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**TROPHY** Written and Directed by Jeremy Bouchard

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### Short Synopsis

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A reclusive woodsman makes a silent journey through the wilderness to do a harmless bit of ice fishing. But when he finds a lone red shoe on the middle of a frozen lake, the man's isolated existence turns increasingly paranoid. What follows is a haunting examination of a broken man's life as he attempts to seek solace in the discovery of a mysterious woman he finds sleeping in the snow.

**TROPHY** is a haunting meditation on the struggle for self-actualization amidst opposing stereotypes in the conflicted culture of Canadian nationalism.

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**Director's Statement**

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On an especially cold winter's night in Montreal, walking from the metro to my apartment, I saw a man sleeping in the snow. There didn't seem to be much ceremony surrounding the event; people hardly noticed. Indeed, the stranger almost looked comfortable, as if by some means he belonged to the haphazard scene.

Indeed, a first glance only revealed him as a part of the landscape, one face among many, each connected by the city and its tangled network of cultures and communities. But a closer look showed the man to be First Nations, a fact which somehow helped to explain the image.

This area is a familiar gathering spot for the homeless and destitute. The stereotypes of alcoholism and drug abuse are on open display. Less obvious, however, are the circumstances driving these stereotypes. In an age of political correctness, such observations are openly deemed irresponsible - and rightly so. But what about the more private thoughts that conspire to justify the picture of a man collapsed in a snow bank? What does the hasty recognition of stereotypes say about the recognized? And what do they say about those making them?

**TROPHY** is an attempt at addressing these questions. More specifically, it is the result of a personal question to myself: How did that man come to be sleeping in the snow? And perhaps more importantly - why did it somehow seem acceptable?

The precise answers are probably unknowable, and moreover, this film has no political agenda. Yet perhaps there is wisdom in the observation that the personal is political. In the end, it is likely that this film is more an indictment of my own unconscious prejudices than a studied dissection of them. Regardless, the curious questions remain -- in the contest of blame and remittance, who emerges triumphant? And what, ultimately, is the **TROPHY**?

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**About the production**

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Shot on a Canon 5D Mark II in 2 weeks, in sub-zero weather in Albert County, New Brunswick with a modest budget, the production of **TROPHY** was nothing short of a miracle for the Bouchard brothers. Jeremy, the eldest of six brothers founded Carte Blanche Productions, wrote and directed **TROPHY** as a fire place challenge from his father. Matthew, the third, scored the film, Darren, the fifth, assisted with sound recording on set, while Tim, the second eldest managed the soundtrack recording. Fervent pre-production emails and phone calls spanned Singapore, Scotland and Canada, before the right collaborators rose to the challenge. **TROPHY** was developed as proof of mettle for the Bouchard brothers and international crew who all wanted to see if they had what it takes to make films and music for a living.

Weather was a constant factor and the crew braved biting winds on a frozen lake and long nights in a rural cabin to get the footage. The actors, both first timers, showed commitment on the level of professionals. A major source of inspiration was the sheer beauty of the winter wilderness captured in HD. This coupled with the warm participation of the local community of Albert County, New Brunswick ultimately made **TROPHY** possible.

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**Cast Bios**

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**Owen Lee Stairs**

Owen Stairs was born in Cochabamba, Bolivia in South America where he lived for most of his childhood years. He moved to Canada and spent the majority of his teenage years in Moncton, New Brunswick. He then moved to Toronto, Ontario, where he lived and worked for over ten years.

While living in Toronto he became involved in Theater Sports Workshops and when he moved back to Moncton in his early thirties he became involved in several community theater productions, including *The Importance of Being Ernest*, *Alienor* and *The Ends of the Earth*.

**Jennifer Michelle Mendoza**

Jennifer Michelle Mendoza, born in Caracas- Venezuela, is a professional ballerina who has been dancing since the age of three. A three-time guest artist at Mexico's Festival Internacional de Danza, she has earned several scholarships and awards including top prize at Venezuela's National Classical Dance Competition in 2005. Jennifer was a principal dancer with Venezuela's prestigious Ballet Teresa Carreño, where she performed leading roles in well known ballets, such as Swan Lake, The Nutcracker and Don Quixote. She has a wide-ranging repertoire which includes major roles in most of the great classics as well as extensive work in contemporary and neo-classical works.

Jennifer currently works with the Atlantic Ballet Theatre of Canada, based in Moncton, New Brunswick. **TROPHY** was her debut film performance and she looks forward to having more celluloid adventures.

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**Filmmaker Bios**

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**Director**

After successfully working in theatre as a writer, actor, and director, Jeremy Bouchard turned to filmmaking. His first feature length screenplay, **BLACK EYED DOG**, was produced by Sam Grana (Boys of St. Vincent) and Louise Jobin (well known Quebec film designer) and directed by Pierre Gang (More Tales of the City) The film premiered at the prestigious **Locarno international film festival** in 2006, with the Hollywood Reporter admiring the script as "an ambitious, well-constructed story with inventive characters and dialogue that has the comic spark of the Coen Brothers." Jeremy's versatility in writing is evident in projects that he currently has in active development. **SWEET JANE** a feature length comedy with Cirrus Productions and Pierre Evan ("**CRAZY**"). Furthermore, he is mining the familiar territory of small town New Brunswick in the soon to be produced **CAPE ENRAGE** with Tribute Films and Big Motion Pictures (Trudeau). Other projects include **ASSISTED LIVING**, an original TV series about the loves, lives, and legacies of a group of lively seniors living in an unusual retirement home. Additionally, Jeremy works as a freelance story editor for film production companies in both New Brunswick and Quebec. **TROPHY** is his first short film as a director and he hopes to continue the experience with **THE PENITENT THIEF**, a feature length comedy

**Producer/ Editor**

Stefanie Tan is a University of Edinburgh first class honors graduate in English Literature with a Masters in Science in Design and Digital Media. She was a high school teacher for 6 years, English, Literature, Drama and Philosophy for Children. In Singapore, Tan has produced award winning collaborative youth films for public exhibition, notably **THE SECRET OF HAPPY CHILDREN**, creative video reflections on what school and home mean to 5 youth (Silver, Student Video Awards); and produced several award winning 24 hour film competition submissions. She has recently published a chapter about nurturing creative communities by employing digital video in the classroom. She has produced and edited trailers and sponsor segments for Television as an On Air Producer with Central, Singapore. In Edinburgh, Tan learnt analogue to digital editing with the Film & Video Access Center. She also exhibited and designed an installation art project: **ATTENTION**: an experimental film edited purely by eye-tracking technology, as well as produced a 48 hour film entry. **TROPHY** is the third short narrative film she has edited as well as produced.

**Composer**

Matthew Bouchard is a New Brunswick Arts funded composer with a diverse portfolio from classical to contemporary work such as rock, theatre and film. He performed and composed witty work for his rock band based in Halifax, Nova Scotia. He nurtured his talent for piano and graduated from Mount Allison with several accomplished compositions. He studied under Reid Professor of Music Nigel Osborne and graduated from the University of Edinburgh MMus with a distinction in 2008, where his works were performed by the Edinburgh Quartet. He works with European musicians and recently won acclaim for best composition in the prestigious Vienna International Summer Academy with pieces for Solo Violin and String Quartet. He currently is working with Italian musicians to compose with experimental sound technology. His easy going and amiable manner make for interesting and intriguing collaboration possibilities. He is currently teaching himself to play the violin, clarinet, flute and accordion and is constantly developing new works for String Quartets and Orchestras.

**Director of Photography**

Tom Bishop is an experienced Photographer and Engineer, a graduate of Cambridge University, with a doctorate from Edinburgh in Electrical Engineering. Tom has been involved in film since his student days; he was on the founding committee for the Cambridge University filmmaking group (CineCam). His documentary work **CLOSING TIME** on the shutdown of brewery works in Edinburgh won him a Golden Video Award in 2005. More recently, he has worked on several short film projects; he had the opportunity to work with producer Stefanie Tan on **ATTENTION** and 48 hour film competition entry **THE DARLING FILES**. He was keen for a chance to put the new 5D Mark II properly to the test, to exploit the benefits of the 35mm frame to obtain some captivating and striking moving images of frozen Albert County, New Brunswick. He looks forward to working on future film projects; in the mean time some of his stills portfolio can be seen at [www.tombishop.net](http://www.tombishop.net)

