

SILENCE AND SPACE PRODUCTIONS INC. IN ASSOCIATION WITH SUPER CHANNEL AND ROGERS CABLE NETWORK FUND

PRESENT



DAN AND MARGOT



SILENCE IS DISTRACTING

A DOCUMENTARY FEATURE BY CHLOE SOSA-SIMS AND JAKE CHIRICO FEATURING MARGOT TODHUNTER

ORIGINAL MUSIC BY JOSEPH MURRAY AND LODEWIJK VOS SOUND DESIGN AND MIX FINLAY BRAITHWAITE AND MARCEL RAMAGNANO POST-PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR ANDRES LANDAU STORY CONSULTANT RICARDO ACOSTA C.C.E.

COLOURIST ZACHARY COX EDITED BY HAYA WASFEM CINEMATOGRAPHY BY JAKE CHIRICO EXECUTIVE PRODUCER TURN AND PUNCH PRODUCTIONS PRODUCED BY CHLOE SOSA-SIMS CO-DIRECTED BY JAKE CHIRICO AND CHLOE SOSA-SIMS





RUNNING TIME: 75 MINS

SCREENING FORMAT: HDCAM STEREO 16:9 COLOR 23.98FPS 1920 X 1080P

COUNTRY: CANADA

WEBSITE: [HTTP://DANANDMARGOT.COM/](http://DANANDMARGOT.COM/)

[HTTPS://VIMEO.COM/150830915](https://VIMEO.COM/150830915)

SHORT SYNOPSIS

For years, Margot was stalked and harassed by a man she could only call "Dan" and her friends began to notice the joyful Margot grow dark and less coherent. Only with hospitalization did the real damage of her undiagnosed schizophrenia suddenly come into sharp focus. Now Margot is rebuilding her life, reaching out to others, and trying to regain her sense of self. Our understanding of schizophrenia may have come a long way but Dan and Margot skillfully presents how much more we need to understand what it means to be inside it, to live around it and to come back from it.

LONG SYNOPSIS

DAN & MARGOT is the intimate look into the life of a young modern woman struggling to take back the three years of her life that she lost to schizophrenia. With transparency and even humour, we will confront the notion of schizophrenia through a female character-driven portrayal that asks questions about the deep-seated stigmatization of mental illness within our culture and the way in which we all choose to cope with our past, present and future.

Not long ago Margot was haunted by the voices in her head. She was stalked, sexually harassed and tormented by a person who never really existed. For three years this went on, leading Margot into a deep depression until finally she was hospitalized and diagnosed.

Today, Margot is trying to gain back the years she lost during her episodes. She wants four things: to move out of her parent's house, to meet others like herself, to find satisfying work and ultimately to discover love.

As she gets closer to achieving what she wants, she continues to grapple with her illness. Schizophrenia is a life-long condition and the chance of relapsing is ever-present. When we start to see signs of paranoia in Margot involving a new male figure, the line between reality and perception is blurred. We, as filmmakers, can't help but get entangled in the fear of what lies ahead.

Margot gives a voice to the many relatable stories of mental illness as she demonstrates a person's right to fail, living with one's past traumas and hope, the key to human existence.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Mass media coverage about mental health tends to come in two juxtaposed forms. The first being the rise of mental illness amongst the general population and the “alarming” recent statistic that in North America ‘one in four adults – suffer from a diagnosable mental disorder in a given year.’ Divergently, the public, when confronted with schizophrenia, are most often introduced to the rare cases of individuals who have committed atrocious crimes and are highly demonized in the media. I believe it’s important that audiences have an opportunity to hear the other stories; those of relatable, capable and warm-hearted individuals with schizophrenia, who like everyone else, are just trying to find their place in this world.

Margot represents the other story. Having been a close, personal friend and present when her first episode originated had a huge effect on me and my understanding of this condition. (Chloe) What’s so effective about her narrative is the relatability of her surprisingly classic coming-of-age story.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT CONT'D

The film looks at her life as she moves out of her mother's home, seeks work that is fulfilling and ultimately, ventures on the search for love. We all go through these fundamental life steps, and will continue to- but imagine throwing a complex mental illness into the swing of things. For Margot, it removed her from living a real existence for 3 years. Can you imagine how hard it would be to come back to reality? And despite these challenges, Margot's bravery and ability to overcome demonstrates a larger message- people with schizophrenia can have successful lives, and when they do, it demonstrates an above-average, almost super human perseverance. Margot says in the film "she is a better person now than she was before" and rightly so. The film aims to demonstrate the shared obstacles that those with schizophrenia must face and the importance of value and empowerment for all.

With this in mind, we really wanted to create a stylistic form of documentary in which various aesthetic styles and formats were interweaved together to visually express the complexity of perspectives within this story. Margot's distinct point-of-view during her episodes is replicated through distorted POV footage, while the perspectives of her friends and family is told in parallel to demonstrate how they saw the story unfolding. To add another layer, the artist in the film, Sara *f*in, introduces her own colourful POV through animated comic panels. These are of course influenced by her own identification with "madness" and having gone through the psychiatric system. Her own empowerment adds to demonstrating the often unappreciated, creative abilities that comes with madness.

The self-reflexive nature of the film is central to the story and format. We, as filmmakers, consciously reflect on screen how we are impacting and twisting Margot's story and how this film may alter her future. We hope that through our transparency as well as Margot's, the film can inspire others to come out and talk about how mental health influences all of our lives.

CHLOE & JAKE



CHLOE SOSA-SIMS

CO-DIRECTOR/

PRODUCER

Chloe Sosa-Sims is a Toronto-based director/ producer whose background spans 10 years across film festivals, markets, distribution/ aggregation companies and production. *DAN AND MARGOT* is her feature debut, which was broadcast on Super Channel and is currently on its festival/ theatrical tour playing Cinequest, the Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival, and the Hot Docs Bloor Cinema, amongst others. Her projects achieve to engage audiences with social issues inside out- focusing on how the emotional core shapes the world around us.

In 2013, Chloe launched Silence & Space Productions Inc. and today, she co-heads the Toronto chapter of Film Fatales. Along with developing solo projects, she is now teaming up with various fatales to develop a body of work that reflects the power of female voices. She works on a consultancy basis for documentary producing, events & research as well. Her previous work includes 5 years as the Industry Programmer at Hot Docs where she launched the popular market event Hot Docs Deal Maker, as well as running various year-round initiatives. She holds a BAH in Film & Media from Queen's University.

A portrait of Jake Chirico, a man with a full, dark beard and blue eyes, wearing a blue baseball cap with a logo and a denim jacket. He is looking directly at the camera. The background is dark with some cables visible.

JAKE CHIRICO

**CO-DIRECTOR/
DIRECTOR OF
PHOTOGRAPHY**

6 years of film school and 8 freelancing put a ring on Jake Chirico's marriage between theory and practice. In between steady work as a freelance cinematographer and a camera assistant for Discovery Channel Canada (Exploration Production Inc.) Jake hits the streets with various personal projects. Mental illness, graffiti writing, and HIV/AIDS are subjects he's grown close to as an emerging cinematographer, director, editor and photographer. He is a Canon C100 owner/operator. Extensive experience traveling with camera work (Africa/Asia/Europe/Americas/beyond) has given him a unique perspective on the power of film as a gateway to exploring human nature. Jake's first short documentary premiered at Hot Docs 2010 (The Freshwater Plague.) Jake's experience has helped him develop a unique eye for the unexpected, fluidity in collaboration, strong improvisational abilities, and a dogged work ethic that is consistent on any set. And he's worked with wolves.



KEY CAST & CREDITS

Director	Chloe Sosa-Sims
Director	Jake Chirico
Producer	Chloe Sosa-Sims
Editor	Haya Waseem
Cinematographer	Jake Chirico
Original Music by	Joseph Murray, Lodewijk Vos
Story Consultant	Ricardo Acosta, C.C.E
Written by	Chloe Sosa-Sims
Featuring	Margot Todhunter

Produced in association with
SUPER CHANNEL

Produced with the participation of
ROGERS TELEFUND

Produced with the participation of
ROGERS CABLE NETWORK FUND

Funding provided by
TORONTO ARTS COUNCIL

Produced in association with
**OMDC CANADA FILM OR VIDEO
PRODUCTION TAX CREDIT**



IMPACT

People with severe mental illnesses, such as schizophrenia, are one of the most marginalized and stigmatized groups in society.

OUR IMPACT VISION is to help end the stigma around mental illness, so that young adults can speak up and find recovery. And to provide families with a source of understanding, education and a sense of common experience. Other marginalized groups have been encouraged to “come out”- those with mental illness need to be empowered to do so as well.

Support Dan and Margot and #EndTheStigma around mental health

“ *Bringing light to one of the most stigma-laden illnesses, Margot looks to the future, sometimes with hope, sometimes despair, to understand Schizophrenia and her desire to be well. Margot is not alone; with one in 100 individuals impacted by this brain illness worldwide, Margot’s story is a familiar one.* ”

DEBORAH CONNER, BRITISH COLUMBIA SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY



DAN AND MARGOT

PRESS

TORONTO FILM SCENE

“ If you know someone suffering from schizophrenia, the film is going to be an even bigger emotional roller coaster than for others. Hearing Margot explain her disease in her own words is frustrating, scary, and heartbreaking. ”

THE TIMES COLONIST

“ Their portrait of Sosa-Sims’s 20-something longtime friend, who discovers she has schizophrenia, is unsettling in that it reminds us how mercilessly pop culture has stigmatized this complex mental illness. Yet it’s also a hopeful and enlightening meditation on the potential to overcome it. ”

NEXUS NEWSPAPER

“ The film should bring some light to schizophrenia and what it’s like to experience something like that and really humanize it for a lot of people who are unfamiliar,” says Sosa-Sims. “Schizophrenia is still really stigmatized. All the media coverage revolves around portraying people with schizophrenia who have committed.. violent and atrocious crimes, and I really wanted to tell a story about a normal, kind-hearted individual who has to deal with it. ”

ART WITH IMPACT EXCLUSIVE

“ AWI had the opportunity to speak with Chloe Sosa-Sims, co-director and producer of DAN AND MARGOT, to get a behind-the-scenes understanding of her film, her friend, and her inspiration for filmmaking ”

THE MOVIE GOURMET

“ Margot is a vivacious, fun young woman. She had a stalker back in college. He tormented her for three years. His name was Dan. And he was her first schizophrenic manifestation. ”

FOR A REGULARLY UPDATED PRESS LIST, GO TO
<http://danandmargot.com/press/>

DAN_{AND}
MARGOT

CONTACT

PRODUCER

CHLOE SOSA-SIMS

T: +1 416 918 5977

E: info@silenceandspace.com

SILENCE & SPACE PRODUCTIONS INC.

silence +
SPACE
PRODUCTIONS
silencespace.com

CANADIAN DISTRIBUTOR

AVI FEDERGREEN

T: +1 416 898 3456

E: info@indiecanent.com

INDIECAN ENTERTAINMENT INC.



INDIECAN
ENTERTAINMENT INC.

indiecanent.com