



WHITE

KILL ME, DEADLY!

A FILM NOIR COMEDY



OPIATE OF THE MASSES PRESENTS

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MAIN CAST

Charlie Nickels	Dean Lemont
Mona Livingston	Kirsten Vangsness
Ida	Lynn Odell
Lady Clairmont	Lesley-Anne Down
Veronica Clairmont	Raleigh Holmes
Clive Clairmont	Nicholas S. Williams
Bugsy Seigel	Joe Mantegna
Dewey	Keith Allan
Jonesy	Joe Roche
Adrain Wilson	Time Winters
Jaime Guterrez	Paul F. Tompkins
Louie Shorts	Darrett Sanders
Henry Lumpkus	Phinneas Kiyomura

CREW

Director	Darrett Sanders
Screenplay	Bill Robens
Director of Photography	Nicholas Trikonis
Production Designer	Krystyna Loboda
Costume Designer	Kimberly Freed
Original Music	Bill Newlin
Editor	Darrett Sanders
Sound	Anthony Enns
Unit Production Manager	Robin Chamberlin / Buddy Enright
Executive Producers	Kirsten Vangsness / John Money
Producers	Darrett Sanders
	Dean Lemont
	Bill Robens
	Wendi West
	Phinny Kiyomura
	Kelsey Wedeen

USA / 2014 / 101 Minutes / English / B&W / DCP / 1.85 Flat / 5.1 Sound

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

Kill Me, Deadly was adapted from Bill Robens' successful stage play and produced in Hollywood, CA at Theatre of NOTE in 2009. The screenplay was adapted by Bill Robens and the film was produced by members of the same theatre company that staged the 2009 production. Except for a \$200,000 Kickstarter campaign, the film was privately funded. Principal photography was completed in August, 2013 and post-production concluded in February of 2014. *Kill Me, Deadly* is a parody of classic 1940's film noir and has fun with the archetypes that inhabit those classic films. The film is presented in glorious black and white to echo the look and feel of the classics.

In **Kill Me, Deadly**, private detective Charlie Nickel's (Dean Lemont) life is thrown into turmoil when his wealthy client, Lady Clairmont (Lesley-Anne Down) is murdered and a priceless diamond stolen. In the process of searching Los Angeles for clues and interrogating key suspects - including the Clairmont children, Clive (Nicholas S. Williams), and seductive Veronica (Raleigh Holmes) and the disgruntled **CENSORED** employees, gardener Jaime (Paul F. Tompkins) and butler, Adrian (Time Winters) - Charlie falls into a torrid love affair with beautiful nightclub singer Mona Livingston (Kirsten Vangsness). Charlie is too blinded by love to suspect Mona's intentions, but his intrepid secretary, Ida (Lynn Odell), can place his new girlfriend with both the **CENSORED** and **CENSORED** on the night of the murder. Furious at having been played for a chump, Charlie starts to grill Mona for answers but is interrupted by hired goon, Louie (Darrett Sanders) who subdues and abducts Charlie, and takes him to the lair of noted L.A. gangster, Bugsy Siegel (Joe Mantegna). Bugsy wants the diamond in order to fund his dreams of a new Las Vegas and suspects the butler, Adrian (who owes Bugsy \$75,000 in gambling debts) has it. While conscripting Charlie to find Adrian, he relates new evidence that ties **CENSORED** and **CENSORED** together as co-conspirators in the heist. Charlie is quickly dissuaded of this when **CENSORED** is found dead. And when **CENSORED** is subsequently bumped off, Charlie's investigation leads him to the sobering conclusion: it was **CENSORED** the whole time.



IT'S 1947, AND HARD-BOILED PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR CHARLIE NICKEL'S CLIENT IS MURDERED AND HER PRICELESS DIAMOND STOLEN. THE INVESTIGATION FORCES HIM TO DO THE ONE THING HE VOWED NEVER TO DO AGAIN: TRUST A DAME.

KILL ME, DEADLY IS A FILM NOIR COMEDY WITH THE FEEL AND LOOK OF THE CLASSIC NOIRS OF THE 1940'S. A LOVE STORY WITH DECEIT, MURDER AND DOUBLE CROSSES TOLD IN GLORIOUS BLACK AND WHITE.



Kirsten Vangsness - Mona Livingston, Executive Producer

Kirsten is best known as the bespectacled-brainiac-tech-kitten Penelope Garcia on the CBS hit drama *Criminal Minds & Criminal Minds: Suspect Behavior* and currently can be seen in season two of the weirdly wonderful web-series *Pretty*. Her stage work has garnered the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award for best emerging comic actress, 15 Min of Fem Best Actress Award, and a Garland Award for best actress for the West Coast premiere of Neil LaBute's *Fat Pig* at the Geffen Playhouse. Vangsness's plays and performance-art pieces have been seen throughout Los Angeles, New York and at Theater of NOTE in Hollywood, the company of which she is a member.



Dean Lemont - Charlie Nickles, Producer

Dean is an award-winning actor, writer and producer, currently living in Los Angeles. Dean has collaborated with his Opiate of the Masses cohorts for over a decade, creating many (typically hilarious) projects for both stage and screen. He co-founded Bunkhouse Films with Jennifer Nicole Lynn (also his lovely bride - lucky guy). The current film production of *KMD*, marks the return of Dean to his critically acclaimed role as hard-boiled yet clueless private dick, Charlie Nickles, this time for the big screen. He has also appeared in the independent features *Scream of the Bikini* and *Outta Sync*, among others, and on television in such hit shows as *Criminal Minds*, opposite Mandy Patinkin, and *The Shield* with Michael Chiklis.

Lesley-Anne Down - Lady Clairmont

Lesley-Anne got her start in TV in 1973 on the Emmy Award winning British drama series, *Upstairs, Downstairs*. In 1975, she moved to Hollywood and began her film career. She starred in the 1976 movie *The Pink Panther Strikes Again*, and later was cast opposite Elizabeth Taylor on the film adaptation of *A Little Night Music*. Down worked as leading lady in film, and starred opposite Kirk Douglas, Lawrence Olivier, Sean Connery, Anthony Hopkins, Harrison Ford and Donald Sutherland in various films. Her major roles were in *The Betsy* (1978), *The First Great Train Robbery* (1979), *Hanover Street* (1979), *Rough Cut* (1980), *North and South* for which she was nominated for a Golden Globe (1986), *Dallas* (1990), *Death Wish V: The Face of Death* (1994), *Sunset Beach* (1996), *The Bold and the Beautiful* (2003), *Rosewood Lane* (2011).



Joe Mantegna - Bugsy Seigel

With over 100 films like *Searching for Bobby Fischer*, *The Godfather Part 3*, *Celebrity*, *Forget Paris* and *Liberty Heights* to name a few, Joe has proven his versatility as an actor and his passion for the art. Joe is no stranger to television either. Whether it's an award winning TV movie like *The Rat Pack* or *The Last Don*, or a critically acclaimed series like *Joan of Arcadia*, *The Starter Wife*, or currently as the star of the long running hit show *Criminal Minds*, it seems like it's hard not to turn on the TV and see Joe. Celebrating forty years in show business, Joe shows no signs of slowing down.





Lynn Odell as Ida



Time Winters as Adrian Wilson



Paul F. Tompkins as Jaime Guttirez



Nicholas S. Williams as Clive Clairmont



Raleigh Holmes as Veronica Clairmont



Phinneas Kiyomura as Henry Lumpkus



Darrett Sanders as Louie Shorts



Keith Allan as Dewey

Joe Roche as Jonesy

"Does for film noir what *BLAZZING SADDLES* did for the Western. It's meticulously crafted, genius comedy."

- Bill Kates



INFLUENCES

Director Darrett Sanders and writer Bill Robens worked very closely on the style of *Kill Me, Deadly*. They gathered at each others homes for months watching as many noirs as possible. Some of these films would have direct references in our film and some would provide ideas for how to execute shots. Bill Robens' script was heavily influenced by *The Maltese Falcon*, *Double Indemnity*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *The Big Sleep*, *Out of the Past* and the more recent *Chinatown*. The dialogue from the stage play and the screenplay wonderfully mimics the slang and style of the noir patter. The characters are heightened versions of the noir archetypes and the visuals had to mirror these classic films. Scorsese's *Taxi Driver* even inspired visual moments in the film and had a direct influence on the score. The scene in which Mona Livingston is at the butler's house required us to hide her appearance. Darrett had the idea to only show her shadow on the wall as she derides poor Adrian Wilson. This image was inspired by a scene in Orson Welles' *The Stranger*, while a classic moment in *The Godfather Part II* is mimicked in a scene in a flophouse hallway. Camera blocking and staging were inspired by specific films like Stanley Kubrick's *The Killing* and *The Postman Always Rings Twice*. The first meeting between Charlie Nickels and Veronica Clairmont in the Clairmont mansion is taken directly from *The Big Sleep*. Darrett and Nicholas Trikonis (Director of Photography) studied the outstanding work of cinematographers John Alton, Gregg Toland, Nicholas Musuraca, John F. Seitz, and Russell Metty among others. Moments for actors were inspired by the films of Robert Mitchum, Richard Widmark, Gloria Swanson, Sterling Hayden, Barbara Stanwyck, Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, Lana Turner, and Veronica Lake. Bill Newlin's rich score was inspired by composers Bernard Herrmann, Max Steiner, Jerry Goldsmith, Franz Waxman and even selections from *The Ren and Stimpy Show*. A great deal of fun was had researching all the influences that would go into *Kill Me, Deadly*.

PRODUCTION NOTES

The twenty-six day shooting schedule was spread over four different phases of production due to the the financial requirements needed to produce the film. The period film required building sets, acquiring costly locations and paying union wages.

The first phase was completed in the fall of 2010 at Musso & Frank Grill in Hollywood. We were not sure how the humor in the play would translate to a film version shot in the style of the classic noir. It was decided to shoot a self-contained thirteen page sequence in order to test the style and and humor. At this early phase the production was very bare bones and the crew was made up mainly of friends. Two days were spent shooting the sequence which involves meeting the lead characters, a murder and a song performed by Kirsten Vangsness.

This sequence went through post production and was presented to a private audience at Raleigh Studios in the Spring of 2011 and the resonse was overwhelmingly positive. We succeeded in bringing the style and humor of the stage play to the screen and decided to produce the film to completion. This would require budgeting for the full feature and hiring the design team and production team. The producing team set about raising funds for the next phase. A start date of June was chosen for Phase Two. Joe Mantegna (Criminal Minds, Godfather Part III) had seen the stage production and after seeing the short, he said he "would sign the deal memo in blood" to play the role of Bugsy Seigel. Using a window of time he had free from Criminal Minds and other projects we constructed a set on a soundstage in Echo Park and shot the Bugsy sequence in one very long day.

Many of the actors from the stage production reprised their roles for the film but we needed to cast a few parts outside the talent pool associated with the play - Joe Mantegna, Lesley-Anne Down (Pink Panther Strikes Again, Hannover Street, The Bold and the Beautiful), Time Winters (Shameless, About a Boy), Raleigh Holmes (Crawlspace), and Paul F. Tompkins (There will be Blood, Mr. Show) were cast in key roles. The actors from the play already knew the style and this really helped speed up the shooting process. Phase Three was shot on a soundstage in El Segundo a month after Phase Two. Our lead characters' apartments and detective office are both used many times in the film and it was decided this would be a great chunk to complete while we worked to secure more funds.

Phase Three allowed us to complete up to 40% of principal photography but we did not have enough funds to complete the last phase. It was a major learning curve for us and the marketplace proved very challenging. We only had ourselves to fall back on. Conventional methods of funding were not available to us. The common wisdom was to keep the train rolling so that was what we did. However, the next hiatus would last a full two years before we got back into production, but we had to find a way to keep the train moving.

During this time we held auditions for Lady Clairmont and Wilson. In the summer of 2013 we were determined to finish the project. We decided to reach out to fans and create a Kickstarter campaign. We had talked many times about using crowd funding but the large amount needed to complete the film made us hesitant. It was during this time other film projects started raising millions through Kickstarter so we decided to see if we could raise a portion of our funds this way.





In June of 2013, the *Kill Me, Deadly* Kickstarter campaign raised over \$200,000 from people around the world. Additional private funding was secured to make up the remaining budget and the final phase was underway.

Phase Four would require three weeks of photography and be the most challenging in regard to locations and set construction. The magic of the production was shared by the cast and the crew. It was a very exciting and fun environment. So many talented artists and technicians contributed to each phase. Some had been with us from the beginning but many were new to the project. Between Phase One and post-production over 370 people worked on the film. A large cast and crew for a small but very ambitious project. Post-production was done by Technicolor and part of our score was recorded at Capitol Records.

A very important element of the production is the style of the piece. The comedy of *Kill Me, Deadly* comes from the actors playing ridiculous situations, reciting comical dialogue in a serious tone. The characters live in a dark and corrupt world. The visual style is taken from the classic Hollywood films of the 1940s. Composition and camera movement must be of the period. Many of the lower budget noirs were staged for the camera in a much different way than we are used to now. The staging was more efficient. The actors would move to the camera as opposed to the camera moving towards them. Our staging allowed for fewer set-ups. Conventional coverage was minimized to incorporate shots with longer takes. You just don't have time to always move the camera and reconfigure the lighting. The lighting was crucial to creating the look and feel of the classic noir and shots and locations were chosen to mimic those classic films.

The Art Department did an outstanding job creating the various atmospheres in the film. We had a great many locations for a small film with a very modest budget. We are very proud that we paid people a good wage and fed them well on set. It was important for us to follow union rules and regulations even though it would have been cheaper to do it otherwise. Not many independent productions, especially with our scale, utilize union members the way we did at our budget. Hiring union musicians to record our score and doing it locally is not common even on much larger productions. This little film did big things and we did it while having fun and encouraging the input of our many collaborators. We were often congratulated for creating such an enjoyable and supportive work environment, and that is something we are very proud of.

PRODUCTION DESIGN

The film takes place over the course of five days in 1947. Crafting a period piece on a smaller budget with nine rented locations and eleven constructed sets was a challenge. Our Production Designer, Krystyna Loboda and her team did an amazing job dressing the various rental locations. The Clairmont Mansion alone has three interiors, an outside veranda and the driveway that leads to the house. We used the Villa del Sol d'Oro mansion in Sierra Madre. It was built in 1924 by architect Wallace Neff and is a two-thirds scale replica of the Villa Collazi near Florence, which is said to have been designed by Michaelangelo. It has been used in both *Legally Blonde* movies, *The Princess Diaries*, *A Walk in the Clouds*, and *Mommie Dearest*.

Our Art Department did an amazing job filling the main room and library with beautiful set pieces. We shot at the mansion for five days. The Lacy Street Production Center in downtown Los Angeles is a maze of odd locations. It was here that we created a Bunker Hill flophouse, a very handsome alley and shot our driving sequences on a green screen. King Gillette Ranch in Calabasas stood in for the Mexican-American community of Chavez Ravine and our Laurel Canyon settings. During the period when the film takes place, the members of Chavez Ravine were forced out to make way for Dodger Stadium. We used a few structures on the ranch property and dressed the buildings and area to depict the community. Laurel Canyon Boulevard of today is a major traffic artery but in the late 40's it was a rural area with a lesser used road. We were fortunate to find a beautiful canopy of trees and a road on the ranch to become our boulevard. In the film, the butler's house is riddled with machine gun bullets. We had to build a false exterior on a soundstage in order to execute the special effects which required us to find an exterior setting that we could match. Our location supervisor found a house near our downtown headquarters that fit the style of the characters house. We shut down the street for a full day in order to get the day and night shots at that location.

Echo Park Lake is a very busy area and was under construction during our shoot. For this location we found a small lake inside Ernest Debbs Regional Park to act as our park exterior. We shot the nighttime bridge sequence on a soundstage. Hollywood's famed Musso & Frank Grill became the location for Tony's Liquor Lounge. The Grill was a favorite hangout for Charlie Chaplin and Douglas Fairbanks, Raymond Chandler did a great deal of writing there. It has not changed much since the 40's so it was a perfect place to shoot the thirteen-page sequence.

Some sets were best suited for the soundstage and we had eleven to juggle during production. The logistics involved in shooting three sets, tearing them down and building a few more while we popped over to some exteriors - this is a testament to the great work of our Art Department and the scheduling of our first A.D. The apartment sets of our lead characters had to have a specific style. Charlie's apartment was modeled after a unit in the Alto Nido which was used in *Sunset Boulevard*. Mona's one bedroom apartment needed to have the flair and style of her character. Bugsy Seigel's office needed to have a more modern feel. We wanted our Bugsy to be more neoteric than the other characters in the film. His taste in art and furniture was wonderfully created by Krystyna's set.

The detective office needed to have the iconic look of Marlowe and Spade. The library exterior, Jaime's shack, Echo Park Bridge and smaller sets still had to have the detail and style that supported the story. Shooting on location is exciting but shooting on a soundstage with more control of the environment allowed us to do much more with blocking. We built camera portals in some of the sets so we could eliminate the need to remove a wall. Location shooting and soundstage sets were challenging for different reasons and each provided us things that the other could not offer.



THE TEAM

Darrett Sanders - Director, Producer, Louie Shorts, Editor

Darrett is an experienced Director of Photography, editor, camera-man, and producer and his hands-on approach behind-the-scenes gives him a direct connection with many technical aspects of the films he makes. His most recent film projects includes *Scream of the Bikini* in which he was Director of Photography, editor, producer and played the supporting role of Humbert. He teaches film production and digital arts at a private school in Encino, California. His work as an acclaimed actor has spanned many years and much geography, including Seattle, South Carolina, Los Angeles, New Mexico and Denver. *Kill Me, Deadly* is his first feature as a director.



Bill Robens - Writer, Producer

In addition to the stage play and screen adaptation of *Kill Me, Deadly*, Mr. Robens has authored several critically acclaimed, smash hit plays, including *The Poseidon Adventure: the Musical* (co-written with Genemichael Barrera and featured in the Fox Movie Channel documentary *Cult Culture: the Poseidon Adventure*), the comedy variety show, *A Fish Without His Flippers*, and the perennial Hollywood favorite, *A Mulholland Christmas Carol*, which earned Mr. Robens an L.A. Weekly Award for Best Adaptation. He also co-scripted the Eurospy thriller/comedy feature, *Scream of the Bikini*, which garnered Best Comedy at the 2009 Thrillspy Film Festival in Washington, DC and won selection by several film festivals nationwide.



Nicholas Trikonis - Director of Photography

Nicholas began as a still photographer, shooting for the music and fashion industries. He attended Cal Arts receiving his BFA in Fine Art Photography. Nicholas began working as a Cinematographer, shooting contemporary artist's film installations. His work on these film installations have been show at the MoMA New York, The Venice Biennale, and many more. Completing his path into motion pictures, Nicholas attended The AFI Conservatory, receiving his MFA in Cinematography. He is currently based and works in Hollywood.

Krystyna Loboda - Production Designer

Recent feature film credits include: Sam Raimi's *Murder of a Cat* starring Greg Kinnear, *Fort Bliss* with Michelle Monaghan and Ron Livingston, *Filly Brown* with Edward James Olmos and Lou Diamond Phillips, *White Swan* with Christian Slater, *Red Sky* with Bill Pullman directed by Mario Van Peebles, and *Christina* starring Avatar's Stephen Lang. Before joining the ranks of independent film, Krystyna began her career on the stage. Her theatrical set and lighting designs have been seen on London's West End, the Edinburgh Festival, the International Scenography Quadrennial in Prague, and the World Stage Design Expo in Toronto. As a student, she was honored with an Emmy Award for the short film *The Elements*. She is a member of IATSE local 800, Art Director's Guild and is represented by APA.

Kimberly Freed - Costume Designer

Costume Designer KimberlyFreed designs for film, television, music videos, commercials, fashion editorials, theatre, and celebrity styling for red carpet and press tours. She completed formal training in fashion design at Otis College of Art & Design and is a member of the entertainment industry's prestigious Costume Designers Guild. www.kimberlyfreed.com.

Bill Newlin - Composer

Bill Newlin's musical experience runs the full spectrum from performing in intimate entertainment settings, to large scale venues, to filmed entertainment. He has spent the last fifteen years working in Los Angeles. Here he has composed the scores for several independent films, including most recently, *Scream Of The Bikini*, *Malpractice*, *Wingtips*, *Remember To Breathe*, and *Kill Me Deadly*. He has worked as orchestrator on several films, including *My Week With Marilyn*, *Argo*, *Life Of Pi*, *The Hobbit - The Desolation of Smaug*, and *Godzilla*. He has also served as musical director on many local theatrical productions, and as accompanist for very talented cabaret performers.

John Money - Executive Producer

John Money has been involved in professional film and theatre since 1981, and is an experienced actor, writer, stage manager and producer. Some of the productions he worked on in New York City include the original off-Broadway productions of *Extremities*, *Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All for You*, and the Steppenwolf's productions of *Orphans*. While in New York, John worked as a copy writer and publicist for Doubleday Publishing, and in the fiction department for Cosmopolitan Magazine. In the mid-1980's, Mr. Money formed his own production company (Dinero Productions) and developed *Strange Interlude(s)*, *Deranged Durangments* and *Bat Sh!t Crazy*. He has worked as a reader/story analyst for The Story Department, Ladies Home Journal, Paramount Pictures, IRS Media and the Dramatist Guild's Young Writers Project. Since moving to southern California, John has worked in development at TriStar Pictures and written for the cable series More of You. In addition, he was the Director of Operations for Klee, Tuchin, Bogdanoff & Stern, LLP.

OPIATE OF THE MASSES



John Money - Darrett Sanders - Kirsten Vangsness - Wendi West - Phinneas Kiyomura - Dean Lemont - Kelsey Wedeen - Bill Robens

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