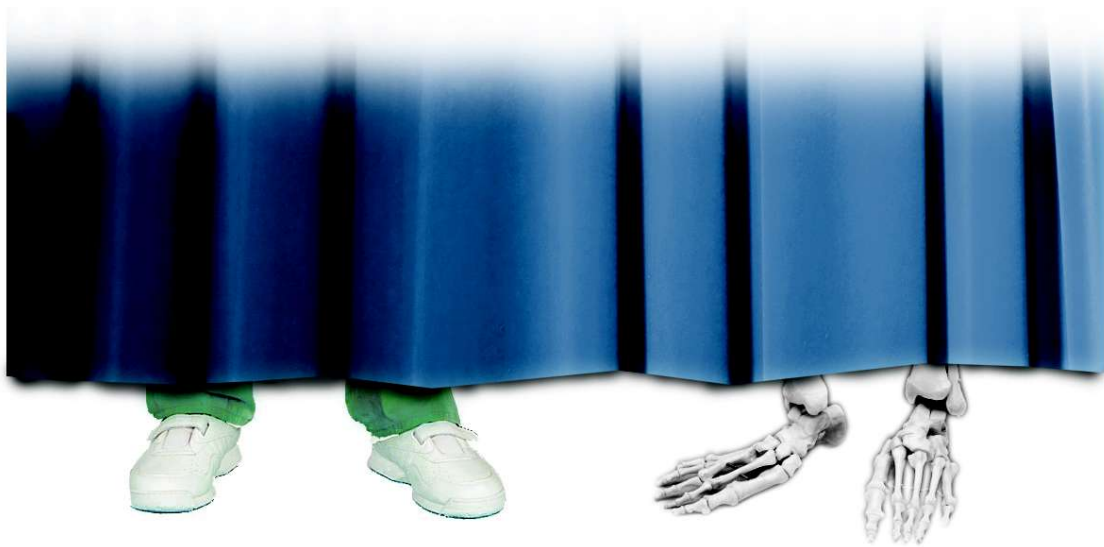


# Dr. Hedd and the Grim Reaper

A FILM BY TALIA MAZZARELLA



## **Synopsis**

Just when working in an over-crowded, under-funded hospital seems to be too much for cardiologist Dr. Hedd, he receives a visit from the sickle-bearing, wise-cracking, ACDC-worshiping Death. Understanding that Death doesn't show up at hospitals just for the laughs, Dr. Hedd realizes he must protect his three severely ill (and severely irksome) patients from the grim reaper's dangerous antics.

As a dark buddy comedy that combines the zany with the grave, "Dr. Hedd and the Grim Reaper" is a sometimes hilarious, sometimes heartbreaking contemplation of life, death, and everything in between.

## **Director's Note**

I set out to write this film, knowing the production hurdles that would need to be overcome: there was the budget I didn't have, the premise that seemed too wild, and a few off-hand comments before I began that "women can't write comedy."

Six months later and I have a solid script, the support of laughs from some of my most cynical readers, and commitments from some of my most talented peers to help me tell a story the world needs to hear.

I think the world is made up of Dr. Hedds: empirically-driven minds trying to get by in a world that doesn't always live up to their intellectual sensibilities. In fact, every character in this film is a Dr. Hedd, each one of them trying to grapple with the inevitability and incoherence of death. Yet, as serious and fearful this subject can be, I can't think of a better way to handle it than with comedy. Comedy is, after all, the reflection of what we fear most. By looking at a world through a satire, we can release this fear and look at it for what it really is.

As Mark Twain once said, "The secret source of Humor itself is not joy but sorrow. There is no humor in heaven."

## Bios

### **Talia Mazzarella** (*Writer/Director*)

Talia is currently a Junior at NYU's prestigious Tisch School of the Arts, majoring in Film/TV Production and English Literature. With over ten screenplays, twenty short directorial projects, and dozens of other film and television productions under her belt, she brings a wealth of experience along with her fresh ideas.

### **Amanda Rohlke** (*Producer*)

Amanda is also a Film and Television major at NYU, accumulating experience on dozens of films. She has produced or associated produced several films at NYU, including the advanced productions of "The Witch in the Woods," "Bohemibot," and "Suburban Shaolin." She is director of the award-winning comedic short, "The Great Cookie Heist."

### **Justine Baker** (*Assistant Director*)

Another film major at NYU, Justine Baker is an Arizona native with a passion for sound. Since choosing to study film at NYU, Justine has not only excelled academically, but has also happily found her niche in the audio world of student productions. Justine just finished production on her own Color Sync film, *The Witch in the Woods*.

## A Word About NYU's Film School

This film will be produced within the context of a 16mm production class at New York University's prestigious Tisch School of the Arts. Many graduates of Kanbar's Institute of Film and Television at Tisch have gone on to create milestones of modern cinema. Famous alumni include Martin Scorsese, Spike Lee, Oliver Stone, Joel Coen, and Ang Lee.

As an NYU student production, "Dr. Hedd and the Grim Reaper" will have access to a large number of student resources. The project will be overseen by an experienced film professor who will give professional feedback and advice for every step of the production process. In addition to that, the director will be provided with a camera and lighting equipment allotment, insurance for the production, eight hundred feet of color film stock (processing and video transfer included), and access to state-of-the-art post production facilities.

## Production Timeline

### November - December 2007

- Preliminary fundraising
- Solidifying script
- Securing key crew members

### January 2008

- Location scouting
- Preliminary casting
- Production design
- Storyboarding

### February 2008

- Final scheduling
- Securing location, crew, and cast
- Rehearsals
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### March - April 2008

- The shoot (dates to be determined)

### May - November 2008

- Post-Production
- Festival submissions and other distribution

## Budget

<b>Pre-Production</b> (Script/Storyboard printing, office/ mailing supplies)	\$100
<b>Lighting/Grip Rentals</b>	\$1550
<b>Camera and Dolly Rentals</b>	\$900
<b>Transportation</b> (Van rentals, gas, tolls, parking, public transportation, etc.)	\$600
<b>16mm Film Stock</b>	\$300
<b>Art Direction</b>	\$1100
<b>Craft Services</b>	\$1500
<b>Lab Fees / Tapes / DVDs</b>	\$450
<b>Music Fees</b>	\$500
<b>Festival Entry Fees</b>	\$300
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$7300</b>

## How You Can Help

Making a short film is never an easy task. As "Dr. Hedd and the Grim Reaper" enters production, the cost of film stock, equipment rentals, art direction, transportation, craft services, and other related expenses will need to be met. This unique opportunity for a team of student filmmakers to tackle the technical and artistic challenges of creating a cinematic portrait of life and death will be impossible without outside financial help.

We appreciate donations of any kind or amount. Every cent helps alleviate costs. In addition to monetary donations, we are grateful for any in-kind donations in the form of food for the cast and crew during the shoot, camera and lighting equipment, film stock, or the use of production and post-production facilities.

"Dr. Hedd and the Grim Reaper" is a sponsored project of Fractured Atlas, a non-profit arts service organization. Contributions in behalf of "Dr. Hedd and the Grim Reaper" may be made payable to Fractured Atlas and are **tax-deductible** to the extent permitted by law.

Please send contributions to Talia Mazzearella at 400 Broome St., Apt. 902A, New York, NY 10013. Checks should be made payable to Fractured Atlas, with "In behalf of 'Dr. Hedd and the Grim Reaper'" in the memo line.

## Distribution Plan

"Dr. Hedd and the Grim Reaper" will be submitted to several prominent film festivals. In addition to being submitted to NYU festivals (First Run, Fusion), it will be sent to regional, national, and international festivals that fit its genre. Among the festivals being considered are Cannes, Sundance, and Tribeca.