



FRANCESCA EASTWOOD

CLIFTON COLLINS JR.

# M.F.A.

A FILM BY  
NATALIA LEITE

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**LOG LINE**

After being sexually assaulted by a fellow classmate, an art student takes justice into her own hands.

**SYNOPSIS**

Noelle, an art student struggling to find her voice, is sexually assaulted by a fellow classmate. Attempting to cope with her trauma, she impulsively confronts her attacker, leading to a violent altercation that culminates in his accidental death. Noelle tries to return to normalcy, but when she discovers that she is only one of many silenced sexual assault survivors on campus, she takes justice into her own hands. A vigilante is born – retribution is the inspiration she's been waiting for.

## **DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT**

MFA tells the story of an art student who is raped and, after seeing the school turn a blind eye to sexual assault crimes on campus, decides to take matters into her own hands and hunt down the rapists on campus. It's a psychological thriller with a strong female anti-hero that we rarely see represented. While there are countless examples of likable men doing bad things in film and television – Don Draper, Walter White, Lester Burnham, Tony Montana - we rarely see a likable female anti-hero.

When I was in my late teens I was sexually assaulted by a boy in my art school. I felt sick for days. Angry, confused, ashamed, alone. I didn't know who to turn to for help and had no examples of women speaking up and finding justice for this crime. Rather than have this be part of my life's story, I pretended it never happened; it seemed easier to deal with a trauma that way. But no matter how often I claimed amnesia, I couldn't shake it. Only now, years later, have I been able to speak openly about what happened and find the support I needed. Sadly, my story is all too familiar for too many women.

I wanted to tell this story because we live in a world that doesn't fully acknowledge the severity of sexual assault or its effect on the victims. Women are constantly bullied into being silent and feeling responsible for someone else's crime. That silence manifests itself in psychological effects that can be seen even years after the assault takes place.

While violence is never a solution for any matter, In creating a female Dexter-type character, I aimed to give these women a cathartic experience - the sense of relief that comes from vengeance through the safety of fiction. Since working on this project, I've noticed how many women have been sexually assaulted and their need to talk about it. Now is the time to speak up about this issue and address the severity of rape crimes and the long-lasting repercussions they can have on their victims.

We need to open the doors to discussions about rape and rape culture, so that we can begin to reconcile our collective past and create a future without amnesia. If MFA can act as a catalyst to these conversations, then all of the hard work we put into it will be worth it.

-Natalia Leite

## **CAST BIOS**

### **FRANCESCA EASTWOOD**

Francesca Eastwood is becoming one of Hollywood's rising stars. She recently wrapped "The Vault" directed by Dan Bush, and co - starring James Franco, Taryn Manning, and Scott Haze. Eastwood was also the lead in JT Mollner's "Outlaws and Angels," starring opposite Luke Wilson and Chad Michael Murray, which premiered at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival.

Additional film credits also include the independent film "Cardinal X," directed by Angie Wang and executive produced by Cassian Elwes. Eastwood also recurred in the NBC mini-series "Heroes Reborn" and will next be seen guest starring on David Lynch's revival of "Twin Peaks" for Showtime.

### **CLIFTON COLLINS JR.**

An acting chameleon and native Angelino, Clifton Collins Jr. has risen through the ranks to become one of Hollywood's most versatile actors.

2016 looks to be another huge year for the seasoned actor with roles in both major film and television projects. First up, Clifton can be seen in the Open Road thriller TRIPLE 9 alongside Woody Harrelson, Casey Affleck, Chiwetel Ejiofor and Kate Winslet that came out earlier this year. Followed up by Terrence Malick's next film WEIGHTLESS, opposite Christian Bale, Rooney Mara, Natalie Portman, Michael Fassbender, Cate Blanchett, Ryan Gosling, and Benicio Del Toro. Additionally, he will be seen in one of the lead roles in the independent film TRANSPICOS, which centers around three Border Patrol agents working a remote desert checkpoint who find the contents of one car will reveal an insidious plot within their own ranks, as well as the independent feature SMALL TOWN CRIME, which follows an attention-seeking psychic who is kidnapped by a murderer with a guilty conscious and tries to use the situation to boost his popularity.

On the television side, Clifton is currently in production on the highly anticipated Bad Robot / Jerry Weintraub Productions, HBO series "WESTWORLD". Further proving his acting chops, Clifton will star opposite such heavyweights as Anthony Hopkins, Ed Harris, Evan Rachel Wood, Jeffrey Wright, James Marsden, Thandie Newton, Rodrigo Santoro, Miranda Otto. The show, inspired by the 1973 film of the same title directed by Michael Crichton, centers around a futuristic theme park populated by artificial beings. Clifton will play 'Lawrence', a sly criminal who really knows his way around Westworld.

Previous film credits include: Terrence Malick's KNIGHT OF CUPS; the Warner Bros. / Wally Pfister-directed feature TRANSCENDENCE opposite Johnny Depp, Morgan Freeman, Kate Mara, and Cillian Murphy; Dito Montiel's MAN DOWN opposite Shia Labeouf and Gary Oldman; Guillermo Del Toro's sci-fi action/adventure film PACIFIC RIM, alongside Charlie Hunnam, Charlie Day, Ron Pearlman, and Idris Elba; Taylor Hackford's feature PARKER, opposite Jason Statham and Jennifer Lopez; the Lionsgate feature THE PERFECT GAME; Paul Scheuring's film THE EXPERIMENT opposite Adrien Brody and Forrest Whitaker; and the Universal feature SCOTT PILGRIM VS. THE WORLD. Clifton's previous and notable feature credits include: Jim Sheridan's BROTHERS, with Jake Gyllenhaal; JJ Abrams' STAR TREK; Mike Judge's EXTRACT opposite Ben Affleck; SUNSHINE CLEANING opposite Emily Blunt and Amy Adams; BOONDOCK SAINTS 2 for Sony; CAPOTE; and has also created memorable characters in such varied projects as BABEL, TRAFFIC, TIGERLAND and RULES OF ATTRACTION.

## **PETER VACK**

Peter Vack is an actor and filmmaker from New York City. Vack was the lead on Doug Liman's cult series *I Just Want My Pants Back* for MTV and is currently on Amazon Studio's Golden Globe winning *Mozart In The Jungle*, starring Gael Garcia Bernal, Lola Kirke and Malcolm McDowell and created by Jason Schwartzman, Roman Coppola, and Paul Weitz. As an actor, Peter's recent film roles include: Natalia Leite's *MFA* (SXSW 2017) Anthony Onah's *Dara Ju* (SXSW 2017), Leah Meyerhoff's *I Believe in Unicorns* (SXSW 2014), Hannah Fidell's *6 Years* (SXSW 2015), Clay Liford's *Slash* (SXSW 2016) Sara Violet Bliss and Charles Rodgers's *Fort Tilden* (Winner Narrative Feature Competition SXSW 2014), Harrison Atkin's *Lace Crater* (TIFF 2015), Celia Rowison-Hall's *Ma* (Venice 2015) and Nancy Meyer's *The Intern* starring Robert DeNiro and Anne Hathaway. As writer/director, Vack was named an RBC's Emerging Storyteller at IFP's Independent Film Week and a Sundance Institute Feature Film Fellow for his upcoming film [www.rachelormont.com](http://www.rachelormont.com), which received the Zygmunt and Audrey Wilf Foundation Award also through the Sundance Institute Feature Film Program. His award winning short film *SEND* screened at over a dozen film festivals including SXSW and AFI Fest. Vack's debut feature film *Assholes* will have it's world premiere at SXSW in 2017.

## **FILMMAKER BIOS**

### **Natalia Leite, Director**

Natalia Leite is a writer/director/actress, born in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Her feature film debut “Bare” premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival in 2015, starring Dianna Agron and Paz De La Huerta. The film was released by IFC and Paramount Pictures. She often deals with sexuality in her work, which has been described as “having emotional intelligence and sensitivity” (LA Times) and as “cementing the reign over highly stylized and sexually progressive dramas” (Slate). She is a frequent contributor to Vice Media, creating original content like the provocative Vice show, “Every Woman” where she documented her experience working in a truck-stop strip club. Her comedy series “Be Here Nowish,” which she stars in, is currently in its second season on Vimeo. Her work has been featured in The Sunday Times, The New Yorker, The Guardian, Vogue, among other publications. Natalia was listed in 2015 as one of Indiewire’s Filmmakers To Watch and has been a featured speaker for NY Women In Film & Television, Apple Store Talks, IFP Filmmaker Conference, and numerous Universities.

### **Leah McKendrick, Writer/Producer/Actress “Skye”**

Leah McKendrick is an award winning actress/writer/producer. She is widely known for the critically acclaimed digital musical series which she created and starred in, Destroy the Alpha Gammas that made her a Webby Award Honoree and a Streamy Award Nominee. In 2014 she formed Villainess Productions, aimed at creating content featuring women in diverse and compelling roles, in front of the camera and behind. Her films have screened throughout the country at festivals such as Savannah, Portland, Dances with Films and Shriekfest. M.F.A. is her feature film debut as a writer/producer/actress. Acting highlights include Bad Moms with Mila Kunis and Christina Applegate and Misconduct with Al Pacino, Anthony Hopkins and Josh Duhamel.

### **Shintaro Shimosawa, Producer**

Shintaro Shimosawa made his directorial debut in 2016’s Misconduct for Lionsgate starring Josh Duhamel, Alice Eve, Malin Akerman, and Academy Award winners Al Pacino and Anthony Hopkins, following a decade of writing and producing film and television. In features, Shin was a producer of the wildly successful horror franchise called The Grudge, wrote and produced The Echo, and also penned the psychological thriller Repentance for longtime collaborator Forest Whittaker. In television, Shin has written for network series such as Smallville, Criminal Minds: Suspect Behavior, Ringer, The Dead Zone, and The Following. He is currently the consulting producer on the CBS series, Zoo.

### **Mike C. Manning, Producer/Actor “Jeremiah”**

Mike C. Manning is an actor, writer and producer of award-winning film and television content. On screen, Mike is most known for his role in the Disney Channel Original Movie Cloud 9, and as heartthrob “Colin Morris” in the online series Youthful Daze. Mike is an actor and executive producer in the Jeff Grace-directed film Folk Hero & Funny Guy, with Wyatt Russell, Melanie Lynskey, and New Girl’s Hannah Simone. Prior to that, he starred in I Do alongside Jamie-Lynn Sigler and Alicia Witt and The Hallmark Channel’s Operation Cupcake. Other credits include Hawaii Five-0 on CBS, Major Crimes on TNT, Crash & Bernstein on Disney XD, Limelight, Johnny Martin’s Delirium, and M.F.A., in which Mike is also a producer. In 2014, Mike executive produced the film Kidnapped for Christ alongside Lance Bass (N’Sync) and Tom DeSanto (Transformers). It debuted at the Slamdance Film Festival where the documentary won the Audience Award and premiered on Showtime television network. Under the production company Chhibber Mann Productions, Mike recently produced the documentary Lost in America, a film following the stories of homeless youth in America, as well as the documentary An Act of Love with actress Pauley Perrette (NCIS). Having lobbied Congress on behalf of several organizations in Washington, D.C., Mike now hopes to use art to create change and inspire others to do the same.

**END CREDITS**

**M.F.A.**

Directed by Natalia Leite  
Written by Leah McKendrick

A Villainess Production  
In Association with GTE Productions and Syncretic Entertainment

Starring:

Francesca Eastwood  
Clifton Collins Jr.  
Leah McKendrick  
David Sullivan  
Marlon Young  
Michael Welch  
Melanie Britton  
Mike C. Manning

Executive Producer:

Rob Angel  
Mariah Owen  
Kelvin Parker

Co-Executive Producer:

Micki Purcell  
Ivar Hagberg

Producer:

Leah McKendrick  
Shintaro Shimosawa  
Mike C. Manning

Co-Producer:

Ivan & Erika Williams  
Dahlia Heyman  
Vinny Chhibber  
Jesse Chrisp  
Erich Hover

Line Producer:

Chelsea Fenton

Director of Photography:

Aaron Kovalchik

Production Designer:

Kelly Fallon

Consulting Producer  
Original Artwork  
Production Coordinator  
First Assistant Director

John Benitz  
Christine Wu  
Naomi Rivas  
Mikhaela Rosen  
Kurtis Gnagey

Noelle	Francesca Eastwood
Kennedy	Clifton Collins Jr.
Skye	Leah McKendrick
Luke	Peter Vack
Cavanaugh	David Sullivan
Shane	David Huynh
Professor Rudd	Marlon Young
Lindsey	Jess Nurse
Melinda Sanders	Mary Price Moore
Jenna	Melanie Britton
Mason	Michael Welch
Jeremiah	Mike C. Manning
Conor	Kyler Pettis
	Kyle McKeever
Charlotte	Mariah Owen
Christian	Ryan W. Garcia
Ryder	Andrew Caldwell
Lieutenant Kelly	Adam Lazarre-White
Brent	Kyle Butenhoff
Lincoln	Chris Labadie
Albert	James Henderson
Marcy	Liberty Hobbs
Dean	John Benitz
Burgess	Steven Spohn
Taylor	Logan Clark
Katie	Kelly Walker
Heather	Ruby Elise
Rory	Joey Beni
Siobhan	Helen Cho
Maggie	Ally Rose
Catie	Rachel Amanda Bryant
Santiago	Jesse Chrisp
Medical Examiner	Alexandra Fatovich
Officer Chavez	Christopher Cano
Officer O'Hare	Brian Carroll
Officer Lu	Luisa De Paula
Officer Shine	Mark Holt
Officer Williams	Brian Hickerson
Officer Dennis	Dennis Garr
Officer Alexander	Jason Chao
Trish	Rachel Zink
Kate	Katrina Rennells
Nick	Nick Hargrove
Mike	Seth Maxwell



Abbey	Sophia Grosso
V-Day Balboa Girl	Laura Robinson
Art Student	Dree Paterson
Art Student #2	Albina Katsman
Art Student #3	Karalynn Dunton
Art Student #4	Max Landwirth
Art Student #5	Christopher Odom
Art Student #6	Tasha Van Zandt
Frat Boy #1	Nicholas Adam Clark
Frat Boy #2	Kieran McShane
Frat Boy #3	James Hawthorn
Frat Boy #4	Bryant Wood
Frat Boy #5	Curtis K Case
Frat Boy #6	Andrew de Burgh
Frat Boy #7	Christian Broussard
Frat Boy #8	Kyle Peck
Douchebag	David B Feldman
Art Buyer	Nicholas Walker
Art Buyer #1	Megan Clancy
Art Buyer #2	Andrea Clemons
Art Buyer #3	Megan Duquette
Art History Professor	Andrea Monte-Warren
Jennifer Blow	Kelsey Oluk
Art Gallery Patron #1	Javier Chavarin
Art Gallery Patron #2	Michael Wayne Brown
Art Gallery Patron #3	Mary Lou Matthews
Art Gallery Patron #4	James E. Clark
Art Gallery Patron #5	Dominique Wilingham
Crying Student	Kate Alden
Party Girl	Krystelle Lorraine
Party Girl #2	Christina Cha
Party Guy	Chandler Emerson
Party Guy #2	Alex Malin
Party Guy #3	Dylan Robinson
First Assistant Camera	Tom Atwell
Additional First Assistant Camera	Kaela Jensen
Second Assistant Camera	Jorge Gomez
	Megan Thuy Pham
Digital Imaging Technician	Jordan Cano
Camera Interns	Sean Alan Sumwalt
	Matthew Ramey
	Patrick Hall
Stills Photographer	Eilene Beniquez
Second Assistant Director	Aaron Smith
	Kathryn Goddard
	Sarah Snow
	Sam Shapson
Second Second Assistant Director	Trey Wilson
	Kurtis Gnagey
	Gregory Nomura
Script Supervisor	Ting Yu

Additional Script Supervisor	Shelby Baldock Yiyang Xu Hongyi Cai Hansjeet Duggal
Art Director	Stephyn Phillips
Set Decorator	Lizzie Boyle
Set Dresser	Dori Desfaugeres
Property Master	Meaghun Crookston
Property Leadman	Ralphie Ramirez
Graphic Designer	Kyle Pettey
Art Department Assistant	Ting Jiang Jasper Oltman
Additional Featured Artwork	Mandy Mitchell (Featured as: Shane) Mel Shimkovitz (Featured as: Luke) Lauren Fejarang Heather Drouillard Brian Parada Andy Rines Michele Yu Alex Weiss Lizzie Boyle Mac Fisken Elayna Snyder Chris Willcox Alyse Snyder
Production Sound Mixer	Jaya Jayaraja
Additional Sound Mixing	Alex Chabot Brian Hackett Nick Carignan
Boom Operator	Alex Chabot Victoria Carrillo Robbie Warnack Alex Harris
Gaffer	Jorge "Coco" Moore
Additional Gaffer	Dustin Lawyer Damian Apunte Ivan Herrera Sean Ryan
Best Boy Electric	Edward "Eddie" Batres
Additional Best Boy Electric	Nathan Yeoman Ricky Tea Anirudh Gattu Dustin Lawyer Damian Apunte Demetrios Katsantonis Joseph Baltazar
Key Grip	Kevin Burks
Additional Key Grip	Anirudh Gattu Gabriel "Gabe" Carnick Chris Dongye Ma

	Riani "Ray Ray" Singhi Daniel Klockenkemper Brent Bailey
Best Boy Grip Additional Best Boy Grip	Gabriel "Gabe" Carnick Vance Singleton Damian Apunte Brent Bailey Adam Boyer
Location Assitant	Max Landwirth
Background Costumer	Kat Eves
Department Head Makeup Artist Hairstylist	Natasha Chanel Taschi Lynell Julie Ngam
Assistant Hairstylist Special FX Makeup Artist	Nora Aguinaga Miriam Nichterlein Kathryn Fernandez
Production Supervisor	Alonzo Nevarez
Production Assistants	Gregory Nomura Mikalyn Cavanaugh Mark Taylor Nicholas Popkey Matthew Ramey Hiroki Wakamatsu Ben Kramer Joshua Barish Masato Suzuki Joey Beni Kyle Peck Ryan Lim Esteban Zuluaga Enzo Flores Marco Mejia
Payroll Accountant	Kristofer King
Police Technical Advisor	John Valencia
Stunt Coordinator Stunt Double Stunt Utility	Dennis Garr Cody Weselis Tony Snegoff
Set Medic	Maria Johansson Kevin Fitch
Drivers	Vance Singleton

Frank Kiper

Catering

Camille's Catering

Additional Editing  
Post Production Assistant

John Paul Horstmann  
Megan Bousard

EPK/Behind The Scenes  
EPK On Set Videographer

Krista Lettko  
Ravi Ullman

Title Design

Tami Ortenau

Finishing Post Production Services provided by  
ColorTime

Colorist  
Editor  
VFX  
Project Manager  
Project Supervisor  
Account Executive

Russell Lynch  
Lars Koerkemeier  
Lars Koerkemeier  
Jamie Collins  
Chris Olmos  
Tal Fiala

Post Production Sound Services

Silverlake Sounds

Supervising Sound Editor  
Re-Recording Mixer  
Sound Editor  
Sound Effects Editor  
Dialogue Editor  
Music Supervisor

Jason Altshuler  
Patrick Sexton  
Matthew Gurgol  
Aaron Seiter  
Patrick Sexton  
Luiza Sa-Davis

Music

"DON'T WANT YOU"

Performed by Fox  
Written by Joules and Fox  
Produced by Joules and Fox

"Goth"

Sidewalks and Skeletons

"Nothing's Gonna Hurt You Baby"

Written by Greg Gonzalez  
Performed by Cigarettes After Sex  
Courtesy of Cigarettes After Sex  
Under arrangement by Syncalicious Music, LLC.

"He's a Hustler"

Performed by Riffraph Ft. Ms. Tina Perez  
Courtesy of Riffraph Hamilton

### **Special Thanks**

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Claudine Jaenichen  
Jeanie Randazzo  
Joann King  
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Christopher Cano  
Suzuko Shimosawa  
Randon and Zandra Urbina-McKendrick  
Chris Edgar  
Jess Prosser  
Jim Clemente  
Haven Entertainment  
Kevin Mann  
Chris Boyd  
John Rosenfeld Studios  
Matt Perniciaro  
Mark Holte  
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Johnny T. Martin  
William Delaney  
Kendall Tichner  
Holly Parker  
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Israel Gutierrez  
Ralphie Ramirez  
John & Sharon Fallon  
Luke Fallon

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Los Angeles, California