

# small pond

**WINNER - PROGRAMMERS AWARD, 2011 SIDEWALK FILM FESTIVAL**

**"It's authentic, which is probably why it has such a powerful impact." - Mark Bell, *Film Threat***

**"The film features some brilliant surprising moments, at least one of which is sure to go down in indie cinema history." - Rachel Morgan, *Sidewalk Film Festival***

**"A refreshingly frank booze-humored drama ... makes you wish more filmmakers had the gonads to go there." - Michael Tully, *Hammer to Nail***

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Total Running Time: 76m 26s

[www.smallpondfilm.com](http://www.smallpondfilm.com)

## SYNOPSIS

It's summertime in Columbia, Missouri ... the college students have all gone home and a blissfully irresponsible young woman named Kirsten reigns as the clown princess of the downtown bar scene. Kirsten has created a modest but comfortable world for herself in which she labors ten hours a week at a local pizzeria while coasting on the declining goodwill of her chums and associates, although Kirsten's best friend has come to tire of shepherding her drunken antics and she is unsurprisingly despised by her long-suffering roommate and co-worker. While in the throes of a tentative reconciliation with an eccentric childhood friend, an ill-fated nitrous bender unexpectedly forces Kirsten's first babysteps into adulthood.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

"Small Pond" is both a love letter to Columbia, Missouri and a satirical comedy about the lives of leisure that are led by its youthful inhabitants. With its low-cost rental properties, modest cost of living and abundance of service sector jobs, Columbia is an ideal place for wayward souls to work part-time while pursuing artistic aspirations ... or simply indulging in a neverending pursuit of self-serving debauchery. Unfortunately, anonymity also comes at a premium in this neck of the woods, especially for a heroine who is still searching for a sense of self and often feeling trapped within the perceptions of her peers.

Kirsten, as immortalized by Hari Leigh, is a bright but rudderless young woman who has constructed a world for herself which is completely focused on immediate self-gratification, and one which also perfectly suits her reluctance to confront grand philosophical and existential concerns. Clocking in at 11:30AM on weekdays for her register detail at Shakespeare's Pizza and clocking out just after the lunch rush, Kirsten is free to spend her day ... reading her horoscope? Napping off that leftover hangover? Or maybe just chasing it with a can of Stag. Except the reach of Kirsten's worldview so rarely extends beyond the bridge of her nose that she is also completely oblivious to the careless ways she disregards her already almost non-existent responsibilities and the needs of her long-suffering friends.

Being a native of Columbia, but having rarely seen this particular cross-section of the American experience preserved for posterity on the silver screen, it was my personal mission to create a story about emerging adulthood that was at once both knowingly funny and truthfully poignant: universally accessible in its timeless depiction of restless youth, yet lovingly specific in its own unique portrayal of life in the Midwest.

## CAST BIOS

**HARI LEIGH** ("*Kirsten*") will next be featured in Nickelodeon's new series "Sanjay & Craig" and also co-starred in John Waters' "A Dirty Shame." She was bestowed the honor of "the dusky ingenue of the moment" by 'Vice' magazine and is also memorably featured in the Franz Ferdinand's "Do You Want To" music video.

**SUSAN BURKE** ("*Lynn*") served as the co-writer of James Ponsoldt's "Smashed" (which won a Special Jury Award from the Sundance Film Festival in 2012) and currently performs with the Birds of Prey comedy troupe. She also recently starred in Dean Peterson's "Incredibly Small" from Range Life Entertainment and has also been featured on G4's "Attack of the Show."

**AMY SEIMETZ** ("*Katie*") is a mega-multi-hyphenate and a recent addition to the casts of both AMC's "The Killing" and HBO's "Family Tree." She also wrote and produced the award-winning film "Sun Don't Shine," which will be receiving a theatrical release in 2013 from Factory 25. She also shared the Special Jury Prize for Best Ensemble Cast for David Robert Mitchell's "The Myth of the American Sleepover" and co-starred in Lena Dunham's "Tiny Furniture" at the 2010 SXSW Film Festival before winning Best Actress at the 2010 Fantastic Fest for her work in Adam Wingard's "A Horrible Way to Die." She will next be seen in Wingard's "You're Next" and Shane Carruth's "Upstream Color," both of which will be receiving theatrical releases in 2013.

**JOSH FADEM** ("*Mike*") is beloved to sitcom audiences everywhere as Simon Behrens, Liz Lemon's hapless agent on NBC's "30 Rock." He has also been featured on "The Whitest Kids U Know" and "It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia."

**JEFF CARRILLO** is a founding member of the band Mahjongg, whose television appearances on "Pepper and Friends" rocketed them into the indie-rock limelight. He makes his big screen debut in "Small Pond."

**ANN MAGNUSON** ("*Luann*") is one of the most enigmatic performers of our time, with credits ranging from Tony Scott's "The Hunger" to Susan Seidelman's "Desperately Seeking Susan" and "Making Mr. Right." She was also the frontwoman of the legendary music outfits Bongwater and Vulcan Death Grip, and created the epic and unforgettable Cinemax television special, "Vandemonium,"

**CARL EDWARDS** ("*Kenny*") is a Columbia native and thirteen-year veteran of the NASCAR racing circuit who makes his big-screen debut in "Small Pond." After making his debut in the NEXTEL Cup Series in 2004, his achievements on the track include a first place finish in the 2007 NASCAR Busch Series Championship.

**MARY FESSENDEN** ("*Aunt Barb*") has served Cornell Cinema since 1987 and became its director in 1996.

## CREW BIOS

**JOSH SLATES** (*Writer / Producer / Director*) is the writer and director of innumerable short films and videos; "Small Pond" is his feature directorial debut. His most recent short, "89 Gator Mine," had its world premiere in competition at Sitges in 2007. His 35mm short film "Ponkutsu Park" premiered at the Maryland Film Festival in 2006 and would later screen in the Short Film Corner at the 59<sup>th</sup> Cannes Film Festival. He is also a film critic and field producer for WYPR's "The Signal."

**KIM SHERMAN** (*Producer*) is a Midwest based filmmaker and musician. Most recently, Sherman produced festival favorites "Sun Don't Shine," "V/H/S" and the highly anticipated home invasion thriller, "You're Next" (which will receive nationwide theatrical release in 2013 through Lionsgate). In 2012, Sherman participated in the Champs-Élysées Film Festival – U.S. In-Progress with Hannah Fiddell's tense drama, "A Teacher," where the film was awarded Grand Prize before making its world premiere at the 2013 Sundance Film Festival (where it was acquired by Oscilloscope). Sherman's production work has come with high recognition, including a fellowship with the 2011 Sundance Institute's Creative Producing Labs and inclusion on Filmmaker Magazine's annual "25 New Faces of Independent Film" in 2012.

**KIRSTEN STRAUB** (*Co-Writer*) is a registered nurse, ecstatic dance instructor and native of Columbia, Missouri.

**DAVID ANDERSON** (*Director of Photography*) is currently the Vice President of Pure Cinematica. During his tenure as President of Arable Entertainment, he was instrumental in developing "Small Pond" as a digital cinema production and served as both director of photography and post-production supervisor on the project.

**DAWSON NOLLEY** (*Production Designer*) studied film, video and animation at the Rochester Institute of Technology. Dawson has been working as a Propmaster, Set Dresser, and Art Department Coordinator on major studio films, independent features, television series and pilots since 2001.

**JONATHAN SCHULTZ** (*Editor*) was one of the founding members of the Baltimore-based filmmaking collective Chlorofilm and co-directed the 2005 feature film "Winterlude," which screened as part of the American Film Institute's Mid-Atlantic Regional Showcase. He also collaborated with Josh Slates on his 2007 short film "89 Gator Mine" and served as both producer and editor.

**SANDY ANDRLE** (*Special Make-Up Effects Designer*) is one of the foremost special make-up effects artists of her generation. Some of her recent credits include "Bad Biology," the first film in 16 years from horror film legend Frank Henenlotter ("Basket Case," "Frankenhooker") as well as Phedon Papamichael's "From Within."

## Q&A WITH DIRECTOR JOSH SLATES

Q: Why did you want to tell this story?

A: I felt like it was important to make a movie about the American midwest that was less about its rustic preciousness and more about the easygoing comfort that I and my dearest collaborators have come to know and love in our lifetime. This is the freewheeling portrait of after-hours central Missouri misadventure that I've wanted to make ever since I picked up a VHS camcorder two decades ago.

Q: What did you learn while making this film?

A: I learned how creative decisions are sometimes inescapably intertwined with logistical and financial decisions (at least in the ultra-low-budget filmmaking arena). I knew that I only had one chance to make a feature directorial debut and that it might also represent the only opportunity that I'd ever have to helm such an endeavor. So, at a certain point, I was really forced to evaluate what was essential to maintaining the integrity and momentum of the mission and what was simply unnecessary flourish and window dressing.

Q: Tell us one memory about the production of this film that you will never forget.

A: I will never forget sending the cast to "Shakespeare's Pizza boot camp" during pre-production. I have come to forget exactly which toppings were on the malformed pie that Hari and Amy baked and attempted to pass off onto horrified lunchtime patrons. I will also never forget switching from overnights to three consecutive 4:00 AM shoots during our first week of filming.

Q: What do you hope the audience will take away from your film?

A: To have an opportunity to share "Small Pond" with complete strangers in Birmingham is a prize that is unique and wonderful. It is especially interesting to hear everyone's perspective on Kirsten, as the responses seem to careen from annoyance to recognition before bouncing over into empathy, acceptance and the occasional begrudging chuckle.

## CREDITS

unit production manager  
Kim Sherman

assistant director  
Stacia Warren

set decorator  
Flynn Thomas Smith

art director  
Robert Lewis

special make-up effects designed by  
Sandy Andrle

script supervisor  
Stephanie Emerson

gaffer  
Marcus Batton

key grip  
Dan Huck

best boy electric  
Jordan Lundy

best boy grip  
Kyle Stewart

production sound mixer  
C-Nug

boom operator  
Liz Jones

production coordinator  
Jen Tolle

costume designer  
Jennifer Razor

key hairstylist  
Heather Garcia

key make-up artist  
Sandy Andrle

digital utility / assistant editor /  
2nd unit director of photography  
Michael J. Wilson

still photographer  
Karen Johnson

catering & craft service  
Rachel Trinklein

2nd hair & make-up  
Turner Walker

production advisors  
Randy Sinquefield  
Matt Porterfield

wardrobe supervisor  
Amanda Moltzan

camera car grip  
Brock Williams

location manager - St. Louis  
Ron Durham

location scout - Chicago  
Phil Merker

wardrobe assistant  
Sarah Wilson

additional grip & electric  
Andy Myer

production assistants  
David Copeland  
Brian Dresner  
Kelsey Eick  
Chris Norton  
Mizuki Taira  
Lauren Woelfel  
Jenna Rinck

picture car coordinator  
Chris Olson

casting associates  
Kyndal Marshall  
Aaron Riffie

visual consultants  
Mary Nguyen  
Andrew Droz Palermo

research assistant  
Katie Larson

post-production supervisor  
digital colorist  
David Anderson

motion graphics supervisor  
Eric Mousel

visual effects supervisor  
Josh Johnson

title design by  
Robert Lewis

post-production sound design  
Jim MacMorran, Avatar Studios

## CAST

(in order of appearance)

Kirsten ... Hari Leigh  
Adam ... Daniel Rowden  
Mike ... Josh Fadem  
Lynn ... Susan Burke  
Ellen ... Amanda Shea  
Katie ... Amy Seimetz  
Straub ... Boson Au  
Student #1 ... Billy Borgmeyer  
Student #2 ... Brian Dresner  
Hippie #1 ... Brock Johnson  
Dennie ... Kurt Mirtsching  
Paul Pepper  
Ralph Duren  
Pants ... Joshua Windle  
Sal ... Sal Nuccio  
Doug ... Ben Bushman  
Charity ... Maria Seiffert  
Beth ... Holly Voges  
Julie ... Christine Koch  
James Mouser  
Jeff Carrillo  
Hunter Husar  
Gabe Viles  
Josh Johannpeter  
Boone Stigall  
Hippie #2 ... Michael Miller  
Barista ... Issam Yanis  
Pedicab Driver ... "Wild Bill" Foley  
Jennah ... Jennah Beilgard  
Jeremy ... Jeremy Freeze  
Dawson ... Dawson Nolley  
Jay ... Jay Sparks  
Hunter ... Carolyn McCandlish  
Wang Mei ... Lin Bai  
Sarah ... Sarah Wilson  
Bachelorette #1 ... Haylee Morris  
Bachelorette #2 ... Jackie Baessen  
That Guy ... Turner Walker  
Kenny ... Carl Edwards  
Todd ... Nick Renkoski  
Brantly ... Ross Taylor  
Receptionist ... Kirsten Straub  
Aunt Barb ... Mary Fessenden  
Corri Flaker  
Luann ... Ann Magnuson  
Waitress ... Kelli Kennedy

## MUSIC

"I Wasn't Built For a Life Like This"  
"Sweetheart"  
performed by Caleb Stine  
courtesy of Caleb Stine

"The Hippy Menace"  
"I Heart Metroid"  
"Can You Feel Me?"  
performed by The Fumes  
courtesy of Lou Nevins

"High, I Am"  
"Butthash"  
performed by Cave  
courtesy of Cave

"I Cannot Radiate Without You"  
"Everybody's Dig Accounted For"  
written by Jeremy Freeze  
performed by Jerusalem and the Starbaskets  
courtesy of Radio Fonico

"Sharks Are Fucked Up"  
performed by Bald Eagle  
courtesy of Emergency Umbrella Records

"Orange"  
"Dead Stars"  
performed by Little Secrets  
courtesy of Little Secrets

"Call It Casual"  
performed by Gentleman Auction House  
courtesy of Emergency Umbrella Records

"Down at the Flop House"  
performed by California Raisins  
courtesy of California Raisins

"The Pepper Rag"  
performed by Mahjongg  
courtesy of Mahjongg

"Puffy, Fuzzy Cheeks"  
performed by Megazilla  
courtesy of Australian Cattle God

"Not Nothin'"  
performed by The Monte Carlos  
courtesy of The Monte Carlos

"Ride With Me"  
written by Edward Kelly, Joshua Reiss and Robert Miller, Jr.  
performed by Krhyme, J Reez and Duce  
courtesy of Edward Kelly

"Moonshine"  
performed by Cabin Sessions  
courtesy of Rubber Tree Records

"Kroo"  
performed by Haii Usagi  
courtesy of Haii Usagi

"Colors"  
performed by Bramble  
courtesy of Bramble

"ELECTRO-LITE"  
courtesy of Maverick Moon Entertainment

directed by  
John Karyus



## SPECIAL THANKS TO

The City of Columbia, Missouri  
Brent Beshore  
Andrea Sporcic, Missouri Film Office  
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Jay and Nancy Lewis  
Kurt Mirtsching  
Zennie Reynolds  
Toby Epstein  
Cara Giessing  
Andrew Weir  
Columbia Police Department  
Sgt. Chris Kelley  
Sgt. Ken Gregory  
Jay Sparks, McNally's  
Tom Spurling, Ernie's Cafe & Steakhouse  
Kris Farris, Daniel Boone Public Library  
Marty Siddall, KOMU-TV  
Vicki Russell, Columbia Tribune

David Owens, KOPN Radio  
Sal Nuccio, Eastside Tavern  
Lasaad Jeliti, Bar Italia Ristorante  
Steve Adams, Boone Hospital  
Vicki Russell, Columbia Daily Tribune  
Annie Ji, Peking Restaurant  
Sabrina Braden, Maude Vintage  
Aaro, Gotcha!  
David Wilson, 1810 Ranch  
Osama Yanis, Coffee Zone  
Billy Schuh, Emergency Umbrella  
Brian Formo, K Records  
David Halstead, Thrill Jockey  
Phil Hoelting, Crystal Antlers  
Caressa Lupold, NMA Entertainment  
Matador Records  
Chrissy Short, The Beggars Group  
Brett Sharlow, Criterion Collection  
Stephen Trippie, Chicago Tribune  
Robert Kremin, Forum Novelties  
Gary Briggs, Schlafly  
Sanjiv Gajiwala, Stag Beer  
Boulevard Brewing Co.

set dressing photos by  
Alyssa Scheinson

graffiti murals by  
Flynn Thomas Smith

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"Small Pond" was filmed on location in  
Columbia, Missouri  
St Louis, Missouri  
Chicago, Illinois

for Karen and Larry Slates

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