film ON THE COUNT OF THREE. Previous producing credits include AT FIRST LIGHT, with Automatik Entertainment (2018, EOne), AWAKENING THE ZODIAC (2017, Sony), ICE SOLDIERS (2014, Sony), PENTHOUSE NORTH (2013, Michael Keaton, Michelle Monaghan) and SACRIFICE (2012, Cuba Gooding Jr., Christian Slater). Executive Producer credits include BACKCOUNTRY, WEIRDSVILLE, YOUNG PEOPLE FUCKING, and EVERYTHING'S GONE GREEN.

Michael served as Vice President of Acquisitions & Development at ThinkFilm and holds a BA with Distinction in Cultural Studies from McGill University in Montreal, as well as a Post-Graduate Certificate with Highest Distinction in Corporate Communications from Seneca College in Toronto.

Michael is also a partner in North American distribution company levelFILM, involved in areas including acquisitions, development and business affairs. Now in its eighth year with more than 400 films on its roster, some of level's recent films include THE ASSISTANT, THE DISSIDENT, THE KID DETECTIVE, THE BODY REMEMBERS WHEN THE WORLD BROKE OPEN and THE PEANUT BUTTER FALCON.



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