

THE TELEPHONE POLE NUMBERING SYSTEM

A FILM BY WILLIAM WEISS



THE TELEPHONE POLE NUMBERING SYSTEM

super16mm to HDCam: 84 minutes

directed by William Weiss

produced by The Film Company



1515 12th AVENUE SEATTLE WA 98122 PH: 206.245.4264 F: 206.329.1193

PRODUCER: GREGG LACHOW glachow@gmail.com
DIRECTOR: WILLIAM WEISS synaesthetic.weiss@gmail.com

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CREDITS

PRINCIPAL CAST

ROBERT	Dick Arnold
WALT	Mark Wilt
THEANNA	Elizabeth Arnold
SAM	Jay Zorich
RUBY	Pamela Morris
LILLY	Gretchen Kritch

PRINCIPAL CREW

WRITER/DIRECTOR	Willam Weiss
PRODUCTION COMPANY	The Film Company
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER	Gregg Lachow
PRODUCER	Joy Brooke Fairfield
CINEMATOGRAPHER	Megan Griffiths
EDITORS	Cheryll Hidalgo Brandon Schaeffer
ART DIRECTOR	Tania Kupczak
MUSIC	Jason Staczek



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LOGLINE

Crotchety oddballs Robert and Walt search for the meaning behind the seemingly unintelligible telephone pole numbering system.

DESCRIPTION

In William Weiss' **THE TELEPHONE POLE NUMBERING SYSTEM**, two lonely souls are looking to make a connection. Robert and Walt, formerly boyhood pals, presently neighborhood eccentrics, have a new hobby – refining the confusing system of numbers used by utility companies to identify telephone poles. It's a get-rich-quick scheme. It's community service. It's therapy.

The two encounter an unlikely accomplice in Theanna, the city's underground oracle of all things lost and found, thanks to her catalogue of postings collected off telephone poles. Theanna, and her faithful dog Tattoo, keep a close eye on Robert and Walt as they navigate city streets and forest pathways, industriously attempting to apply their own system of logic and meaning to the telephone pole numbering system.

But as Robert and Walt soon learn, sometimes the answers to life's seemingly complicated questions are remarkably simple.



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DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

When I received the call from Gregg Lachow offering me the chance to be the The Film Company's first greenlight, he outlined a very tight production schedule that would require me to deliver the first rough cut within nine weeks! Having just put the finishing touches on a solo project that was four years in the making, I was excited at the challenge of making a film at such short notice, and with the intense collaboration that it demanded. Gregg had assembled a staff of film-artists for me to work with, and encouraged us to rely on our collective creative talents to produce an improvised feature film. We decided to build the film around an idea that I'd been carrying around in my head: What is the meaning of the numbers on telephone poles? And what if they aren't merely identifiers, but some sort of secret code?

We assembled a cast of actors that shared our spontaneous, creative spirit towards the project and "wrote" each day's scenes during improvised rehearsals of situations that the actors and I invented while the crew was lighting and dressing the sets. As production developed, I realized that the concept of the numbering system was not so much the central plotline as it was a metaphor for the eternal nature of curiosity that keeps us all young. And it also became apparent that the same theme was evident in production of the film itself. As filmmakers challenging conventional methods of filmmaking, we needed to unlearn all the expectations we had of film production. We didn't rely on scripts, schedules and budgets in order to mimic the intent of some preconceived notion of a movie. Instead we faced a daily reliance on reminding ourselves of what we love about filmmaking – inventing and telling stories.

In the case of THE TELEPHONE POLE NUMBERING SYSTEM, both the fictional story and the story of its production are about making connections between the real world and our imaginations, and living each day like a child at play.

William Weiss



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DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

William Weiss is a Seattle-based filmmaker known for his unique skill at creating films that combine experimental and traditional narrative techniques within an analog aesthetic.

After completing "Seemann, Deine Heimat Ist Das Meer" in 2000, William began working on "The Emergency Pants Collection." Comprised of nine short films, the collection premiered to critical and popular acclaim in October 2004. One of the films "Have You Seen Me?," received the Best Experimental Film award at the 2005 Northwest Film and Video Festival in Portland, Oregon. In 2005 William completed his first feature film, "The Telephone Pole Numbering System" after being offered an unrestricted greenlight by The Film Company.

William operates his own 16mm production and post-production studio, Synaesthetic Filmproduktions, where he offers assistance to artists who want to make films "the way it used to be done."

FILMOGRAPHY OF THE DIRECTOR

EMERGENCY PANTS - 16mm - 23 min - color - 2004
HAVE YOU SEEN ME? - 16mm - 5 min - color - 2004
I LOVE A PARADE - 16mm - 3 min - color - 2004
OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS - 16mm - color - 2004
EARTHQUAKE - 16mm - 3 min - B&W - 2004
DIRTY BABY SAYS 'HELLO' - 16mm - 5 min - color - 2004
THE WEEK IN REVIEW - 16mm - 5 min - B&W - 2004
OCTOBER 2000 - 16mm - 3 min - color - 2004
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN - 16mm - 5 min - color - 2004
SEEMAN, DEINE HEIMAT IST DAS MEER - 16mm - 23 min - B&W - 2000
EASTER JAY JUNIOR - VHS - 12 min - color - 1999
GAR-DEN - 16mm - 5 min - color - 1998



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SHORT BIOS OF KEY CREW MEMBERS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Gregg Lachow is the creator of The Film Company, a non-profit film studio, and an artist in his own right. He has been generating original works in film and performance for the twenty-two years, the last seventeen in Seattle. His own films include the Emmy-nominated short TO HAVE AND TO HOLD for PBS, and the features MONEY BUYS HAPPINESS, THE WRIGHT BROTHERS, and THE SEVEN MYSTERIES OF LIFE. Other films include SILENCE!, a feature with all dialogue, music and effects performed live onstage. As Executive Producer of The Film Company, he has collaborated with directors Lynn Shelton, Brian Short, Megan Murphy and Guy Maddin.

PRODUCER

Joy Brooke Fairfield is a recent graduate of Harvard University where she studied literature, cultural criticism and theatre with scholars such as Robert Brustein, Peggy Phelan and Robert Woodruff. Since moving to Seattle, she has worked as the literary manager for The Empty Space Theatre and assistant directed at On the Boards and The Intiman Theatre.

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Megan Griffiths has been active in the Seattle film community since 2000, after attaining an MFA in film production with an emphasis on cinematography at Ohio University School of Film. Since relocating to the Northwest, Megan has worked on nine independent features and several shorts, gaining national recognition for her work. Her own debut feature, "First Aid for Choking," is available through Film Threat DVD. She is currently in production on a follow-up feature, "The Off Hours," scheduled to be shot in Seattle in 2007.



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EDITOR

Cheryll Hidalgo learned to cut film on a Steenbeck flatbed at the Art Institute of Chicago, where she received her BFA and MFA in film. Her graduate film, *THE REAL YOU, TOP TO BOTTOM*, was selected for screening at the Midwest Film Center and was shown on public television in Chicago. Cheryll spent time a number of years working as a software engineer before returning to her first love, film. In 1999 she designed and founded the film/video production program at the Seattle Academy of Arts and Sciences, a department which she continues to head.

ART DIRECTOR

Tania Kupczak graduated from Oberlin College with degrees in Molecular Biology and Art History. She received her MFA in Visual art form Vermont College, with an emphasis on Installation art, Digital Media, and Cyberfeminism and published her graduate work in *Domain Errors: Cyberfeminist Practices* (Autonomedia, 2003). Tania is co-founder of the Center for Visual Culture and was one of Jack Straw's New Media Gallery Artists-in-Residence for 2004. Recently Tania has turned her attention toward the film world, working with directors such as Lynn Shelton and Guy Maddin.

MUSIC

Jason Staczek has been playing and writing music for thirty years. He has performed with and written for many different groups, in styles including R&B, soul-jazz, singer-songwriter acoustic, 70s rock, and country blues. Jason is co-owner of Chroma-Sound, a music production house and recording studio located in Seattle. Recently he has collaborated with director David Russo on an animated short, and has produced projects with Garth Reeves and Carrie Akre. He is currently collaborating with director Guy Maddin on music for his upcoming film *THE BRAND UPON THE BRAIN!*



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SHORT BIOS OF KEY CAST MEMBERS

ROBERT

Dick Arnold began his professional acting career in 1948 on the network radio drama, "The Children's Hour," where he made weekly appearances as three-inch tall Hiram Corn, a pixie from Arkansas. Since that auspicious beginning, he has appeared in numerous stage productions (both on and off-Broadway), on network and local television, and in some thirty films, recently having starred in a half dozen features and shorts, taking him from being one of the best unknown actors in Seattle to one of the best unknown movie stars in Seattle. He's also been in the college professor business, and designed stage sets, theatres, houses, interiors, furniture and forgotten advertising logos.

WALT

Mark Wilt has acted in plays, films, TV spots, and euro-style living room "wine glass" comedies since the revolution of 1968. Once a product of Akron, Ohio, he then became a product of Minneapolis-St. Paul where he once filled Garrison Keillor's water jug. Mark then returned to Akron where he regained product status before moving to Seattle in 2002.

THEANNA

Elizabeth Arnold lived in NYC for 14 years before moving back home to Seattle after 9/11. She has worked on a number of film and commercial projects, most recently as the voice of The Maytag Store. Her dog Tattoo (featured in THE TELEPHONE POLE NUMBERING SYSTEM) has just had his headshots done, and has recently been photographed for the new issue of Design Within Reach magazine.



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SAM

Jay Zorich, a member of the Screen Actor's Guild and American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, is a Seattle-based actor whose passion it is to work in front of the camera. A veteran of the operatic stage and local community musical comedy theatre, Jay has found a new passion in the world of television and film. Over the last few years, he has appeared in independent films and a number of television commercials, including Washington State Lottery, Nestle Chocolates, Buick, Toyota, Quality Rentals and Heinz Ketchup.

RUBY

Pamela Morris has been a professional actor for the past 30 years, co-starring in New York and Los Angeles in feature films including THE BIG PICTURE, LAST RITES, and TO THE LIMIT. She has appeared on numerous television show such as THE YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS, DAYS OF OUR LIVES, GENERAL HOSPITAL, PORT CHARLES, MAMA'S FAMILY and HOTEL. Her stage appearances in Los Angeles, Detroit and Seattle include Neil Simon's "FOOLS," "UNDER MILKWOOD," "SAME TIME NEXT YEAR," "AND MISS REARDON DRINKS A LITTLE." She is currently enjoying living and working in Seattle.



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FILMOGRAPHY/ THE FILM COMPANY

WE GO WAY BACK

Directed by LYNN SHELTON

2006

Best Feature & Kodak Vision Cinematography Award, Slamdance 2006

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2006

THE BRAND UPON THE BRAIN!

Directed by GUY MADDIN

2006

Premiering at the Toronto International Film Festival, Fall 2006

ALL MY LOVE

Directed by BRIAN SHORT

2006

(currently in post-production)

THE PART I LOVE THE BEST

Directed by MEGAN MURPHY

(currently in production)



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