

# Press KIT

Zach Braff  
Isabelle Blais

## The High Cost Of Living

a film by  
Deborah Chow



**tiff.** toronto  
international  
film festival  
OFFICIAL SELECTION 2010

THE HIGH COST OF LIVING - a film by Deborah Chow

## THE HIGH COST OF LIVING



### TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Format : 35mm/DCP/HDCAM SR

Length : 93 minutes

Format : 1.85 / 1080p / 23,98fr.

Audio : Dolby SR

Language: English

French Version Available

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### DISTRIBUTION AND SALES

FILMOPTION INTERNATIONAL

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

### FTP SITE

ftp.megafun.ca

Username: filmoption

Password: option

Folder: High Cost of Living





THE HIGH COST OF LIVING is the story of a young pregnant woman whose world falls apart when she loses her baby in a hit and run accident.

*Short synopsis*

It starts with an accident. Henry (Zach Braff) makes a wrong turn and crashes into Nathalie (Isabelle Blais). In a fit of panic, and over the legal limit, he cuts and runs, leaving Nathalie lying in the street, unconscious, bleeding and eight months pregnant. She wakes up in the hospital only to find her bright future destroyed and the baby she is still carrying, dead. Her husband, Michel (Patrick Labbé) is too unnerved and emotionally bereft to deal with the tragedy. As her life unravels, she stumbles across Henry – who has been searching for his victim. Unaware of what

he has done, Nathalie sees him as an unlikely guardian angel, everything Michel is not – compassionate, charming and a little crazy. She finds a welcome relief in the tall, rumped stranger that seems only too willing to offer her refuge. But Henry has his own problems. His past misdeeds are catching up, and he soon discovers that the police are steadily closing in. The inevitable collision will force both Henry and Nathalie to confront loss, labour and life, and to ultimately decide whether the cost of living is worth the price.



FILMOPTION INTERNATIONAL PRESENTS A SUKI FILMS PRODUCTION OF A DEBORAH CHOW FILM "THE HIGH COST OF LIVING"  
WITH ZACH BRAFF ISABELLE BLAIS AND PATRICK LABBÉ PRODUCTION DESIGNER SUSAN MACQUARRIE  
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY CLAUDINE SAUVÉ EDITORS JONATHAN ALBERTS AND BENJAMIN DUFFIELD SOUND BRUNO PUCELLA  
MUSIC NORMAND CORBEIL EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS HEIDI LEVITT AND WALTER KLIMKIW  
PRODUCED BY KIMBERLEY BERLIN AND SUSAN SCHNEIR WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY DEBORAH CHOW

PRODUCED WITH THE FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION OF



# THE STORY

## It starts with an accident.

On a cold winter night, Henry makes a wrong turn. Weary, worn and well above the legal limit, he takes a left that should have been a right and suddenly finds himself hurtling towards a woman standing straight in his path. In a fit of panic, he hits and runs, leaving her lying in the street—unconscious, bleeding and thirty-four weeks pregnant.

Nathalie wakes in the hospital only to find her bright future destroyed, and the baby she is still carrying, dead. With her health in fragile condition, the doctors decide to postpone the delivery in order to give her time to recover. And so Nathalie is sent home with her husband Michel, left to carry the stillborn child as she tries to regain her health.

Across town in a rundown Chinatown apartment, Henry tries to bear his

own burden. With his conscience weighing heavily, he combs the news but finds nothing, and finally decides to take matters into his own hands. He hires his teenage neighbour, Johnny, and sends him out to discover the woman's fate.

Over the next week, Nathalie struggles to come to terms with the loss. But everywhere she looks she sees reminders of the child, and Michel—too unnerved and emotionally bereft to deal

with the tragedy—offers her little support. As the days pass the strain takes its toll, and the baby that was supposed to save the marriage, is suddenly destroying it.

But as her life unravels, Nathalie stumbles across Henry, an unlikely guardian angel who has finally found her thread. Henry is

everything that

Michel is not—



compassionate, charming and funny—and Nathalie finds a welcome relief in the rumpled stranger that seems only too willing to offer her refuge.

But that refuge is not all that it seems. Henry's past misdeeds are catching up, and he soon discovers that the police are steadily closing in on the wrong suspect. With Johnny in danger and Nathalie in need, Henry finds himself in an increasingly precarious position as he tries to ignore his growing feelings for the woman he ran over.

When the truth finally surfaces, the inevitable collision will force both Henry and Nathalie to confront loss, labour and love, and to ultimately decide whether the cost of living is worth the price.



# THE CHARACTERS

**HENRY  
(ZACH BRAFF)**



Henry is his own poetic invention—a scotch-tape man of many words and many mistakes.

He lives his life with reckless abandon and thinks little of the consequences, completely unaware that the years are catching up with him. A New Yorker by birth, he ended up in Montréal by accident and unexpectedly found himself a home.

A charming contradiction, Henry's actions and intentions are frequently at odds. His lazy morality leads him astray, but his generous heart refuses to let him walk away. He gets tangled up in his own mistakes, tripping and stumbling on his own good intentions as he inevitably compounds the mess.



**NATHALIE  
(ISABELLE BLAIS)**

Born and raised in Québec, Nathalie belongs to a vibrant, well established Francophone community of well educated professionals. Everyone is married, everyone has children, and everyone's life is comfortable and secure.

Nathalie has worked hard and chosen well. She has taken few risks, and has built a life that seems destined to work out. But that life leaves little room for an accident, and when her world is torn apart, Nathalie suddenly finds herself questioning her logic.

**MICHEL  
(PATRICK LABBE)**



Self-absorbed and obsessed with his career, Michel takes little notice of the life he leaves behind each morning. His blackberry makes more sense than his wife, and so when their comfortable world starts unraveling, Michel just can't understand.



**JOHNNY  
(JULIAN LO)**

Old enough to drive but still too young to drink, Johnny has a lot of time on his hands. A swaggering teenager, a natural leader and an urban hipster beyond the grasp of his immigrant parents, Johnny is part of a young Asian generation that speaks three languages and loves both hip hop and poutine.

# THE DIRECTOR

## Deborah Chow

Deborah was born in Toronto, Canada, shortly after her parents emigrated from Australia. She completed her undergrad at McGill University, and received her M.F.A in directing from Columbia University. She has written and directed two short films, "Daypass" and "The Hill," both of which toured extensively on the festival circuit and were broadcast worldwide. "The High Cost of Living" is her first feature.

### *Director's Statement*

*Over the course of a lifetime, everyone pays a price. We all go through things that knock us down and leave us fumbling in the dark, and regardless of how straight or narrow the course—no one gets through life unscathed. Whether it be an illness, an accident or even an infidelity—everyone at some point, pays the cost.*

*"The High Cost of Living" is a story about that cost. It's about the choices we make, the sacrifices, the struggle, the labour and toil; everything we do to try and make our lives worth living. And everything we don't do, that ends*

*up happening anyway.*

*Such as an accident. In this story, an accidental collision levies a heavy toll. Henry's wrong turn leads to a reckoning of his past and present life, and forces him to finally face the consequences of his future. Nathalie's seemingly secure life unravels after she loses the baby, and her entire future, all of her hopes and dreams, are instantly thrown into question. And from the Asian family who are inadvertently drawn into Henry's mess to Lille's struggle with addiction—each and every character is grappling*

*with the cost of living. And although that price varies, all of them must eventually pay it.*

*But with payment, comes return. And for Henry and Nathalie, that return brings a quality of life that was formerly lacking—an integrity and honesty that allows Henry to face himself in the mirror, and gives Nathalie the chance to discover a better way of living. Because although the cost of living is high, this is a story about realizing that it's ultimately worth the price.*



### *Filmography*

THE HILL (12 mins, 35mm.)

#### Festivals

Festival des films du Monde de Montreal  
Toronto International Film Festival  
IFP Market, NY  
Tribeca Film Festival  
Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival  
Cinefest Sudbury International Film Festival  
Hawaii International Film Festival  
Female Eye Film Festival

Gotham City Short Film Festival  
Famafest Internacional (Portugal)  
Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival  
Victoria Independent Film & Video Festival  
NSI FilmExchange Canadian Film Festival  
Clermont-Ferrand International Film Festival  
Calgary International Film Festival  
Cinewomen Screening Series

Vancouver Asian Film Festival  
Canadian Film Centre Worldwide Short Film Festival  
Rehobeth Beach Film Festival  
North Fork Film Festival  
San Francisco Women's Film Festival  
FIPA - Festival International de Programme Audiovisuels

DAYPASS (13mins, s16-->35mm.)

#### Festivals

Festival des films du Monde de Montreal  
Canadian Film Centre Worldwide Short Film Festival  
Rhode Island International Film Festival  
Victoria Independent Film & Video Festival  
Quebec City International Film Festival  
Palm Springs Festival of Short Films  
Atlantic Film Festival  
Cinefest Sudbury  
Woodstock Film Festival  
Festival of Festivals (Palm Springs)

Vancouver International Film Festival  
Hawaii International Film Festival  
Foyle Film Festival (Ireland)  
Vancouver Island Independent Film & Video Festival  
Ajijic Festival Internacional de Cine (Mexico)  
Milano Film Festival (Best Actor, James Urbaniak)  
Puchon International Film Festival (Korea)  
Message to Man Intl Film Festival (Russia)  
International Film Festival of Turin (First Prize)  
Sarasota Film Festival

Nederlands Film Festival (Best Film Award)  
Philadelphia Film Festival  
Antistatic Media Festival  
580 Short Film Festival  
Les Etranges Nuits du Cinema (Switzerland)  
Edmonton International Horror Film Festival  
Semarang International Film Festival (Indonesia)  
Sex and Death Short Film Festival (Toronto)  
1 Reel Film Festival (Seattle)  
Nihilist Film Festival (Los Angeles)



# THE CAST

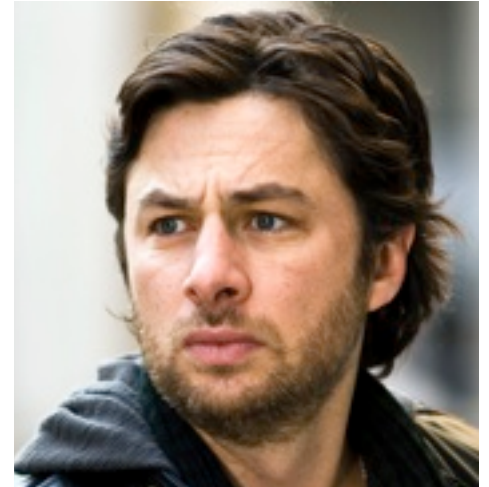
## ZACH BRAFF HENRY

Zach Braff has distinguished himself from his peers—not only as an actor, but as a writer and director. With his feature writing and directorial debut, *GARDEN STATE*, Zach Braff reveals himself in all three capacities—acting, writing and directing. Braff plays the lead role of “Andrew Largeman” among a cast which includes Natalie Portman, Peter Sarsgaard, Ian Holm and Method Man. With a budget of only \$2.5 million, the film premiered at the 2004 Sundance Film Festival, where it sold for \$5 million in an unprecedented sale to two studios, Fox Searchlight and Miramax. The film garnered numerous awards. On the writing side, Braff received a coveted WGA nomination for “Best Original Screenplay.” The film earned him an Independent Spirit Award for “Best First Feature” as well as a nomination for “Best First Screenplay.” In addition, Braff was awarded “Best Directorial Debut” by the National Board of Review, “Breakthrough Director” by the Hollywood Film Festival and “Most Promising Filmmaker” by the Chicago Film Critics Association. With his hand-picked soundtrack including songs by Simon and Garfunkel, Coldplay and Frou Frou, Braff has also won a Grammy for

“Best Compilation Soundtrack Album for Motion Picture, TV or Other Visual Media.” The album has sold over a million copies.

This summer Braff returns to the stage in the Second City Theaters' original comedy "Trust" written by Paul Weitz and and directed by Peter DuBois. The dark comedy also stars Bobby Cannavale and Sutton Foster.

As an actor, Braff was nominated for a 2005 Primetime Emmy Award and a 2005, 2006 and 2007 Golden Globe award for his portrayal of Dr. John "J.D." Dorian in NBC's comedy "Scrubs." His filmography includes roles in *THE BROKEN HEARTS CLUB*, *GETTING TO KNOW YOU* and *MANHATTAN MURDER MYSTERY* in which he plays Woody Allen and Diane Keaton's son. Braff's stage experience includes New York City's Public Theater productions of "Twelfth Night" and "Macbeth" with Alec Baldwin and Angela Bassett. Braff is currently co-writing with his brother Adam an adaptation of the children's book, *ANDREW HENRY'S MEADOW*, which he will also executive produce. He can be heard as the voice of the title character in Disney's much-anticipated 3-D animated film *CHICKEN LITTLE*. He



also starred in Dreamworks' *THE LAST KISS* and The Weinstein Company's *THE EX*.

A native of New Jersey and graduate of Northwestern University's film program, Braff studied theater acting while writing and directing his own short films.

## ISABELLE BLAIS NATHALIE

Isabelle graduated from Montréal's Conservatoire d'Art Dramatique in 1997. Best known for role in the Oscar winning and acclaimed Denys Arcand film, *The Barbarian Invasions*, she has starred in a number of feature films, including George Clooney's *Confessions of a Dangerous Mind*. In 2003, she won a Masque (Quebec's theatre award) for best actress in *Au coeur de la rose*, a Jutra (Quebec's movie award) for Best Supporting Actress in *Québec-Montréal* and two Best Actress Genie nominations for *Savage Messiah* and for *Les aimants*. In 2008, she played the lead character in the movie *Borderline*, for which she again won the Jutra Award for best actress and was nominated for a Genie in the same category. Recently, she was seen in Yves Pelletier's *Le Baiser du Barbu*.

On TV, She starred in the series *Human Trafficking*, garnering her a Gemini nomination for Best Supporting Actress. She has also starred in a number of seasons of the popular series *C.A.* She has a lead role in *Prozac* a new series that has just started shooting this summer.

In addition to acting, Isabelle is the lead singer of rock band, Caïman Fu. So far, the band has released three albums and toured extensively.



## PATRICK LABBÉ MICHEL

Patrick Labbé is one of Quebec's best-known French language stars. His film roles include four installments of the box office hit *Les Boys*. He had the lead role in Oscar winning French director, Claude Lelouch's *Hasard ou coincidence*. He also had principal roles in *Ma vie en cinémascope*, *Les Muses orphelines* and *La brunante* among others.

Labbé first appeared on English television in the lead role of the CBC drama *October 1970* and starred in the mini-series *Trudeau II*, directed by Tim Southam, and had a guest role in the comedy series *Moose TV* as well as having a continuing roll in the HBO series *Durham County*.

On French television, Labbé won a 2002 MétroStar (Quebec's version of The People's Choice Awards) for his portrayal of Simon in the Géméaux Award-winning series "La vie la vie". His lengthy list of television principal roles includes: "Nos étés", "Virginie", "Lance et compte", "Fortier", "Cover Girl", "Chambre en ville" and "Graffiti" to name a few.

Labbé was recently nominated for an ACTRA award in the category of Outstanding Male Performance for his work on "Durham County" and in 2007 was nominated for a Géméaux Award for his role in "Nos étés III".

THE HIGH COST OF LIVING







# THE CREW

## PRODUCTION DESIGNER

### SUSAN MACQUARRIE

Ms. MacQuarrie is originally from Nova Scotia. After finishing a BA degree in French and Art, Susan went to Toronto and quickly became a jack of all trades in the art dept of a commercial production house.

With her move to Montreal she swiftly moved up the ladder working as a props buyer, set decorator and then an Art Director/ Production designer. After 26 years in the industry, Susan continues to work in all mediums, feature films, commercials, MOWs, and shorts. No job is too big or too small to interest Susan, because it is about the passion for the project, the ensemble of people and the vision of the filmmakers that matter. Susan is an avid traveler and feels that learning about other cultures and their art brings a different dimension to her design.

## DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

### CLAUDINE SAUVÉ

Claudine has over 15 years of experience as a director of Photography. During this time, she has been nominated seven times for a Gemini/Gémeaux award for her work on documentaries and drama series such as "Short Infinity", "CA" and "Minuit le Soir".

Claudine has also received The Special Jury award (for cinematography) at the Fantasia Festival in 2007 for her work on the short films "Hôtel" and "Moi", as well as winning the Vision Globale-Kodak cinematography award for "Fata Morgana" directed by Alexandre Franchi. Her work on Alexandre's first feature "The Wild Hunt" contributed to its successful reception at The Toronto International Film Festival in 2009, winning best Canadian first Feature, and at Slamdance in 2010, winning Best Film Audience Award.

In addition to shooting "The High Cost of Living" for Suki Films and Director Deborah Chow in 2010, Claudine also was the DOP on "The Year Dolly Parton Was My Mom" for Palomar Films and Director Tara Johns.

Ms. Sauv   is also a prize-winning still photographer and has published a book of photography "Barbershops".

## EDITORS

### JONATHAN ALBERTS and BENJAMIN DUFFIELD

JONATHAN ALBERTS was born and raised in Canada and studied at McGill University in Montr  al and the American Film Institute in Los Angeles. His feature film work includes, 'Wristcutters: A Love Story,' (Lionsgate) starring Patrick Fugit and Tom Waits which premiered at Sundance and was nominated for two Independent Spirit Awards.

'Pedro', a biopic of the late Pedro Zamora, screened at TIFF and Berlin before its broadcast on MTV. In 2010, Strand Releasing released 'Happiness Runs' starring Andie MacDowell and Rutger Hauer. His work has been broadcast and screened at festivals worldwide including the Whitney Biennial of Art, PBS and the Sundance Channel.

BENJAMIN DUFFIELD is a Montreal-based director/editor working in both documentary and fiction films. In 1994 he directed and edited two seasons of CTV's *Missing Children*, and in 1996 he joined five filmmakers to make *Yukonna*, an expedition documentary on the Yukon River that retraced the prospectors' journey a century ago. The film sold to National Geographic, won several awards and played on the CBC during their 1998 Canada Day celebrations.

As a film editor, he has cut numerous feature films (including *These Girls* starring Caroline Dhavernas & David Boreanaz and *Banshee* starring Taryn Manning), American and Canadian television series (CBC's *18 to Life*, *Grand Star*, and *15/Love*), and feature documentaries (including Ilan Ziv's *Six Days in June*, Irene Angelico's *Black Coffee*, and Terence McKenna's Gemini Award winning *Trail of a Terrorist* for CBC and PBS: Frontline).

He went on to co-direct and edit a feature-length documentary about the children of rock legends entitled *Singing in the Shadow*, nominated for a Gemini Award, and co-direct *The Mad, the Bad & the Ugly* on the psychology of driving. He is currently editing season two of *18 to Life* and directing a documentary on interactive installation artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer entitled *Your Presence is Requested*.

## SOUND

### BRUNO PUCELLA

Bruno Pucella is a native Montrealer working for several years as a sound recordist, editor and designer. He has designed the sound for a number of films including award winning shorts, documentaries and feature films. Some of his titles include Michael Jett  's new feature *Bumrush*, Sarah Fortin's feature documentary *J'm'en va revivre*. He has collaborated with Julien Frechette on his acclaimed documentary *Le doigt dans l'oeil* as well as his upcoming feature documentary *Le monde en coulisse*. He designed the sound for Jeremy Torrie's soon to be released horror epic *A Flesh Offering* and worked with Jennifer Almey on her award winning feature documentary *L'Atelier de mon p  re*.

## MUSIC

### NORMAND CORBEIL

Normand Corbeil has garnered a reputation among top Hollywood filmmakers for his sweeping and evocative scores.

Among Corbeil's feature film credits are THE STATEMENT for Sony Pictures Classics, directed by Norman Jewison, starring Michael Caine and Alan Bates, and A DIFFERENT LOYALTY, starring Sharon Stone and Rupert Everett. Other credits include Paramount's DOUBLE JEOPARDY, directed by Bruce Beresford, starring Ashley Judd and Tommy Lee Jones, and THE ART OF WAR at Warner Brothers, directed by Christian Duguay and starring Wesley Snipes and Donald Sutherland.

Corbeil has received two Emmy Award nominations for his scores for the miniseries HUMAN TRAFFICKING and HITLER: THE RISE OF EVIL. Corbeil has just completed the score for Bruce Beresford's THE CONTRACT, starring John Cusack and Morgan Freeman.

Normand's recent credits include WHITE NOISE 2, CHEECH, MON FILLE MON ANGE, EMOTIONAL ARITHMETIC, STRAIGHT EDGE, MASTER KEY, and the forthcoming HIGH COST OF LIVING, starring Zach Braff.

Maestro Corbeil has also conducted symphony orchestras in London, Los Angeles, Montreal, Munich, Bratislava and Seattle.

# THE PRODUCTION

## Suki Films Inc.



Suki Films Inc. is a fully operational Montreal-based boutique production house that acts as an independent producer and consultant for clients throughout Canada and the United States.

Kimberley Berlin and Susan Schneur have combined their talents and in opening Suki Films in 2008 are committed to producing films that will resonate with all viewing audiences and compete at the highest level within the current marketplace and festival circuit.

Suki is currently in post production of "The High Cost of Living" developed with the

assistance of Telefilm Canada, SODEC, and Superchannel and produced with the assistance of Telefilm Canada and Quebec, Canadian tax credits and private equity. "The High Cost of Living" stars Zach Braff, Isabelle Blais and Patrick Lab  e and is distributed by Filmoption International.

"Rose By Name" written and to be directed by Shawn Linden is currently in early pre-pre production with a confirmation of production financing from SODEC. "Rose" is a Quebec-Manitoba co-production also to be distributed by Filmoption International. This will be Shawn's second feature. His

first feature "Nobody" has won over 11 international festival awards.

Projects currently in development: "Kelly's Bar" directed by the award winning Shirley Cheechoo and to star Adam Beach. "Cape Enrage", developed with the assistance of SODEC, Telefilm, Film N.B., Movie Central, and HG Fund. Suki is also currently developing two television series as well as a trio of very edgy horror-thrillers.

Though it's precursors, Suki has worked with a selected list of these clients and collaborators includes: Oxygen

Media, Serendipity Point Films, Sci-Fi Channel/ NBC Universal Television, Buena Vista International/Disney, Shaftesbury Films, CHUM, Alliance Atlantis, The Movie Network, Movie Central, Paramount, MGM, Showtime Network, Somerville House, Blue Engine Entertainment, Wiesbord Del Gaudio Iacono, Big Motion Pictures, Buffalo Gal Pictures, Steven Onda Productions Inc, Domino Film and Television International, World Affairs Television Productions, IMP, Brainstorm Media, Equinoxe Films Inc., Filmoption International and Entertainment One.

### Producers

#### KIMBERLEY BERLIN

With a career that has spanned over two decades, Kim Berlin has over 25 films, hundreds of hours of episodic television to her credit, and has produced 10 feature films. A hands-on producer, she consistently brings projects in on time and on budget with creative integrity.

In 1984, Ms. Berlin started her career as a production assistant. She quickly moved up the ranks and became one of Canada's most sought after 1st assistant directors. Her on set experience, a valuable asset, allowed for the seamless transition to Ms. Berlin becoming a producer. Kim Berlin has worked with companies ranging from Buena Vista

International, Disney, Oxygen Media, Hearst, Saban Entertainment, Alliance International, Serendipity Point Films, CTV, TMN, Showtime and the Family Channel to name a few.

Formerly President of Production at Blackwatch Communications Inc., Kim Berlin produced several feature films that were sold to domestic and international markets including "Dead Silent" starring Rob Lowe, "Artificial Lies" starring Jack Wagner and Daphne Zuniga, "Nowhere in Sight" starring Andrew McCarthy and Helen Slater and "Life in the Balance" starring Bo Derek and Bruce Boxleitner.

Ms. Berlin has also been a guest speaker on production-related industry conference panels, notably at the Montreal Film Festival in both 2000 and 2001.

Ms. Berlin under her former company banner Wishmaker Films produced "Banshee" directed by Kari Skogland and starring Taryn Manning for the Oxygen Channel as well as "2 Human" aka "Android Apocalypse", starring Scott Bairstow and Joseph Lawrence for the Sci-Fi Channel. Both films premiered on June 24th, 2006.

#### SUSAN SCHNEIR

Susan started her film career in 1978 from the lowest rung, an office driver. Fifteen years later, she was a Line Producer on features. In between, she learned the nuts and bolts of real filmmaking, working on many Canadian feature films as a sound recordist, sound editor, picture editor and Post-Production Supervisor. She made the move to production management and TV simultaneously, working on the first English prime time TV series shot in Montreal, "Mount Royal", for Alliance Communications (Alliance Atlantis). From that experience she went on to Line Producer two Feature Films.

After starting her family, it was time to step back and create a way to work on her own terms. In 1994 she pioneered the field of Professional Representation in Montreal by starting Blitz Management with one Director of Photography. It has been a thriving enterprise for 14 years with clients including Directors, Directors of Photography, Producers, Production Designers and Writers. Discovering and encouraging talent has become a passion as well as a job.

Susan has also created a television series optioned by Malofilm and developed in conjunction with Malo-Behaviour Films and co-writer, Leila Basen.

The Montreal based company CineGroupe later optioned "Time Cruiser". The rights have currently reverted to the Partnership of Schneur-Basen. Her former partnership, Tribute Films, has accessed development money for its various projects from SODEC, Telefilm, HGF, CTV Cogeco, Corus Entertainment, Telefilm Canada and Film New Brunswick. Susan has taken her projects through Tribute Films and moved to Suki Films Inc.

Kim and Susan have been collaborating for over 25 years in many different capacities and in joining together to form Suki Films in 2008 they bring to the table a sweeping range of abilities.



# PRODUCTION NOTES

## Suki Films Inc.

### Partnership:

Suki Films is the partnership of Susan Schneir (Su) and Kimberley Berlin (ki) the producers on "The High Cost of Living".

We met 25 million years ago on the series "Mount Royal" and knew a time would come where we would work together. Our friendship and sisterhood has continued through all these years. Time passed with frightening speed and careers were built. Susan started Blitz Management the first company to represent cinematographers and directors in Montréal and after years of freelance production work Kim became head of production at Blackwatch and employed a number of Susan's clients on many of her productions under that banner. When Blackwatch closed its doors she opened her boutique production house Wishmaker Films. In 2006 Kim was producing a movie for Oxygen network and asked Susan to come on board as Supervising / Line Producer. It was a show fraught with many challenges but they were an excellent team and always had each other's backs and it was time to work together. From the ashes Suki Film Inc. was born.

### Passion:

"The High Cost of Living" resonated as a project for us not only because of the inherent drama in the story but also how it featured life in Montreal. In the past the films coming out of the city completely reflected the English-French division in society. As Michaëlle Jeane said in her first speech as Governor General, "the time of 'two solitudes' had finished", we fervently believe this as well.

In The High Cost of Living we see the new Quebec, Anglophone and Francophone and new Quebecer's living side by side integrated into Quebec life, speaking both languages and accepting one another as equals. We want audiences to understand the positive changes in our society.

### Perseverance

We met Deborah Chow in the summer of 2007, it was clear from our first meeting that her vision for her screenplay The High Cost of Living was powerful and compelling. We recognized immediately that she was a formidable talent and matching that with our skills, passion, perseverance and pit bull tenacity; her first feature

would set the tone of her career and our new company.

September 2008 all development applications for HCOL to Telefilm and SODEC were completed. Kim was staggered at the amount of trees that were destroyed in the name of paper. Susan with a glance to the mountain of paper piled on our boardroom table, a veteran of the submission and filing of the applications funds nodded sagely, "We'll plant more trees. Keep printing collating and stapling to the left"...

We signed our development deal with both Telefilm and SODEC end of March 2008. We had cleared the hurdle to step one. To get to step 2 we needed to interest and attach a Canadian Distributor. Andrew Noble VP of Distribution at Filmoption a most noble man, came on board not only as our distributor but as our champion. He saw the great potential in "The High Cost of Living" and put his heart and Filmoption's MG behind us. Going in for production financing at Telefilm and SODEC was step 3... a very big step... more like scaling the Matterhorn than step climbing.

Fast forward to March 2009, in we marched in for production financing rounds. June we receive the news we were turned down by both Telefilm and SODEC. We were devastated and Andrew immediately checked us into a clinic well known for treating the anxieties of unfunded producers, (Deborah went to the clinic exclusively for Director breakdowns) Andrew reminded us that the wonderful team of Melanie Hartley, Peggy Lainis, Katrina Best and Telefilm Montreal really loved and were behind our project. HCOL needed some minor revisions and we were invited come back and apply again. Deborah plunged back into the draft. We read, made notes, gave notes. November 2009 in we marched again to Telefilm and to SODEC. As we left the Telefilm meeting we exchanged warm fuzzy glances... we had a good feeling...a really good feeling. Beware of good feelings.

December 2009 we rip into our email. YES production funding from Telefilm!!!! We were at the height of happiness, ten minutes later the SODEC email arrived NO production funding from SODEC...we were plunged back into the depths of despair.

We immediately called Melanie Hartley our champion at Telefilm and told her we had to meet. We met with Melanie, we met with Michel Pradier, we explained the situation, we justified our position, we had more meetings, then at the final meeting with Melanie, we asked for more..."How much more?" Melanie asked cautiously. We told. " Hmm okay let me see what I can do." Melanie left the office with a determined look of determination. Two months later... she did... she got us more. We were 80% there.

And now the Indie Producer Mantra becomes real...

**ABC-Always Be Closing** - Endless meetings with our Bank, Filmoption, reworking the finance structure, budget the cash flow and/ or lack of it, piecing it together with investments and reinvestments.

**ABC-Always Be Casting** - The role of Natalie had Isabelle Blais name on it from the start and we couldn't imagine anyone in the role of Michel but Patrick Labbé. Our casting directors Murielle LaFerrière and Claude Brunet were brilliant at scouring the country to find the perfect Johnny, and they did after weeks of search finally right here in Montreal, a natural in his first acting role, Julian Lo. Henry ---oh the role of Henry we made our lists and off Heidi Levitt our US casting director and executive producer went to find the perfect Henry. From February 2009 to January 2010, no perfect Henry, no Henry at all. We are now three weeks to camera and we are getting exceedingly freaked out ...

January 2010 we get a call from Heidi that the all powerful Sandra Chang, Zach Braff's manager has read the "The High Cost of Living 'and loves it for Zach. We are thrilled and terrified, we hadn't made an offer and the money we had for Henry wouldn't be enough to renovate Zach's bathroom. Zach reads it, loves it, and wants to meet Deborah. We put Deborah on a plane on a Saturday and fly her to New York. They meet, they talk...

Monday morning we make our offer and hold our breath. Zach is in, and the offer accepted. This was a script and role he had been looking for and it was finally, at the end of the day for Zach, not about the money, just passion for a role he wanted to play.

**ABC-Always Be Chasing** and calling everyone you know thought, you knew, and wanted to know and your imaginary friends for help, advice and investment. With partners like Walter Klymkiw both investor and executive producer, Filmoption, Andrew Noble and Maryse Rouillard, we pulled it off. And finally after almost 3 years of relentless, untiring effort we close at the National Bank on January 15, 2010. We have secured an exemplary crew. The fantastic Diandra Yoselevitch as our Production Manger, the talented Claudine Sauve as our DP, the maverick of production designers Susan Macquarrie. We had the dream team. Principal photography is now locked and day one will be Feb 11 2010.

The High Cost of Living had a horseshoe up its butt...Our shoot was blessed. Our winters generally evil was benign and kind. The weather film gods looked down upon us, smiled, and gave us mild muggy nights and almost no snow. For one roof top scene we quietly asked for a few flakes...you know atmosphere flakes, we got more than flakes but it was a beautiful magical night and scene.

From the incredible performances by Zach, Isabelle, Patrick, Julian and our entire cast, to the deft and mature direction of Deborah and under the watchful eyes of the Suki pit bulls, we had an extraordinary shoot with drama only on the screen.

Post Production has been fast and furious but again, blessed. The award winning Normand Corbeil, composer, came on board after watching our director's cut and proceeded to compose and deliver a most haunting score.

On Wednesday July 28th 2010 we left the office early, we could no longer stare at our office phone and will it to ring ...were waiting to hear from YOU. A bottle and half later of a tasty pinot gris Andrew phoned us with the news.

And so here we are thrilled, delighted, and very proud.

See you there September 15th 21:00 Scotia Bank #3.

PS- We are in the process of changing our logo from the fluffy terrier to a tough but charming Pit Bull.

# THE CREDITS

Filmoption International Presents

A Suki Films Production

## THE HIGH COST OF LIVING

Written and Directed by  
Deborah Chow

Producers  
Kimberley Berlin  
Susan Schneir

Executive Producers  
Heidi Levitt  
Walter Klymkiw

Zach Braff

Isabelle Blais

Patrick Labbé

Director of Photography  
Claudine Sauv 

Production Designer  
Susan MacQuarrie

Music Composer  
Normand Corbeil

Edited by  
Jonathan Alberts  
Benjamin Duffield

Costumes by  
Annie Dufort

Sound Design  
Bruno Pucella

Casting  
Murielle La Ferri re  
Claude Brunet  
Heidi Levitt (USA)

### CAST

Nathalie Isabelle Blais  
Henry Zach Braff  
Michel Patrick Labb 

Johnny	Julian Lo
Wai Lin	Aimee Lee
Detective Lambert	Pierre Gendron
Kenny	Sean Lu
Julie	Anick Lemay
Lille	Nicole Braber
Ian	Graham Cuthbertson
Anna	Myl�ne Savoie
Dr. Rosen	Tony Robinow
Nurse #1	Joujou Turenne
Eli	Kyle Switzer
Paul	Ian Finlay
Martin	Shan Chetty
Urban Wife	Anik Matern
Student	Victor Andres Trelles Turgeon
Medical Resident	Paul-Antoine Taillefer
Pascale	Karine Lavergne
Gavin	Mathew Mackay
Hipster	Patrick Costello
Isabelle	Nicole Jones
New Father	Qamar Abbas
Nurse #2	Susan Bain
Olivia	Paula Jean Hixson
Sarah	Val�rie Ouimet-Chiriaeff
Teenage Boy	William Phan
Urban Bartender	Richard Robitaille
Urban Husband	Robert Higden

### STUNTS

Stunt Coordinator	St�phane Lefebvre
Nathalie Stunt Double	H�l�na Lalibert�
Henry Stunt Double	St�phane Lefebvre

### CREW

Production Manager	Diandra Yoselevitz
1st Assistant Director	Christian Simard
2nd Assistant Director	Danielle Ste-Marie
French Translation	Joseanne Brunelle
	Tristan Tondino
Extras Casting	Casting Quarters
	Johanne Titley
Decorator	Claudine Ste-Marie
Key Make-Up Artist	Melissa Purino
Key Hairdresser	Hanne Yee
Location Manager	Fran�ois Renaud
Script Supervisor	Isabelle Faivre-Duboz
Production Coordinator	M�lanie Lavoie
Sound Recordist	Philippe Mercier
Boom Operator	Olivier Vinson
Sound Trainee	Sophie Cloutier
1st Assistant Camera	Daniel Guy
2nd Assistant Camera	Marie-France Simard
Data Wrangler	Isabelle C�t�
	Kyle Switzer

# THE CREDITS

Stills Photographer	Jan Thijs Sébastien Raymond Philippe Bossé	Unit Publicist	Judith Dubeau Ixion Communications
Set Props Master	Julie Larose	EPK	Jean-Nicolas Orphan
Scenic Technicians	Jaoa Baptista Gilbert Mercier Michel Dufour Nicolas Mathieu	MUSIC	
Picture Car Coordinator	Luc Poirier (Lucky Luc)	Music Supervisor	Diandra Yoselevitz
Wardrobe Mistress	Raphaëlle Champagne	Music conducted and orchestrated by Normand Corbeil	
Key Dresser	Melissa Martel	Violin Solo	David Juritz
Dresser	Josiane Jospitre	Violin	Kathy Gowers
Daily Assistant Dresser	Renée Tremblay	Violin	Philippa Ibbotson
Make-Up Artist	Melissa Purino	Violin	Ian Humphries
Asst. Make-Up	Jessia Heeren	Viola	Nicholas Barr
Special Effects Makeup	Adrian Morot Kathy Tse Bruno Gatien	Viola and contractor	Andrew Brown
Key Hairdresser	Hanna Yee	Cello Solo	Caroline Dale
Asst. Hairdresser	Rocco Stallone	Cello	Nicholas Cooper
Gaffer	Michel Caron	Music Recorded and mixed at Abbey Road Studios by Jonathan Allen assisted by John Barrett	
Best Boy Lighting	Jacques Tremblay	POST-PRODUCTION	
Lighting Technician	Serge Larouche	Technical Directors	Simon Cliche Jérôme Corbeil Christophe Lygrisse
Generator Operators	Andrew Dent Marc Henaut	Asst. Technical Directors	Simon-Benoît Boisvert Guillaume Mayrand-Bouchard
Key Grip	Simon Hébert	Technical Coordinator	Martin Lapointe
Best Boy Grip	Robert Auclair	Post Coordinators	Julie Labarre Isabelle Bouchard
Grips	Manuel Daigneault Steven McMahon	Assistant Editor	Claude Sophie Barsalo-Lacoursière
Office Runner	Geoff Patenaude	Colourist	Dean Lewis
Daily 3rd Assistant Director	Lucie Boulanger	VTR Operator	Isabelle Gariépy
Production Accountants	Jean-François Lalonde Nathalie Bélanger Karine Simard Thierry Niquel Habib Elias	Quality Control	Virginie Doré-Lemonde Véronique Papillon
Unit Manager	Karl Archambault	Sound Mixer	Philippe Attié
Assistant Unit Manager	Kristian Girard	Mixer's Assistant	Jean-Baptiste Joubaud
Set Production Assistant	Pascal Ménard	Foley Artists	Caboom Audio
Production Assistants	Gabrielle Cantin Victor Amyot	Foley Recording	Sevan Koryan
Truck Production Assistant	Daniel Charbonneau	Voice Recording	Coordinator Marie-Pierre Johnson-Gagné
Assistant Location Managers	Ariane St-Pierre Diane Janna	ADR Recording	Caroll Cafardy Joe Petrella Sevan Koryan
Drivers	Jon Prévost Maxime Normandeau Jose Wilson Yvan Labranche	Credits & Subtitles	Louis-Gabriel Pothier Claude Sophie Barsalo-Lacoursière
Craft	René Lopez	Filmoption assistants	Amanda Desroches Ian Tkach
Assistant Craft	Jonathan Summerville	Financial services	National Bank of Canada
Caterers	De Bons Petits Plats	Legal counsel	Heenan Blaikie, Dean Chenoy
		Clearances	The Rights Company
		Accounting services	Weisbord Del Gaudio Iacono
		Insurance	BFL Canada



# THE CREDITS

**"Head On"**

Performed by The Jesus and Mary Chain  
 Written by James McLeish Reid and William Adam Reid  
 Published by Domino Publishing Company of America, Inc  
 © 1989 – Courtesy of Warner Music Canada Co.

**"Furious Fire"**

Performed by Brian Tichy  
 Written by Marc Ferrari, Brian Tichy  
 © Red Engine Music (ASCAP)  
 Courtesy of MasterSource Music Catalog

**"Choses que j'aime le plus"**

Performed by Rebecca Shoichet, Bill Runge, Tim Hearsey  
 Written by William Runge

**"Assault On Precincts 1 Through 12"**

Performed by L.A. Heat  
 Written by Paul Minor and David Baum  
 Courtesy of Steam Room Romeo Music

**"Dime A Dozen"**

Performed by Petra  
 Written by Marc Ferrari & Michael McGregor  
 © Red Engine Music & Revision West  
 Courtesy of MasterSource Music Catalog

**"The Mama Papa"**

Performed by Plants and Animals  
 Written and composed by Warren Spicer,  
 Matthew Woodley and Nicolas Basque  
 Published by Secret City Publishing  
 Licensed courtesy of Secret City Records

**"Holding Hands"**

Performed by We Are Wolves  
 Written by Antonin Marquis, Alexander Ortiz,  
 Vincent Levesque  
 Published by Third Side Music Inc.  
 Courtesy of Dare To Care, 2009

**"The Bridge"**

Performed by Matthew Popieluch  
 Written by Marc Ferrari, Josh Kessler,  
 Lewis Pesacov, Matthew Popieluch, Ariel Rechtshaid  
 Published by Red Engine Music (ASCAP)  
 Courtesy of MasterSource Music Catalog

**"We at the Party"**

Performed by Spesh K  
 Written by Kevin Kinch & Travis VanLieshout

**"For The Love"**

Performed by Farm Team  
 Written by Jonathan Simon, Morgan Little  
 Courtesy of Just Hit Music, 2005  
 Licensed courtesy of Third Side Music Inc.

**"SOS"**

Performed by The Breeze  
 Written by Tammy Herrera, James Hendrix,  
 Delano Hillard, Nicki Nevlin

**"Fire Alarm"**

Performed and written by Snailhouse

**"Country Song"**

Performed by Tim Bubbett & The Nashville Six  
 Written by Jai Josefs  
 © Revision West (BMI)  
 Courtesy of MasterSource Music Catalog

**"Assault On Precincts 1 Through 12"**

Performed by L.A. Heat  
 Written by Paul minor and David Baum  
 Courtesy of Steam Room Romeo Music

**"Tranquille"**

Performed and written by Dactylo

**"Firefly"**

Performed by Black Kites  
 Written by Alan Petherick, Evelyn Groves,  
 Marcel Feldmar, Nicki Nevlin

**"Fall"**

Performed by Saturna  
 Written by Ryan Carroll, Steve Anderson,  
 Eric Block, Matt Badger  
 Courtesy of Nexus Underground

**"Sleep Behind Dark Glasses"**

Performed by L.A. Heat  
 Written by Paul Minor and David Baum  
 Courtesy of Steam Room Romeo Music

**"Disco Blackout"**

Performed by Controller.Controller  
 Written by N. Basnayake, S. Kaija,  
 C. Llewellyn-Thomas, R. Morris, J. Scheven  
 Published by Controller.Controller  
 Courtesy of Paper Bag, 2004  
 Licensed courtesy of Third Side Music Inc.

**"The Great Escape"**

Performed by Patrick Watson  
 Written and composed by Patrick Watson  
 Published by Intrigue Music, LLC  
 Licensed courtesy of Secret City Records

Thank you to

Walter Klymkiw The Valet d'Coeur  
 Brasserie McAuslan Bloom Maternity  
 Allyson Kassie Danny Lavertu  
 Andrew Noble Maryse Rouillard  
 Paul Cadieux (Charlie) Sandra Chang  
 Alex, Victor, Fanny, Josephine, Jack and Kiki Amyot  
 The Schneir Family  
 Mary, Kevin and Kenny Berlin  
 Sam Berlin Jr.  
 Winnie Chow & The Chow Family  
 Reggie and Gary Handelsman  
 Lise Dubois Jasmine Schnarr  
 Andy Bulman-Fleming Heather Schnarr  
 Joseph Raso Noah Rosen  
 Larysa Kondracki Ellis Kirwan  
 Patricia Riggen Dr. Janet Schinder

Lillian Linder Katrina Best  
 Peggy Lainis Melanie Hartley  
 Marielle Poupelin Marla Struzer  
 Caroline Braut Sandrine Cioccio  
 Joe Iacono Gabriel Nasra  
 Ortensia Palmerino Dean Chenoy  
 Michael Spanier Josh Fagin  
 Joshua David Jinny Barbosa  
 Anna Georgopoulos Cherri Campbell  
 Patrick Downs Maija Burnett  
 Geoff Patenaude Sandra Chang  
 Rose Greater  
 Walter Lighting and Grip



Dedicated to my father, Dr. R.C.M Chow

# THE HIGH COST OF LIVING

Produced with the participation of



Produced in association with



Production Executive Kathleen Meek



Production Executive Julie Di Cresce

Produced with the assistance of



Developed with the assistance of



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