

LOST HOLIDAY

Directed by: Michael and Thomas Matthews

Written by: Michael and Thomas Matthews

Starring: Kate Lyn Sheil, Thomas Matthews, Keith Poulson, William Jackson Harper, Ismenia Mendes, Tone Tank, Joshua Leonard, and Isiah Whitlock Jr.

Produced by: Michael and Thomas Matthews

Run Time: 75 minutes

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LostHolidayMovie/>

Logline: Home for the holidays with nothing to do, two old high school friends get in over their heads when they try to solve the kidnapping of a Washington DC socialite.

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SHORT SYNOPSIS

Margaret and Henry are back home in Washington DC for the holidays. At a Christmas party of old high school friends, Margaret discovers that her ex-boyfriend is now engaged. With her holiday mood ruined, Margaret and Henry ditch the party to go score some drugs. What starts as a night of debauchery evolves into a self-indulgent quest when the two friends become convinced that they are the only ones who can solve the kidnapping of a neighborhood socialite.

LONG SYNOPSIS

When we first see Margaret, she's at the most boring holiday party imaginable. Fortunately for the audience, she and her less-than-mature friends Henry and Samer find an excuse to leave almost immediately. It's only in flashback that we see what drew Margaret away wasn't exactly boredom but a brush with a disaster involving her ex, Mark, who is now engaged to be married. After a wild night of partying with a lively Brazilian drug dealer named Russian and a hangover that puts her on the brink of existential crisis, Margaret stumbles onto the case of a missing heiress with ties to Russian. In the end, her gumshoe antics put Margaret in the crosshairs of dangerous types, but also help her find a way to confront Mark about her feelings towards him and their futures.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Lost Holiday is a torn love letter to where we grew up.

The film was inspired by real-life individuals with whom we grew up and dilemmas they faced, though not in the same intersections you see in the film. The plot spun organically from endless conversations centered on the premise, "but what if these people we know ran into each other around Christmas and then..." What connected all the characters is the heroine's disillusionment, sometimes kind, sometimes harsh. Aspiring artists become crooks, nice boys become nasty teenagers, and old flames disappoint. It's like the dirty snow that the protagonist, Margaret, observes, "goes from beautiful to disgusting almost instantly, doesn't it?"

Disillusionment doesn't make Margaret cynical though. Instead these realizations reinforce convictions Margaret's has always had. While she seems at first to be a hedonist, we learn later she silently values the commitments of marriage and family. "Well, that's huge," she remarks about her ex's wedding engagement (who seems less-than-enthused). Even though there's still a flirtation between them, she dodges a very direct pass he makes at her. When she finds her personal antichrist, it's someone who sees family as a just cash cow to extort. By the film's conclusion though she grows to be more empathetic.

Other films have shown the anxieties of starting a nuclear family, but this one specifically is from the perspective of someone who is on the outside looking in. If marriage and parenthood were meaningless they wouldn't seem so intimidating from afar. When we wrote the first draft of the script, one of us had just graduated college, and the other was still in grad school, not yet married and without kids. Living in NYC like Margaret, we knew we were on a different life schedule than friends who lived elsewhere. But by the time we started production, Michael was married with two

kids and being away from them for four weeks made production a bittersweet experience that inspired creative choices to add feelings of loss and nostalgia to the images on screen. The playful working title, *Winter Break Mystery*, naturally evolved into the eventual one, *Lost Holiday*.

Thomas's relationship with his best friend, the inspiration for our film's heroine, had evolved as well. When we first started developing this crime fighting team, the parties were still going to the wee hours of the morning. By the time production started, however, Thomas had just seen her off on her honeymoon. Our love-letter to this duo's take on DC in winter, where time stood still, had therefore turned into one of "good-bye."

Last month, we had a private screening for the real-life Margaret at the post-production house in Brooklyn. 8 months pregnant with twins, she tearfully laughed, "I wanna go back!"

Real-life combines with genre.

The relationships in *Lost Holiday* are not ones we normally see in movies. Margaret is the alpha and Henry is her sidekick along for the ride. When she speaks, he has to listen. But when they find their groove, their voices sync almost in harmony. There's love between them but it isn't the romantic-comedy kind. It was important to us to make this distinction because injecting familiar tropes like, "the person you're looking for is really the one who's been there along," would have felt inauthentic to us.

At the same time, our appreciation for past movies was vital to making *Lost Holiday*. We're both drawn to and inspired by movies where the dialogue is so abundant it becomes part of the landscape. *Listen Up Phillip*, *Metropolitan*, *Frances Ha*, *2 days in Paris/New York*, to name a few. Cinema of course is a visual medium but watching people talk themselves into a corner, becoming their own worst enemy with their own words, can be very compelling to see on screen. We're also influenced by books and films where the opposite is true, where a hero's way with words is his or her best shield and weapon. That's certainly true of the detectives in the hard-boiled crime novels by Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler and the film adaptations that followed.

Margaret is not a lone wolf like Philip Marlowe or Sam Spade (she has Henry always along for the ride), but like those heroes, we learn about her moral code gradually. Behavior clarifies the motivations behind previous, seemingly reactive behavior. On the one hand she's driven by a desire to solve the case, the truth being it's own reward. On the other, we come to learn that she has an unspoken respect for loyalty.

The visual style of the film was meant to track the mindset of Margaret, someone who is vulnerable at times but who keeps moving forward, both physically and mentally. She became a sort of hero to us and we hope audiences feel a similar way by the end of the film. Whenever camera movement felt motivated, we made a best effort to include it. Zooms, handheld, lateral motion, and push-ins. Some scenes required a shot lists but in others we relied on the blocking rehearsal, especially Margaret's eye line, to make sure the camera supported the performance and reflected what might be going on behind those eyes.

The setting was key.

We set the film in the DC area, rather than NY or LA, because the mystery felt very specific to the side of Washington the two of us are most familiar with.

The city is obviously known for the federal government, but there are almost infinite cultures there that seem distant from Capital Hill and the Pentagon. Early on in developing the story, using a regional headline grabber as a dramatic hook made perfect sense to us. Our mother was an investigative reporter in local news (that's her on the TV at the bar in the film). It was an opportunity to show how this area is like many other parts of America but has it's own unique flavors.

Specifically, we wanted to explore the lifestyles in the suburbs that hover around the city. DC is very cinematic because of its baroque urban downtown planning, but once you leave the monuments and federal sector, the look is much closer to *The Americans*, a mix of interstate highway, one residential community after another, and almost ubiquitous forest. You can hear at least a dozen languages at a time at the county Department of Motor Vehicles, not from diplomats but from first-generation immigrants. The large public high schools in our native Montgomery County are incredible—kids who live in Section 8 housing share classes with kids whose parents are CEO's of infamous companies like Lockheed Martin. It's not better or worse than other suburbs. It's just unique. Class-lines don't fracture but they do intersect. When poor rich boy Sammer says he met Russian, a Russian-Brazilian drug-dealer, in "class," it makes sense. As with Henry and Margaret's uncommon platonic friendship, we hope *Lost Holiday* makes viewers see America's capital in a new light.

PRODUCTION NOTES

We shot *Lost Holiday* in 15 days in the DC area with a handful of incredibly dedicated multi-taskers and the help of a ton of small businesses. It ended up turning into a real community project.

Every morning throughout the shoot, Thomas would pick up the lead actress, Kate Lyn Sheil, in that sputtering '92 VW and they'd drive through the city while talking through the script. On days off, the cast and crew went to the Air and Space Museum, the National Gallery of Art, and National Mall, because they're all free. The UPM on the film, Josh Foster, who was like the dad of the crew, would often walk around the set late at night and look around with an innocent gleam in his eye like he was in the parallel universe of the movie, which is basically a director's dream come true.

One of the more challenging parts of the creative process for us was finding the balance between action and information. The dialogue and what you see in film was shot 99.9 percent as written, but the editing room allowed for flexibility in chronology so we could move to the action sooner and delay explanations. We filmed out of order on a tight 15 day schedule, but we had the advantage of a shooting script that included almost constant narration by an all-knowing observer. During rehearsals and takes, one of us would read aloud that narration. What this approach did was allow a very deliberate understanding by the cast of thoughts. Rehearsals led by Thomas also clarified for the cast what was happening in each scene. This articulation enabled us to shoot relatively few takes and ration precious film, as well as maximize our page count every day. We dispensed with the narration in post and added the voice of Emily Mortimer as the NPR commentator to elevate the subtext. Editing thus became an additional sort of adaptation.

We had a dream cast on this film. Thomas knew Allison Twardziak, CSA, from college and he and Michael both love the films she's cast. Michael used to show her debut, one of Kate's first shorts, *Knifepoint*, to students applying to Tisch graduate film as part of the tour when he was a student. Kate's one-of-a-kind Sun Belt noir, *Sun Don't Shine*, was also an influence. We sent the script over to Kate's team and were over the moon when she wanted to meet. After searching far and wide for a "Sam," Kate recommended Keith Poulson. Michael had worked with Tone Tank and Isiah Whitlock Jr. on *Newlyweeds*. Thomas knew Emily Mortimer from working on *The Newsroom*. Will Harper was a friend of a friend who came down for two full days and immediately felt like family. Josh Leonard, husband of Thomas's friend and *Newsroom* co-star Alison Pill, brought pathos and sympathy to Daryl, a villain you're not sure if you should run from or just hug and whisper, "It's going to be okay."

For the soundtrack, we tried on a lot of different kinds of music to emulate DC in winter. It started with a chamber string piece, *Mars 22*, by guitarist and composer James Iha. We were also lucky to work with Kevin Bendes, Scott Thorough, Andrea Perdue as well as centuries-old classical and medieval music to animate the rest of the film. We needed it to be fanciful, cold and irresponsible at the same time. (*And if it ain't baroque, don't fix it.*)

We were fortunate enough to shoot on Super 16mm film under the expert eye of DP Donovan Sell, with tremendous support from Anne Hubbell at **Kodak Film**, Mike Dellatore and Mary Mcgee at **Panavision**. We also got some awesome locations donated by Herbert Niles at the DC Film office and Jack Gerbes at the MD film office. The rest of the places we shot at were courtesy of local businesses, like **Vamoose Bus**, **Atomic Billiards**, **Hank Dietles**, **Talbert's Wine and Liquor**, and **Airbnb**. Our wardrobe was donated by **Tuckernuck Clothing**. DC native production designer Paige Mitchell recreated Christmas in March and pulled magic tricks like making an owl and a phone booth appear in the woods. The owl incidentally is Kate's favorite shot in the film. Our post was done in collaboration with the alchemists at Nice Dissolve and Nocturnal Sound, as well as graphic designer Phil Sportel.

We hope you enjoy getting lost in the world of the film that this team made possible.

CAST & CREW BIOS

Michael & Thomas Matthews (Directors)



Thomas and Michael are brothers who grew up in our nation's capital. This is their directorial debut. Michael attended NYU's Graduate Film program. He previously produced *NEWLYWEEDS*, winner of the 2014 Film Independent Someone to Watch Award. Thomas's credits include 3 seasons of HBO's "The Newsroom", *AMERICAN HUSTLE*, and *JOY*. He is also a founding member of The Attic Theater Company.

Kate Lyn Sheil ("Margaret")



Kate Lyn Sheil went to NYU Tisch School of Drama. Other Credits include: *SUN DON'T SHINE*, *KATE PLAYS CHRISTINE*, *YOU'RE NEXT*, *SILVER BULLETS*, *BRIGSBY BEAR*, *VHS*, *THE SACRAMENT* and *BUSTER'S MAL HEART*. *The Sound of Silence*, is currently premiering at Sundance.

William Jackson Harper ("Mark")



William Jackson Harper stars as Chidi on NBC's comedy "The Good Place."

Born in Dallas, Harper has an extensive background in theater, with a Broadway role in "All The Way." Notable off-Broadway appearances include "A Family for All Occasions" at the Labyrinth, "Modern Terrorism" at Second Stage, "The Total Bent," "Titus Andronicus" and "Measure for Measure" at the Public, "Placebo" and "A Cool Dip in the Barren Saharan Crick" at Playwrights Horizons, and "Queens Boulevard" and "Paradise Park" at the Signature. He also has numerous regional theater credits, including "Ruined," "Hamlet," "Much Ado About Nothing" and "Romeo and Juliet."

On the TV side, Harper has made guest appearances on "30 Rock," "The Blacklist," "Law & Order," "Law & Order: Criminal Intent," Hulu's "Deadbeat," "High Maintenance," "Unforgettable" and the children's series "The Electric Company." His credits also include the telefilms "The Breaks" and "The Share."

Feature film credits include "Lost Holiday," "Man in the Woods," "Paterson," "True Story," "All Good Things" and "How to Tell You're a Douchebag."

Keith Poulson ("Sammer")



Keith Poulson is a Brooklyn-based actor, filmmaker, and musician. His acting credits include SOMEBODY UP THERE LIES ME, LISTEN UP PHILIP, HELLAWARE, THE GREAT PRETENDER, BAD AT DANCING, HERMIA & HELENA, LITTLE SISTER, and HER SMELL.

Katie Ennis (Editor)

Katie Ennis is a NYC-based filmmaker and member of the Motion Picture Editor's Guild. As an editor her work has screened in wide release, film festivals, prime time television and major streaming outlets. Katie is currently working on season two of the STARZ drama Sweetbitter. In addition to Lost Holiday, past credits include the FX prestige drama The Americans and the independent film Sister Aimee starring Micheal Mosley and Anna Margaret Hollyman, which premieres at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival.

Allison Twardziak (Casting Director)

Allison Twardziak is a New York based Casting Director. She recently cast the The Oculus Emmy Award Winning VR Short Film 'Henry,' the SXSW Grand Jury Prize winner Fort Tilden, The Berlinale, New Directors/New Films feature, She's Lost Control, the Sundance features Appropriate Behavior, and My Best Day, The Slamdance feature Faith Love and Whiskey, The Woodstock feature Bastards of Young, OutFest's Lyle starring Gaby Hoffman, the web series F to 7th, The Impossibilities and Be Here Nowish as well as the feature Black Dog Red Dog starring James Franco, Chloe Sevigny, Whoopi Goldberg, Logan Marshall-Green and Olivia Wilde. Recent features include Fits and Starts with Wyatt Cenac and Greta Lee which premiered at SXSW, March 2017. 'Lemon' and 'The Foster Portfolio' premiered at Tribeca Films. She cast MGM & Eko's Interactive Series WarGames, today's version of the 80's classic. She has four feature films in post-production, including Carlo Mirabella Davis' 'Swallow' starring Haley Bennett, produced by Mollye Asher (The Rider).

Allison has cast over 40 shorts which have premiered at Cannes, Sundance, SXSW and The Clermont Film Festival. Allison primarily casts commercials (On camera, VO and real people casting). Her select personal clients include Samsung, Sony Music, Nickelodeon, Visa, Siggis, Coca Cola, Tabasco, FILA, Google, Carol's Daughter, Dark and Lovely, Matrix and Maybelline. She cast the award winning play, I Was Tom Cruise and holds a B.F.A. from New York University, studying with The Atlantic Theater Company.

Donavan Sell (Director of Photography)

Donavan Sell is a San Francisco-based cinematographer. His ad, "Unskippable Family," made in collaboration with Terri Timely, won a gold Clio award. Together they also made the music videos for St. Vincent, "Cruel," "Marrow," and "Actor," as well as the documentary short "Father Philanthropy."

James Iha (Composer)

James Iha is a writer, composer, producer and performer. James began his career in Chicago as a co-founder and contributing songwriter of *The Smashing Pumpkins*. He recorded and toured with the group from 1988 - 2000, during which time they released ten albums and became one of the biggest bands of the era, selling millions of albums and filling arenas worldwide. Since 2002, James has been a member of the acclaimed progressive rock band *A Perfect Circle*. He continues to tour with the band, most recently headlining amphitheaters and arenas in the US in early 2017. As a composer he creates original music for film and television - most recently scoring drama TV series *The Arrangement* (E!/NBC). Prior, James scored the James Franco headed film *Mother, May I Sleep With Danger?* (Lifetime) and comedy *Deadbeat* (Lionsgate/Hulu), among others. James has also released two well-received solo albums, *Let It Come Down* (1998) and *Look To The Sky* (2012) as well as collaborated in the power pop group *Tinted Windows* (featuring Adam Schlesinger, Taylor Hanson and Bun E. Carlos) and released their self titled debut album in 2009.

Dena Greenbaum (Line Producer)

Dena Greenbaum has served as Producer, Director, and Line Producer on award-winning independent films and TV throughout New York. She is a graduate of NYU's Tisch School of the arts and received her MBA at Columbia University. A short 30 for 30 film she produced called "86-32" premiered on ESPN. She has overseen production on TV shows for networks such as Bravo, VH1, MTV, and Discovery. Dena was the Associate Producer on the Sundance Film Festival feature drama "Gun Hill Road," and Production Manager on the Sundance Film Festival feature comedy "Newlyweeds." She served as Line Producer on a feature documentary, "Brick" which was supported by the Ford Foundation, Sundance Institute, Impact Partners, and was part of Doc NYC. She directed, wrote, and produced, "Blues" a short narrative film that received the Reach Film Fellowship through Cinereach and won "Best Student Short" at the L.A. Women's International Film Festival. Dena was awarded the Clive Davis Excellence in Music and Film Production award, AmericanLife Network Post Production award, Morris Fierberg Student Film Award, and the Reynolda Film Festival's Best Female Film Maker Award.

END CREDITS

Crew

Produced, Written, and Directed – Michael and Thomas Matthews

Director of Photography – Donovan Sell

Co-producer/ Unit Production Manager – Josh Foster

Co-producer/Line Producer – Dena Greenbaum

Script Supervisor – Emily Cheeger

Executive Producer – Steven J. Berger

Associate Producers – Jim Koufos, Dr. William Dixon, The Haft Family,
Franck Giraud, and Gonzague De Luze

1st Assistant Director – Chris White

Production Coordinator – LaQuin Alexander

1st Assistant Director – Chris White

2nd Assistant Director – Geoff Dunn

2nd 2nd Asst. Director – Sean Bredbenner

Production Designer – Paige Mitchell

Assistant Production Designer – Becca Morrin

Assistant Production Designer – Rob Fiks

Assistant Production Designer – Sebastian Avery

Casting Director – Allison Twardziak

Editor – Katie Ennis

Asst Editor – Alexander Frasse

“Mars 22,” original music composed by James Iha

Score Composed by – Kevin Bendis, Andrea Perdue, Scott Thorough, and James Iha

Costuming by – Tuckernuck Clothing

Costume Designer – Julia Vincenza Whalen, Julie Bent

Asst. Costume – Christina Barringer, Alexis Martinez

Cast

Margaret/ Mar/ Maggie – Kate Lyn Sheil

Henry/Hemmy – Thomas Matthews

Sammmmer – Keith Poulson

Mark/ Marky – Keith Poulson

Russian – Tone Tank

Jesus/ Jeezy – Rolls Andre

Amber Jones – Ismenia Mendes

Daryl – Joshua Leonard

Katie – Allie Gallerani

Associate – Jay Bulger

Officer Matthews – Isiah Whitlock Jr.

NPR Commentary – Emily Mortimer

News Anchor – Kathleen Matthews

Bo Jones – David Corn

Johnny – Jonathan Sears

Jan Jan – Janna Emig

Tatty – Matthew Alan Ward

Krissy – Chris Daileader

Bartender – Anne Fidler

Iko – Iko Tsikurishvili

His Buddy – Rick Kain

Sammer's Mom – Ginny Grenham

Julia – Sara Hernandez

Guard – David Hankla

Andrew – Andrew McPherson

Emily – Emily McPherson

Rachel – Rachel Napolitano

Bouncer – Dan Maceda

Baby Joy – Annabel Farmer

Baby on Bus – Huck Schaffer

Philip Killian – Joey Toker

Officer White/Drunk in Jail – Chris White

Handsome Bartender – Matthew Atwood

Dispatch – Nicole Correa

Funny Cop – Sean Bredbenner

Lonely Prisoner - Kevin Crawley
War On Women – Themselves

Stunt Coordinator – Rick Kain
Gaffer – Matthew Atwood
Best boy – Devin McBay

First assistant camera – Jiyeon Jean Kim
First assistant camera – Colleen Kwok
Second assistant camera – Shannon Palmer

SFX – Hank Atterbury
Hair/Makeup – Jasmen Davis, Sallie Keena

PA - Key Kevin Crawley
PA Set - Rachel Napolitano
PA – Nikki Correa
PA – Sarah Laine Smith
PA –Whit White
Transportation – Vamoose Bus
Accommodations – Airbnb

Post Production

Re-recording mixer - Eli Cohn
Dialogue Editor - Lucas Sanoff
Sound FX Editors - Ben Chesneau, Maya Peart
Mix Studio - Nocturnal Sound
Colorist - Joseph Mastantuono
Graphics – Philip Sportel
Finishing – Pierce Varous, Nice Dissolve

Music Notes

Songs of the Wayfarer, Gustav Mahler (courtesy of Musopeon)

Romanian Christmas Caro, Sz. 57, Papalin Recorder Ensemble (courtesy of Musopeon)

V. Poarga Romaneasca Allegro, Papalin Recorder Ensemble (courtesy of Musopeon)

Heat; In My Arms; Fire, Untitled “Ending” Song, Dark End of the Sea,
Written and Performed by
Andrea Perdue, from her album *Cerf Volant*

“We’re Getting Rid of Bodies,” Performed by Metrorail, written by Paul Newell Reaves

"Mars 22" Original Music Composed by James Iha

"Just Walk Away" Composed by Kevin Bendis, Performed by Ismenia Mendes

Carol of the Bells, Michel Rondeau

"Sad Xmas"

"Flamenco's at Russian's"

"Selenium"

Music by Scott Thorough

Written S. Krupnick

BEST SOUP YOU EVER HAD

Stakeout/Hot Pursuit/ "Must Go Faster":

Composed and Performed by Kevin Bendis. Additional Vocals Thomas Matthews.

"Holiday Medley (Deck The Halls/Jingle Bells)"

Arranged and Performed by Timo Elliston

Courtesy of BANG NY

Oh Tannenbaum performed by Carlo Colombo

Oh Christmas Tree performed by Stuart Moore

Special Thanks

Chipotle

Vamoose Bus

Panavision

Kodak

Airbnb

Compass Coffee