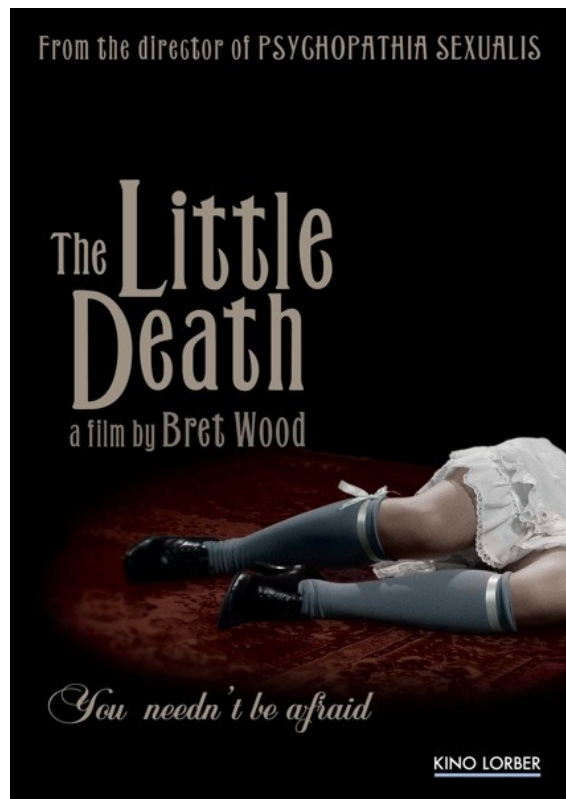


KINO LORBER
i n c o r p o r a t e d

presents

THE LITTLE DEATH

a film by Bret Wood



You needn't be afraid...

2011 / US / Color / 75 min. / 1.78:1 / in English

A Kino Lorber Release
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LONG SYNOPSIS

An adaptation of Frank Wedekind's play *Death and Devil* (*Tod und Teufel*), interwoven with elements of Anton Chekhov's short story "A Nervous Breakdown" ("Pripadok"), *The Little Death* observes the fateful intersection of four lives in the shadowed chambers of a 1910s brothel. A privileged social reformer, Eleanor Malchus (Courtney Patterson) has come to confront the brothel owner, Casti-Piani (Daniel May), to demand the release of a girl -- a former servant in her home -- whom she believes is held there in sexual captivity. Welcoming the challenge of debate (and possible seduction), the cynical Casti-Piani has Eleanor brought to his office, where they argue their philosophies of morality, sexuality and commerce. Meanwhile, a sensitive student named Cyril (Clifton Guterman) has been brought to the brothel by a pair of roguish friends (J.C. Long and Joe Sykes). Cyril tries, unsuccessfully, to engage in conversation with some of the women who work there, and ends up watching the proceedings from the wings, bitter and alone. Upstairs, Casti-Piani (whose name literally translates as "pure intentions") manages to pry beneath Eleanor's icy exterior, finding her to be more intelligent, honest, and passionate than he assumed. It appears that, in spite of their differences, they may find some common ground. Just when Cyril is losing hope of finding a companion, he meets a young woman who shares his disenchantment with the place, and his contempt for its shallow, soulless clientele. She is Lisiska (Christie Vozniak), the young woman for whom Eleanor has been searching. Eleanor is just succumbing to Casti-Piani's spell when they are interrupted by the sound of Cyril and Lisiska entering the adjoining room. Now curious for a glimpse into the unvarnished reality of the brothel, Eleanor peeks at the young lovers through a concealed window. But no one -- not Eleanor, Casti-Piani, or Cyril -- is prepared when Lisiska reveals her true self in the gaudy bedroom, and allows the *Little Death* to descend.

SHORT SYNOPSIS #1

A strong-willed reformer ventures into a turn-of-the-century brothel to confront its owner, and to liberate a young woman who is being held there in sexual captivity.

SHORT SYNOPSIS #2

A strong-willed reformer (Courtney Patterson) ventures into a turn-of-the-century brothel to confront the owner (Daniel May), and liberate a young woman whom she believes is held there in sexual captivity. While the brothel-owner attempts to mesmerize and seduce the would-be rescuer, a meek student (Clifton Guterman) and a young prostitute (Christie Vozniak) become tragic pawns in the game of sexual cat-and-mouse that is rapidly unfolding. Based on the play "Death and Devil" by Frank Wedekind ("Spring Awakening"), integrated with Anton Chekhov's short story "A Nervous Breakdown"

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CAST

Casti-Piani.....	Daniel May
Eleanor Malchus.....	Courtney Patterson
Cyril.....	Clifton Guterman
Lisiska.....	Christie Vozniak
Victor.....	J.C. Long
Leopold.....	Joe Sykes
Violet.....	Gayle Kej
Iris.....	Jill Perry
Heather.....	Sarah Falls
Buttercup.....	Jeriynn Bedingfield
Mother Adele.....	Sandra Hughes
Barman.....	Steven Westdahl
Doorman.....	Michael Hicky
Rose.....	Zoe Cooper
Daisy.....	Alison Prescott
Poppy.....	Amanda Nixon
Violinist.....	Paul Mercer
Pianist.....	Bruce Bennett
Brothel Patron 1.....	Steve Warren
Brothel Patron 2.....	Sacha A. Dzuba

Written and Directed by Bret Wood
Based on "Death and Devil" by Frank Wedekind
and "A Nervous Breakdown" by Anton Chekhov
Produced by Linda Burns
Director of Photography Chris Tsambis
Original Music by Paul Mercer
Adapted Music by Rodney Sauer
Edited by Chris Tsambis and Bret Wood

Sound.....	Jeremiah Kulani Prescott
Art Director.....	Alexandra West
Set Dresser.....	Paige McRae
Costume Designer.....	Sean Michael Patton
First Assistant Director.....	Linda Burns
Assistant Director Consultant.....	J.D. Taylor
Choreographer.....	Sandra Hughes
Camera Operators.....	Nick Hiltgen and Victoria Warren
Assistant Camera.....	Ian Deaton and Alan Melling
Still Photographer.....	Ted Westby
Sound Mixers.....	Aron Siegel and Christopher Todd Weaver
Makeup Artist.....	Fawn Ortega
Hair Stylist.....	Montgomery Schuth
Wardrobe Assistant.....	Paige McRae
Special Effects Makeup.....	Blake Myers
Property Master.....	Laurie Garner
Construction Coordinator.....	Guy Tuttle
Script Supervisor.....	Lynn Lamousin
Location Coordinator.....	Bryan Gaftman
Stunt Coordinator.....	Cooper Andrews



ABOUT THE WRITER/DIRECTOR

Bret Wood is the writer/director of the 2006 feature *Psychopathia Sexualis* (which *Sight and Sound* called a "remarkably mature and beautifully photographed debut...balancing fresh cinematic techniques with silent influences and devices"). *Filmmaker Magazine* called Wood's 2003 documentary *Hell's Highway: The True Story of Highway Safety Films*, "a Lynchian view of the nightmarish underbelly of middle America." Wood's essays on film history have appeared in *Sight and Sound*, *Film Comment*, *Positif*, and *Video Watchdog*. He is currently editing the collected works of writer William Lindsay Gresham, and developing a film adaptation of Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla*.

HISTORICAL NOTES

THE WHITE SLAVE TRAFFIC: As the world grew more modernized and urbanized in the first decades of the twentieth century, prostitution evolved into a highly organized industry. It became demonized by outspoken reform groups, who coined the sensational term "white slavery" to emphasize the cruelty of the practice and its threat to the Caucasian race. Books such as Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls or War on the White Slave Traffic (1910) provided melodramatic accounts of women held as sexual prisoners, tossing notes through the bars of their brothel cribs in hopes of rescue. The topic was also exploited by the media, often depicted in elaborate engravings in the tabloid *International Police Gazette* (whose primary readership was the sporting gentleman) and such films as *The Inside of the White Slave Traffic* (1913) and *Traffic in Souls* (1913) -- films that were conceived more to profit from the topic rather than bring about social reform. As a result of these frequently exaggerated treatments, a mythology emerged: of the morally corrupt white slave trafficker, the deceitful madame, and the innocent women duped into sexual bondage. The brothel became a place of great mystery. A place of evil...of suffering...of very little pleasure.

DEATH AND DEVIL: The play *Death and Devil* was one of Frank Wedekind's so-called "Sex Tragedies," along with *Earth-Spirit* (*Der Erdgeist*, 1895), *Pandora's Box* (*Die Buschse der Pandora*, 1904) and *Castle Wetterstein* (*Schloss Wetterstein*, 1910). It was initially published under the title *Totentanz* (*Dance of Death*) in 1906, before being reprinted as *Tod und Teufel* (*Death and Devil*) in 1909. It is sometimes referred to as *Danse Macabre* or *Damnation*. The character of Casti-Piani also appears in *Pandora's Box*, which was the foundation of G.W. Pabst's 1929 film starring Louise Brooks.

A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN: Also known as "An Attack of Nerves," Anton Chekhov's "Pripadok" (1888) is the source of the character Cyril in *The Little Death*. It follows the psychological descent of Vassilyev, an idealistic law student who is taken by his friends to a series of brothels. "He knew nothing of fallen women except by hearsay and from books, and he had never in his life been in the houses in which they live. He knew that there are immoral women who, under the pressure of fatal circumstances -- environment, bad education, poverty, and so on -- are forced to sell their honor for money. They know nothing of pure love, have no children, have no civil rights; their mothers and sisters weep over them as though they were dead, science treats of them as an evil, men address them with contemptuous familiarity. But in spite of all that, they do not lose the semblance and image of God."

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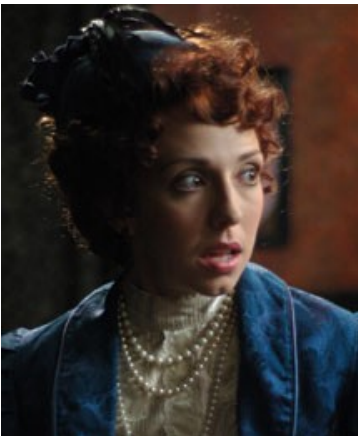
ABOUT THE CAST



Daniel Thomas May (*Casti-Piani*)

An Atlanta native, Daniel first attended Georgia Tech before throwing himself into a successful stage career. In 15 years he's performed on most every stage in Atlanta, and portrayed the great male leads in *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof*, *Hamlet*, *Bug*, *Burn This*, *The Pillowman*, *Take Me Out*, *Cotton Patch Gospel*, *How I Learned to Drive* and *A Streetcar Named Desire* to name only a few, all work praised by audiences and critics alike. Daniel holds the title of Associate Artist at both Actor's Express theatre, known for its cutting edge new work, and Georgia Shakespeare, renowned for its contemporary stagings of both European and American classics. More recently Daniel has expanded his work to include film and television, appearing in *The Vampire Diaries*, *Drop Dead*

Diva, and Bret Wood's *Psychopathia Sexualis*.



Courtney Patterson (*Eleanor Malchus*)

Courtney Patterson is an actor based out of Atlanta. While most of her work is on the stage, she can be seen in various commercials, television shows, local films and industrials. Stage credits include *Managing Maxine*, *Eurydice*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *Frame 312*, *Light Up the Sky* (Alliance Theatre Company), *King Lear*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Twelfth Night*, *Hamlet* (Georgia Shakespeare), *Brownie Points*, *Lost Highway* (Theatrical Outfit), *Boeing! Boeing!* (Aurora Theatre), *My Name is Rachel Corrie* (Synchronicity Performance Group).



Clifton Guterman (*Cyril*)

Clifton Guterman recently returned to Atlanta after several years in NYC. He has performed Off-Broadway and at various top regional theatres, including Arena Stage, Berkeley Rep, San Jose Rep, California Shakespeare Theatre, North Shore Music Theatre and Barrington Stage, among others. Locally, Clifton has acted with the Alliance, Actor's Express, Dad's Garage and Synchronicity Theatre. Fairly new to film work, he recently appeared on the CW's *One Tree Hill* and enjoyed every second on the set of *The Little Death*. He is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association, holds a BA from UGA and MFA from SCAD and teaches at Actor's Express. Clifton is from Iron City, a very, very small town in southwest Georgia.