



Surrogate

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY **JEREMY HERSH**2020 / 93 MIN / USA / ENGLISH / DRAMA

PUBLICITY:



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Logline

Jess is thrilled to be the surrogate for her best friend and his husband, but when a prenatal test comes back positive, it creates a moral dilemma that threatens their friendship.

Synopsis

Jess Harris (Jasmine Batchelor, "The Good Fight"), a 29 year old web designer for a nonprofit in Brooklyn, is ecstatic to be the surrogate and egg-donor for her best friend Josh (Chris Perfetti, "Looking") and his husband Aaron (Sullivan Jones, *Slave Play*). Twelve weeks into the pregnancy, a prenatal test comes back with unexpected results that pose a moral dilemma. As they all consider the best course of action, the relationship between the three friends is put to the test.

Director's Statement

I came of age being told that as a queer person, I was entitled to the same rights as straight people, including having biological children if I wanted to. I set out to write a film about a relationship between queer people and their chosen family who are confronted with the same types of difficult questions (ethical and otherwise) that all potential parents have to answer, questions that are becoming increasingly complicated due to recent advances in prenatal testing technology. I don't have the answers to these questions, or a particular message I set out to convey, but I'm interested in the various points of view and conversations these questions provoke.

I make movies partly as a way of investigating my own blind spots, in order to hopefully identify them and learn from them. Like so many among us, the characters in *The Surrogate* pride themselves on being open-minded progressives who talk openly and freely about everything. The conflict in the film arises when they're finally confronted with something they don't know how to talk about. Ultimately, the characters have to confront the gap between ideals and practical realities.

Cast and Crew Biographies

JEREMY HERSH (Writer / Director) is a filmmaker based in New York. His undergraduate thesis film *Natives* premiered at SXSW in 2013. In 2015, his short *Actresses* screened at Sundance, SXSW, BamCinemaFest, and The New Orleans Film Festival, where it won the audience award for narrative short. *Actresses* was included on David Ehrlich's list of "5 Sundance Shorts That Knocked Us Out" in Time Out New York. *The Surrogate* is his first feature.

JASMINE BATCHELOR ("Jess" / Associate Producer) is from Philadelphia, PA and Atlanta, Georgia. After discovering a love for acting in high school, Jasmine went on to study acting at Wright State University and The Juilliard School. Recent television credits include "New Amsterdam," "NCIS: New Orleans," "The Good Fight," "The Affair," "Law & Order: SVU" and "Miss 2059." In addition to film and television, Jasmine's recent theater credits include projects at Manhattan Theatre Club, The Playwrights Realm, The Public Theater, Two River Theater, and Baltimore Center Stage. "Batchelor, whose expressive face recalls the oft-doomed heroines played by Lillian Gish, turns in an Isabella for the ages."-- Jose Solís, New York Times review of MEASURE FOR MEASURE at the Public Theater, December 2019

CHRIS PERFETTI ("Josh") was last seen starring in Halley Feiffer's *Moscow x6* at MCC Theatre Off-Broadway under the direction of Trip Cullman and will next be seen on the CW series "In The Dark" and Netflix's "Bonding". Chris will also be seen supporting roles in the features *The Virtuoso* opposite Anson Mount and Anthony Hopkins and *Minyan* with Ron Rifkin. On television, Perfetti most recently recurred on the FX series "What We Do in the Shadows." He was a series regular on the NBC series "Crossbones" with John Malkovich and on Stephen Falk's "Next Caller." He's had memorable recurring arcs on HBO's "The Night Of" and "Looking," "Gotham" and "Bull". Stage credits include *The Low Road* at the Public Theater; the revival of John Guare's *Six Degrees of Separation* with Allison Janney; Brandon Jacob-Jenkins' play *Everybody* Off-Broadway at the Signature Theater; Roundabout Theater Company's Broadway production of *Picnic* under the direction of Sam Gold; *The Tempest* at the Delacorte Theater for Shakespeare in the Park; *The Tutors* (Second Stage; Tommy Kail, dir.); *Cloud Nine* (Atlantic Theater Company; dir. James MacDonald) and his New York debut in *Sons of the Prophet* (for which he was the recipient of a Theater World Award).

SULLIVAN JONES ("Aaron") was a series regular in the Hulu limited series "The Looming Tower" and has made appearances in "Parks and Recreation," "The Blacklist," "The Good Fight," "Blue Bloods," "House of Cards," "Wu-Tang: American Saga," and "The Politician." This year, Sullivan can be seen in A24's upcoming horror movie *False Positive*, starring Ilana Glazer, as well as the Netflix limited series, "Halston," starring Ewan McGregor. On stage, Sullivan has worked in Off-Broadway and Regional theaters throughout the country, and most recently made his Broadway debut in the critically lauded production of *Slave Play* at the John Golden Theater. Sullivan studied Theater at Brown University and the UCLA School of Theater. He is a recipient of the Princess Grace Award for Theater.

BROOKE BLOOM ("Bridget"): Selected film and TV: the Oscar-winning *Marriage Story*, *Minyan* (Berlinale 2020), *She's Lost Control* (Independent Spirit Award nomination for Best First Feature), "The Sinner," Amazon's "Homecoming." Obie Award for Clare Barron's *You Got Older*.

JULIE CHRISTEAS (**Producer**) is the founder and CEO of Tandem Pictures, since 2010. Her recent films include, *The Surrogate* (SXSW 2020) and *Black Bear* (Sundance 2020) starring Aubrey Plaza, Christopher Abbott and Sarah Gadon. She also executive produced the cult horror favorite *The Eyes of My Mother* (Sundance 2016/Magnet Releasing), *Monogamy* (Best NY Narrative, Tribeca Film Festival 2010), the feature doc *Dukale's Dream* starring Hugh Jackman, and *Ghost Team* starring Jon Heder, David Krumholtz, Justin Long, Amy Sedaris and Melonie Diaz. Previously she produced *Blood Stripe* (Jury Prize for Best Narrative Film, LA Film Festival 2016), *Wildlike* starring Bruce Greenwood and Brian Geraghty (HIFF), and *The Sleepwalker* starring Christopher Abbott and Brady Corbet (Sundance 2014/IFC). Julie also produces original short-form content for some of the biggest brands in the world -- Amazon, Chase Bank, Ford Motors, Netflix, Cadillac and many more. Before Tandem, Julie was EVP across production and development at Renart Films.

JONNY BLITSTEIN (Producer) is the COO and Partner at Tandem Pictures. He produced the films *The Surrogate* (SXSW 2020), *Black Bear* (Sundance 2020) starring Aubrey Plaza, Christopher Abbott and Sarah Gadon, both films made under strict green-production standards. Prior to Tandem he worked at Sony and Disney, creating some of the first Snapchat Brand content programs, as well as Instagram and YouTube campaigns for Sprint, P&G, Covergirl, Walmart and more. At Oracle, he helped kick off Marvel Studios' fan-loyalty program Marvel Insider. His first feature *Let Them Chirp Awhile* (2006) was distributed by Netflix. He began his career in 2005, marketing indies for Digitas, including Park Chan Wook's *Old Boy*, and Noah Baumbach's *The Squid and the Whale*.

TAYLOR HESS (**Producer**) is a filmmaker and journalist based in Brooklyn. She produced and directed the award-winning ESPN 30 for 30 documentary *Mack Wrestles* (SXSW 2019), wrote and directed two episodes Vox Media's *Explained* (Netflix), and has worked at Part2 Pictures, Alex Gibney's Jigsaw Productions, The Independent Filmmaker Project (IFP), and Scott Rudin Productions. Taylor is a graduate from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism.

MIA CIOFFI HENRY (Cinematographer) shot two projects premiering at SXSW 2020: Jeremy Hersh's feature *The Surrogate* and Kati Skelton's Adult Swim pilot "Lusty Crest." Shorts include *Moving* (New York Film Festival 2019), *Cheer Up Baby* (Sundance 2018), and *Superior* (Sundance & Berlinale 2015). Henry has recently teamed up with longtime collaborator, director Erin Vassilopoulous, to adapt *Superior* into a feature length film, which is now in post. Assistant Arts Professor of Cinematography and Head of 1st Year Studies for Graduate Film and Television at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.

Credits

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY: GAFFER: Taylor Merriman

Jeremy Hersh KEY GRIP: Yasmeen Jawhar

KEY GRIP: Sam Zhang

PRODUCED BY: ADDITIONAL GRIP: Mark Solomon

Julie Christeas

Jonny Blitstein

Taylor Hess

ART DIRECTOR: Natalie Eakin
SET DECORATOR: Desiree Kong

Jeremy Hersh

LEADMAN: Travis Hall

SET DRESSER: Adam McNulty

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: **2ND UNIT ART DIRECTOR**: Gabriella

David Chan Moses

Sam Bathrick

Adam Barton ASSISTANT COSTUME DESIGNER:

Alex Cullen Kimberly Ware

Ben Wiessner ASSISTANT COSTUME DESIGNER:

Jim Cummings Aliana Galan

Kenneth Filmer

Tony Gapastione PRODUCTION SOUND: Vera Quispe
ADDITIONAL SOUND MIXER: Jin An

CO-PRODUCERS: BOOM OPERATOR: Hector Delgadillo

Chloe Sabin ADDITIONAL BOOM OPERATOR: David

Lucas Woods Moragas

ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS: 1ST AD: Howie Shawki

Jasmine Batchelor

2ND AD: Kelly Fernandes

Erica Hart

ADDITIONAL 2ND 2ND AD: Sydney Stewart

Jeremy Popper

HAIR AND MAKEUP DESIGN: Andrea LINE PRODUCER: Roan Bibby
Saavedra

ADDITIONAL HAIR AND MAKEUP:

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Marisa Mircovich

Mia Cioffi Henry

SUPERVISING SOUND EDITOR:
EDITOR: Cecilia Delgado
Tommy Stang

DIALOGUE EDITOR: Ben Kruse

PRODUCTION DESIGNER: D'Vaughn Agu ADR RECORDIST: Ben Kruse

COSTUME DESIGNER: Lauren Tanchum

PRODUCTION ATTORNEY: George Rush

1ST AC: Alice Boucherie

FOLEY RECORDIST: Tommy Stang

RE-RECORDING MIXER: Tommy Stang

SOUND POST FACILITY: Dungeon Beach

2ND AC: Beth Fletcher SOUND POST FACILITY PRODUCER:

2ND AC: Xavier Venosta George Dellinger
2ND AC: Vincent Paté COLORIST: Jeff Sousa

B CAMERA: Alex Cullen

TITLES DESIGNED BY: Daniel Jaffe
GAFFER: Jacob Mallin

POSTER DESIGNED BY: Yen Tan

CAST COMMUNITY CENTER FACILITATORS:

Laurence Agenor

JESS: Jasmine Batchelor

JOSH: Chris Perfetti

Samantha Walter

AARON: Sullivan Jones

BRIDGET: Brooke Bloom

KAREN WEATHERSTON-HARRIS:

Dea Julien

Tonya Pinkins

NATE: Brandon Micheal Hall

SAMANTHA HARRIS: Eboni Booth

LEON: Leon Lewis

STEPHEN HARRIS: Leon Addison Brown

MARIA: Tiffany Villarin DAN: Erin Gann

SARAH FRIEDBERG: Catherine Curtin

SANDRA: Meg Gibson

GERTRUDE: Layla Khoshnoudi

RACHEL THE WAITRESS: Jennifer Damiano

NADINE THE MIDWIFE: Jennifer Lim

DIANA: Purva Bedi

RESTAURANT MANAGER: Hannah Cabell

DAVE: Wesley Taylor KEVIN: Hunter Canning PIERRE: William DeMeritt

CHELSEA: Tiffany Topol

RACHEL: Rachel Siegel PATRICK: Patrick Dreger

MALIK: Malik Jabaara MALIK'S MOM: Yamira Siu

KELLER: Keller Chung SOL: Sol Chung

LANGSTON: Noah George Phillips WESLEY: Wesley Haakenson EMILIO: Emilio Bernier

GEORGE: George Dreger

COMMUNITY CENTER PARENTS:

David Chung Gay Cioffi

Hilda Bernier

Kerstin Haakenson

CHILD AT COMMUNITY CENTER: Alma

Louise Cioffi Fernandez

RESTAURANT HOSTESS: Natasha Gilberti

RESTAURANT PATRONS:

Bailey Williams Matthew Puccini Hunter Wilson Samantha Daniel Dan Schechter

Nic Inglese

Jordie Lynn Everett

Daniel Jaffe

J. Taylor Arnold Lanie Zipoy Meryl Frick JJ Bozeman

Ani Simon-Kennedy Emily Steiker-Epstein

Sonya Goddy

Meagan Moscaritolo Jonathan Minard Kolbe Handal Selah Kreeger Amelia Courtney Lindsey Malinoski Sydney-Alexis Hall

Dhruvitkumar Talati Elliot Masters

Sophie Poole

Mariya Chulichkova

Jav Haves

Sabina Friedman-Seitz

Sophie Brooks Akillah Clarke

Isabel Sandoval

Antoine Jaeger Benjamin Pirog

Nicholas McCarthy Ariane Raymundo

CAFE PATRONS:

Victoria Pollack

Amelia Courtney

Kolbe Handal

Erin Sanger

Claudia Domo

John Scheibe

Emily Burnett

Ariane Raymundo

Kamal Brown

Elliot Masters

Morgan White

Devin Vega

Jordie Lynn Evertt

Foster Reisz

Tessa Stokes

YOGA CLASS ATTENDEES:

Aaron Hersh

Erin Ream

PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS:

Joe McMahon

Jeremy Falson

Ross Mayfield

Shak Hutchinson

OFFICE PRODUCTION ASSISTANT:

Jane Kharkover

CREATIVE CONSULTANTS:

Elisa Peebles

Kendra Mylnechuk

Sara Hersh

Featuring the artwork of Bill Rebholz

Excerpt of the podcast "The Lucky Few" courtesy of Heather Avis, Micha Boyett, Mercedes Lara, and Valerie Schlieder.

www.theluckyfewpodcast.com

MUSIC

"Everything Must Go" by Pat McCarthy. Written and performed by Eric J. Dejmek, Jake Menaged, James Reen, Louis Ramsay, Patrick E. McCarthy, and Patsy

"YWLGOML" by Outer Spaces. Written by Cara Beth Satalino, Produced by Cara Beth Satalino

and Chester Gwazda. Guitar and Vocals by Cara Beth Satalino. Keys, Bass Guitar by Chester Gwazda. Drums by Rob Dowler. Saxophone by Ryan Syrell. Recorded and Mixed by Chester Gwazda and Jared Paolini at Tempo House in Baltimore, MD. Mastered by Sarah Register. Courtesy of Western Vinyl.

"Come Back" by Frances Cone, written by Christina Cone, courtesy of Frances Cone

"A Man Falls II" by Noah Hutton

"Train" by Goodwolf, written and performed by Samuel Gedymin

"Both" Written and Performed by Kelly McFarling By arrangement with Terrorbird Media

"World Go Round" by Hannibal King

VERY SPECIAL THANKS

BRENDA ABBANDANDOLO CARL JACOBS FOUNDATION

KEVIN HAYDEN

JEREMY O. HARRIS

ANITA TANAY & STEPHEN HERSH

NOAH HUTTON

HEIDI JARK

BENNY KAUFFMAN

FRIEDA JACOBS & FRED KLEIN

RACHEL MCKEON & SAM GEDYMIN

REGINE POLENZ & JON LEWIS
SARAH PARKER
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DAVE COLEMAN
TAYLOR SHUNG
LOUISE CRAWFORD

ANTOINETTE TANAY

ANU VALIA

KERRY WARREN

SARA CROW

NIA DACOSTA

SAMMY DANE

MICHELLE WEINBERGER ANDREW & XAVIER VAN DEGNA

ANDREW ZITEK YEMANE DEMISSIE WILL DENNIS

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WILL DETLEFSEN
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MOLLY DILLON
RACHEL ADAMS
MEME'S DINER
BRAD AKIN
JOHN DREGER

ALFONSO'S AMANDA DRINKALL
BRETT ALLBRITTON DANELLE ELIAV
JESSICA ALMASY ALICE ELLIOTT
JOSH CHERTOFF & BEN ALTARESCU DAVID ERF

THOMAS EMMET ASHTON AMANDA FATEMI ANNABELLE ATTANASIO JASMINE FERRER

BABYDUDES KARI FIELDS

SUSAN BALDOMAR

JULIA BALES

THE GOOD BATCH

ZBIGNIEW BEDNARZ

SOMER BENSON

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PETER FOX

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PRANAV BHASIN

EFFIE'S BISCUITS

LIZ BLOCKER

A.J. BOND

JAMES GALLAGHER

JOSH BONZIE

ALEXA GEOVANOS

NICK BORENSTEIN

BREVEN WARREN & BREAKER

VALARIE FRANKLIN

DARYL FREIMARK

SUSAN FREIMARK

ALEXA GEOVANOS

TREY GERRALD

NATASHA GILIBERTI

BONNIE BREAUX

BROOKLYN BREWERY

SUSAN GOLOMB

NATASHA GILIBER

SUSAN GOLOMB

RUTH BRILLMAN THERESE 'TAG' GOULET
CLAIRE BROOKS CIARA ROSE GRIFFIN
SOPHIE BROOKS OLLI HAASKIVI
SIENA BROWN LAURA HEBERTON

SIENA BROWN

BETHANY JOY BURR

LUCAS HEDGES

KAT CANDLER

J. ANDRÉS CARDONA

FRANK'S BROADWAY CATERING

LUCAS HEDGES

CATRIN HEDSTROM

MAGGIE HELM

MEL HENRY

JUSTIN CHAN MARNIE ELLEN HERTZLER LILY'S CHOCOLATE KAREN & ROGER HESS

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JANET JAFFE

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DAN JANVEY ELAINE BONGARTEN MICKEL

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DANIEL AUKIN & EMILY JENKINS SAM MINK

JESSICA RINLAND

DARREN JOE

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JOAN VON OHLEN

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LORENZO LEGARDA LEVISTE OTWAY

SAM LIBOWSKY STACIE PASSON ALEX LIPSCHULTZ ED PEACOCK ANNIE PEARLMAN LISA SMITH LES PIERCE YUKO SOBRIN

JOE PIRROANDREW SOLOMONROBERT PLONSKIERCARL SONDROLCHARLES POEKELJAMES SORRELSALAN POWERDANIEL SPENCEKAT PRESCOTTTHE GREEN SPOT

BROOKLYN FIRE PROOF ALEXANDRA STERGIOU

KISHORI RAJAN MEGAN STERN

GAYLE RANKIN VAISHNAVI SUBRAMANI

KYLE RANSON-WALSH KING TAI

SCOTT RASHAP DEVIN & TIGERLILY TANCHUM

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CASEY ZENNER

LANIE ZIPOY

BRIAN ZUPAN

BILL SMITH EFFIE'S HOMEMADE

ETHAN WAYNE SMITH