

# AERODYNAMICS

A FILM BY THEODORE CORMEY

## PRESS NOTES

THEODORE CORMEY, PRODUCER  
tcormey@lostjockeyprods.com  
LOST JOCKEY PRODUCTIONS c/o  
P.O. Box 52424  
Boston, MA 02205  
617.838-4518

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

# AERODYNAMICS

## SYNOPSIS

"AERODYNAMICS" details the eleventh-hour mission of Lil' Moe, the first African-American ventriloquist dummy in space, and his estranged relationship with his ex-partner, ventriloquist Willy Jefferson.

Lil' Moe, celebrity ventriloquist dummy and M.O.O.N. experimental test pilot, is launched into orbit to investigate the disappearance of several lunar teams. The diminutive astronaut soon uncovers the problem but his shuttle sustains fatal damage and begins to drift. A "point-of-no-return" is breached, taxing the limits of Moe's unique bond with the Earth-bound Willy. The narrative juxtaposes Lil' Moe's perilous mission with Willy and Moe's ventriloquist act backstory.

"AERODYNAMICS" is the opening segment for the sci-fi anthology feature, "APRIL LAND". The film will showcase a quartet of off-beat, pulp space adventures inspired by disparate Wasteland sources-- both T.S. Eliot's epic poem and Del Close's 1980's "adult" comic book.

# AERODYNAMICS

## BIOGRAPHIES

### **THEODORE CORMEY: Writer/Producer/Director**

Theodore Cormey a.k.a. Lost Jockey Productions has produced/directed numerous music videos for such bands as You Shriek!, Annette Farrington, Walter Sickert and the Army of Broken Toys, as well as Sarah RabDAU and The Self-Employed Assassins. His film credits include the shorts, "LANDFALL!" (2004) and "PAULIE" (2003). His self-financed feature film, "WHAT I DID WHEN I WAS AWAY" (1999), screened at over a dozen local and national film festivals including Park City's No Dance, Boston Underground, and Woods Hole.

His plays have been performed as part of The Boston Theater Marathon and The New Haven Short & NEAT One-Act Play Festival. He's been a writing finalist in the Rhode Island International Film Festival, Fade In, TuCann, and British Short Film Screenplay Competitions. In 2006, his play, *Absolute Zero Content*, was published in the Netherlands by Anco Publishing.

He was both director and player for the comedy improv troupe, *Scriptease* (2003-2004). More recently, he was director for *Improv Boston's Short Play Night* (2008). He's also a storyboard artist. His credits include everything from animated shorts to Public Enemy music videos.

### **RICARDO PITTS-WILEY: Actor (Willy Jefferson)**

Ricardo Pitts-Wiley is an accomplished actor, director, playwright and composer who has performed critically acclaimed roles at various venues throughout the United States including The Actor's Shakespeare Project in Boston, The Old Globe Theater and San Diego Repertory in San Diego, North Carolina Black Repertory, and Trinity Repertory Company in Providence, RI, where he was a member for eighteen years.

He has directed over seventy plays and musicals, from *Romeo and Juliet* to *Driving Miss Daisy* and has adapted and directed productions of *Moby Dick: Then and Now*, *Frankenstein*, and *The Narrative of Frederick Douglass*. His writing credits include the script, lyrics and music for the musical, *Celebrations: An African Odyssey* in addition to *Waiting for Bessie Smith* (which includes the music of the legendary jazz singer). He was also co-composer for *The Spirit Warrior's Dream*, *Sara's Jukebox*, *Night Voices*, *Man/Woman/Chaos*, *A Secret Meeting of Black Men*, and *A Kwanzaa Song*.

He will be the Martin Luther King Visiting Artist at M.I.T. Fall 2009.

### **JEREMIAH KISSEL: Actor (Flight Director Lex Harrison)**

Jeremiah Kissel is a twenty-five year veteran of professional stages. He has been a member of the American Repertory Theatre in Cambridge, the West Side Repertory Theatre in New York City, The Lyric Stage Company of Boston, as well as understudy for both Nathan Lane and Richard Nixon.

He is the recipient of the first annual Outstanding Boston Actor Award at the Elliot Norton Award Ceremonies in 1990, an IRNE Award for best Supporting Actor in 1999, and, in June of 2003 was presented with the Norton Prize for Sustained Excellence.

His recent credits include Shylock in Actor's Shakespeare Project's *The Merchant of Venice* as well as Boston Playwrights' upcoming new Ronan Noone play, *Ludology*.

## **PAULA LANGTON: Actor (Mayor Kate O'Connell)**

Paula Langton's Shakespearean work includes Cordelia in *King Lear*, Isabella in *Measure for Measure* with Actor's Shakespeare Project; Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Miranda in *The Tempest* with Shakespeare and Company; Kate in *Taming of the Shrew* with Boston Theatre Works; and Feste in *Twelfth Night* with Los Angeles Shakespeare Company at the John Anson Ford Amphitheatre in Hollywood.

She was principal cast in American Repertory Theatre's *Trojan Barbie* and will appear in Boston Center for the American Arts forthcoming *The Glass Menagerie*. She is Head of Acting in the School of Performing Arts at Boston University's College of Fine Arts.

## **WILL LUERA: Actor (Voice of Lil' Moe)**

Will Luera joined ImprovBoston in 1997 as a member of the ImprovBoston Mainstage. Within two years he joined the TheatreSports cast and also became the director of *Sitcom*. In 1999, he left ImprovBoston to start his own improvisational theater company called Blue Screen, where he continued to direct *Sitcom* but also developed and directed *Secret Society* and *Dropkick Bandito*.

In 2000, he rejoined ImprovBoston as Artistic Director, directing the Mainstage cast as well as premiere productions of *Sitcom*, *Secret Society*, *Blue Screen*, and *Quest*. He has appeared at the Chicago Improv Festival, New York Improv Festival, Greater Boston Improv Festival, and Toyota Comedy Festival and has studied improvisation with ImprovOlympic, The Second City, The Annoyance Theater, The Upright Citizens Brigade, and Keith Johnstone.

In addition to his work at ImprovBoston, Will has taught improvisation classes for the Young Presidents Organization (YPO), the National Fire Prevention Association, Northeastern University, Boston College and numerous regional, college, and high school improv troupes. Will continues to direct the ImprovBoston Mainstage, but has also worked with Improv Asylum, The Tribe Theater, The Alarm Clock Theater, and Another Country Productions.

He was recently one half of Improv Boston's *Ocean's 2*.

## **STU VOSE: Director of Photography**

Stu Vose was Director of Photography for Cramer Productions (1997-2002). His client list has included Reebok, Staples, WGBH, Jordan's Furniture, Hardball with Chris Matthews, and Time Warp for the Discovery Channel.

## **ELAINE WALKER: Composer**

Elaine Walker has been writing, recording, performing and producing electronic music since 1984. Originally a classically trained pianist, Elaine veered away from traditional Western harmony and instead focused on microtonal music. She received her Bachelors in Music Synthesis Function from Berklee College and her Masters in Music Technology from New York University.

She's released electronic music with her band Zia (full-length releases include "ZIA v1.5" (1994), "Big Bang!" (2000) and "Martians" (2006)) as well as multiple solo albums.

Elaine served as President of the Boston and New York City Chapters of the National Space Society (NSS) from 1996 to 2003. She also served on the Board of Directors of NSS, the Space Frontier Foundation, and the NY Transhuman Association in 2002 and 2003. In Summer 2008, she was the Public Outreach Coordinator and Photo Journalist for the NASA/SETI Haughton-Mars Project (HMP), a scientific study relating to the geology of Mars high in the high Canadian Arctic, some seventy-five degrees North.

## **STEVE SHERRICK/Obscure Knowledge: Editor**

Steve Sherrick started his post-production career at Chedd-Angier-Lewis Productions, a leading documentary and educational television, video, and multi-media company in 1999. He was Co-Producer of Jodom Pictures and supervised sound design for the feature film, "A HOUSE DIVIDED" (2004) as well as the narrative short, "THE BURN BOOK" (2006).

He has worked with Providence-based Tango Pictures as Location Sound Mixer on the Jack Kerouac feature documentary, "ONE FAST MOVE OR I'M GONE" (featuring appearances by Tom Waites, Patti Smith, and Ben Gibbard from Death Cab for Cutie). His clients have included Erickson, Boston Rack, and Eastern Clothing.

Obscure Knowledge, Steve's independent production and post-production company, recently worked with award-winning filmmaker, Rachel Johnson.

## **JASON JORDAN: Sound Design & Mix**

Jason Jordan is a graduate of The School of Music at Texas Tech University as well as the Music Synthesis Program at Berklee School of Music. He joined Sonic Implants/SONI VOX in 2003, eventually becoming a Senior Sound Designer. Over the last five years he has written music and done sound design for numerous documentary and independent films including "What's Going On Up There" (with Leonard Nimoy), "En Medias Res" (winner of the 2007 Boston 48 Hour Film Project), and the LA-filmed TV pilot, "Women On Top".

## **K. ELIZABETH EVANS/Renaissance Artist Puppet Company**

K. Elizabeth Evans is Artistic and Residency Director and President for Renaissance Artist Puppet Company. She has been working in the Theatre Industry for 30 plus years. She's a veteran of classical and puppet theatre design and has also spent her share of time directing and teaching principles of theatre performance and design.

## **DAN CASTELLI/Castelli Models**

Castelli Models handles custom fabrication for television, print, and film. Clients include: Saturday Night Live, VH1, The Conan O'Brien Show, and One Life To Live.

## **JOHN WEISGERBER/Gemini Company**

Established in 1996 by John Weisgerber, The Gemini Company is a Brooklyn-based art studio that produces and distributes its own unique merchandise and collector's items. The Gemini Company specializes in creature and puppet effects as well as custom props and models for the film, commercial, and advertising industries.

Their client list includes: Poland Springs, Hot Wheels, Gillette and Carvel as well as feature work on such films as "187" and "BATMAN AND ROBIN".

## **MICHAEL BILOTTA/Shibboleth Pictures**

Shibboleth Pictures offers an array of post-production services such as digital photography, editing, compositing, After Effects, and Photoshop for music videos.

Their work includes live performance clips for the Late Night Players and Jim's Big Ego, additional music videos for Chapter 6, Adriana Balic (keyboards, vocals for Pink), and corporate videography for the Studer Group.

# AERODYNAMICS

## PROJECT STATEMENT

It began with a dream. Literally. Chicago, Spring 1993. One of the most miserable six-months of my personal life (NOTE: see self-financed feature film, *What I Did When I Was Away*). For the first time, I kept a dream journal. Horrible drunken after-images were recorded in laborious, self-involved detail ie. me flying off a window ledge on a giant napkin kite, unreleased record albums covered in hieroglyphics, bodies in the snow, etc.

One dream image in particular stuck— a tiny, wooden African-American ventriloquist dummy in a shiny spacesuit tootin' creaky falsetto verses of "The Star-Spangled Banner", all smiles and confidence before a waving American flag ala George C. Scott in *Patton*. Who was he? What was he doing? How'd he get there? Twelve pages of script later, I had my answer ala a choppy rough draft composed in one sitting, as I hunched over the steamer trunk I used as a writing desk in my spartan North-Side studio apartment.

There were more dreams, cobbled segments which shifted over time and began to take form as an anthology feature (*April Land*, which became my Peter Gabriel album— years in the making and overtly produced). Yet, despite the juggle-bug which constituted the other script segments, the tiny cosmonaut who could stand the test of time.

Fifteen years later (and seven since initial, aborted principal photography in 2002), *Aerodynamics* is perilously close to completion. The story on one man and his refusal to quit, the outcast who makes good by any means engastrimuthon\* is a chord that is both universal and personal.

The world of *Aerodynamics* is a fantastic one, but grounded in emotion and science. I did oodles of research to capture the mid 60's and early 70's vibe of Gemini, Apollo space missions. The bible I adhered to was none other than Gene Krantz' recollection of those days when NASA and space exploration took international center stage (Krantz was a Mission Control Center Flight Director, perhaps best remembered as the "character" Ed Harris portrayed in *Apollo 13*).

The name of that book? "Failure Is Not An Option".

Or to quote the great Irish god, Bono: "There is no failure here, sweetheart, just when you quit".

There's meaning here somewhere. Thanks to cast and crew and all those along the way who helped make a dream a pragmatic, digital reality. And eternal hallelujah's esp. to Ray Griffin, Director of McAuliffe Learning Center who believed enough in me and the film to get the "mission" rolling again.

Theodore Cormey

*\*familiar spirit, one consumed (roots of ventriloquism)*

# AERODYNAMICS

## Cast

Willy Jefferson

Flight Director Lex Harrison

Mayor Kate O'Connell

Assistant Flight Director

Craig Cates

Mission Control

Ricardo Pitts-Wiley

Jeremiah Kissel

Paula Langton

Lawrence Dierickx

Jeremy Brothers

Kevin Harrington

William Clack

Kevin Bright

Tom Dunn

Marshall Famum

Peter Ioannilli

Sal Lizard

Marc Nazarro

Dave Kopcyh

Mike Pfaff

Josh Rudy

George Saulnier III

Doug Weeks

Jay Shaw

Mark Hetherington

Reporters

Phil Thompson

Irina Peligrad

David Yee

Kevin Clay

Alexandra Rousseau

Harry Rothman

Bert DeSimone

Joe Smith

Don Martin

Tim Dennis

Round Table

Peter Berkrot

Lonnie Farmer

Neil Reynolds

Robert J. LaTremouille

Sasha Goldberg

Erika Helpert

Jennifer Mila

SerahRose Roth

Anastacia Stornetta

StageGirls

NightClub Patrons

Alicia Greene  
Sonya Joyner  
Chemi C. Kadete  
Scott A. Neufville  
Ezra Stevens  
Alyse Tennermann

Will Luera

Lil' Moe (voice)

## Crew

Writer/Producer/Director

Theodore Cormey

Production Manager

BriAnna Olson

Line Producer/Assistant Director

Tim Dennis

Production Designer

Ivy Roberts

Director of Photography

Stuart Vose

Location Sound Mixer

Zack Gorman  
Jason O'Neill

Gaffer

John Coyne

Lighting/Grip

Mike Hersey  
Robert Beinhocker  
Travis Trudell

Still Photography

Ana Reyes  
James Gaffney

Production Assistants

Fritz Ceriales  
Helena Fonseca  
Craig Carpenter  
Keith Menzie  
Sasha Goldberg

Puppet & Puppet Costume Construction

Elizabeth Evans,  
Renaissance Artist  
Puppet Company  
John Weisgerber,  
The Gemini Company

Animatronic Puppet & Models

Additional Shuttle Construction

Dan Castelli,  
Castelli Models

After Effects

Michael Bilotta,  
Shibboleth Pictures

Additional Computer Animation

Darren Thulin

Art Department

Debra Reich  
Kelly Godshell  
Christina  
Christodoulopoulos

Make-Up/Hair

Julia Mila  
Meghan Surrect

Editor

Steve Sherrick

Additional Editing

Colby Peterson

Sound Design/Mixing

Anthony Juno &  
Larry Langton/  
FullMind Creative

Website

Chris Lyons

# AERODYNAMICS

## Technical Info

Format	Mini-DV
Duration	25 mins.
Aspect Ratio	16:9 widescreen (2:4:0)
Language	English
Country of Origin	USA
Production Company	Lost Jockey Productions

## 2005 Space Odyssey

If you can dream it, you can do it... even if it takes a decade. Ted Cormey took a dream about an astronaut ventriloquist dummy and turned it into his latest film:

"Aerodynamics." **By Sara Faith Alterman**



A still from "Aerodynamics."

[Click to enlarge]

If you're a filmmaker, you're likely familiar with the 'hurry up and wait' phenomenon that plagues the production atmosphere. (Especially if you're a production assistant; come on, you don't actually enjoy crawling out of bed at 5 am to race to a location, dress the set, help the grips, and then sit around waiting forever for the 'magic hour,' do you?) If you're an *independent* filmmaker, you understand that this temporal marvel extends beyond the set; it taints pre and post-production with the same fervor. Does this sound familiar? Production can't begin, for lack

of funds. So, you hurry, hurry, hurry to write a grant by deadline. And then... you wait to see if you represent the one production out of thousands to receive seed money. Or worse, production has *halted*, and you're stuck with a bunch of footage that you can't use, a project you can't complete without the necessary resources. So, you hustle to write a grant, or organize a fundraiser. And then wait.

And then there's Ted Cormey, who awoke from a dream over a decade ago, determined to make his somnambulist vision a reality.

Personally, if I had a dream about a singing dummy I'd be freaked out -- I've seen enough episodes of the X-files and horror films about knife-wielding talking dolls to know that toys that can speak and move without a battery are likely going to stalk and mutilate me. And a dream about an astronaut ventriloquist dummy singing in front of the American flag would be enough to jolt me from my bed and send me running around the apartment, screaming and sweating. Ted Cormey had a different reaction to this experience.

Inspired by a dream about an African-American ventriloquist dummy donning astronaut gear and bellowing the national anthem, Cormey set out to write and direct "Aerodynamics," a hybrid of genres including blaxploitation and 1960s science fiction.

Quelling my suspicions that any cinematic endeavor that includes a walking talking doll will scare the pants off of me, "Aerodynamics" actually spins the tale of a heroic underdog destined to save the world. The film's official website promises that "Famed African-American ventriloquist dummy & astronaut, Lil' Moe, is sent into space to save Earth from a colossal Man O' War Jellyfish. The alien creature is defeated and the eleventh hour mission is considered a success...But the fatal return trip will have repercussions for Lil' Moe's ex-partner, the timorous ventriloquist, Willy Jefferson." [At the time of this interview, the film was still in post-production and unavailable for screening.] Don't be fooled by the feel-good premise, however. After all, "I want the films I make to be films that people are discussing afterwards," says Cormey, "Not something with a cute little puppet."

*newenglandfilm.com (December 2005) cont'd*

Production of the film took nearly as long as preparation for an actual space mission! Stunted by cast and crew scheduling conflicts, funding drainage, a reliably unreliable carpenter, and emotional exhaustion, "Aerodynamics" took the classic 'hurry up and wait' cliché to new heights, as time and time again Cormey jumpstarted his vision only to be cut dead in the water. It took approximately 10 years to complete production of the film, which is just now moving into post-production.

Cormey himself is no stranger to the inevitable melodrama that accompanies filmmaking. An accomplished director, screenwriter and playwright, he has penned theatrical pieces that have been performed at the Boston Theater Marathon and the New Haven Short & NEAT One-Act Play Festival. "Aerodynamics" has earned him accolades in screenwriting competitions such as TuCann and the British Short Film Screenplay Competition, and he has been a writing finalist in the Rhode Island International Film Festival and the Fade In screenwriting competition. As a director, Cormey's credits include the digital shorts "Landfall!" (2004) and "Paulie" (2003), and a self-financed feature film "What I Did When I Was Away" (1999), which screened at film festivals including Park City's 'No Dance' (one of the many Sundance reactionary film festivals), the Woods Hole Film Festival, and the Boston Underground Film Festival.

Despite all of the creative and logistic obstacles that have plunked themselves in Cormey's path, with all of his filmmaking experience and expertise, putting a fork in "Aerodynamics" should be no problem. He will begin editing the film in January 2006, finally completing the manifestation of his vision from nighttime scenario to big screen glory. Proving, of course, that when it comes to creative tenacity and artistic dedication, Ted Cormey is no dummy.

*For more information, visit <http://www.aerodynamicsmovie.com>.*

*Imagine Magazine (October 2005)*

## **AERODYNAMICS Wraps Principal Photography**

Lost Jockey Productions wrapped principal photography on the science-fiction short, AERODYNAMICS. The film shot for five days in early September 2005, utilizing the McAuliffe/ Challenger Learning Center at Framingham State College as well as Improv Boston in Inman Square, Cambridge. It stars Ricardo Pitts-Wiley (Showtime's Brotherhood), Jerry Kissel (Commonwealth Shakespeare Company), Paula Langton (Actors Shakespeare Project), plus mainstage performers of both Improv Boston and Improv Asylum. It was written, produced, directed, and self-financed by Ted Cormey and lensed by Director of Photography, Stuart Vose.

AERODYNAMICS details the eleventh hour mission of the first ventriloquist dummy in space, Lil' Moe. Shot in black-and-white with the Panasonic DVX 100a, the film evokes the look of a vintage episode of The Outer Limits or Doctor Who. Old school, non-digital Model FX such as the Independence shuttle and the animatronic Lil' Moe dummy were designed and created by Castelli Models and The Gemini Company respectively.

"The film contains many comedic elements," notes director Ted Cormey, "But at its core is the relationship between the timorous ventriloquist, Willy Jefferson, and his more adventurous half, Lil' Moe. It also juxtaposes the 60's issues of the emerging space program with the civil rights movement (both Willy Jefferson and Lil' Moe are African-American)."

Cormey plans to edit this winter with remaining Model FX/2nd Unit shooting scheduled for Spring 2006. He hopes to submit footage as part of next year's Sundance Filmmakers Lab application. Further information on AERODYNAMICS and Lost Jockey Productions can be found at [www.aerodynamicsmovie.com](http://www.aerodynamicsmovie.com).



AERODYNAMICS details the eleventh hour mission of the first ventriloquist dummy in space, Lil' Moe shown here with director Ted Cormey. *Photo courtesy of Ted Cormey.*



Ricardo Pitts-Wiley as ventriloquist, Willy Jefferson in AERODYNAMICS. At the film's core is the relationship between the timorous ventriloquist, Willy Jefferson, and his more adventurous half, Lil' Moe. *Photo courtesy of Ted Cormey.*