



SIFF / 2021  
 国际展映  
 INTERNATIONAL  
 SCREENING



AN ABDOLREZA KAHANI FILM

# ISTHMUS

BLUE FOOTLIGHTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH TALL BRIT PRODUCTIONS AND CHELIFILMS PRESENTS "ISTHMUS"  
 STEPHANIE JASKOT REECE PRESLEY MUSIC BY YVES BOISVERT PRODUCTION DESIGNER NAZANIN MIR AHMADI DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY JACK YAN CHEN  
 EDITED BY SHIMA MONFARED EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS AMANDA KIELY PATRICK GIMENEZ RASAM TABASINEJAD NAZANIN MIR AHMADI  
 WRITTEN AND PRODUCED BY SAEEED FAROSABERI DIRECTED BY ABDOLREZA KAHANI



**LANGUAGE:** ENGLISH

**RUNNING TIME:** 78 MIN

**GENRE:** PSYCHOLOGICAL DRAMA

**COUNTRY OF PRODUCTION:** CANADA





# SYNOPSIS

There is a fine line between love and obsession. **Veronic** knows this line all too well; her husband, **Ethan** spends most of their marriage straddling it. Ethan's constant insecurity has been a major threat to their relationship. Veronic has been stuck in a web of control that has been created by his paranoia and despite her faithfulness to him, and their commitment to each other, Ethan's constant need for reassurance is taking a severe toll on her mental health. He constantly wants to have sex in order to prove his love and devotion to her.

Veronic suffocates in silence, afraid to worsen the situation. Ethan's sanity deteriorates as he feels threatened by her job as a masseuse and takes it as an insult when she asks for time alone. When she begins to stand up for herself and attempts to set boundaries, Ethan unravels further. Despite the unhealthiness, Veronic still loves Ethan and wants to make it work, but quickly realizes she can't reason with an uncompromising, abusive monster.

When her job is threatened because of Ethan's irrational behaviour, she finally pulls together the strength to walk away from this psychologically abusive marriage, but Ethan won't let her go that easily. No matter where she goes, he follows, and as she grows more and more certain of her choice to leave, he grows more and more unstable. As the situation deteriorates, Veronic fights for her freedom, willing to abandon everything in this life of captivity... and in the end she prevails. Through the horror of her marriage, Veronic rediscovers her sense of self, happiness, and her independence.

# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

For this film to work, we have decided to strip it of culture and religion. Veronic and Ethan are in love. Their religion is irrelevant, their backgrounds and cultures are also not an indicator of their behaviour. They are educated, and “modern”. The premise of our story revolves around one word; consent. It is so basic, and yet so misunderstood. We are mindful of the fact our position is still one of privilege. Whilst I have never faced sexism the same way my wife has, I understand it. I've been affected by it, but I have never personally experienced it. Because of this, this script has gone through an extensive regiment of background research with some of Canada's most prominent professionals in this very field. From rape centres to social workers, we have spent hours to take in their valuable input to not only make sure that our depiction of this crime is accurate, but also try to educate our audience that simple actions can have devastating consequences.

**Abdolreza Kahani** born in 1973, is an Iranian filmmaker. He has made more than ten films in different countries such as Canada, Iran, Thailand, and France. In 2009, Kahani's film “Twenty” won the Special Jury Prize and the Prize of Ecumenical Jury at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival. He is also a Golden Alexander winner at Thessaloniki Film Festival. He emigrated to France in 2015 after three of his films were banned in Iran and he was prevented from submitting them to international festivals.





## STEPHANIE JASKOT as 'Veronic'

Stephanie Jaskot is an actress based out of Vancouver, BC, Canada. Originally from Europe (Poland), she moved to Canada in January 2017 after receiving her Master Degree from Drama Academy of Acting in Krakow, Poland. Since that time she has been working consistently as an artist and creator, developing her own projects as well as collaborating with other artists in North America and Europe.



## REECE PRESLEY as 'Ethan'

Reece Presley is an actor known for *Isthmus* (2021), *Psycho Goreman* (2021) and *Santa's Castle* (2018).



## CATHERINE HOWARD as 'Pascale'

Catherine Howard is known for *Isthmus* (2021), *Stealing Vows* (2022) and *Don't Click* (2020).



## ADAM DANIEL MEZEI as 'Eric'

Adam applies his myriad life experiences through audio, visual, written, and artistic mediums and is as confident drafting a screenplay as he is in front of the camera creating a vision of his own making. Adam recently wrapped Abdolreza Kahani's psychological drama, *Isthmus* (2021).



*Directed by*

**ABDOLREZA KAHANI**

*Produced by*

**SAEED FARDSABERI**

*Written by*

**SAEED FARDSABERI**

*Director of Photography*

**JACK YAN CHEN**

*Production Designer*

**NAZANIN MIR AHMADI**

*Editor*

**SHIMA MONFARED**

*Hair & Makeup*

**ELENA SEEPE**

*Music by*

**YVES BOISVERT**

*Production Sound*

**DAVID MOFFAT**

*Executive Producers*

**AMANDA KIELY  
PATRICK GIMENEZ  
RASAM TABASINEJAD  
NAZANIN MIR AHMADI**

# CONTACT



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