

Sabbatical Pictures

Presents

The Beacon

Produced by Sally Helppie
Written and Directed by Michael Stokes

98 Minutes
Language: English
Genre: Supernatural, Horror, Suspense, Mystery
Rated R

THE BEACON

A woman becomes obsessed with helping the ghost of a small boy pass on in the hope that he can carry a message to her own dead son.

Written and Directed by
MICHAEL STOKES

Produced by
SALLY HELPPIE

Co-Producer
KATHLEEN SHIPLEY

Director of Photography
DON REDDY

Production Designer
ERIC WHITNEY

Editor
STEPHEN LOVEJOY

Composer
JOHN MAJKUT

Special Effects Make-Up Designed by
VINCENT GUASTINI

CAST

TERI POLO..... Bryn Shaw
DAVID REES SNELL..... Paul Shaw
ELAINE HENDRIX..... Vanessa Carver
MICHAEL IRONSIDE..... Lt. Ned Hutton
KEN HOWARD..... Officer Bobby Ford
NICK SOWELL..... Will Tyler
MARNETTE PATTERSON..... Christina Wade
JONNY CRUZ..... Simon Valencia
KELLI DAWN HANCOCK..... Officer Kit Karasic
EVERETT SIFUENTES..... Mr. Butters
KEVIN SCOTT KEATING..... James Nash

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THE BEACON

(Synopsis)

While trying to get their lives back on track after the disappearance and presumed drowning of their four year old son, Bryn and Paul Shaw move to the charming old Beacon Apartments. Friendly neighbors and a kick start to Paul's teaching career help smooth the transition. The only sore spot for Bryn is her argument with the building's resident diva, Vanessa Carver, a beautiful, once-successful actress who still behaves as if she were a sought-after star.

Bryn begins seeing a mysterious little boy skulking around the building. She suspects he might be the child from the apartment down the hall and is shocked to discover that the boy actually died in a fall down the Beacon's elevator shaft while trying to escape his abusive father.

Bryn channels the grief of her own loss into discovering the details of the boy's death and his reason for haunting the Beacon. She hopes that freeing the boy will allow him to carry a message to her son. As her quest begins to consume her, she fails to notice how her marriage is beginning to fray. The beautiful Vanessa has set her sights on Paul.

Enlisting the help of an eccentric young professor who believes in the paranormal, Bryn comes up with a plan to save the boy's spirit... only to discover there is another malevolent entity stalking the halls of the Beacon -- one that doesn't want the boy set free.

MICHAEL STOKES

Writer-Director

Michael Stokes is perhaps the only Humanitas Prize-winning screenwriter to also have a movie heralded by Fangoria Magazine as a “must-see gem”.

Stokes alternates between writing animated shows for children and penning feature-length thrillers and chillers like SABOTAGE, JUNGLEGROUND, BRAM STOKER’S SHADOWBUILDER (the Fango fave), and EXIT SPEED which he also produced. EXIT SPEED is a modern day western in which bus passengers traveling across Texas are set upon by “bandits” in the form of meth-addicted bikers. It stars Fred Ward, Desmond Harrington and Lea Thompson.

Stokes’s two most recent scripts are in preproduction. NIGHTFALL, a violent vampire flick (that restores bloodsuckers to their rightful place atop the predatory food chain), is being made by Frank Mancuso Jr., the producer of SPECIES and the Robert DeNiro spy movie RONIN. Stokes’s neo-noir detective story VERDIGRIS about corruption in post-Katrina New Orleans is being produced by Tule River, producers of the Sundance feature, DOWNLOADING NANCY.

Stokes also writes children’s animation. In 2006 he was awarded a Humanitas Prize (which honors stories that “affirm the human person, probe the meaning of life, and enlighten the use of human freedom”) for an episode of MISS SPIDER’S SUNNY PATCH FRIENDS. In 2005, he was a nominee for a Writer’s Guild of Canada Award for another episode of MISS SPIDER called “The Marin Rose” (named after the youngest of his five stepchildren).

Stokes is the story editor and lead writer for the new BABAR television series based on the beloved books. He has written for ROLIE POLIE OLIE, TOTALLY SPIES and TODDWORLD. He was a writer and story editor for the animated adventure JANE AND THE DRAGON which was co-produced by Peter Jackson’s WETA Studios, the digital wizards behind LORD OF THE RINGS. Stokes was also part of a team of writers hired by Lucasfilms to break stories for CLONE WARS.

In 2008, Stokes wrote and made his directorial debut with THE BEACON. Like all good ghost stories, THE BEACON is, at heart, a mystery. As the heroine, Bryn Shaw, unravels the circumstances surrounding the death of a small boy, Stokes provides the audience clues to the unraveling state of Bryn’s marriage. Guilt and ghosts make a potent and frightening combination. THE BEACON stars Teri Polo, David Rees Snell, Elaine Hendrix, Ken Howard, and genre icon Michael Ironside.

SALLY HELPPIE

Producer

Sally Helppie is a Founder and President of the Texas-based motion picture production company Sabbatical Pictures. In its first two years, Sabbatical Pictures has financed and produced two feature films.

A graduate of the UCLA School of Law, Sally practices Entertainment Law and commercial litigation even as she produces character-driven genre films like the action-packed thriller EXIT SPEED and the supernatural chiller THE BEACON.

Sally is a hands-on producer, intimately involved in all phases of development, pre-production, production, post-production and distribution. She is Of Counsel and heads the Entertainment Law section of the Dallas law firm Tipton Jones, where she has handled the legal work for several big-budget Hollywood-based films. In addition, she represents Texas-based financiers, producers, writers and actors.

In addition to Entertainment law, Sally is a seasoned trial attorney, whose practice encompasses all aspects of commercial trials and appeals. She has been named a Texas Super Lawyer for three years and has been recognized as one of the top business litigators in the United States. She is a member of the Entertainment and Litigation sections of the State Bar of Texas and the Dallas Bar Association, and currently serves as Chair of the Business Litigation Section of the Dallas Bar.



TERI POLO as Bryn Shaw

Teri Polo is well-known as the bride, Pam Byrne, from *MEET THE PARENTS* (for which she was nominated for a Blockbuster Entertainment Award as favorite female-newcomer) and *MEET THE FOCKERS*. She is set to reprise her role in *LITTLE FOCKERS* and stars in Joe Dante's new horror feature, *THE HOLE*.

A few of her many other movie roles include *BEYOND BORDERS* with Angelina Jolie and Clive Owen, *DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE* with John Travolta and Vince Vaughn, *THE UNSAID* with Andy Garcia and Linda Cardellini, *THE ARRIVAL* with Charlie Sheen, *2:13*, *FULL OF IT*, *MYSTERY DATE* and *THE HOUSE OF THE SPIRITS*.

Teri starred for two seasons as Helen Santos on *THE WEST WING* (for which she was nominated for a SAG acting award) and has appeared in numerous television shows, including *GHOST WHISPERER*, *LAW & ORDER: SVU*, *THE WEDDING BELLS*, *NUMB3RS*, *LEGACY OF FEAR*, *THE PRACTICE*, and *I'M WITH HER*.

She also starred in CBS's 2009 drama about an elite FBI team, *WASHINGTON FIELD*, and currently appears in NBC's new series, *STORM*, opposite Treat Williams.

Teri studied ballet for 12 years -- and her dancer's body is evident in her ever popular Playboy spread.



DAVID REES SNELL as Paul Shaw

David is probably best known for his seven seasons as stalwart Detective Ronnie Gardocki on FX's ground-breaking, critically acclaimed drama, *THE SHIELD*. He had a recurring role in *THE UNIT* and has appeared in CBS's *MONDAY AFTER THE MIRACLE*, Hallmark's *DESOLATION CANYON* with Stacy Keach and Patrick Duffy, TNT's *HAWTHORNE* and HBO's *TRUMAN*.

David's films include Ang Lee's *RIDE WITH THE DEVIL* and the 2008-released *EXIT SPEED* with Lea Thompson and Fred Ward....not to mention a few notorious and award-winning short films.

David has extensive experience on stage, appearing in dozens of professional productions. He has also lent his voice to a number of high profile action videogames.

David was born and raised in Wichita, Kansas and earned a B.A. in Theatre and Media Arts from the University of Kansas.



ELAINE HENDRIX as Vanessa Carver

Elaine has starred in such feature films as *THE PARENT TRAP* with Lindsey Lohan, Dennis Quaid and Natasha Richardson, Disney's *INSPECTOR GADGET 2*, *SUPERSTAR* with Will Farrell and Molly Shannon, and *ROMY & MICHELE'S HIGH SCHOOL REUNION* with Mira Sorvino and Lisa Kudrow. She also has appeared in *HERE ON EARTH* with Chris Klein and Josh Hartnett, *MOLLY* with Aaron Eckhart and Elisabeth Shue, and several popular indie films such as *WHAT THE BLEEP DO WE KNOW?!*, *BAM BAM AND CELESTE*, *THE DUKES*, *ROCK SLYDE*, and *DEAR LEMON LIMA*.

Some of her television credits include shows like *CSI: CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION*, *CSI: MIAMI*, *GHOST WHISPERER*, *E.R.*, *CRIMINAL MINDS* and *FRIENDS*. She has had recurring roles on *PRIVILEGED*, *THE MIDDLEMAN*, and *JOAN OF ARCADIA*. Elaine also has appeared in Movies of the Week *JANE DOE: EYE OF THE BEHOLDER* and *MR. ST. NICK*.

In her spare time, Elaine writes and records custom theme songs and involves herself in political issues. In fact, two of her songs can be heard in *THE BEACON*. Her greatest passion is animal activism - working with several prestigious organizations across the country such as In Defense of Animals, The Humane Society of the United States, and Best Friends Sanctuary.

All of this is just the tip of the iceberg. It's no wonder, then, that legendary film critic Roger Ebert said, "She earns her stripes."

Originally hailing from the Smokey Mountains of Tennessee, Elaine has particular affinities for vanilla ice cream, *STAR WARS*, Elvis, and Target, and believes it is important to maintain a healthy balance of work, play, spirituality and shopping.



MICHAEL IRONSIDE as Officer Ned Hutton

A seasoned character actor with a devoted cult following, Michael Ironside has starred in more than 120 feature films. Born in Canada, he studied at the Ontario College of Art and Canadian National Film Board.

After working on numerous Canadian film and television productions, both in front of and behind the camera, Ironside came to the forefront in David Cronenberg's sci-fi hit *SCANNERS*, garnering a Genie Award for Best Supporting Actor. This success was followed by leading roles in *TOP GUN* with Tom Cruise and *TOTAL RECALL* with Arnold Schwarzenegger. He recently reunited with director McG and Christian Bale in *TERMINATOR: SALVATION*. Michael's numerous other films include *STARSHIP TROOPERS*, *THE PERFECT STORM*, *CRIME AND PUNISHMENT IN SUBURBIA*, *SURVEILLANCE*, *THE MACHINIST*, *THE OMEGA CODE*, *THE NEXT KARATE KID* and *FREE WILLY*.

In 2002, Ironside starred as Bob Durrelle in the Canadian mini-series *THE LAST CHAPTER*, for which he received a Gemini Award nomination, and he recently reprised the role in *THE LAST CHAPTER II: THE WAR CONTINUES*. Aside from his regular appearances on the hit drama *E.R.*, he also starred in the series *NUREMBERG, V*, *SMALLVILLE*, and had a recurring role on the smash hit *DESPERATE HOUSEWIVES*.

Michael has many upcoming projects, including the lead role in the sci-fi series *ICE PLANET*.



KEN HOWARD as Officer Bobby Ford

Ken is a talented actor of stage and screen, winning both Tony and Emmy awards. With a career spanning several decades, he has delighted television audiences as world-wise retired Detective Lieutenant Max Cavanaugh on NBC's *CROSSING JORDAN*, as Garrett Boydston on *DYNASTY* and *THE COLBYS*, as Adam Bonner on *ADAM'S RIB*, as Dave Barrett in *THE MANHUNTERS*, as Jack Long in *IT'S NOT EASY*, as George Andrews on *MELROSE PLACE*, and as Joe Samuels on *CANE*. He recently appeared

opposite Drew Barrymore and Jessica Lange in HBO's GREY GARDENS. But Ken is perhaps best known for his performance as the street-savvy teacher Ken Reeves in the classic drama THE WHITE SHADOW.

Other TV credits include CURB YOUR ENTHUSIASM, THE PRACTICE, ARLI\$\$, THE WEST WING, PERFECT MURDER, PERFECT TOWN, THE THORN BIRDS, RAGE OF ANGELS, OP CENTER, MASTERGATE, HE'S NOT YOUR SON, THE COUNTRY GIRLS, MURDER IN NEW HAMPSHIRE and MEMORIES OF MIDNIGHT.

Some of Ken's movie roles are MICHAEL CLAYTON for Warner Bros. starring George Clooney, and RAMBO opposite Sylvester Stallone. He also has appeared in SUCH GOOD FRIENDS, CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER, THE NET, AT FIRST SIGHT, IN HER SHOES and DREAMER.

Ken originated the role of Thomas Jefferson on Broadway in the Tony-winning musical 1776. Other Broadway roles include PROMISES, PROMISES, SEESAW, THE NORMAN CONQUESTS, 1600 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, and CHILD'S PLAY, for which he won the coveted Tony award. He recently earned rave reviews from his tour de force performance in the One Man Show, ACCORDING TO TIP.

Ken won an Emmy for his on-camera narration of "Facts for Boys: The Body Human." His voice can be heard on more than 30 best-selling books on tape.



NICK SOWELL as Will Tyler

Nick Sowell is a Dallas native and versatile actor, appearing in such varied roles as a cowboy, a slacker, and a rising young professional. He shines as the charming Will Tyler in THE BEACON. He recently performed the role of Josh Posler in MIDDLE MEN starring Luke Wilson, Giovanni Ribisi and James Caan. Nick also co-starred as Duke in EXIT SPEED starring Lea Thompson, Fred Ward and Desmond Harrington. He appeared in SPIRAL alongside Joel David Moore, Amber Tamblyn and Zachary Levi. Other film roles include THE DEVIL WEARS SPURS and REWARD.

Nick is a graduate of the Los Angeles Film School, which he attended after a stint at Lubbock Christian University in Texas. He is an avid horseback rider and enjoys golfing, fishing and skeet shooting.



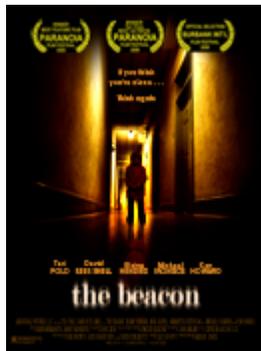
MARNETTE PATTERSON as Christina Wade

Marnette started her acting career as a child, including voicing Lucy Van Pelt in “It’s Spring Training, Charlie Brown” and “It’s Christmastime Again, Charlie Brown.” Over the years, she has appeared in numerous television shows, such as CHARMED, BOY MEETS WORLD, THIRD ROCK FROM THE SUN, TOUCHED BY AN ANGEL, SUPERNATURAL, GROUNDED FOR LIFE, and CSI: LAS VEGAS. She recently appeared in STARSHIP TROOPERS 3: THE MARAUDER and THE BEAUTIFUL ORDINARY.

Marnette’s hobbies include singing, horseback riding, kickboxing and cooking.



2009 PARANOIA FEST OFFICIAL AWARD WINNERS



BEST FEATURE FILM:

“The Beacon” Directed by Michael Stokes



BEST ACTRESS:

“The Beacon” Directed by Michael Stokes



I got to see **The Beacon**, about a couple who recently lost their young son. They move to the Beacon Apartments where the wife is haunted by a little boy about the same age as her lost son. Is this apparition due to her feelings of guilt over her lost son and all in her head or is there something more sinister in the Beacon Apartments? This was a taut thriller with a really great ending! It reminded me a bit of a mix of 70's cult film **The Sentinel**, Roman Polanski's **The Tenant** as well as some J-Horror like **Dark Water** thrown in for good measure. It won the top prize at Paranoia with good reason!



You guys remember a little while back when I gave you some info on the apartment building chiller called **THE BEACON** from writer/director Michael Stokes? Let me jog your memory: it stars MILF-y hottie Teri Polo (I'm sure you'd like to *Focker*). Well, even if you still don't quite recall the flick, I'm betting you're going to be hearing a lot more of it soon. Especially now, as the new poster states up top, that **THE BEACON** is an award-winning film. That's right, it just recently picked up the Best Feature Film prize at the first Paranoia Film Festival, as well as Best Actress for lead Teri Polo. Not bad at all! Treat yourself to a rehash of the plot:

Bryn and Paul Shaw, who are trying to put their life back together following the death of their son. After they move into the Beacon Apartments, Bryn starts experiencing visions of a little boy who died there, and comes to believe that freeing his spirit will allow her to contact her own dead son through him.

That may sound a tad generic like a handful of previous PG-13 efforts at first, *however* I do believe that this bad boy will be rated R which totally opens up the "apartment door" to way more intense possibilities. So bring this **BEACON** on!

In addition to Ms. Polo (who you can see below in a pic from the flick), the rest of the cast includes bad-ass Michael Ironside, David Rees Snell, Elaine Hendrix, Ken Howard, Kevin Scott Keating, and Michael Urie. **BEACON's** production company, Sabbatical Pictures, is currently fielding distribution offers.





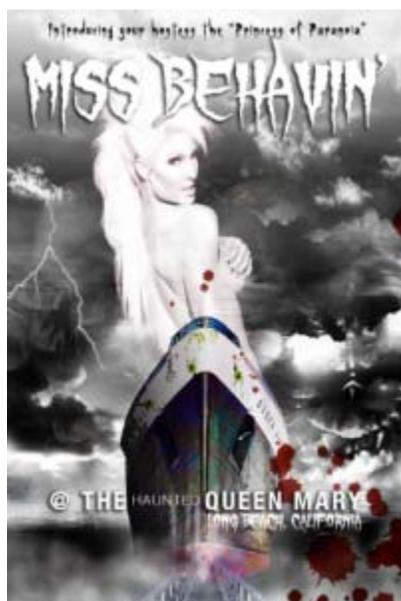
A solid schedule of independent horror features will screen at the first annual Paranoia Horror Film Festival, running Friday-Sunday, March 13-15. Hosted by Miss Behavin', the "Princess of Paranoia," the event takes place aboard the Queen Mary in Long Beach, CA.



Among the films to be shown are such new and promising chillers as Michael Stokes' *THE BEACON* (pictured), Jason Stephens' *NECROSIS*, Robbie Bryan's *IMURDERS* and Joshua Butler's *VLOG*. Also terrorizing the Paranoia Fest's screens are recent releases like Jack Messitt's superior *MIDNIGHT MOVIE*, Josh Eisenstadt's *DARK REEL*, Harry Basil's *FINGERPRINTS* and *SOUL'S MIDNIGHT* and David A. Prior's *ZOMBIE WARS*, along with midnight presentations of the original *FRIDAY THE 13TH* and *EVIL DEAD II*. Christopher P. Garetano's documentary *HORROR BUSINESS* is also in the lineup, and scary shorts will be in abundance as well, both before the features and in blocks. Among them are the Viscera Film Festival, a collection of minimovies created entirely by women and overseen by Fango 2009 Spookmodel Shannon Lark, the much-praised likes of Richard Gale's *CRITICIZED*, Ryan Spindell's *KIRKSDALE* and Paul Campion's *EEL GIRL* and Shalena Oxley's wonderfully titled *OPENING NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD*.

In addition, the Paranoia Fest will present an award ceremony and after-party the night of the 15th. For ticket info, trailers for the flicks and more details, check out the festival's official site.

2009 Paranoia Horror Fest Awards Announced



There's no better way to end a weekend of frightful movies with friends aboard the famous Queen Mary than with a drink in one hand and a **Paranoia Award** in the other.

The first annual **Paranoia Horror Film Festival** wrapped this past Sunday night in the Queen Mary Observation Bar where the gorgeous Miss Behavin', the "Princess of Paranoia", announced the 2009 Paranoia Awards.

Cheers and prizes were abundant as the winners (below) for each competitive category were announced.

Best Music Video: *The Beauty* directed by Luca Vecchi

Best Trailer: *Blood Bunny* directed by Molly Madfis

Best Screenplay: *Devil's Playground* written by Ryan Gilmore

Best Special FX: *Lucifer* directed by Ray Griggs

Best Actor: Armand Assante for *Soul's Midnight*

Best Actress: Teri Polo for *The Beacon*

Best Short Film: *Criticized* directed by Richard Gale

Best Film: *The Beacon* directed by Michael Stokes