

"I read a lot of screenplays.  
This one is a masterpiece."

- C. Lytton, Holding Pictures

"A sparkling gem! A prestige  
piece – but skewed toward a  
younger audience. I'm loving  
this!" – B.Bowen, Archstone



"Sexy and Dangerous!"

- Red Thorn Productions

"I read Midnight Swing and love it.  
You write beautifully. The structure  
is precise, the story compelling, and  
the world so vital." – L. Runge, OneZero Films

3rd PLACE

**WATKINS**

FF Screenwriting  
Competition  
Finalist

TOP 10

**NASHVILLE**

FF Screenplay  
Competition  
Semi-finals

# MIDNIGHT SWING

**SUNDANCE**

Screenwriting  
Comp.  
Official Entry

**NICHOLL**

**FELLOWSHIP**

Semi-finals

**SCREENCRAFT**

**FELLOWSHIP**

Semifinals

**FADE IN**

Screenwriting  
Semi-Finals

# MIDNIGHT SWING

## GENRE

Music-based drama, LGBTQ+

## FORMAT

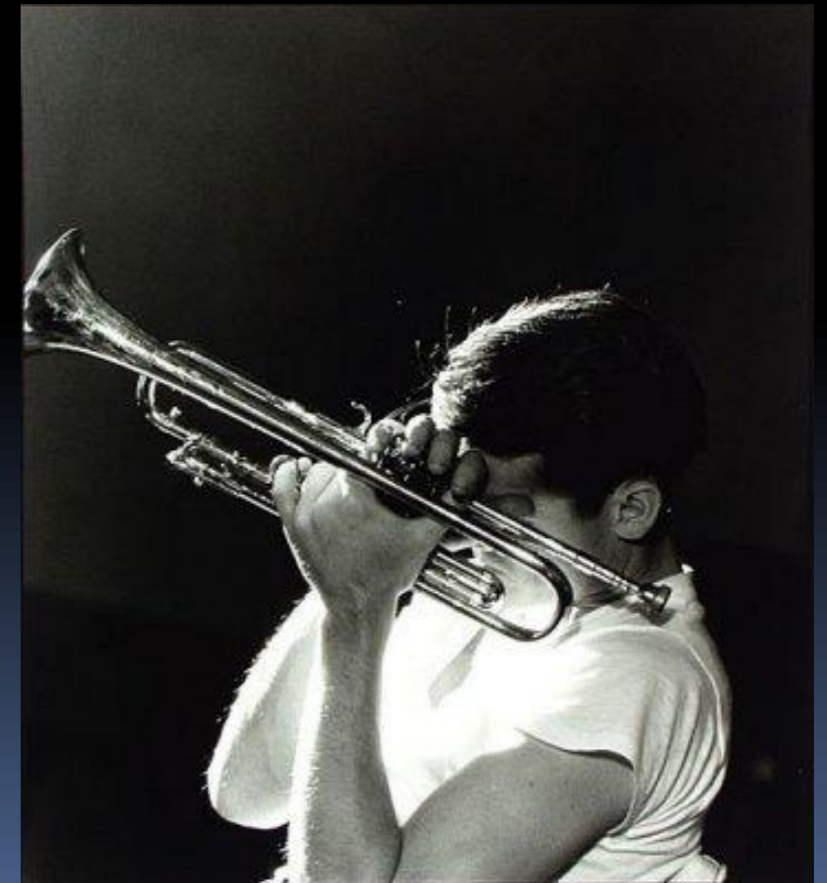
Feature with series potential

## SETTING

It's 1939 – a shimmering time when jazz dazzles, swing is King and dance halls across the nation are hopping. Lording over all of this are the boys in the band.

## LOGLINE

A boy in a small-town swing band confesses his feelings for the 2nd-chair trumpet player – just as the band is about to explode onto the National stage.



## STORY

It's 1939 – Hollywood's most glamorous year. Smoking tea is all the rage and kids as young as fifteen are hitting the road in hopes of becoming the next Benny Goodman.

Charlie is one of those starry-eyed kids. He and his best friend Jack revel in jazz, booze and girls while trumpeting with a hot local swing band in Ohio. Charlie and Jack are inseparable, but for Charlie it's different; he's secretly gay and in love with Jack, in a time when that is not something you share.

But Charlie is able to keep it cool – until a photographer from the Big Apple shows up to do a story on small-town swing bands, and sets his sights on Charlie.

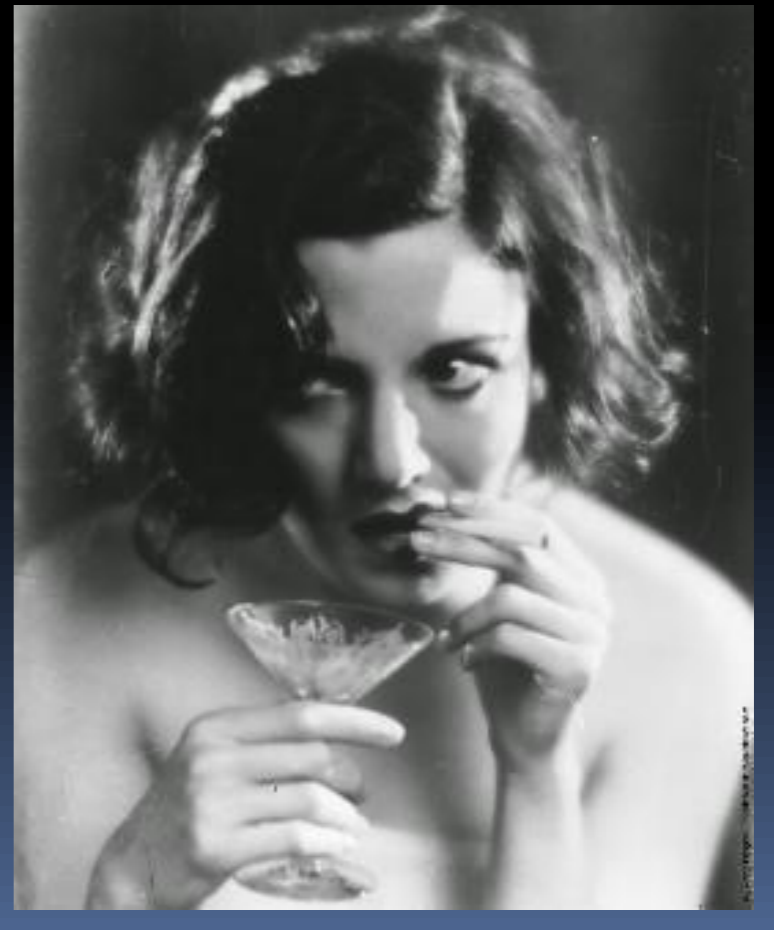
Larry is a tall drink of water, a real smooth talker – and he picks up on Charlie's sexuality.

Larry boasts that he can get Charlie and the band into the pages of *Downbeat*. After a raucous night of jazz and booze, he invites Charlie back to his hotel room under the guise that he wants to show him some photographs he's taken of famous Big Bands. Starry-eyed and naïve, Charlie accepts the invitation and has his first sexual encounter with another man.

Now, Larry has a way into the band as they prep for the show that will launch their careers. They're one show away from catapulting to a new level of fame, when Charlie confesses his love to best friend and fellow trumpeter, Jack. Once Jack gets over the shock and anger, his feelings are anything but mutual.

Everything and everyone that Charlie has ever loved is unraveling before his eyes – just because he finally came out. Now he must battle to save the band from falling apart and pick up the pieces of his broken heart and identity.

Imagine if *Call Me By Your Name* met *Almost Famous* in the Big Band era. That's the tone and emotion of *Midnight Swing*; exploring that one, brief, beautiful moment we have before we realize we are on the other side of adulthood.



Cast of Characters



The Breakdown

## CHARLIE HATFIELD

Charlie Hatfield, 18, is a young man with a natural talent for music. One of the hottest trumpet players around, he's fortunate to find himself soaking up the limelight on a local level with Teddy Arnold and his Blue Boys Dance Band. Charlie's inner conflict is his evergrowing love for his longtime best friend, Jack DuPree – the second-chair trumpet player – which he fights hard to keep secret.



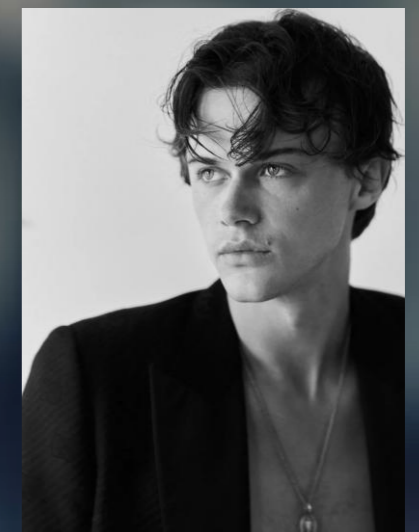
**Maxwell Jenkins**  
*Lost in Space*



**Inaki Godoy**  
*Netflix's One Piece*



**Jake Satow**  
*Adeline, Gaslit*



**Christopher Briney**  
*Mean Girls*

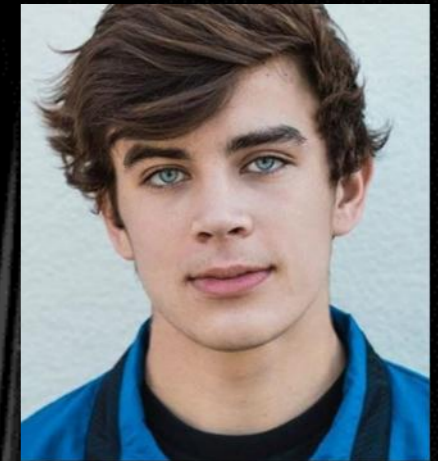
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## JACK DUPREE

Jack Dupree, 19, is not the brightest crayon in the box, but he's showy and daring and a real piece of eye candy for all the ladies – not to mention Charlie. Jack is a little rough around the edges having had to take care of his lush of a promiscuous mother for most of his life. Without a father figure to bring him up he leans toward his bandleader, Teddy, for approval and praise. Jack has a lust for attention and will take it from anyone but finds his best audience in Charlie.



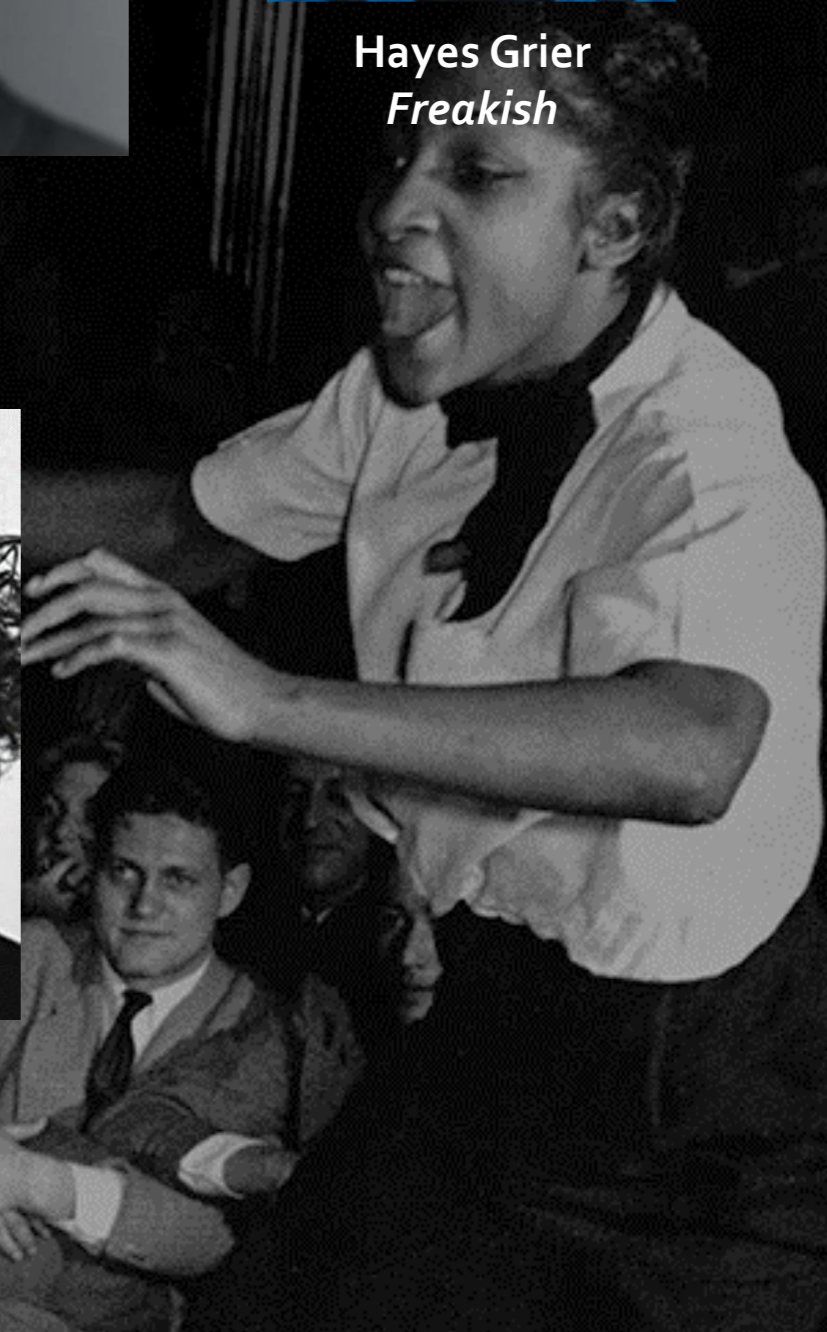
Noah Jupe  
*A Quiet Place*



Hayes Grier  
*Freakish*



Finn Wolfhard  
*Stranger Things*



## TEDDY ARNOLD

Teddy Arnold, 50+, is the desperate bandleader. Not the most confident of fellows, and lacking certain skills when it comes to women, he relies on his young musicians to pull in the crowd. A sad sack most of the time, Teddy really only comes alive when he's onstage with his boys. With no other skills to rely on he pours all his focus into making the band a topnotch celebrated entity. But he has a distraction; Jack's single mother, Mary.



Paul Giamatti



Ewan McGregor



Steve Buscemi



Hugh Jackman



Jon Osbeck



Jon Hamm

## LARRY EVANS

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Larry Evans (35-40) is a dashing, young photographer from the Big Apple who is working his way up the ranks. His photos have appeared in Metronome, Melody Maker and Downbeat, among many other venues. He loves bands – and is especially drawn to Teddy Arnold and his Blue Boys – a small outfit he comes across while on assignment for a story on little club swing bands of the Midwest. Though he has a wife in NY, Larry falls hard for Charlie.



Jeremy Irvine



Rudy Pankow



Austin Butler



Joe Alwyn



Nicholas Galitzine

## MARY DUPREE

Mary Dupree, late 40s, is a single woman whose world is centered around herself. Strikingly beautiful, she relies on her looks to get her through life. Working is just too hard for her to handle. It's much easier to bat an eye at a drooling man to get her rent paid, her groceries bought, and whatever else she desires. And that sad-sack drip of a bandleader, Teddy, is a great little meal ticket.



Keely Hawes



Juliette Lewis



Michelle Monaghan



Carla Gugino



Lauren Graham

## DAISY POPP

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Daisy Popp (a young Debbie Reynolds type), 18, is Charlie's best gal. Vivacious and bubbly, she's the envy of all the other girls because Charlie picked her. Daisy's big dream is to one day marry Charlie and become a famous dancer for all those big MGM movies that she can't get enough of. In the meantime, she has to find a dancing partner because her boyfriend is always up on the stage playing. Enter Larry Evans, the handsome journalist from DownBeat Magazine!



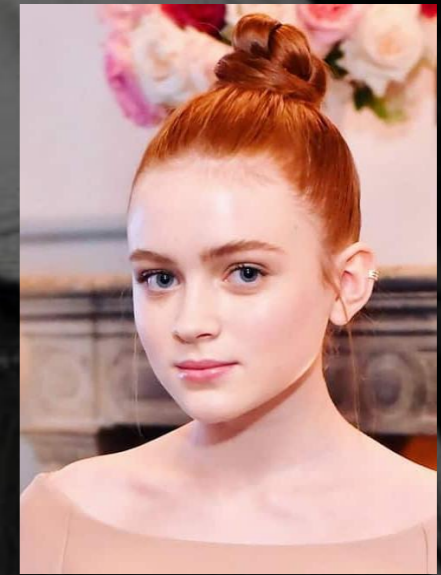
Emma Myers



Maisie Williams



Taylor Richardson



Sadie Sink

## DINAH

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Dinah is Daisy's best friend in the whole world. These two are inseparable. Where Daisy is a flash of color and energy, Dinah is the more collected one.

She's beautiful, calm and smart – but her heart belongs to bad boy Jack DuPree.



Cailee Spaeny



Izabela Idovec



Kiernan Shipka



Mackenzie Foy

## From Scene 86: Daisy and Dinah try caviar.

DAISY

And what are those little things with the with grape jelly on top?

WAITER

That, Miss, is caviar.

He offers the tray and lets them choose.

DAISY

Caviar! Oh, let's try it!

DINAH

Oh, let's do!

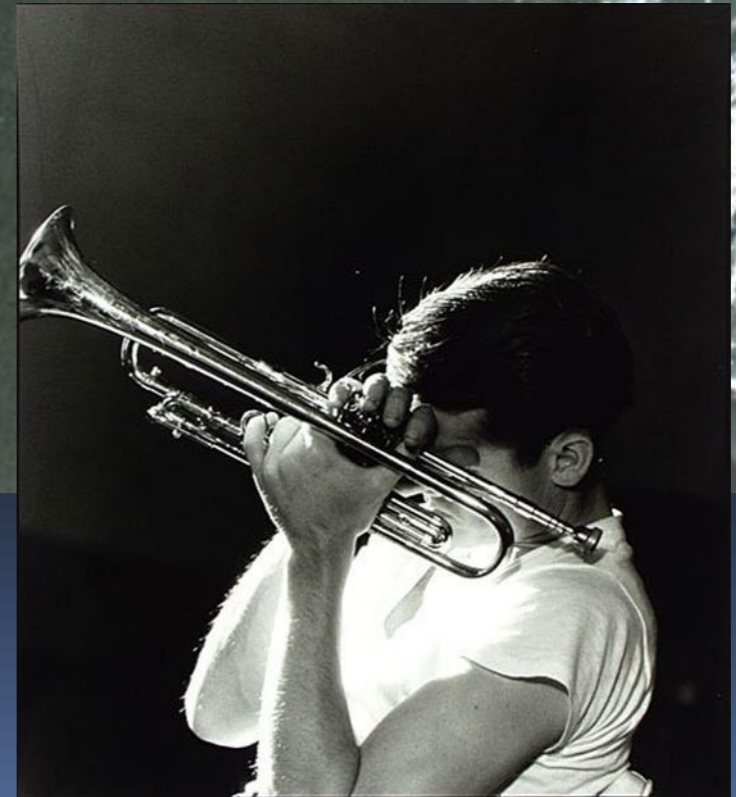
Dinah takes the cake gingerly from the tray. Daisy copies her actions. They study the glistening caviar as the waiter exits.

DINAH

What's caviar?

DAISY

I think it's French for cake.



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## MARTHA HATFIELD

Martha Hatfield (45+) is Charlie's good-hearted mother. Because her husband works third shift at the steel mill she's often left alone. Jack DuPree, though years younger, is often able to convince her to step outside of her boredom which appeals to her girlish heart.

Because of Jack sweet-talking her out of the house, she can occasionally be seen hitting the dance floor while Teddy's band plays. And her husband need never know a thing.



Larisa Oleynik



Missi Pyle



Donna Lynne Champlin



Drew Barrymore



## DANCE

Midnight Swing is lush with dance numbers and stylized movement. The big dance numbers include a **raucous night at the Starlight**, a **waltz under the stars** and a **drunken tap dance** in the rain. Sprinkled throughout the story are moments with stylized blocking that will include choreography for our fictional band, Teddy Arnold and his Blue Boys. Dance is hot in America and around the globe. One of the highest rated and longest-running shows on TV is Dancing with the Stars.

Did you know?

There are over **15,700 swing dance societies** around the globe including (but not limited to) the UK, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Russia, Canada, Eastern Europe, the Netherlands, Australia, France, Germany and the US. (Maps and stats available through the World Swing Dance Council.)



# Music

We plan to take a page right out of the Big Band swing-era by using **Public Domain** songs that are ingrained into the American conscience. This will also keep our music budget much more affordable.

With its roots in **red hot jazz**, the music of Midnight Swing will sizzle and swing in the early part of the story to match the enthusiasm of our youthful and hopeful characters. By the end of the story, the music will take a more somber and **bluesy tone** to match the arc of our characters who are now more road-worn and much less innocent. More music details with youtube audio samples are available as part of our e-package.



Visit

[Midnight Swing Music Files](#)

# Tone

**Exuberant ♦ Emotional ♦ Flashy**

We envision the world of Midnight Swing with a sizzling color palette of red, hot pink, and vibrant orange to match the energy and exuberance of our young cast. This color palette will be used throughout the first half of the story.

As our characters lose their innocence we plan to subtly cross over to a palette of lush blue, purple and green.

By the end of the story, those blue tones will subtly bleed out to give us a water-colored hue. This will depict the loss of youth our characters have gone through, and are now in the world of adulthood.

This color palette will mirror the journey of the characters, as well as the journey of the music, and the clothing they wear. Every major element will go from vibrant and exciting to more muted, bluesy and grown up.

## Deb Havener – Writer / Producer



<https://www.imdb.com/name/nm1422935>

Deb is an award-winning writer/producer and a multiple Nicholl Fellowship semi-finalist. She has recently signed with Laurie Ashbourne of LA Story Studio to develop *Barrel House Blues*.

Some of Deb's honors include:

- Nicholl Fellowship semi-finals (*Midnight Swing, Blood Land*)
- Sundance Screenwriting Official Entry (*Red Hot Charlie*)
- Screencraft Fellowship finalist (*Raining Cats*)
- CIFVF Bronze award for hip-hop doc *Groove Shack*

Deb executive-produced the acclaimed anti-bullying short, *Strain*, with actress/director Yin Chang (Disney's *Prom*, CW's *Gossip Girl*). It was selected by the PACER organization to be used as part of an educational toolkit to spark discussion about bullying among high school students. Senator Martins (NY) declared *Strain* "the most powerful film I've seen on this important topic."

Deb worked as a producer for Pretty Egg Productions for 15 years and now runs Dream River. She continues to work for a public library that has the distinction of being 1 of 5 libraries in America to have received a 5-star rating for 14 consecutive years from the Library Journal. Current projects in development include the feature *Happy Noise* and an untitled limited series.



## Diane Cornell - Line Producer



With over 25 years of experience in both domestic and foreign projects, Diane has worked with NBC, ABC, CBS, Showtime, HBO, Universal Pictures, Sony Pictures/ Columbia Pictures and Hallmark just to name a few. Diane is regularly hired to create finance packages for investors or to review and consult revisions to existing finance packages and business plans.

Diane is a member of the DGA and the PGA.

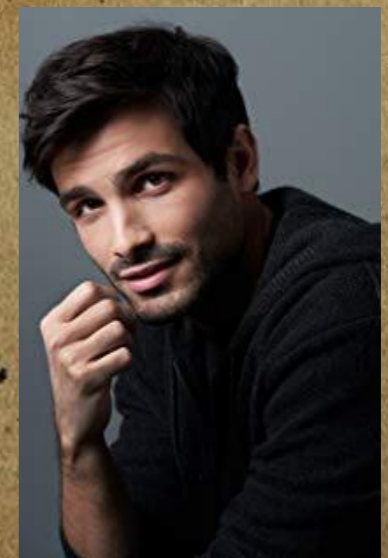
Her short film *See Me* was a festival winner at the Sacramento Film Festival for Outstanding Film. In addition, Diane was involved with the 4-time Oscar nominated film *Far From Heaven*.



## Micky Shiloah - Producer

A native New Yorker, actor/writer/musician/producer Micky, moved to Los Angeles to pursue acting in a variety of mediums. Among his credits are *Mistresses*, (ABC), *NCIS: Los Angeles* (CBS), HBO's *Westworld* and the feature film *The Party is Over* with Kathy Baker. He got his start performing in the off Broadway play *God is Nearer than the Door* as well as in front of a sold-out crowd at the Radio City Music Hall for *A Time for Music*. Micky is currently developing a contemporary musical comedy series *Bad Gay* with Deb Havener. Micky has also written and produced a number of shorts including *The Dead Diaries* and *The Church Ladies*.

You can catch Micky in his successful online comedy series *Anthony and Diane: A New York Love Story* – in which he plays all the characters: <https://canvasrebel.com/meet-micky-shiloah/>



## Vanessa Nirode - Head of Wardrobe

Vanessa's exceptional work in wardrobe and costume design runs the gamut from family programming to the colorful and macabre world of Quentin Tarantino. Her lavish costuming can be seen in such films as *Sin City* (Dimension Films), *Cop Out* (Warner Brothers), *Planet Terror* (The Weinstein Company), *Grindhouse* (Dimension Films), HBO's *Girls* and the popular *Spy Kids* franchise.

Vanessa was the Key Tailor and Head of HBO's costume-building shop for the award-winning *Boardwalk Empire*.

Ask us for Vanessa's vision deck for *Midnight Swing*!

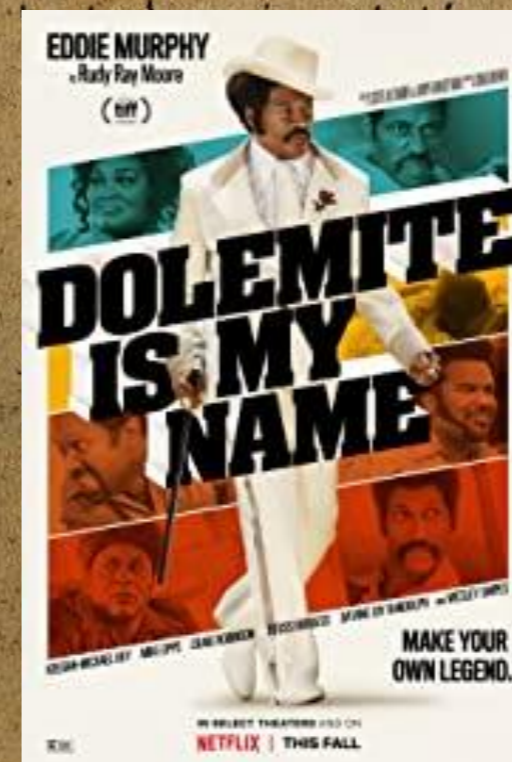


## Ron Mason - Head of Art Direction

Are you as much a fan of Ron's work as we are?

We are thrilled to have Ron Mason head our art direction for *Midnight Swing*! From his candy-colored palettes on *Glee* to his smoldering and sexy dark tones of *The Vampire Diaries*, Ron is an artist who pays strict attention to detail to evoke just the right mood while complimenting all the other production elements at play.

Ron's feature work can be seen in the smash box office hits *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2*, *Avengers: Infinity War*, *Avengers: Endgame*, *Gemini Man*, *Killers of the Flower Moon* and *Scarpetta* (Amazon Prime) to name a few.



HOLLYWOODLAND



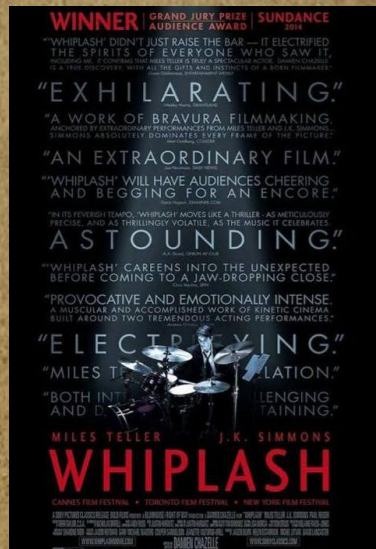
# INDUSTRY COMPS



<b>THE ARTIST</b>	
Genre: Music, Romance, Drama, Comedy	
Production Budget: \$15 Million	
Total Lifetime Grosses:	
Domestic	\$44,671,682 (33.5%)
Foreign	\$88,761,174 (66.5%)
Worldwide	\$133,432, 856



<b>CALL ME BY YOUR NAME</b>	
Genre: Drama, Gay	
Production Budget: \$3.5 Million	
Total Lifetime Grosses:	
Domestic	\$18,095,701 (44.3%)
Foreign	\$22,778,129 (55.7%)
Worldwide	\$40,873,830



<b>WHIPLASH</b>	
Genre: Music, Drama	
Production Budget: \$3.3 Million	
Total Lifetime Grosses:	
Domestic	\$13,092,000 (26.7%)
Foreign	\$35,890,041 (73.3%)
Worldwide	\$48,982,041



<b>LALA LAND</b>	
Genre: Musical, Romance, Drama, Comedy	
Production Budget: \$30 Million	
Total Lifetime Grosses:	
Domestic	\$57,749,353 (62.4%)
Foreign	\$34,742,461 (37.6%)
Worldwide	\$92,491,814



<b>BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN</b>	
Genre: LGBT, Romantic Drama	
Production Budget: \$14 Million	
Total Lifetime Grosses:	
Domestic	\$83,043,761 (46.6%)
Foreign	\$95,018,998 (53.4%)
Worldwide	\$178,062,759

# FILMING IN OHIO

A variety of productions are occurring all across the state of Ohio, thanks in part to the Ohio Motion Picture Tax Credit administered by the Ohio Development Services Agency. The Ohio Motion Picture Tax Credit provides a refundable, transferable tax credit of 30 percent on production cast and crew wages plus other eligible in-statespending.



One of our great finds is the Grand Valleydale Ballroom in Columbus, Ohio, an authentic 1930s ballroom. Today, the owners have taken great pains to preserve the authenticity of this jewel from the swing-era. A plus side for the production of *Midnight Swing* is that several scenes can be shot in and around the Valleydale's many rooms.

The beautiful Columbus Athenaeum is a single building that houses several authentic 1930s ballrooms and stages all under one roof. This will save a significant amount of time and money as we can move our cast conveniently from one prepared room to another. Built in the 1890s and refurbished in 1936, the current owners have taken great pains to keep the authenticity over the years while keeping the building up to code. This authenticity will provide a lush and affordable backdrop for many of our interior scenes and greatly enhance our production value.



# STRENGTHS

**DANCE** is hot in America and around the globe. One of the highest-rated shows on TV is the long-running Dancing with the Stars. Midnight Swing explodes with show-stopping and innovative choreography.

**MOVIE & TV MUSICALS** are hot niches that attract film review boards such as AMPAS, Golden Globes, AFI and BAFTA and generate great Box Office: La La Land, Pitch Perfect, Mamma Mia, Chicago, Moulin Rouge, High School Musical, The Artist, Whiplash – have all tapped into mainstream America. The ratings and ancillary profits generated around the globe are proof that the world craves more of this kind of picture.

**But, isn't this a period piece – and aren't period pieces hard sells?**

You may have heard that period pieces are hard sells. That said, we'd like to point out just a few period piece features and series that were successful both critically and at the box office:

American Hustle	\$ 251.2 million	Gangs of New York	\$ 193.8 million
The King's Speech	\$ 414.2 million	Brokeback Mountain	\$ 178.1 million
Call Me By Your Name	\$ 41.9 million	L.A. Confidential	\$ 126.2 million
Titanic	\$ 2.187 billion	Grease	\$ 396 million
The Revenant	\$ 533 million	Moulin Rouge	\$ 179.2 million
The Great Gatsby	\$ 353.6 million	Singin' in the Rain	\$ 12.4 million
Stand By Me	\$ 52.3 million	Saving Private Ryan	\$ 482.3 million
There Will Be Blood	\$ 76.2 million	Shakespeare in Love	\$ 289.3 million
Hairspray	\$ 202.5 million	Chicago	\$ 306.8 million
The Artist	\$ 133.4 million	The Help	\$ 216.6 million
An Education	\$ 26.1 million	Joy	\$ 101.1 million
Sing Street	\$ 13.6 million	Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood	\$374.5 million



# Contact

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<https://www.dreamriver.org/midnightswing>