

Presents

# **SECRET MALL APARTMENT**



From Executive Producer Jesse Eisenberg and Acclaimed Director Jeremy Workman



# IN SELECT THEATERS STARTING MARCH 21ST WATCH THE TRAILER <u>HERE</u>

# DIRECTED, PRODUCED, & EDITED BY Jeremy Workman

**EXECUTIVE PRODUCED BY** Jesse Eisenberg, Allen Altman, Cathie Altman, Matthew Spain, Ivan Williams, Peter Haberman, Lance Hoffman, Marnie Black, Scott Black, Amy Zelnick, Brad Zelnick **EDITED BY** Paul Murphy, Jeremy Workman

**FEATURING** Michael Townsend, Adriana Valdez Young, Colin Bliss, Andrew Oesch, Greta Scheing, James Mercer, Emily Ustach, Jay Zehngebot, Glenn Lavertu, Paula Most, Brian Chippendale, Emily Bryant, Joan Townsend, Brady Townsend, Lauren Rosati, Marion Orr, Micah Salkind, Francis Leazes, Jr, .J. Hogue, Jim Drain, Raphael Lyon, Ian Jean Cozzens, Stephen Mattos, Martha Kuhlman, Lizzie Araujo Haller, Xander Marro, Umberto Crenca, Patricia Mclaughlin

Run Time: 91 minutes

Publicist: 42West | SecretMallApartment@42West.com

# **SYNOPSIS**

In 2003, eight young Rhode Islanders created a secret apartment in a hidden space inside the Providence Place Mall and lived in it for four years, filming everything along the way. They snuck in furniture, tapped into the mall's electricity, and even secretly constructed a brick wall with a locking door, smuggling in over 2 tons of cinderblock. Far more than just a wild prank, the secret apartment became a deeply meaningful place for all its inhabitants – a personal expression of defiance against local gentrification, a boundary-pushing work of public/private art, and finally, a 750 square foot space that sticks it to the man!

# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT By Jeremy Workman

"You want to hear something incredible?"

It was very late at night. We were in Athens, Greece. I had only met Michael randomly a few days before at an art festival, but we became fast friends and spent each evening in Athens talking until dawn. On our last night, Michael was a little tipsy and seemed to be working up the courage to tell me something.

He proceeded to tell me about the Secret Mall Apartment — how he and 7 of his Rhode Island friends snuck inside the Providence Place Mall one night in 2003, discovered a secret space, and turned it into their home. They dodged mall security and snuck in loads of furniture — a large couch, a dresser, a grand credenza, a dining table and chairs, a television, a PlayStation, a waffle iron, and countless personal effects. They tapped into the mall's electricity, ate at the food court, and used the mall's bathrooms. In perhaps their boldest gesture, they smuggled in over 100 cinder blocks and cemented up a brick wall that concealed their secret space even further. In late 2007, FOUR YEARS after first moving in, Michael and his crew were finally caught.

And then Michael dropped the final kicker: they had filmed nearly everything along the way. Practically no one had ever seen this footage.

I was floored. I also had a permanent smile etched on my face listening to this insane story.

Apparently, the secret apartment was actually some sort of Rhode Island urban legend. When the apartment was discovered in 2007, the story had been covered breathlessly in the local news (and beyond). But since then, it has receded from public memory, lost to urban myth and local lore. A lot of Providence locals no longer even knew about it.

The story of SECRET MALL APARTMENT instantly became an obsession for me. I spent the next year learning about the apartment and the Providence Place Mall, frequently driving up to Providence from New York City in order to visit Michael and get to know all the participants. It was a very impressive

group. All 8 of them were conscientious and thoughtful, and all still worked in the arts. Where I had wondered if they were just goofy pranksters, I quickly learned that they created the secret apartment to make a statement against gentrification. They had lost their homes as a result of development, and this was their unique personal way to show developers that they weren't going anywhere. Where I had wondered if they were just provocateurs, I quickly learned that they all lived a life of deep artistic commitment and integrity. At the same time that they were building up the secret apartment, they spent their free time doing artistic charity — volunteering at local children's hospitals, teaching art at schools, or creating massive memorial art pieces for victims of 9/11 and the Oklahoma City Bombing.

And of course, I learned more about the secret apartment itself. It seemed to be like a clubhouse, a hangout, a headquarters, a rebellious 750 square foot symbol against capitalist excess, a walled fortress of subversive mischief, not to mention a very complex DIY public/private artwork that changed and transformed whenever I thought I had a handle on it.

Making SECRET MALL APARTMENT was an absolutely joyful and meaningful experience. I feel privileged to share this incredible tale and bring it to a new audience. Hopefully, the story can resonate further. We all continue to live in the shadows of these larger economic systems. Corporations come and remake our neighborhoods, and we're forced to adjust to their whims. We all are under the thumb of an increasingly commodified lifestyle, harder and harder to stand up and assert our identity. SECRET MALL APARTMENT is a reminder to declare your presence and individuality in the most unlikely and unique ways. It's also one heck of an incredible story.

# PARTICIPANT BIOS

# **MICHAEL TOWNSEND**

Michael Townsend is arguably the founder of the Tape Art movement and has been recklessly drawing on buildings for over 30 years with and without permission. He has driven over a million miles across the country to spearhead over 500 large-scale Tape Art murals as well as collaborations in dance, film, sculpture, and more than one secret underground installation. His work, when discovered, has garnered national press with a few projects that have erupted into international news stories. Michael's work is ephemeral and 95% of his artworks no longer physically exist.

He is an avid teacher who believes in the art capabilities of everyone. In the last few decades, he has introduced collaborative drawing to over 60,000 students in environments ranging from community centers and universities to corporate board rooms, prisons, and hospitals. In his other pursuits, he has broken video game world records, saved historic mill buildings from demolition, and will happily turn any space into a sweaty dance floor. For more information <u>www.tapeart.com</u>.

# ADRIANA VALDEZ YOUNG

Adriana Valdez Young is a design researcher who makes products, spaces, and experiences more inclusive, helpful, and joyful. She grew up in a family of new Americans who romanticized the mall as a temple to fulfill their dreams. She has visited dozens of shopping malls around the planet as part of her research on the securitization of lifestyle and architecture as a tool for conflict mediation and creation. Currently, she is faculty and acting chair of MFA Interactive Design at the School of Visual Arts, New York City. She holds a BA in History from Brown University and an MS in City Design from the London School of Economics. She much prefers sleeping on an organic mattress made of Greek wool, coconut fiber, and foam over a dusty ne of discarded insulation tiles any time.

### **COLIN BLISS**

Colin Bliss is an interdisciplinary artist, living and working in Providence, Rhode Island. He studied Sculpture at the Rhode Island School of Design, where he now works as a Technician and Technical Instructor. In works that range from devastatingly permanent to fleeting a transient, he explores the emotional lives of objects, and how these contemporary artifacts can tell just enough of a story to leave a viewer with a path to craft their ending. For more information: <u>www.colinbliss.com</u>

#### JAMES J.A. MERCER

James J.A. Mercer is a New York based artist whose paintings, drawings and animations explore troubled geometries. Highlighting moments of alienation in suburban architecture, he paints situations hovering on the edge of relatability, held in spatial and emotional contradiction. James received an MFA from Columbia University and a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design. He has exhibited at the Today Art Museum in Beijing, the Drawing Center, Pioneer Works, and the Roswell Museum. His collaborative animations with Yifan Jiang have been shown at IFFR, Slamdance and Eyeworks Festival. You can see his work at: jamesmercer.net.

## **ANDREW OESCH**

Andrew Oesch is an Artist Educator living in Providence, RI. He sees learning as a space for expansive collaborative making. Past projects with students have ranged from exploring oral histories of families and communities to transforming the classroom environment through costumes and temporary installations. He is interested in moments when many meanings pile up, particularly through social and art/design media. The processes and work surrounding these moments are messy, ephemeral, ambiguous, and a great deal of fun. Currently, he is working at The Learning Community in Central Falls as a 7th and 8th-grade teaching artist in addition to being an artist educator at the RISD Museum. From 2006-08, Andrew was an Artist Mentor and is now a member of the board of directors. You can see past projects and updates at andrewoesch.com.

#### **GRETA SCHEING**

Greta Scheing is an artist and animator living in Providence, RI. She believes design and storytelling can make our daily lives better and wants to use her skills as a megaphone. When she's not animating she's thinking about being outside, speculative fiction, intersectionality, and rollerskating. Sometimes all at once. For more information, visit <a href="https://greta.video/">https://greta.video/</a>.

#### JAY ZEHNGEBOT

Raised in Florida, forged in Providence, and based out of Brooklyn, Jay Zehngebot has been drawing from the jump. An early interest in comics, art, and children's books led to a degree from the Rhode Island School of Design (printmaking). The opportunity to work as a professional public artist on temporary, large-scale murals with the Tape Art collective struck, as did the chance to help build, teach, and direct community programming at AS220's Community Printshop in Providence, RI. From there, a dream to develop creative software turned into a Masters from NYU's ITP, and a segue into a long run in web publishing, internal tooling, and experimentation as an artistic director of various companies. For more information, visit <a href="https://realjayz.com/">https://realjayz.com/</a>.

#### **EMILY USTACH**

Emily Ustach is the Deputy Director of New Urban Arts, a community of high school students and adult mentors in Providence sharing space, skills, and resources to inspire creative expression. She has received training in Art History and painting but has found her creative practice lies in youth

development and non-profit administration. Previously, Emily developed the Education Fellowship AmeriCorps program at The Learning Community, a nationally recognized public charter school. She also worked as the Program Coordinator at Rhode Island Campus Compact, where she supported college student's civic and community engagement. Emily was born in a small town in Eastern North Carolina where she was raised among artists and scientists. She received her B.A. in Art History from Salem College, in Winston-Salem, NC, and her M.A. in Community Based Arts Education from the Rhode Island School of Design. She lives in Providence with her husband Mike and their cat Kepler.

# **CREW BIOGRAPHIES**

# JEREMY WORKMAN (Director, Producer)

Jeremy Workman is the director of the documentaries LILY TOPPLES THE WORLD (Discovery), THE WORLD BEFORE YOUR FEET (Greenwich Entertainment / Kino Lorber), MAGICAL UNIVERSE (IFC Films), and DECIDING VOTE (The New Yorker), among others. Jeremy's documentaries have been released in theaters and on TV and played at prestigious film festivals throughout the world. His 2023 short documentary DECIDING VOTE - about George Michaels's 1970 tie-breaking vote on New York's abortion bill - premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival and won multiple film festival awards, before being acquired by The New Yorker. It was shortlisted for the 96th Academy Awards in the Documentary Short Film category.

His 2021 feature documentary LILY TOPPLES THE WORLD - about acclaimed domino artist Lily Hevesh - was the Grand Prize Winner for Best Documentary at the 2021 SXSW Film Festival. Soon after, it won the Audience Award for Best Documentary at the 2021 San Francisco Intl Film Festival. It went on to become a high-profile acquisition for Discovery/Discovery+ and was released to acclaim in August 2021. Rotten Tomatoes "Certified Fresh," it can now be streamed on MAX.

Jeremy's 2018 documentary THE WORLD BEFORE YOUR FEET - about Matt Green's mission to walk every street of New York City - premiered at SXSW and subsequently was released in over 75 US cities during 2018/2019. Executive Produced by Jesse Eisenberg, it was hailed upon its release and played in US and Canadian theaters for nearly 6 months. Since its release, it's played in theaters in the Yukon, Vladivostok, Estonia, and Jordan, among dozens of other international locales. It currently stands at 100% on RottenTomatoes. Previously, Jeremy's 2014 documentary MAGICAL UNIVERSE - about outsider artist Al Carbee - was released theatrically across the US by IFC Films. The documentary won several film festival awards and was a Los Angeles Times and Village Voice Critic's Pick upon its release. It was featured by The New York Times as "recommended watching" when it debuted on Netflix 2015.

Additionally, Jeremy is well-known for his editing work, particularly for indie movie trailers. A two-time Emmy award nominee, Jeremy is the Creative Director of Wheelhouse Creative, a movie trailer company that caters to indie films.

# JESSE EISENBERG (Executive Producer)

Jesse Eisenberg is an actor, director, and playwright known for his captivating performances across film, television, and theater. Born in New York City in 1983, Eisenberg rose to prominence with his breakout role as Mark Zuckerberg in THE SOCIAL NETWORK, for which he earned an Academy Award nomination. With a unique blend of wit, intensity, and vulnerability, Eisenberg has delivered memorable performances in a diverse range of films, including ZOMBIELAND, THE SQUID AND THE WHALE, and NOW YOU SEE ME. Beyond his work on screen, Eisenberg is also an accomplished playwright, with his

plays being produced both off-Broadway and internationally. In the last two years, he has also written and directed two films - WHEN YOU FINISH SAVING THE WORLD (A24) and A REAL PAIN (Fox Searchlight). A REAL PAIN won the Waldo Salt Screenwriting Award at the 2024 Sundance Film Festival and went on to become a high-profile acquisition for Fox Searchlight. SECRET MALL APARTMENT is the 2nd film that Executive Produced with director Jeremy Workman, as Eisenberg previously served as an EP on Workman's THE WORLD BEFORE YOUR FEET.

# **MICHAEL LISNET (Cinematographer)**

Michael Lisnet is a Brooklyn-based cinematographer and photographer. Michael has worked with Jeremy Workman on numerous projects including LILY TOPPLES THE WORLD which won the Grand Jury Prize - Best Documentary SXSW 2021. With 25 years of experience, Michael has worked for many diverse clients ranging from Def Jam Records, A24, Prada, Sony Pictures, Vogue Magazine, New York Times, GE, etc... Lisnet is also a video artist who combines sound, photography, and video to create fine art that is both beautiful and profound. Michael is proud to have worked on SECRET MALL APARTMENT. Http://www.michaellisnet.com

# DAN KENNEDY (Cinematographer)

Dan Kennedy is a cinematographer with a rich independent filmmaking background and extensive commercial experience. Dan's cinematography has been featured at Tribeca, Sitges, and Rome, and he has collaborated with many renowned music video and commercial directors, artists and brands in the US. For more information, visit https://www.kennedydp.com/

# PAUL MURPHY (Co-Editor)

Paul Murphy is a film editor based in Melbourne, Australia. He edited RED OBSESSION (2013 narrated by Russell Crowe and winner of the AACTA for Best Feature Documentary. In 2016, Murphy edited the feature film BEAST, a drama-thriller starring Garret Dillahunt and Ange Bayani. The film made its debut at the Toronto International Film Festival. More recently, in 2022, he edited BLIND AMBITION, a documentary following four Zimbabwean refugees turned sommeliers. It won the Audience Award for Best Documentary at the Tribeca Film Festival. In addition to SECRET MALL APARTMENT, Murphy has edited another film set for release this year: the sci-fi thriller IN VITRO, starring Ashley Zukerman of SUCCESSION fame.

# **OLIVIER AND CLARE MANCHON (Composers)**

Based in Kingston NY (from Brooklyn/Paris/Martha's Vineyard), Olivier and Clare Manchon come from a background of writing, recording and touring- Sharing music with live audiences. They had the band Clare & the Reasons and Olivier headed up the Orchestre de Chambre Miniature. Clare first saw Olivier standing in front of a Dunkin Donuts across from the Berklee College of Music they both attended in Boston, she thought "I shall make that Frenchman mine!" ... She then asked him to play on an arrangement she had written, he laughed, she cried...the rest is history.

They started scoring with a documentary about Ricky Jay about 12 years ago and haven't looked back. They made scores and songs for films and TV such as TURN EVERY PAGE about Rob Caro and Robert Gottlieb, the ABC series BLACK BOX starring Vanessa Redgrave, music in THE UNBEARABLE WEIGHT OF A MASSIVE TALENT (Nick Cage) EMILY IN PARIS season 1 and 2 on Netflix, NBC's GOOD GIRLS, ONCE WERE BROTHERS: ROBBIE ROBERTSON AND THE BAND, Amazon's MODERN LOVE, Oscar-shortlisted short films "Deciding Vote" (Directed by Jeremy Workman of SECRET MALL APARTMENT) and HYSTERICAL GIRL, the Canal Plus French adventure "En Attendant Bojangles", starring Romain Duris and Virginie Efira, and so many more. Over the years collaborations have been had with Van Dyke Parks, Sufjan Stevens, The National, Peter Dinklage, DeKotchka, and many more. Olivier and Clare approach each film project creating a sonic universe that supports, paints, juxtaposes and gives an auditory experience that is imperative to the storytelling. They also hate midi, love the sound of a human breathing while playing their instrument, and deeply appreciate the absence of music.

# **MATT SPAIN (Executive Producer)**

Matthew Spain is a producer and creative entrepreneur who focuses on early-phase indie fil documentary, TV, and theater. Recent feature executive producing credits include documentary SECRET MALL APARTMENT, dramedy RAMONA AT MIDLIFE, and noir romantic thriller BLACK DIAMOND. Committed to mainstream entertainment that makes you think differently about the world, Spain is passionate about projects that bring provocative characters and perspectives to the forefront.

# **IVAN WILLIAMS (Executive Producer)**

As a Southern California entertainment leader, Ivan Williams has helped produce the hit podcast HIDDEN HISTORY HAPPY HOUR, and the films KNIGHTS OF BADASSDOM, BIG STONE GA M.F.A., CREATING WOODSTOCK, RAMONA AT MIDLIFE, and the Broadway musical First Date.

He also was on the team that helped make the Academy Museum-recognized, Geena Davis executive produced, feature documentary THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING. A film that illuminated the issue of gender misrepresentation in Hollywood. Recently, Ivan presented two short climate change-related films (HEART OF THE SEA, and LETTER FROM THE AGE OF ECOCIDE) during the COP28 summit in Dubai and is premiering the feature THE WONDER AND THE WORRY at the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival. In addition to SECRET MALL APARTMENT, Ivan is also world premiering the documentary HOW TO BUILD A TRUTH ENGINE at the SXSW Film Festival too.

Ivan is an active member of the Producers Council of the Producers Guild of America, co-founder of two non-profit ecological-oriented art and design collectives, a distinguished member of the non-profit entertainment and arts advocacy organization The Creative Coalition a member of the Broadway Dreams and Apples and Oranges Arts board of directors and an advisory board member of the startups ScriptHop and Re|Space.

# **END CREDITS**

# **Wheelhouse Creative and Altman Films Presents**

A Film by Jeremy Workman

# Secret Mall Apartment

# Director / Producer Jeremy Workman

# Executive Producer Jesse Eisenberg

Executive Producers Allen Altman Cathie Altman Matthew Spain Ivan Williams Peter Haberman Lance Hoffman Marnie Black Scott Black Amy Zelnick Brad Zelnick

#### Editors

Paul Murphy Jeremy Workman

#### Cinematographers

Michael Lisnet Jeremy Workman Dan Kennedy

**Production Designer** 

Suja Ono

# **Original Music**

Olivier Manchon Clare Manchon

#### Original 2003-2007 Footage Filmed By

Michael Townsend Colin Bliss James Mercer Andrew Oesch Greta Scheing Emily Ustach Adriana Valdez Young Jay Zehngebot

## **Associate Producer**

Hannah Marianetti

## **Archival Producers**

Prudence Arndt Debra Mcclutchy Melissa Jacobson

Post Production Supervisor Eric Hahn

#### **Aerial Cinematography**

#### Victor Chu

## **Animation/Motion Graphics**

Oguz Akin

#### Featuring

Michael Townsend Adriana Valdez Young Colin Bliss Andrew Oesch Greta Scheing James Mercer Emily Ustach Jay Zehngebot

Glenn Lavertu Paula Most Brian Chippendale Emily Bryant Joan Townsend Brady Townsend Lauren Rosati Marion Orr Micah Salkind

Francis Leazes, Jr .J. Hogue Jim Drain Raphael Lyon Ian Jean Cozzens Stephen Mattos Martha Kuhlman Lizzie Araujo Haller Xander Marro Umberto Crenca Patricia Mclaughlin

#### Cast

Mall Security Guard 1 Alexander Gebrail

Mall Security Guard 2 David O'hanlon

Michael Townsend 2007 Michael Townsend

# Friend Of Michael Zoe Liu

## Cool Guy With Walkie Talkie Colin Bliss

## **Head Of Security**

Mark I. Davies

# **Security Team**

Peter Welch

#### Production

#### Additional Cinematography

Eric Walker Michael Barry Sammie Amachree Amy Hudson

# **First Assistant Camera**

Talia Krohmal

#### **Production Sound**

Jeremy Workman

#### **Art Directors**

Susan Choi Grace Bilbao Gaffer Alec Roy

#### Grips

Tony Ventura Jeremy Smith

#### Stages

Red Sky Studios Waterfront Studios

# Construction Coordinator Jason Horgan

Juson norgan

# Scenic Artist

Jenn Medrano

#### Carpenters

Thea Price-Eckles

Elliott Anderson Adam Benoit

Set Decorator Jake Lutter

Set Fabrication David Riley

## Set Upholstery Fiona Bank

## **Production Assistants**

Lisha Payne Jay Finkelman

#### **Post-Production**

**Colorist** Eric Hahn

# Assistant Editor Joshua Bogatin

# Audio Post-Production Gramercy Post

# Re-recording Mixer Allison Casey

# Sound Effects Editor Rachel Ruggles

Map Design Sarah Silva, Mapshop

#### Legal Services

Patrick+Mccormack Drew Patrick Sarah Byrne

#### **Sales Representation**

Submarine Entertainment Josh Braun Dan Braun Ben Braun Matt Burke Ben Schwartz Val Dowd

## For Wheelhouse Creative

Executive Producer Robert J. Lyons Assistant Editor Colton Caulfield

#### Music

Original Score Recorded In Kingston, NY

#### **Olivier Manchon**

Violin, Viola, Piano, Wurlitzer, Bass Guitar, Lap Steel, Drums, French Horn Euphonium, Peck Horn, Synth, Vocals

**Clare Manchon** Lap Steel, Vocals, Percussion, Synth

> Hideaki Aomori Flute, Clarinet Bass Clarinet (Recorded In Los Angeles)

> > **Cello** Anita Balázs

# Drums

Daniel Freedman

Bass Larry Grenadier

#### Drums

Jeff Lipstein

#### Written, Arranged, And Orchestrated By

Olivier Manchon And Clare Manchon Ascap Published By Babella Family Publishing Ascap

#### **Additional Music**

"The Puzzle" By Max Avery Lichtenstein Published By Departure Music Courtesy Of Tin Drum Productions, Llc

#### "Offset"

By Elephant Music

Simon George Begg Elephant Music Global

#### "Capitol"

"A Diabolical Caper" "Apple" Philip Sheppard / Luke Richards Jonathan Kelly - Prs / Alexis Beulah Garside - Prs Audio Network, Ltd.

#### **Archival Materials**

Providence Place Mall Archival Footage Sam Cullman Placing Providence Place

# Fort Thunder And City Hall Archival Footage Raphael Lyon

#### Additional Archival Material Courtesy Of

Erik Bright Veritone **City Of Providence Boston Globe** New Jersey Herald Philip C. Marshall Grace Trofa Wjar-Tv Providence Sinclair Tv Mark Petteruti The Advance-Titan Providence Journal **Stephen Mattos** Craig Wreckryan Woosley Jody Hassett Sandor Bodo Gannett

# **Special Thanks**

Dante Bellini Becca Bender Michael Berman Hisham Bharoocha Gerald Carbone John Cribbs Rachel Garfield Ze'ev Gilad

**Claudette Godfrey** Matt Green **Renee Harrison** Nickolas Hasse Mark Hevesh Jason Hoffman **Colin Hudson** Zach Kaplan Noah Kistler Jim Kolmar **Chris Kentis** Mark Kruger Rob Kuhns Penny Lane Alexandra Lange **Kevin Maher** Victoria Mcnally Jason Outlaw **Keidrick Pettaway** Janet Pierson Amy Porobil Mark Sacco Peter Schmidt Nowara Daniel Sgrizzi **Eric Soucy** Leah Smith Jonny Sutak **Erik Talley** Astrid Von Ussar Vania Von Ussar Andy Webb Ted Weinbaum **Chuck Workman** Jeff Yorkes

Accel Academy, Mobile Alabama The Temple Downtown, Mobile Alabama Brattleboro Museum And Art Center, Vermont

Art In Ruins, Providence Tapeart.Com Rhode Island School Of Design, Providence Brown University, Providence Bryant University, Rhode Island The Providence Athenaeum The Rhode Island Historical Society Hasbro Children's Hospital, Providence Secret Mall Apartment ©2024 Wheelhouse Creative, Inc. All Rights Reserved