



The Surrogate

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY **JEREMY HERSH**

2020 / 93 MIN / USA / ENGLISH / DRAMA

SALES:

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Logline

Jess is thrilled to be the surrogate for her best friend and his husband, but when a prenatal test comes back positive, it creates a moral dilemma that threatens their friendship.

Synopsis

Jess Harris (Jasmine Batchelor, “The Good Fight”), a 29 year old web designer for a nonprofit in Brooklyn, is ecstatic to be the surrogate and egg-donor for her best friend Josh (Chris Perfetti, “Looking”) and his husband Aaron (Sullivan Jones, *Slave Play*). Twelve weeks into the pregnancy, a prenatal test comes back with unexpected results that pose a moral dilemma. As they all consider the best course of action, the relationship between the three friends is put to the test.

Director's Statement

I came of age being told that as a queer person, I was entitled to the same rights as straight people, including having biological children if I wanted to. I set out to write a film about a relationship between queer people and their chosen family who are confronted with the same types of difficult questions (ethical and otherwise) that all potential parents have to answer, questions that are becoming increasingly complicated due to recent advances in prenatal testing technology. I don't have the answers to these questions, or a particular message I set out to convey, but I'm interested in the various points of view and conversations these questions provoke.

I make movies partly as a way of investigating my own blind spots, in order to hopefully identify them and learn from them. Like so many among us, the characters in *The Surrogate* pride themselves on being open-minded progressives who talk openly and freely about everything. The conflict in the film arises when they're finally confronted with something they don't know how to talk about. Ultimately, the characters have to confront the gap between ideals and practical realities.

Cast and Crew Biographies

JEREMY HERSH (Writer / Director) is a filmmaker based in New York. His undergraduate thesis film *Natives* premiered at SXSW in 2013. In 2015, his short *Actresses* screened at Sundance, SXSW, BamCinemaFest, and The New Orleans Film Festival, where it won the audience award for narrative short. *Actresses* was included on David Ehrlich's list of "5 Sundance Shorts That Knocked Us Out" in Time Out New York. *The Surrogate* is his first feature.

JASMINE BATCHELOR ("Jess" / Associate Producer) is from Philadelphia, PA and Atlanta, Georgia. After discovering a love for acting in high school, Jasmine went on to study acting at Wright State University and The Juilliard School. Recent television credits include "New Amsterdam," "NCIS: New Orleans," "The Good Fight," "The Affair," "Law & Order: SVU" and "Miss 2059." In addition to film and television, Jasmine's recent theater credits include projects at Manhattan Theatre Club, The Playwrights Realm, The Public Theater, Two River Theater, and Baltimore Center Stage. "Batchelor, whose expressive face recalls the oft-doomed heroines played by Lillian Gish, turns in an Isabella for the ages."-- Jose Solís, New York Times review of MEASURE FOR MEASURE at the Public Theater, December 2019

CHRIS PERFETTI ("Josh") was last seen starring in Halley Feiffer's *Moscow x6* at MCC Theatre Off-Broadway under the direction of Trip Cullman and will next be seen on the CW series "In The Dark" and Netflix's "Bonding". Chris will also be seen supporting roles in the features *The Virtuoso* opposite Anson Mount and Anthony Hopkins and *Minyan* with Ron Rifkin. On television, Perfetti most recently recurred on the FX series "What We Do in the Shadows." He was a series regular on the NBC series "Crossbones" with John Malkovich and on Stephen Falk's "Next Caller." He's had memorable recurring arcs on HBO's "The Night Of" and "Looking," "Gotham" and "Bull". Stage credits include *The Low Road* at the Public Theater; the revival of John Guare's *Six Degrees of Separation* with Allison Janney; Brandon Jacob-Jenkins' play *Everybody* Off-Broadway at the Signature Theater; Roundabout Theater Company's Broadway production of *Picnic* under the direction of Sam Gold; *The Tempest* at the Delacorte Theater for Shakespeare in the Park; *The Tutors* (Second Stage; Tommy Kail, dir.); *Cloud Nine* (Atlantic Theater Company; dir. James MacDonald) and his New York debut in *Sons of the Prophet* (for which he was the recipient of a Theater World Award).

SULLIVAN JONES ("Aaron") was a series regular in the Hulu limited series "The Looming Tower" and has made appearances in "Parks and Recreation," "The Blacklist," "The Good Fight," "Blue Bloods," "House of Cards," "Wu-Tang: American Saga," and "The Politician." This year, Sullivan can be seen in A24's upcoming horror movie *False Positive*, starring Ilana Glazer, as well as the Netflix limited series, "Halston," starring Ewan McGregor. On stage, Sullivan has worked in Off-Broadway and Regional theaters throughout the country, and most recently made his Broadway debut in the critically lauded production of *Slave Play* at the John Golden Theater. Sullivan studied Theater at Brown University and the UCLA School of Theater. He is a recipient of the Princess Grace Award for Theater.

BROOKE BLOOM (“Bridget”): Selected film and TV: the Oscar-winning *Marriage Story*, *Minyan* (Berlinale 2020), *She’s Lost Control* (Independent Spirit Award nomination for Best First Feature), “The Sinner,” Amazon’s “Homecoming.” Obie Award for Clare Barron’s *You Got Older*.

JULIE CHRISTEAS (Producer) is the founder and CEO of Tandem Pictures, since 2010. Her recent films include, *The Surrogate* (SXSW 2020) and *Black Bear* (Sundance 2020) starring Aubrey Plaza, Christopher Abbott and Sarah Gadon. She also executive produced the cult horror favorite *The Eyes of My Mother* (Sundance 2016/Magnet Releasing), *Monogamy* (Best NY Narrative, Tribeca Film Festival 2010), the feature doc *Dukale’s Dream* starring Hugh Jackman, and *Ghost Team* starring Jon Heder, David Krumholtz, Justin Long, Amy Sedaris and Melonie Diaz. Previously she produced *Blood Stripe* (Jury Prize for Best Narrative Film, LA Film Festival 2016), *Wildlike* starring Bruce Greenwood and Brian Geraghty (HIFF), and *The Sleepwalker* starring Christopher Abbott and Brady Corbet (Sundance 2014/IFC). Julie also produces original short-form content for some of the biggest brands in the world -- Amazon, Chase Bank, Ford Motors, Netflix, Cadillac and many more. Before Tandem, Julie was EVP across production and development at Renart Films.

JONNY BLITSTEIN (Producer) is the COO and Partner at Tandem Pictures. He produced the films *The Surrogate* (SXSW 2020), *Black Bear* (Sundance 2020) starring Aubrey Plaza, Christopher Abbott and Sarah Gadon, both films made under strict green-production standards. Prior to Tandem he worked at Sony and Disney, creating some of the first Snapchat Brand content programs, as well as Instagram and YouTube campaigns for Sprint, P&G, Covergirl, Walmart and more. At Oracle, he helped kick off Marvel Studios' fan-loyalty program Marvel Insider. His first feature *Let Them Chirp Awhile* (2006) was distributed by Netflix. He began his career in 2005, marketing indies for Digitas, including Park Chan Wook's *Old Boy*, and Noah Baumbach's *The Squid and the Whale*.

TAYLOR HESS (Producer) is a filmmaker and journalist based in Brooklyn. She produced and directed the award-winning ESPN 30 for 30 documentary *Mack Wrestles* (SXSW 2019), wrote and directed two episodes Vox Media’s *Explained* (Netflix), and has worked at Part2 Pictures, Alex Gibney’s Jigsaw Productions, The Independent Filmmaker Project (IFP), and Scott Rudin Productions. Taylor is a graduate from New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts and the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism.

MIA CIOFFI HENRY (Cinematographer) shot two projects premiering at SXSW 2020: Jeremy Hersh’s feature *The Surrogate* and Kati Skelton’s Adult Swim pilot “Lusty Crest.” Shorts include *Moving* (New York Film Festival 2019), *Cheer Up Baby* (Sundance 2018), and *Superior* (Sundance & Berlinale 2015). Henry has recently teamed up with longtime collaborator, director Erin Vassilopoulos, to adapt *Superior* into a feature length film, which is now in post. Assistant Arts Professor of Cinematography and Head of 1st Year Studies for Graduate Film and Television at New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts.

Credits

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY:

Jeremy Hersh

PRODUCED BY:

Julie Christeas
Jonny Blitstein
Taylor Hess
Jeremy Hersh

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS:

David Chan
Sam Bathrick
Adam Barton
Alex Cullen
Ben Wiessner
Jim Cummings
Kenneth Filmer
Tony Gapastione

CO-PRODUCERS:

Chloe Sabin
Lucas Woods

ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS:

Jasmine Batchelor
Erica Hart
Jeremy Popper

LINE PRODUCER: Roan Bibby

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY:

Mia Cioffi Henry

EDITOR: Cecilia Delgado

PRODUCTION DESIGNER: D'Vaughn Agu

COSTUME DESIGNER: Lauren Tanchum

PRODUCTION ATTORNEY: George Rush

1ST AC: Alice Boucherie

2ND AC: Beth Fletcher

2ND AC: Xavier Venosta

2ND AC: Vincent Paté

B CAMERA: Alex Cullen

GAFFER: Jacob Mallin

GAFFER: Taylor Merriman

KEY GRIP: Yasmeen Jawhar

KEY GRIP: Sam Zhang

ADDITIONAL GRIP: Mark Solomon

ART DIRECTOR: Natalie Eakin

SET DECORATOR: Desiree Kong

LEADMAN: Travis Hall

SET DRESSER: Adam McNulty

2ND UNIT ART DIRECTOR: Gabriella
Moses

ASSISTANT COSTUME DESIGNER:

Kimberly Ware

ASSISTANT COSTUME DESIGNER:

Aliana Galan

PRODUCTION SOUND: Vera Quispe

ADDITIONAL SOUND MIXER: Jin An

BOOM OPERATOR: Hector Delgadillo

ADDITIONAL BOOM OPERATOR: David
Moragas

1ST AD: Howie Shawki

2ND AD: Kelly Fernandes

ADDITIONAL 2ND 2ND AD: Sydney Stewart

HAIR AND MAKEUP DESIGN: Andrea
Saavedra

ADDITIONAL HAIR AND MAKEUP:

Marisa Mircovich

SUPERVISING SOUND EDITOR:

Tommy Stang

DIALOGUE EDITOR: Ben Kruse

ADR RECORDIST: Ben Kruse

FOLEY RECORDIST: Tommy Stang

RE-RECORDING MIXER: Tommy Stang

SOUND POST FACILITY: Dungeon Beach

SOUND POST FACILITY PRODUCER:
George Dellinger

COLORIST: Jeff Sousa

TITLES DESIGNED BY: Daniel Jaffe

POSTER DESIGNED BY: Yen Tan

CAST

JESS: Jasmine Batchelor
JOSH: Chris Perfetti
AARON: Sullivan Jones
BRIDGET: Brooke Bloom
KAREN WEATHERSTON-HARRIS:
Tonya Pinkins
NATE: Brandon Micheal Hall
SAMANTHA HARRIS: Eboni Booth
LEON: Leon Lewis
STEPHEN HARRIS: Leon Addison Brown
MARIA: Tiffany Villarin
DAN: Erin Gann
SARAH FRIEDBERG: Catherine Curtin
SANDRA: Meg Gibson
GERTRUDE: Layla Khoshnoudi
RACHEL THE WAITRESS: Jennifer Damiano
NADINE THE MIDWIFE: Jennifer Lim
DIANA: Purva Bedi
RESTAURANT MANAGER: Hannah Cabell
DAVE: Wesley Taylor
KEVIN: Hunter Canning
PIERRE: William DeMeritt
CHELSEA: Tiffany Topol
RACHEL: Rachel Siegel
PATRICK: Patrick Dreger
MALIK: Malik Jabaara
MALIK'S MOM: Yamira Siu
KELLER: Keller Chung
SOL: Sol Chung
LANGSTON: Noah George Phillips
WESLEY: Wesley Haakenson
EMILIO: Emilio Bernier
GEORGE: George Dreger

COMMUNITY CENTER PARENTS:

David Chung
Gay Cioffi
Hilda Bernier
Kerstin Haakenson

CHILD AT COMMUNITY CENTER: Alma
Louise Cioffi Fernandez

COMMUNITY CENTER FACILITATORS:

Laurence Agenor
Lisa Zaretsky
Samantha Walter
Regine Polenz
Sara Hersh
Dea Julien

RESTAURANT HOSTESS: Natasha Gilberti

RESTAURANT PATRONS:

Bailey Williams
Matthew Puccini
Hunter Wilson
Samantha Daniel
Dan Schechter
Nic Inglese
Jordie Lynn Everett
Daniel Jaffe
J. Taylor Arnold
Lanie Zipoy
Meryl Frick
JJ Bozeman
Ani Simon-Kennedy
Emily Steiker-Epstein
Sonya Goddy
Meagan Moscaritolo
Jonathan Minard
Kolbe Handal
Selah Kreeger
Amelia Courtney
Lindsey Malinoski
Sydney-Alexis Hall
Dhruvitkumar Talati
Elliot Masters
Sophie Poole
Mariya Chulichkova
Jay Hayes
Sabina Friedman-Seitz
Sophie Brooks
Akillah Clarke
Isabel Sandoval
Antoine Jaeger
Benjamin Pirog
Nicholas McCarthy
Ariane Raymundo

CAFE PATRONS:

Victoria Pollack
Amelia Courtney
Kolbe Handal
Erin Sanger
Claudia Domo
John Scheibe
Emily Burnett
Ariane Raymundo
Kamal Brown
Elliot Masters
Morgan White
Devin Vega
Jordie Lynn Evertt
Foster Reisz
Tessa Stokes

YOGA CLASS ATTENDEES:

Aaron Hersh
Erin Ream

PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS:

Joe McMahon
Jeremy Falson
Ross Mayfield
Shak Hutchinson

OFFICE PRODUCTION ASSISTANT:

Jane Kharkover

CREATIVE CONSULTANTS:

Elisa Peebles
Kendra Mylnechuk
Sara Hersh

Featuring the artwork of Bill Rebholz

Excerpt of the podcast “The Lucky Few”
courtesy of Heather Avis, Micha Boyett,
Mercedes Lara, and Valerie Schlieder.

www.theluckyfewpodcast.com

MUSIC

“Everything Must Go” by Pat McCarthy.
Written and performed by Eric J. Dejmek,
Jake Menaged, James Reen, Louis Ramsay,
Patrick E. McCarthy, and Patsy

“YWLGOML” by Outer Spaces. Written by
Cara Beth Satalino, Produced by Cara Beth
Satalino
and Chester Gwazda. Guitar and Vocals by Cara
Beth Satalino. Keys, Bass Guitar by Chester
Gwazda. Drums by Rob Dowler. Saxophone by
Ryan Syrell. Recorded and Mixed by Chester
Gwazda and Jared Paolini at Tempo House in
Baltimore, MD. Mastered by Sarah Register.
Courtesy of Western Vinyl.

“Come Back” by Frances Cone, written by
Christina Cone, courtesy of Frances Cone

“A Man Falls II” by Noah Hutton

“Train” by Goodwolf, written and performed by
Samuel Gedymin

"Both" Written and Performed by Kelly
McFarling By arrangement with Terrorbird
Media

“World Go Round” by Hannibal King

VERY SPECIAL THANKS

BRENDA ABBANDANDOLO
CARL JACOBS FOUNDATION
KEVIN HAYDEN
JEREMY O. HARRIS
ANITA TANAY & STEPHEN HERSH
NOAH HUTTON
HEIDI JARK
BENNY KAUFFMAN
FRIEDA JACOBS & FRED KLEIN
RACHEL MCKEON & SAM GEDYMIN

REGINE POLENZ & JON LEWIS
SARAH PARKER
PAUL W.R. PEREZ
TAYLOR SHUNG
ANTOINETTE TANAY
ANU VALIA
KERRY WARREN
MICHELLE WEINBERGER
ANDREW ZITEK

SPECIAL THANKS

MEGAN ABELL
RACHEL ADAMS
BRAD AKIN
ALFONSO'S
BRETT ALLBRITTON
JESSICA ALMASY
JOSH CHERTOFF & BEN ALTADESCU
THOMAS EMMET ASHTON
ANNABELLE ATTANASIO
BABYDUDES
SUSAN BALDOMAR
JULIA BALES
THE GOOD BATCH
ZBIGNIEW BEDNARZ
SOMER BENSON
PRANAV BHASIN
EFFIE'S BISCUITS
LIZ BLOCKER
A.J. BOND
JOSH BONZIE
NICK BORENSTEIN
BREVEN WARREN & BREAKER
BONNIE BREAUX
BROOKLYN BREWERY
RUTH BRILLMAN
CLAIRE BROOKS
SOPHIE BROOKS
SIENA BROWN
BETHANY JOY BURR
KAT CANDLER
J. ANDRÉS CARDONA
FRANK'S BROADWAY CATERING
JUSTIN CHAN
LILY'S CHOCOLATE

BARBARA COFFEE
JONATHAN COHEN
DAVE COLEMAN
LOUISE CRAWFORD
SARA CROW
NIA DACOSTA
SAMMY DANE
ANDREW & XAVIER VAN DEGNA
YEMANE DEMISSIE
WILL DENNIS
ELLA DERSHOWITZ
WILL DETLEFSEN
MOLLY DILLON
MEME'S DINER
JOHN DREGER
AMANDA DRINKALL
DANELLE ELIAV
ALICE ELLIOTT
DAVID ERF
AMANDA FATEMI
JASMINE FERRER
KARI FIELDS
HAND HELD FILMS
SAM FLEISCHNER
LOUISE FORD
PETER FOX
LIZZIE FOX
VALARIE FRANKLIN
DARYL FREIMARK
SUSAN FREIMARK
JAMES GALLAGHER
ALEXA GEOVANOS
TREY GERRALD
NATASHA GILIBERTI
AMY GOLDBERG
SUSAN GOLOMB
THERESE 'TAG' GOULET
CIARA ROSE GRIFFIN
OLLI HAASKIVI
LAURA HEBERTON
LUCAS HEDGES
CATRIN HEDSTROM
MAGGIE HELM
MEL HENRY
MARNIE ELLEN HERTZLER
KAREN & ROGER HESS

BRIAN HESS
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ANNE KAUFFMAN
MATT KAZMAN
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THERESA & DAN KELLY
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NATHAN B. KINNEY
JASON KOHL
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LOUISA KRAUSE
DANIEL LAABS
ANICK LAVICTOIRE
LAUREN LEDERMAN
LAWRENCE LEE
SALLEY LEE
LORENZO LEGARDA LEVISTE
SAM LIBOWSKY
ALEX LIPSCHULTZ

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DEAN LOXTON
TAYLOR MAATMAN
SCOTT MACAULAY
ANIL MAHADEV
ZACH MANDINACH
MARTINA MONRO
FAHAD MAYET
NICK MCCARTHY
ELISE MCCAVE
MEGHAN MCFARLAND
BRIAN MCOMBER
MEGAN MCQUILLAN
JORDANA MENDELSON
BUNNY MICHAEL
JUSTINE MICHELE
ELAINE BONGARTEN MICKEL
JONATHAN MINARD
SAM MINK
LAUREN MINNERATH
BARB MINNERATH
MICHAEL MOHAN
ASSAF MOR
ASHLEY MORADIPOUR
DAVID MORAGAS
ANTHONY MORRISON
GABRIELLA MOSES
KAVEH NABATIAN
GABRIELLE NADIG
STEVE NAKISHER
JOANNA NAUGLE
CRAIG NEWMAN
DAVID NINH
AMAKA NWADEI
GIGI'S PLAYHOUSE NYC
LAURA NYHUIS
MARK OBENHAUS
KAORI OGAWA
JOAN VON OHLEN
ORNANA
METTIE OSTROWSKI
TONY OSWALD
ERIC OTTEN
OTWAY
STACIE PASSON
ED PEACOCK

ANNIE PEARLMAN
LES PIERCE
JOE PIRRO
ROBERT PLONSKIER
CHARLES POEKEL
ALAN POWER
KAT PRESCOTT
BROOKLYN FIRE PROOF
KISHORI RAJAN
GAYLE RANKIN
KYLE RANSON-WALSH
SCOTT RASHAP
ELI RASKIN
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CAROLYN ROSENFELD
KENZIE ROSS
ALEX RUDOLPH
JENNIFER RUFFALO
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IAN SAMUELS
ISABEL SANDOVAL
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LEAH SHORE
TREY SHULTS
TAYLOR SHUNG
ANI SIMON-KENNEDY
ISABEL SLISZ
BARBARA AND MARC SLUTSKY
MATTHEW SMAGLIK
BILL SMITH
ETHAN WAYNE SMITH

LISA SMITH
YUKO SOBRIN
ANDREW SOLOMON
CARL SONDROL
JAMES SORRELS
DANIEL SPENCE
THE GREEN SPOT
ALEXANDRA STERGIU
MEGAN STERN
VAISHNAVI SUBRAMANI
KING TAI
DEVIN & TIGERLILY TANCHUM
COURTNEY TANIGUCHI
JOSH TATE
BREANNE THOMAS
COLLEEN THURSTON
JENNIFER WHITE & ELLEN TRACHMAN
AMANDA TREYZ
IRENE TURRI
MICHELLE URANOWITZ
CARLOS VALDIVIA
THE VANDERBILT
YIFAT VAPNIK
JOSEPH VARCA
KEVIN VILLAFUERTE
JEFF WALKER
SAMANTHA WALTER
KIRSTEN WEHR
MARK WEINBERG
KEELY WEISS
WHITNEY WHITE
BAILEY WILLIAMS
STEPHEN WINTER
MADELINE WISE
LAUREN WOLKSTEIN
NATE WRIGHT
EMILY YOUNG
BRITTANY ZAKEN
MARIE ZENITER
CASEY ZENNER
LANIE ZIPOY
BRIAN ZUPAN
EFFIE'S HOMEMADE