



# THE HEADMISTRESS

NIGHT NIGHT.  
DON'T LET THE HEADMISTRESS BITE.

Running Time.....89 minutes

Genre.....Horror

Rating.....Unrated (Offensive language, some violence, adult situations)

Year.....2021

Language.....English

Country of Origin.....United States

Format.....1920x1080, 24fps, Sound 5.1

Contact.....Chris Micklos, [chris@visuality.com](mailto:chris@visuality.com), 608-279-1324

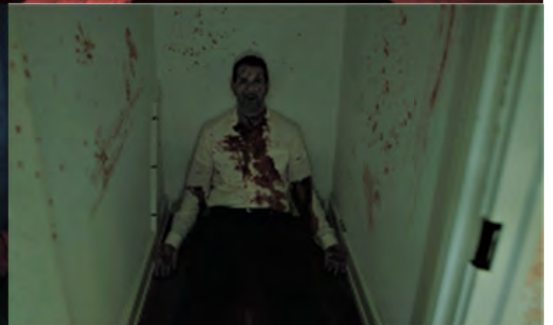
Links.....Official Website: [www.theheadmistressmovie.com](http://www.theheadmistressmovie.com)

Official Facebook: [www.facebook.com/ThreeTorturedMinds/](https://www.facebook.com/ThreeTorturedMinds/)

IMDB: [www.imdb.com/title/tt10487924](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt10487924)

## THE HEADMISTRESS

When a debt-ridden teacher inherits an abandoned lakefront inn, she and a group of potential buyers visit the property, where they discover a dark, sinister secret and a malignant supernatural presence determined to keep them there forever.



## SYNOPSIS



Young teacher Mara awakes from a fevered nightmare in a cheap motel room.

In rural Wisconsin to sell a recently-inherited property she's never seen, Mara meets up with the potential buyers: married couple Pete and Dex, who own several pizza franchises; arrogant real estate developer Donovan; trust fund baby Ani; and hotelier Nikki. Together, they set off for the abandoned property deep in the Wisconsin woodlands and find it's an isolated, century-old inn perched on the edge of a quiet lake.

They pair off to look around, but strange things soon begin to happen. Mara, who feels an odd familiarity with the inn, hears distant voices whispering her name. Nikki is startled by a figure racing down the hallway as she explores a room. And Ani discovers a small girl crying in the cellar with her mouth sewn shut...who disappears before anyone else can see her.

While the rest of the group responds to Ani's cry and gather outside, Nikki continues to explore, coming face-to-face with a demonic presence that attacks and kills her.

After the rest of them search fruitlessly for Nikki and experience a number of bizarre and threatening supernatural events, they attempt to return to their vehicle, which is now gone. With night falling, no cell service, and no means of getting back to town, they trudge back to the inn for the night.

At the inn, paranormal enthusiast Dex tells Mara and Ani the Legend of the Headmistress: the cruel child-killer whose ghost Dex believes haunts the inn, which was once a boarding school for young girls. Thinking it nothing more than a creepy bedtime story, they all head to their separate rooms to hunker down for the night, and things begin to go terribly wrong.

Dex is lured down to the cellar by a mysterious presence, and once there, he sees a vision of the Headmistress' evil brother, Nathaniel, about to abuse one of their young charges. Donovan appears at Ani's door and sexually assaults her, seemingly possessed by Nathaniel. And Mara is drawn by noises into a small alcove and finds herself surrounded by several young girls moving towards her and reaching for her...but when Pete appears suddenly, the girls are gone.

After Ani is found by Pete and Dex, Mara and Pete go off to search for Donovan, who knows that they are hunting for him and returns to his room. There he becomes trapped in the closet with a dark presence and is quickly killed.

Pete confronts Mara, and she confesses that she is aware of several bizarre murders that have plagued the property in its various incarnations over the course of several decades. They then find Donovan, slaughtered on floor of the closet.

Concerned about Pete, Dex directs Ani to leave the inn and get to safety while he goes to find his partner. When he finds Pete and Mara, the three of them piece together what they know and come to the realization that the Headmistress and Nathaniel were Mara's incestuous grandparents.

Before she can get to safety, Ani is drawn into the inn's chapel, where she is killed by the Headmistress.

As Dex, Pete, and Mara try to escape, their passage is blocked at every pass by ghostly children. While Pete and Dex are discovering Ani's corpse, Mara realizes that the girls' spirits are trapped in the inn—still captive to and victims of the Headmistress—and that she must sacrifice herself to release them.

Pete and Dex flee the inn, while Mara makes her way to the attic, allowing her to release the souls of the trapped children. However, once there, she comes face to face with Nathaniel and the Headmistress, and Mara screams one last earthly scream before being reunited forever with her demonic family.

## FILMMAKERS' STATEMENT



*(Filmmakers Jay Sapiro, Christopher A. Micklos, and Glenn Chung: the Three Tortured Minds.)*

**“Where our first film was a cinematic throwback to the suburban horrors of the 1970’s and 1980’s, we wanted THE HEADMISTRESS to exploit the contrast between the isolated, century-old feel of our location and the film’s more modern sensibilities and character conflicts.”**

The journey of THE HEADMISTRESS began when we were offered access to a recently decommissioned nunnery perched on the edge of a small lake in the woods of South-Central Wisconsin. We had a short six-month window before the nunnery was to be demolished, and this phenomenal location ultimately became the foundation on which we built the story, the characters, and atmosphere of the film.

It became important to us right from the beginning that the exotic location itself become a character in the story. From its utter isolation in the middle of nowhere, its patchwork of out-of-time wallpaper and carpeting, its closets that locked from the *inside*, and the dingy cellar and legitimately terrifying attic: we wanted the location itself to become as much of a villain as the sinister inn of THE SHINING, the decommissioned asylum of HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL, or PSYCHO’s Bates Motel. Where our first film, THE NURSERY, was a cinematic throwback to the suburban horrors of the 1970’s and 1980’s—like Carpenter’s HALLOWEEN and Coscarelli’s PHANTASM—we wanted THE HEADMISTRESS to exploit the contrast between the isolated, century-old feel of our location and the film’s more modern sensibilities and character conflicts.

At the same time, like THE NURSERY, our aesthetic relies on prioritizing suspense over gore, maintaining a consistent but escalating sense of desperation and dread, and letting our characters’ backstories—primarily our heroine Mara—dictate their reactions and their ultimate fates.

Then, at both textual and subtextual levels, we wanted THE HEADMISTRESS to swim in the waters of classic horror themes like the supernatural as expression of psychological dysfunction or moral defect, while exploiting modern issues and conflicts—made even more relevant in the post-Coronavirus era—like paralyzing debt and loneliness. We believe that the best films of the genre can be understood on multiple levels, and we wanted to be sure that THE HEADMISTRESS offered not only clear, straight-forward narrative and moments of genuine suspense and fear, but also an existential sense of something both dangerously malevolent but also—in some ways—affirming and transcendent.

Despite a budget of less than a \$50,000, a skeleton crew, and an abbreviated shooting schedule that was actually shorter than our first film, THE NURSERY, we are proud that THE HEADMISTRESS fulfills our original vision and gives us the opportunity to both entertain horror fans and explore themes and ideas that we find compelling.

## THE PRODUCERS

### Three Tortured Minds



Glenn Chung, Chris Micklos, and Jay Sapiro—the producers of *THE HEADMISTRESS*—have been in business together for more than 25 years and have been friends even longer than that.

Their first feature film, *THE NURSERY*, was released in 2018 by Uncork'd Entertainment.

Sapiro and Micklos first met in college in the early 1990's. They were both students in the Radio-TV-Film program at the University of Wisconsin – Oshkosh, where their paths occasionally crossed; but their friendship did not form until a few years later when they both ended up living in Madison, WI. While they were at Oshkosh, Chung was studying at the University of Wisconsin – Madison, where he earned his MBA and began his career as a consultant helping startups write business plans.

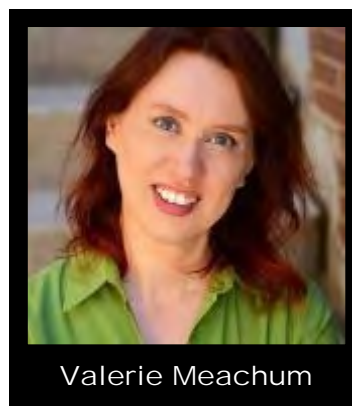
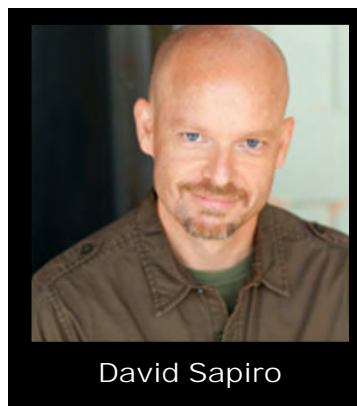
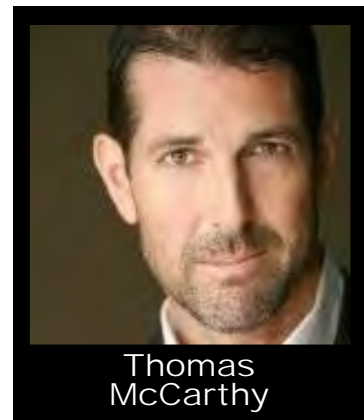
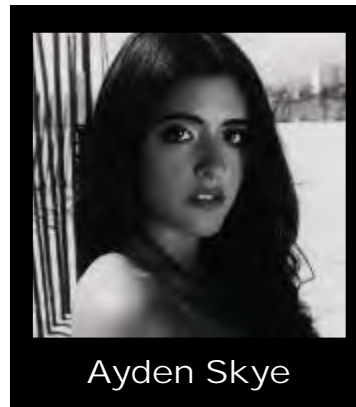
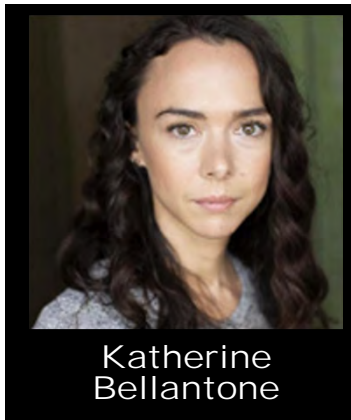
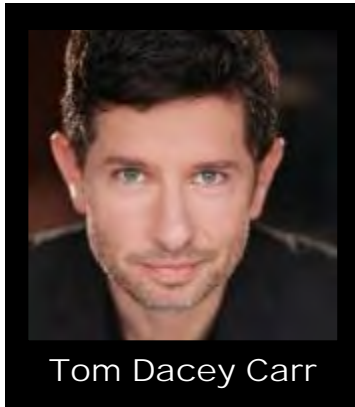
While the three of them were off following different career paths, Sapiro and Chung met, and soon they decided to start their own business together: a boutique media production firm called Visuality, which Chung had actually founded earlier to do freelance media design and animation work. A year or so later, Micklos joined them at Visuality, and in the years since their media work has been honored with literally scores of top awards and discussed on *CNN*, *MSNBC*, *Fox News*, and in *The New York Times*.

Rabid film buffs, the three talked for years about making a feature film together, but it wasn't until 2016 that they resolved to stop talking about it, push their chips to the center of the table, and go for it. Together, they hammered out the story, and within a couple short months they had their screenplay, a cast, and a crew. A few months later principal photography was complete, and by mid-2017, they had their first finished feature film: the throwback indie horror film *THE NURSERY*.

Not long after the 2018 release of *THE NURSERY*, Chung, Sapiro, and Micklos started working on concepts for their second feature film, which eventually became supernatural horror-thriller *THE HEADMISTRESS*.

In addition to their film projects and ongoing Visuality work, Three Tortured Minds produces a weekly podcast called *INDIE HORROR RISING*, which is a vehicle for filmmakers and other professionals working in the indie horror space to talk about their projects and their processes, etc. Each week, the IHR podcast features interviews with filmmakers, performers, distributors, producers, etc., like Kevin Lewis (*WILLY'S WONDERLAND*), Mike P. Nelson (*WRONG TURN*), Felissa Rose (*SLEEPAWAY CAMP*), Andrew Traucki (*THE REEF*), Larry Fessenden (*WENDIGO*), historian David Skal (*THE MONSTER SHOW*), and Ms. Lou Simon (*AGORAPHOBIA*), among many others.

## THE CAST



## BIOS



Katherine Bellantone (Mara)

**Katherine Bellantone** is an actress currently based in Chicago. *THE HEADMISTRESS* was her first full-length film. Recent projects to be released include *GUARDIANS OF TIME* (Ace Entertainment films/Stephen Shimek) and *DORMANT EVIL* (Friel Films/Joshua L. Norman). She is currently filming the television series *THE CLOWNS* (Nomenclature Film - Ross Otterman) and the feature *LOCAL AREA NETWORK* (Logan Avenue Productions - Glenn Barrabrandt). She was recently nominated for Best Actress at the GI Film Festival in San Diego for her work in the film *LIVES ON THE LINE*. In her spare time, she chills out and writes short comedy pieces for online publications such as Slackjaw and The Belladonna.



Tom Dacey Carr (Pete)

**Tom Dacey Carr** is a Chicago-based classically trained actor with numerous film and TV credits. His theatre credits include work with Victory Gardens, Cincinnati Playhouse In The Park, and Playmakers Repertory Theatre. Tom earned his MFA at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and is married with two grown daughters. He is repped by Lily's Talent Agency.



Hunter O'Harrow

**Hunter O'Harrow** is a wannabe actor, improviser, comedian, and clown. To that end he lives in Los Angeles and trains at such venerated institutions as The Groundlings, The Clown School, and the Actor's Comedy School. Perhaps something someday will come of it, but for now the joy is in the journey.

## BIOS



Tom McCarthy (Donovan)

**Tom McCarthy** was born just outside of San Francisco, CA, and grew up in suburban Detroit, MI. Upon graduating from the University of South Carolina, he moved to Chicago, IL, to embark on a career in financial services for approximately 10 years. He then shifted gears and entered the commercial real estate arena, leasing high rise office towers in downtown Chicago for approximately 6 years. After deciding to take his first acting class in his early 40's, Tom was officially bitten by the acting bug. He moved to Los Angeles, CA, to embark on an acting career, where he continued his training with both theatre- and camera-based classes while building his acting resume. He moved back to Chicago in 2015 to get married and continue with his acting career. His focus has been in the area of independent films. He has been cast in recent years for principal/lead roles in the feature films *TORMENT A LOVE STORY*, *WHAT HAPPENED IN DANVILLE*, *IRRATIONAL FEAR*, *THE HEADMISTRESS*, *BROKEN SILENCE*, *MERCIFUL SHOCK*, and *PHOENIX REBORN*. Tom and his wife Christine currently reside on the north side of Chicago, IL.



Ayden Skye (Ani)

**Ayden Skye** is a New York doll with a raspy voice and a 1970s wardrobe. On the screen, she can most recently be seen in Amazon's *THE MARVELOUS MRS. MAISEL*, HBO's *PATERNO*, *AURORA*, *ALL THE LORD'S MEN*, and *IMAGINARY FRIENDS* (opposite Soleil Moon Frye). As a writer/director for the screen, she proved her prowess at a young age: her directorial debut film, a nostalgia-fueled coming-of-age dramedy called *DAFFY*, capped off a banner year on the festival circuit (30+ selections) with the Best Film (Grand Prize) Award at the Katra Film Series....when she was just 21 years old. She then transitioned to writing for the stage (the rave-reviewed *ANDERSON LENA AND THE THINGS THAT DON'T MATTER*, in which she also starred) and later, the mic: her first single, "Pray To Me", produced by two-time Grammy Award winner Boo Mitchell ("Uptown Funk"), is out June 17.



## BIOS



DeChantel Kosmatka (Nikki)

**DeChantel Kosmatka** is a multi-award-winning actor and producer. She hails from the Midwest and is now located in Los Angeles. She started her career in the Chicago Storefront Theatre scene, along with touring review shows around the U.S. You might recognize her from commercials and print ads for companies such as Sprint, Walgreens, Blue Chip Casino, and Carnival Cruise Lines. DeChantel just wrapped a one-of-a-kind, single shot feature, SHAI AH & WILL, written and directed by Ben Eisner, for which she served as Executive Producer, Casting Director, and Wardrobe. She is currently ramping up production on her next feature and making her first attempt at writing a feature of her own. She is currently represented by PEA.



Valerie Meachum (The Headmistress)

Born in the Downriver suburbs of Detroit, **Valerie Meachum** grew up an Air Force brat, logging fifteen addresses by age twelve. Now based in the Chicago suburbs, she's equally at home in new plays on storefront stages, musicals and classics in the 'burbs, and the vibrant independent film scene of "Hollywood Midwest." She has two feature film roles currently in post-production: the title role in THE HEADMISTRESS and dark sorceress Maedea Dredd in BY SWORD OR BY FIRE. In recent years, she was seen on screen as Donna in the comedy/horror webseries THE DEADERSONS, in summer Shakespeare as Prospera in THE TEMPEST, and on the concert stage singing repertoire ranging from Puccini to Sondheim to Guettel, including a second-place award in the musical theatre division of Soirée Lyrique's voice competition with her rendition of "Monster" from FROZEN. A familiar face on the cosplay scene, she has accumulated a number of awards over the years, most recently placing third in the high-profile C2E2 2021 Cosplay Celebration. More often than competition, though, she portrays family-favorite characters at community and charity events as a member of Costumers with a Cause, the Rebel Legion, and the 501st Legion.

## BIOS



David Sapiro (Nathaniel)

**David Sapiro** is an accomplished professional actor from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Screen credits include public defender David Alonzo on the NBC series CHICAGO FIRE, Stu Schmidt in the feature film SMALL TOWN WISCONSIN, and Pastor Ben Nicholson in the acclaimed web series LEAVING EDEN. David is a graduate of the Meisner Training Program at Green Shirt Studio in Chicago.



Christopher A. Micklos (Writer / Co-Director / Producer)

**Christopher A. Micklos** is a life-long horror junkie, an award-winning filmmaker, and a frequently-published writer of horror-themed fiction and non-fiction. His first feature film, THE NURSERY (writer/co-director), was released worldwide in 2018. A Greek-American long-fascinated by the monsters, demons, and doomed souls of classical mythology and ancient legends, Christopher writes stories about supernatural forces and malignant creatures that exploit and expose the dark secrets and wicked impulses lurking inside us all. Christopher studied Radio-TV-Film in the University of Wisconsin system, and he is an active member of the Horror Writers Association. His horror writing has appeared in outlets like Rue Morgue Magazine, DreamOfShadows.co.uk, and the Chilling Tales for Dark Nights podcast, among many others; and recently his horror-comedy pieces have appeared regularly in Sci-Fi Lampoon Magazine. Christopher lives in Madison, Wisconsin, with his wife, daughter, and their monstrous mini-labradoodle Ygor.

## BIOS



Jay Sapiro (Co-Director, Editor, Producer)

**Jay Sapiro** is an award-winning filmmaker based in Madison, WI. He is a member of the film production company THREE TORTURED MINDS, along with his two fellow filmmakers Chris Micklos and Glenn Chung. On his first feature, THE NURSERY, Jay served as the co-director, editor, and as a producer. THE NURSERY screened at various film festivals, winning “Best Director for a Feature Film” at the Milwaukee Twisted Dreams Film Festival. THE NURSERY was released worldwide by Uncork’d Entertainment in 2018. On his second feature, THE HEADMISTRESS, Jay once again served as the co-director, editor, and as a producer. THE HEADMISTRESS was acquired by Indican Pictures and will be released in 2022. Along with his filmmaking partner, Chris Micklos, Jay co-hosts INDIE HORROR RISING, a weekly podcast about indie horror filmmaking, indie horror films, and indie horror filmmakers.



Tasos Eliopoulos (Composer)

**Tasos Eliopoulos** was born in Athens, Greece and began composing music at age 5 on the piano. At age 7 he entered the Athens Conservatory to study classical violin, piano, harmony, counterpoint, orchestration and composition with George Diamantis, student of Pierre Lantier. Tasos was also a member of the chorus and symphonic orchestra of the Athens Conservatory, where he completed studies in cinema music, music and technology, and sound engineering. Since 2014, Tasos has scored over 30 films in the United States and Internationally, which have garnered him awards along the way.

## MAIN CREDITS



### Starring

Katherine Bellantone | Tom Dacey Carr | Thomas McCarthy  
Hunter O’Harrow | Ayden Skye | DeChantel Kosmatka  
Valerie Meachum | David Sapiro

#### Directed by

Christopher A. Micklos  
Jay Sapiro

#### Written by

Christopher A. Micklos

#### Story by

Glenn Chung  
Christopher A. Micklos  
Jay Sapiro

#### Producers

Glenn Chung  
Christopher A. Micklos  
Jay Sapiro

#### Executive Producers

J.J. Alaily  
Chad Brown  
Alex Evens

#### Director of Photography

Daniel Andera

#### Editor

Jay Sapiro

#### Music by

Tasos Eliopoulos

#### Makeup Department

Jenni Schenk

#### Sound

Jacob Fadke  
Jacob Mitchell

#### Supervising Sound Editor

Audrey Martinovich

#### Visual Effects by

Grid Studio

#### Additional Visual Effects

Stacey Palmer  
Glenn Chung

#### Illustrations by

MVMET

#### Camera

Daniel Andera  
Tony Porter

#### Gaffers

Tony Porter  
Aaron Zakowski

#### Best Boy

Randy Slagle

#### Production Assistant

Joshua Reavis

#### Set Designer

Jessica Day

#### Practical Effects

Jenni Schenk

#### Drone Operator

Jason Knight

#### Post-Production Supervisor

Jay Sapiro

#### Sound Designer

Audrey Martinovich

#### Dialogue Editor

Audrey Martinovich

#### Foley Artists

Buzz Kemper  
Noah Gilfillan  
Audrey Martinovich

#### Photographers

Quinn Beaupre  
Claire Kopperud

#### “Psalm 23”

Written & Performed by  
Carrellee

#### “Elder of Zion”

Written & Performed by  
The Softrocks

## THREE TORTURED MINDS NEWS ARTICLES / INTERVIEWS



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**The Capital Times, Feature Article, October 28, 2017**

**“Local filmmakers deliver their baby—a horror movie—with *The Nursery*”** [\[CLICK TO READ\]](#)

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***Isthmus*, Article, October 26, 2017**

**“Homegrown horror”** [\[CLICK TO READ\]](#)

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***PopHorror.com*, Interview, June 2018**

**“Interview With Christopher Micklos and Jay Sapiro, Directors of *The Nursery*!”** [\[CLICK TO READ\]](#)

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***HorrorFuel.com*, Interview, June 12, 2018**

**“Directors Chris Micklos and Jay Sapiro Talk *The Nursery* In An Interview”** [\[CLICK TO READ\]](#)

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***PromoteHorror.com*, Interview, May 23, 2018**

**“Exclusive Interview with *The Nursery* Directors Christopher A. Micklos and Jay Sapiro”** [\[CLICK TO READ\]](#)

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***MastersOfHorror.co.uk*, Interview, May 22, 2018**

**“Interview with Christopher A. Micklos and Jay Sapiro”** [\[CLICK TO READ\]](#)

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***SpoilerFreeMovieSleuth.com*, Interview, May 2018**

**“Interviews: Filmmakers Christopher A. Micklos & Jay Sapiro Talk About Their Horror Film *The Nursery*”** [\[CLICK TO READ\]](#)

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***HorrorNews.net*, Article, July 26, 2020**

**“THE HEADMISTRESS Adds Composer Tasos Eliopoulos”** [\[CLICK TO READ\]](#)

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***PromoteHorror.com*, Article, August 12, 2020**

**“THE HEADMISTRESS Adds Digital VFX Team”** [\[CLICK TO READ\]](#)

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## THE NURSERY: Three Tortured Minds' First Film | Critical & Festival Success



“absolutely should not be missed”

- *Horror Fuel*

“*The Nursery* is really a fun ride.”

- *PopHorror*



“a real surprise”

- *ReelReviews*

“awesome”

- *Tales of Terror*

“paranormal encounter that you won’t want to miss”

- *inDIEhorror*

“creepy as hell”

- *Geek Legion of Doom*

“chilling experience”

- *1428 ELM*

“*The Nursery* is a ghost story done right; a heady cocktail of spirits, metaphysical pondering, and straight up murder biz that absolutely should not be missed by horror hounds that dig on a great haunted house yarn!”

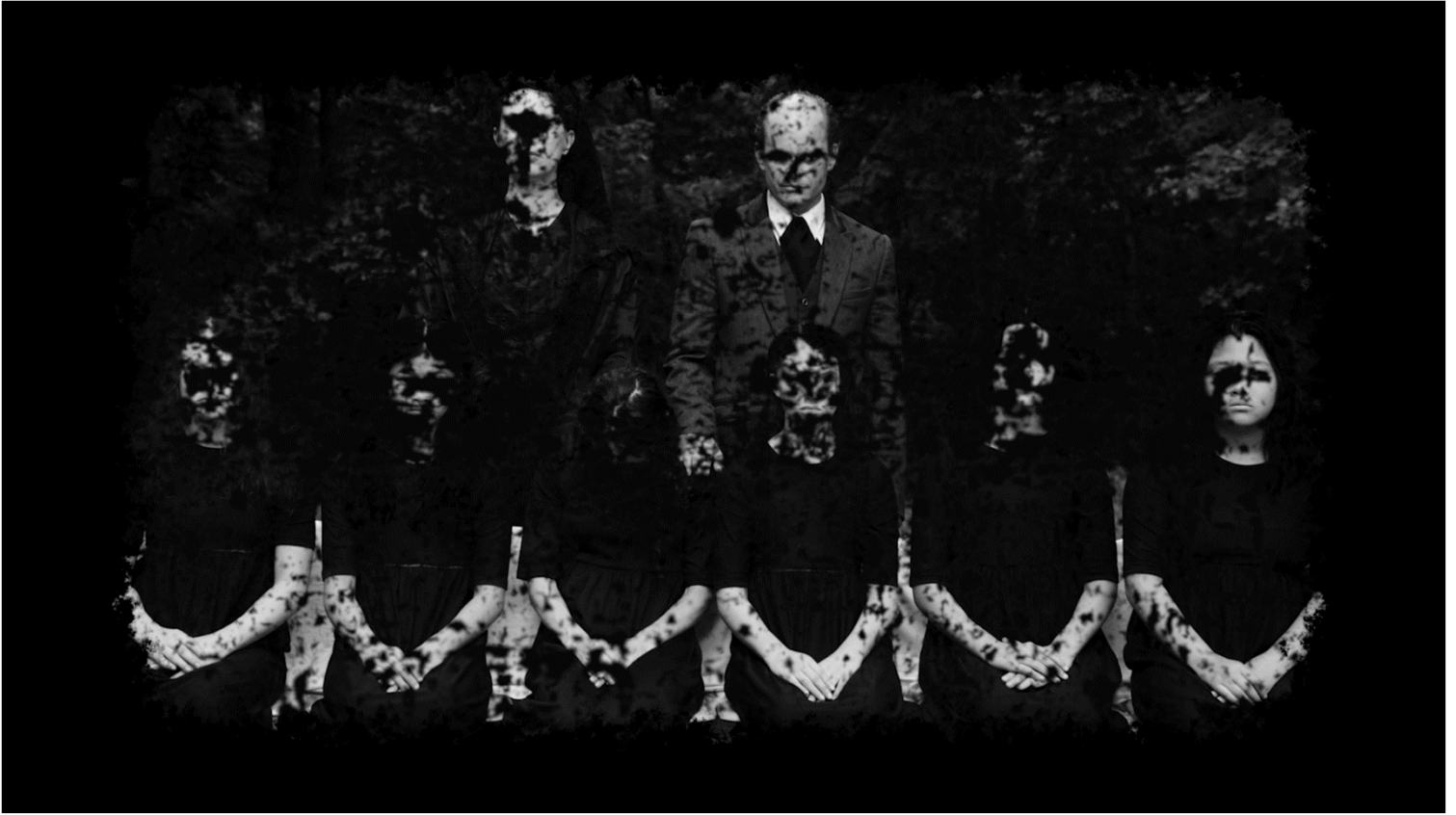
- *Horror Fuel*

“it does boast oodles of atmosphere and visual panache”

- *SexGoreMutants*



## CONTACT & LINKS



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IMDB:

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<https://threetorturedminds.wordpress.com/>