



# The Fisherman's Wife

A FILM BY JARED WATSON

## INFO

USA 2023, English

8 minutes

## CONTACT

Jess Vogel, Producer

[jess@dirtyblondefilms.com](mailto:jess@dirtyblondefilms.com)



## THE FISHERMAN'S WIFE

A FILM BY JARED WATSON



STARRING

T. RYDER SMITH    CAITLIN RILEY    KELSEY CARTHEW

PRODUCED BY ELVA GAPSTON    WRITTEN BY JESS VOGEL    DIRECTED BY MICHELLE BECK  
A CANTONISEN EDUCATION, STUDIO, DIRTY BLONDE FILMS & BACK TO THE FUTURE FILMS PRESENTATION

# AN ENVIRONMENTAL HORROR CONVERSATION STARTER

## LOGLINE

Amidst total environmental collapse, a desperate and lonely fisherman discovers a mermaid...and makes her dinner.

## SYNOPSIS

It's the near future after total environmental collapse. The oceans are dead; pollution clouds the sky. In the wreckage of former industry a fisherman struggles to sustain himself and his daughter. His net catches only plastic refuse and animal carcasses.

One bleak morning, after another failed fishing expedition, the fisherman makes a surprise discovery: a mermaid, washed ashore. She's tangled in a net, terrified, and struggling to breathe.

Desperate and lonely, he brings her back to the decrepit building he calls a home, makes her dinner, and introduces her to his daughter.

They then gather around the table, to eat. The Fisherman, the Daughter, and the Mermaid... to an extent.



Kelsey getting into character



Shooting in Flushing Bay, Queens



On set at the Andrew Freeman Home in the Bronx

## OUR STORY

This film is an environmental horror story. It is not a cautionary tale but rather a conversation starter, part of an emerging artistic movement that bears witness to the escalating effects of climate change while wrestling with humankind's self-destructive impact on a dying world.

Part of this movement is to acknowledge the existing devastation within our local communities. As both filmmakers and residents of NYC, we wanted to use locations within the five boroughs that truly showcase humans' ruinous effect on our surroundings. Our interior is the Andrew Freedman Home in the Bronx; a semi-reclaimed relic of Gilded Age America. Our exterior is Flushing Bay; one of the many polluted waterways in Queens.

Thanks to strong vision by our writer/director, we also had a green set, plant-based meals, and worked with local crew and talent to minimize our own footprint on the environment.



Scene as captured in camera

## A NIGHTMARE NEAR FUTURE VISUALIZING THE CLIMATE CATASTROPHE



Scene as captured in camera



Industrial set extension and smog composited in



Final scene with VFX and color grade

What will our world look like when the ecosystems collapse, droughts ravage our cropland, and wildfire smoke chokes out the sun? We used VFX techniques like set extensions, object removals, and compositing to imagine this post-apocalyptic wasteland. We then used real world, contemporary examples of smog and industrial pollution for our color grade, to suggest that this nightmare reality is much closer than we'd like to admit.



Final scene with VFX and color grade



Caitlin in Mermaid costume with green leggings for VFX



SFX makeup artist Beatrice putting final touches on The Mermaid



The Mermaid tail on set

## THE MERMAID HALF-WOMAN, HALF-TILAPIA

Rather than a colorful, fantastical, mythical being, our Mermaid is inspired from simple freshwater fish found in lakes and ponds throughout America. She represents the actual wildlife that humans destroy—either directly, like through overfishing, or indirectly, like in the pollution of waterways.

Around her torso is a kind of armor plating made from plastic grocery bags that were melted and pressed together, to form a leather-like laminate material. We imagined the Mermaid making this herself, using the trash she swims through everyday.

Her tail is also handbuilt from silicone and plastics. The scales were hand-sculpted in clay and cast in plaster, to make molds. Several hundred scales were glued together for the final tail.

# CREATING A MERMAID

## THE ARMOR



Test fit



Painted and weathered

## THE TAIL FIN



Tail fin sculpted in clay



Plastic resin cast from clay sculpture



Paint test

## THE SCALES



Scales sculpted in clay



Silicone cast from clay sculptures



Flexibility test



Paint test

## THE TAIL



Sewing dummy



Tail assembled with scales



Test fit



## T. RYDER SMITH THE FISHERMAN

Best known for his role as The Trickster in **BRAINSCAN**, T. Ryder Smith is a horror movie icon. Based in New York City, he has also appeared in the film **THE REPORT** with Adam Driver and on television in **BULL** (CBS), **HUNTERS** (AMAZON), **THE BLACKLIST** (NBC), and **NURSE JACKIE** (SHOWTIME). On stage T. Ryder has appeared on Broadway in the world premiere of **OSLO**, the original American company of **WAR HORSE**, and opposite Daniel Radcliffe and Richard Griffiths in the revival of **EQUUS**. He has also supplied his voice to Baron Ünderbheit on **THE VENTURE BROTHERS** as well as Sander Cohen in the videogame **BIOSHOCK**.





## **KELSEY CARTHEW**

### **THE DAUGHTER**

Kelsey Carthew is a New York and Los Angeles based actor who has appeared on television in *SUCCESSION* (HBO) and has guest-starred in *THE MARVELOUS MRS. MASEL* (Amazon) and *HIGH MAINTENANCE* (HBO). She's featured in *YOU HURT MY FEELINGS* (A24), directed by Nicole Holofcener and starring Julia Louis-Dreyfus, which will premiere at the 2023 Sundance Film Festival. Kelsey received her BFA in Acting from Carnegie Mellon University and trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.



## **CAITLIN BETH RILEY**

### **THE MERMAID**

Caitlin Riley is a Philadelphia based film and TV actor whose career highlights include acting opposite of Kate Winslet and Guy Pearce in *MARE OF EASTTOWN* (HBO) and being directed by Cynthia Nixon in *AND JUST LIKE THAT* (HBO).







## **JARED WATSON**

### **DIRECTOR**

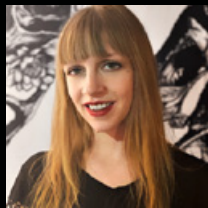
Jared Watson is a Texas-born, Southern-raised, and Pittsburgh-nourished writer, photographer, and cinematographer. Now based in NYC, his work explores the human impact on our environment; from what we consume, and why, to what we inevitably leave behind.



## **LIZA GIPSOVA**

### **DP**

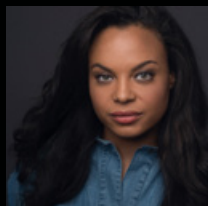
Liza is an award-winning NYC-based cinematographer fascinated by humans, light and stories of identity, location and the why. Her work has played at festivals worldwide, most notably Tribeca, Camerimage, LA Shorts, Anthology and others. She is a recipient of the ASC Vision Mentorship and a member of International Cinematographers Guild (Local 600).



## **JESS VOGEL**

### **PRODUCER**

Jess Vogel is a filmmaker, producer, and founder of Dirty/Blonde Films. Her projects have filled screens big and small, often delighting audiences and occasionally winning awards. Career highlights include a successful festival run for her film 1500 MILES, permitting the Parthenon for her favorite Olympian (STORYBOOKED, A&E), and an upcoming feature film starring Chloe Cherry and Cat Cohen.



## **MICHELLE BECK**

### **PRODUCER**

Michelle Beck is a multi-hyphenate artist best known for her award-winning short film THE SNAKES (HBO) which she wrote, directed and produced. Michelle is also the Director of Film for Epic Theater Ensemble and believes theater has the power to heal, incite, and give a voice to the next generation.



## CREDITS

Writer and Director	JARED WATSON
Cinematographer	LIZA GIPSOVA
Producers	JESS VOGEL MICHELLE BECK
Production Companies	CURIOUSER CREATIVE STUDIO DIRTY BLONDE FILMS BECK TO THE FUTURE FILMS
In Association With	ADVENTURE WE CAN
Sound Design & Mixing	SOUND LOUNGE
Color Grade	COLOR DEPARTMENT
VFX	SERGIO MISHCHENKO
SFX	BEATRICE SNIPER