



MAGNET RELEASING, EVERGREEN AVENUE

presents

A MAGNET RELEASE

WHAT YOU WISH FOR

Written & Directed by Nicholas Tomnay

101 minutes / USA

Official Selection:

2023 Fantastic Fest
2023 Fantasia Festival
2023 ScreamFest

FINAL PRESS NOTES

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SYNOPSIS

Ryan (Nick Stahl) is a talented chef with crushing gambling problems. Circumstances being what they are, he leaves town in a hurry for the safe haven of an unnamed Latin American country where his friend Jack (Brian Groh), a more prestigious chef with his own unique troubles, welcomes him into his home. Ryan has no idea how Jack's able to afford his extravagant lifestyle, and he doesn't want to feel envious, but he knows that he wants it for himself. Soon, a grim twist of fate will give that to him. Ryan assumes his friend's identity. And soon discovers just what Jack's been doing to maintain the lifestyle he so desperately craved.

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DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I wrote the script for *What You Wish For* at the end of 2018. Soon after this another film I was deep into a pre-production which fell through - the third one for me in about five years.

In the summer of 2019, I decided to stop asking permission from other people and produce *What You Wish For* myself. With my wife's help we began the process of raising money, and a couple of years later we had a modest budget.

I found an excellent production services team in Bogota, enlisted a couple of other producers to help and in the fall of 2021 during the pandemic we began production.

I've always felt that a genre film is the best Trojan horse to express philosophical or societal ideas. Before writing the screenplay, I was struck by an overwhelming feeling that the powerful in America had become completely uninterested in the world as a community. In particular I was stunned by the inaction concerning climate change, and when I thought about it further, it was clear to me that greed was the reason for all of it.

The film's location is never mentioned in the story, I wanted ambiguity in where it is actually happening, but the production was shot over 23 days in a Colombian town three hours south of Bogota. One of our principal cast dropped out days before production, there was no hot water in our lodgings and Nick Stahl had a 2-foot iguana as a roommate.

Some of my favorite films are the ones that feel like a spell. You enter them and become immersed in their bubble. I really felt this story needed to be told in that same way. And so the cinematographer and I limited our focal lengths, the production designer and I designed a color chart, where each color has a meaning, and the composers and I found a way to use the same musical theme with variation. All of these techniques go a long way to create a unique and consistent identity.

What You Wish For is a noir thriller and also a morality tale. It has a point to make about greed, but hopefully not didactically, rather simply through the story we have told.

- Nicholas Tomnay

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ABOUT THE CAST

NICK STAHL – Ryan

Nick Stahl can currently be seen as a lead role in the Showtime series LET THE RIGHT ONE IN opposite Demien Bachir and Grace Gummer as well as a lead role in the Sony International Feature Film KNIGHTS OF THE ZODIAC opposite Sean Bean and Famke Janssen. He can also be seen in the Hulu series TINY BEAUTIFUL THINGS opposite Kathryn Hahn.

Last year Nick appeared as a lead role in the IFC independent film HUNTER HUNTER opposite Devon Sawa as well as the lead role in the feature film WHAT JOSIAH SAW opposite Robert Patrick and Kelli Garner for Shudder.

Notable credits include Robert Rodriguez's SIN CITY, the franchise hit TERMINATOR 3, Todd Field's IN THE BEDROOM, and the lead of the HBO series CARNIVALE. Nick Stahl has also appeared in Richard Loncraine's MY ONE AND ONLY opposite Renee Zellweger and Kevin Bacon and in the feature film QUID PRO QUO alongside Vera Farmiga, and starred in the Sundance favorite SLEEPWALKING alongside Charlize Theron, Woody Harrelson, and Dennis Hopper.

TASMIN TOPOLSKI - Imogene

Tamsin Topolski is a British actress from London. She studied acting at Drama Centre London and on graduating was cast in the role of Lavinia Putney on Showtime's *Penny Dreadful* opposite Rory Kinnear. She is currently shooting the upcoming Netflix limited series *The Madness* playing a lead role opposite Colman Domingo. She can currently be seen in the latest season of the Emmy nominated show *Slow Horses* (Apple TV) opposite Jack Lowden, and the BAFTA winning show *Guilt* (BBC/PBS) opposite Mark Bonnar. Other recent television credits include *Atlanta* (FX), *Into The Badlands* (AMC) and *The Rook* (Starz).

Past credits also include the lead role in *Madly: I Do* opposite Joe Dempsie, directed by Natasha Khan (aka. Bat For Lashes), which premiered at Tribeca Film Festival. Other independent film credits include *Clan* (2019), *Commitment* (2014) and *Control* (2013).

Theatre credits include *Believers Anonymous* (The Rosemary Branch Theatre), *This is Living* (Theatre 503), *Coram Boy* (The Pleasance Theatre) and a French-speaking production of *Huis Clos* with Vienna's English Theatre - she is fluent in French having spent her whole education in the French system.

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Tamsin also works as a director and is currently in the final stages of post-production for her upcoming short film *I'm a Good Person* which will be showcased on the festival circuit this year.

She also works as a session singer. She has toured extensively and internationally as a backing singer with artist Laura Marling on several headline tours, as well as on a support tour opening for Neil Young. She is currently working on Mark Knopfler's new studio record.

RANDY VASQUEZ – Detective Ruiz

Randy can currently be seen in the Paramount Plus series FATAL ATTRACTION and plays the lead role in the feature film AMERICA HAS FALLEN: ELECTION DAY on Amazon Prime. His numerous TV appearances include WILL&GRACE, SHAMELESS, ALL AMERICAN, SELENA: THE SERIES and BOSCH. Randy was a series regular on JAG, FIRST MONDAY, LOVE BOAT: THE NEXT WAVE and ACAPULCO H.E.A.T

Randy has appeared in four Mexican films: PUNOS ROSAS, PRIVATE PEREZ, VOLANDO BAJO and next year's PERDIDA TOTAL. He has over forty theater credits in Los Angeles and New York including the Off- Broadway show EACH DAY DIES WITH SLEEP by Jose Rivera.

Randy has directed three award winning documentaries: TESTIMONY: THE MARIA GUARDADO STORY, THE THICK DARK FOG and BADGER CREEK.



ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

NICHOLAS TOMNAY – Writer/Director

Originally hailing from Sydney, Nicholas is a multi-award-winning filmmaker, including best film at the Seattle International Film Festival, a Saturn award, Amsterdam’s Imagine Film Festival and Australia’s highest honor; the AACTA award.

Nicholas’ first feature film THE PERFECT HOST starring David Hyde Pierce premiered at the Sundance Film Festival, where it was bought and distributed by Magnolia Pictures. *The Perfect Host* also screened at Fantasia and Sitges.

What You Wish For is Nicholas' second feature film.

DIANA TRUJILLO – Production Designer

Diana is an award-winning Production Designer and Art Director for film and TV that has established herself as one of the most recognized names in Latin America for her creative work and unique style and aesthetics in more than 25 feature films and 15 TV Series. Her films have been recognized in multiple international festivals, including Sundance film Festival, San Sebastian, Morelia and Guadalajara. After establishing herself as a renowned name in Latin America she has recently collaborated with several US productions, working with award winning directors like Ang Lee GEMINI MAN, Sebastian Gutierrez ELIZABETH HARVEST, Patricia Riggen THE 33, and most recently Nicholas Tomnay WHAT YOU WISH FOR. She was responsible for conceptualizing the look and aesthetics for the first season of the popular Netflix Series NARCOS. She has continued to work with Netflix as Production Designer for the successful WILD DISTRICT and has also worked with Apple TV’s MALAYERBA. Her last collaboration for a show BILLIS will premiere on Amazon Prime next November.

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CREDITS

CAST

NICK STAHL – RYAN

TAMSIN TOPOLSKI – IMOGENE

RANDY VASQUEZ – DETECTIVE RUIZ

PENELOPE MITCHELL – ALICE

JUAN CARLOS MESSIER – MAURICE

BRIAN GROH – JACK

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY

NICHOLAS TOMNAY

PRODUCTION DESIGNER

DIANA TRUJILLO

PRODUCERS

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EDITOR

NICHOLAS TOMNAY

COSTUME DESIGNER

LINA GUARNIZO

MUSIC BY

JEFF RUSSO & TRACIE TURNBULL

CASTING BY

ALEXIS ALLEN WINTER