



# GRACE

The Art of Recovery is Born From the Threat of Addiction



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The Art of Recovery is Born From the Threat of Addiction

Story by Marisa Vitali

Drama

13.57 Minutes

Written & Directed by Chris Ordal

Produced by Marisa Vitali, Chris Ordal, Claudine Marrotte, Alysia Reiner

Starring: Marisa Vitali, Stephanie Brait, Alysia Reiner, Zach Grenier, Chris Kerson

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# Synopsis

## Short Synopsis

Janice must face her high powered ex-husband in family court for the custody of their daughter. Head waitress at the Depot Diner, staying clean and doing the right thing is Janice's only priority. When her boss Johnny makes a decision that affects her ability to appear in family court, Janice has to face her addiction demons and choose whether to stay clean through adversity or 'screw it' and use. GRACE follows Janice as she tries to do the right thing for herself and her daughter.

## Medium Synopsis

GRACE tells the story of a recovering addict trying to create a new life for herself. Janice has been trying for years to keep her act together, so that she can get custody and have her daughter back at home with her. She finally has a chance to prove that she can be the mother she wants to be, and prove to herself that she has truly recovered from addiction.

Janice just celebrated her first year clean from drug addiction and is ready for the next step: custody of her daughter. Janice's powerful ex husband not only has custody of Grace but is also an addict deep in his addiction. Janice has gathered her courage to face the day, the court, her ex husband and her daughter.

On the day she is scheduled to go to court, complications arise. Now her job is on the line and with probation hanging over her head, Janice must make a life changing decision.

She wonders if this is too much for her. Can she even handle the responsibility of being a mom? Will she do the right thing or will she say screw it and go back to using? Today, like every other day of the past year she has been clean, she must make that decision. But this time, the stakes are higher.



## Production Notes

Marisa Vitali wanted to tell this story about the first year of being clean as a way to acknowledge, process and celebrate her own past. She chose to film in her own hometown of Northport, NY to keep it really personal. Filming in the town where she grew up, Marisa was delighted to find a community of support and strength. Marisa looks forward to starting a conversation about hope and recovery.

## Technical Info

Camera: Red

Aspect Ratio: 1.85

## Locations

Northport, NY

Manhattan, NY - Flatiron District



## Creator's Statement

I was inspired by an acting teacher who gave us a call to action. He told us we all have a story to tell, so tell it. I have written my story before, about how I started using heroin, in many different forms. I've written it as a stream of consciousness, a play, a screenplay, a short story. But I always got stuck at the ending. I couldn't see what it was.

After receiving the call to action, the story just flowed out of me. I couldn't write fast enough. The story was not about my active addiction, but about my first year clean in recovery. I realized then that the first year was the most difficult time for me. I had to face the reality of what my life had become, with no drug to hide behind. My family and friends didn't want to talk about it and acted as if nothing had happened. There was an unspoken expectation that because I wasn't using, everything was fine. I felt raw and exposed.

This is the story I wanted to tell in this film. I wanted to talk about hope and recovery, and create a conversation between addicts and non-addicts. We can all be a little more compassionate for one another's struggles to overcome, sometimes against all odds. If I can make a difference to one person with this film, I will have been of service.

Thank you for taking this journey with me.

Marisa Vitali  
Creator, Actress, Producer

## The Filmmakers



### **Marisa Vitali** Creator/Producer/Janice

Marisa Vitali is an award-winning filmmaker whose work has been screened internationally from Cannes to SOHO Film Festival. Her award-winning film, *GRACE*, is an autobiographical story of her first year clean in recovery from heroin addiction. As a producer for Conde Nast Entertainment, many of her videos were top performers company-wide, garnering Webby Award consideration. Marisa recognized the importance of branding and social media while producing independent films and went on to become a private consulting producer for a number of indie filmmakers, whom she led to great success in the film festival circuit. She is a co-founder of Emergent Pictures, who is producing the award-winning feature, *Carbon*.

Marisa is a graduate of NYU TISCH Drama and has seamlessly transitioned from actress to producer.

<https://www.instagram.com/marisavitali/>

<https://www.emergent-pictures.com/>



### **Chris Ordal** Writer/Director/Producer

Chris is an award-winning writer, producer and director. His debut feature film, *Earthwork* (starring Academy Award® Nominee, John Hawkes) won a staggering number of awards at film festivals across the United States (including more than 20 Best Feature Film Awards, multiple Audience Awards, multiple Best First Feature Film Awards, multiple Best Director Awards, a Best Cinematography Award and an Audience Award & Special Jury Prize at the 2010 SXSW Film Festival). Ordal lives in Los Angeles with his lovely wife, Emily and their charming dog, Sampson.

## The Filmmakers *continued*



### **Claudine Marotte** Producer

Claudine is a successful New York City based creative and tactical Producer with a holistic twist. She has worked on television, feature films, commercials, documentaries, web-series and music videos. Her producing experience ranges from negotiating and signing award winning actors, to creating accurate & workable budgets, to motivating crews to execute, to delivering award-winning shows on time and under budget. She believes that communicating a clear vision for the team you work with empowers them to find their own answers instead of relying on forced instructions. Organization, thorough preparation, dedication and a sense of humor are paramount to building team trust and respect, a critical skill for a filmmaker.



### **Alysia Reiner** Producer

Alysia appears as Fig in *ORANGE IS THE NEW BLACK*, the Netflix series by Jenji Kohan who created *WEEDS*, as well as the film *LIFE ITSELF* with Morgan Freeman and Diane Keaton.

Reiner, one of the SAG Award-winning ensemble of *SIDEWAYS*, has been busy scoring roles in a slew of upcoming films including Martin Scorsese's *REVENGE OF THE GREEN DRAGONS*, *THE GIRL IN THE BOOK*, *KELLY & CAL*, and *FORT TILDEN* (both at SXSW 2014), and *THAT AWKWARD MOMENT* with Zac Efron.

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

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### **Lyn Montcrief** Cinematographer

Lyn is an American cinematographer based in Los Angeles. He holds an MFA from the AFI Conservatory in cinematography and is a member of the International Cinematographers Guild. His work as a Director of Photography has taken him around the world shooting in Europe, Asia, and North America. He has compiled an eclectic body of work, including over 50 narrative feature films, documentaries, music videos and short films. In addition he has earned over a dozen awards for his work including the coveted Kodak's Visions of Light Award.

## The Cast



**Marisa Vitali** - *Janice*

See above



**Stephanie Brait** - *Melissa*

Stephanie is an actress who recently relocated her porcelain (East Coast butt to sunny Los Angeles. Formerly based in New York and splitting her year equally between the two, Stephanie has recurred and guest starred in a number of TV shows and appeared in a growing collection of films including GOLDEN BOY (CBS), I JUST WANT MY PANTS BACK (MTV) directed and executive produced by Doug Liman, GEORGETOWN (ABC), LAW AND ORDER: SVU (NBC), BASTARDS OF YOUNG (a NY feature currently doing the festival circuit; available on Amazon and iTunes), COLBY (a feature in pre-production, in which Stephanie plays the title role, a serial-drifter who finds herself fantastically stuck), METH (screened at Cannes, among other festivals - Best Actress awarded to Stephanie for the Derby Film Fest). She was on THE PRICE IS RIGHT too. She didn't win anything.

Stephanie also did a bit of off and far-off Broadway in NY and her hometown of Boston having been heavily trained in theater and screen with Walnut Hill School for the Arts, CCM (The College-Conservatory of Music), NYU Tisch, Trinity College Dublin, Anthony Vincent Bova (Morris technique), The Aquila-Morong Studio in LA, and Rebecca Kitt (coach /teacher extraordinaire in LA). She also works commercially, in voiceover and in print.

Stephanie is a Capricorn with Leo rising. She's repped bicoastally by APA (theatrical), Station 3 Management and Mavrick Commercial.



**Alysia Reiner** - *Bridgitt*

See above



## The Cast *continued*



### **Zach Grenier** - *Johnny*

Zach has been a familiar presence to audiences of television, screen and stage for decades. He can currently be seen on the acclaimed CBS series *THE GOOD WIFE* as the ethically-challenged family lawyer, David Lee. Other shows on which he played regular roles include the highly-praised *C16:FBI* on ABC and *TOUCHING EVIL* on USA Network. Zach has also recurred in a number of critically acclaimed series, including Fox's *24*, in which he played the fixer Carl Webb, and HBO's *DEADWOOD* in which he played Andy Cramed, the gambler who brought the plague to town. He joined Bill Nighy and Christopher Walken in *TURKS AND CAICOS*, the second installment of David Hare's BBC thriller, *THE WORRICKER TRILOGY*, which aired on PBS in the Fall of 2014. His film credits extend back to the cult classics *A SHOCK TO THE SYSTEM* starring Michael Caine, and Mike Figgis's *LIEBESTRAUM*. More mainstream film credits include *TOMMY BOY*, *TWISTER* and *DONNIE BRASCO*. Zach has been privileged to work with some of the great film directors of our time: with David Fincher on *FIGHT CLUB* and *ZODIAC*, Ang Lee on *RIDE WITH THE DEVIL* and Clint Eastwood on *J. EDGAR*. He can be seen in the 2014 *ROBOCOP* directed by José Padilha.

Between television and film engagements, Zach takes every opportunity to return to stage work. He was nominated for a Tony Award® for his portrayal of Beethoven in Moisés Kaufman's *33 VARIATIONS* starring Jane Fonda, and most recently for a Lucille Lortel Award for his performance in John Patrick Shanley's *STOREFRONT CHURCH* at the Atlantic Theater Company. His portrayal of Dick Cheney in David Hare's *STUFF HAPPENS* at the New York Shakespeare Festival was recognized with Ensemble Awards by both the Drama League and the Drama Desk. He has twice shared the Roundabout Theatre Company's Broadway stage with Frank Langella, in Robert Bolt's *A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS* and Terrence Rattigan's *MAN AND BOY*. Zach worked with another legendary performer, Julie Harris, in Tim Mason's *THE FIERY FURNACE* at Circle Repertory Theatre. He originated the role of Dr. Chapman in David Rabe's *A QUESTION OF MERCY* at New York Theatre Workshop, a performance that earned him an Outstanding Artist honor from the Drama League. His first Broadway credit was Larry Gelbart's *MASTERGATE* in which he had no lines, but played all four lawyers: Mr. Child, Mr. Picker, Mr. Boyle and Mr. Carver.

## The Cast *continued*



### **Chris Kerson** - *Trevor*

Chris, a transformational film, stage and television actor, received his acting training from Charlie Laughton, who was mentor to Al Pacino. In roles ranging from offbeat comedy to intense drama, he has starred in 17 plays and acted opposite Judith Malina a founder of the award winning Living Theater. He originated the role “Carl the Usher” in the New York premiere of the never before performed Tennessee Williams' play, THESE ARE THE STAIRS YOU GOTTA WATCH. He also starred in the New York premier of Mario Fraetti's MISSIONARIES opposite Tony Nominee Rose Gregorio. He has been the lead in over 30 feature and short films over his career, several of which have gone to film festivals such as Cannes, Slamdance, Berlin, and Worldfest. Chris has had pivotal roles in six features in the last year, including Independent Spirit Award nominee Tim McCann's ZERO IN THE SYSTEM and in the Anchor Bay feature DAYLIGHT'S END.

Chris' newest reel can be viewed at [www.chriskerson.com](http://www.chriskerson.com). Chris starred in COST OF A SOUL, the winner of Relativity's Rogue and AMC Theatres's “The Big Break Movie Contest” and this season can be seen as Nails on TRUE DETECTIVE.

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## Featured



### Richard Millen – Walter

Richard is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker and actor. His documentary CHRONICLE OF A DEATH POSTPONED has been widely praised. Richard can be seen in the award winning Shawn Snyder's FESTUS and the upcoming Charles Rogers / Sarah-Violet Bliss's FORT TILDEN (SXSW 2014-Best Feature), Graham Waterston's AND IT WAS GOOD and Steven Spielberg's ST. JAMES PLACE.



### Vincent Petrosini – Donald

Vincent is a New York based Actor and producer. He recently co-starred in PARALLELS, the winner of best Drama at the LA Web Series Festival. He also produced and was featured in the upcoming Feature film OVUM. Vincent executive produced the award winning independent film POLLYWOGS, an L.A. Film Festival Official Selection, which was nominated for the Independent Spirit Award.



## Full Cast/Crew Credits

Marisa Vitali  
Stephanie Brait  
Alysia Reiner  
Zach Grenier  
Chris Kerson  
Richard Millen  
Vincent Petrosini

Janice  
Melissa  
Bridgitt  
Johnny  
Trevor  
Walter  
Donald

Creator / Producer  
Writer / Director / Producer  
Producers  
Cinematographer

Marisa Vitali  
Chris Ordal  
Claudine Marrotte, Alysia Reiner  
Lyn Moncrief

# Festivals





## Contact Information

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[facebook.com/GraceTheMovie](https://www.facebook.com/GraceTheMovie)

### Marisa Vitali

Creator – Actress – Producer

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