



HOW TO
MAKE IT
TO THE

PROMISED LAND

MARLANE BARNES LIA H. NOAH HARPSTER KATE KRIEGER AARON SANDERS PETER VACK
Production Designer RACHEL PAYNE Costume Designer KIMBERLY WILLIS Editor JACOB CHASE
Sound Designer DAVID BRIGGS Composer JOHN TURNER Cinematographer MIKE TESTIN
Based on the short story by ELLEN UMANSKY Producer ALEXANDRA BARRETO
Written and Directed by SAM ZALUTSKY

HOW TO MAKE IT TO THE

PROMISED LAND

a short film by Sam Zalutsky



Camp Director Bobby Z. introduces the activity for the day.



Kron and Lizzie learn about the game.

photos: Yoram Astrakhan

SYNOPSIS: Summer camp suddenly becomes very strange for 15 year-old Lizzie when she is forced to play a Holocaust role-play game.

TRT: 16 minutes, 47 seconds

CAST:

Lizzie - Marlane Barnes
Kron/Karen - Lia H.
Orna - Kate Krieger
Camp Director Bobby Z. - Noah Harpster
Rafi - Peter Vack
David Margolis - Aaron Sanders

CREW:

Writer/Director - Sam Zalutsky
Original Story - Ellen Umansky
Producer - Alexandra Barreto
Cinematographer - Mike Testin
Production Designer - Rachel Payne
Costume Designer - Kimberly Willis
Editor - Jacob Chase
Composer - John Turner
Sound Designer - David Briggs
Title Design/Graphic Designer - Erin Shigaki

A Holocaust role-play game? You're kidding, right? Nope.

IT HAPPENED TO ME. SORT OF.

I went to Jewish summer camp for many years and have many fond memories of good friends, fun activities, and lots of learning. But when I was at camp, the plight of Soviet Refusniks (Jews denied the right to emigrate from the Soviet Union) was a HUGE issue for Jewish communities around the world. One night, we met in the library for evening activity. Suddenly the lights cut out and a counselor declared that we were all "Soviet Refusniks" who had to escape "KGB" agents (our counselors) in the "USSR" to get to America or Israel. I can't remember what happened. I think I blocked it out. But I've spoken with many people who played similar "games," about the Holocaust, Soviet Jewry, the Inquisition, even the KKK. So...

I COULDN'T SAY NO TO THE STORY. IT GOT STUCK IN MY HEAD.

When I first read Ellen Umansky's short story (*Lost Tribe: Jewish Fiction from the Edge*, ed. Paul Zakrzewski), I knew I had to make it into a film.

Hopefully the film raises a lot of **interesting questions**: What is the best way to teach this terrible historical legacy, or other unfathomable historical events, to the next generation? With the last generation of Holocaust survivors nearing the end of their lives, how should we remember the Holocaust? And if you were Lizzie and had to play this game, **WHAT WOULD YOU DO?**

PROJECT HISTORY:

In 2012, I was awarded a production grant for *How to Make it to the Promised Land* from the Jerome Foundation (<http://jeromefdn.org>). This incredible support allowed me and my team to shoot the film for five days in March 2013 at VT Ranch in Santa Clarita, California, north of Los Angeles. Some of the actors and crew, including myself, even stayed in the bunks at the camp. The location was gorgeous, the perfect setting.

Once we wrapped production, editor Jacob Chase worked with producer Alex Barreto and myself cut the film in Los Angeles. We locked picture in the end of April.

In summer 2013, I raised over \$20,000 on Kickstarter to complete the film. You can see the trailer here: <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1757826396/how-to-make-it-to-the-promised-land-a-short-film-0>. Over 4,000 people watched the trailer and 188 supporters pledged to the campaign.

See some of the press about the Kickstarter campaign:

<http://www.tabletmag.com/scroll/134019/new-film-about-summer-camp-holocaust-game>

<http://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-life-and-religion/135213/jewish-summer-camp-1980s>

<http://heebmagazine.com/worst-jewish-camp-experience-ever/45792>

<http://filmshortage.com/trailers/how-to-make-it-to-the-promise-land/>

We finished the post-production in New York City in fall 2013.

CAST:



MARLANE BARNES (Lizzie) is best known for *The Twilight Saga's Breaking Dawn Part Two*. Other film credits include the independent features *Sake Bomb*, *Somebody Marry Me*, and *Artois the Goat*. Television appearances include *Mad Men*, *Ray Donovan*, and recurring roles on *Sons of Anarchy*, *The Fosters*, *iCarly*, and the Showtime drama *Masters of Sex*. She got her MFA in Acting from UT-Austin. Marlane volunteers in the animal rescue community by fostering for Best Friends Animal Society and serving as a national spokesperson

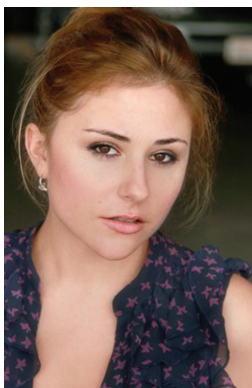
for SpayFirst. Marlane is repped by Defining Artists Agency and managed by Consortium Entertainment. Follow her on Twitter @MarlaneBarnes!

NOAH HARPSTER (Camp director Bobby Z.) has appeared most memorably on *Grey's Anatomy*, *CSI*, *Big Love*, *Californication*, *Longmire*, *The Closer*, *Dollhouse*, and *Lucky Louie* - usually he's seen crying, dying, taking his shirt off, eating, or in one case... all of the above. As a writer, Noah and writing partner Micah Fitzerman-Blue work on the upcoming Amazon series *Transparent* and won Best Screenplay at Rome Film Festival for their feature, *The Motel Life*, in which Noah took his shirt off. Together, they've also adapted *Going After Cacciato* based on Tim O'Brien's National Book Award winning novel.



LIA H. (Kron/Karen) was born and raised in Los Angeles and currently studies at the University of Southern California. As an actress, she has been a part of the Silverlake Theatre Group for many years. She is also a musician and frequently performs with her band around Los Angeles. Follow her on Twitter @Lia_H.

PETER VACK (Rafi) has worked consistently as an actor since the age of nine. He played the lead in Doug Liman's cult television series *I Just Want My Pants Back* for MTV and punk rock historian Legs McNeil in *CBGB*. Vack also stars in Leah Meyerhoff's feature debut *I Believe In Unicorns* and plays a supporting role in Keith Palmer's *Swelter*, which stars Alfred Molina and Jean Claude Van Damme. His past film credits include *Consent*, *A Perfect Fit*, *The Treatment*, and *Kiss Of The Damned*. His short film, *Send*, which he wrote and directed, recently premiered at SXSW.



KATE KRIEGER (Orna) loves playing nuanced characters with intricate backstories and idiosyncrasies. She studied acting at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts and continues to train in L.A. with mentor Dan Ireland at the Director's Playhouse. She loves theater and film equally, having played everything from Olivia in *Twelfth Night* to one of Andy Samberg's vapid, but hilarious love interests in *Celeste & Jesse Forever*.

CREW:



SAM ZALUTSKY (writer/director) was shortlisted for the Independent Spirit Award's "Someone to Watch Award" for his psychological horror feature, *You Belong to Me*. It won Best First Feature Audience Award at San Diego FilmOut and Honorable Mention at NewFest and is distributed by Wolfe Releasing (<http://wolfevideo.com>).

Sam is one of the creators of the comedy webseries, *The Go-Getters* (<http://www.thegogetters.net>). His previous shorts, *Superstore*, *Stefan's Silver Bell*, and *Smear*, have played at festivals around the world. He has made videos for designers Lewis Cho, Mark Montano, and 2(x)ist, non-profits Prep for Prep and Civic Builders, and a series about breast cancer survivors, available at <http://www.Artisanbreastreconstruction.com>.

Sam teaches screenwriting at Spalding University's low residency MFA in writing and has received residencies at MacDowell and Fundación Valparaíso. He earned a BA in art from Yale and a MFA in film from NYU's Tisch School of Arts. You can see his work at <http://www.Sazamproductions.com>. Follow him on Instagram and Twitter at @zalutsky.

SAM ZALUTSKY FILMOGRAPHY:

How to Make it to the Promised Land, short film, 2014

You Belong to Me, feature film, 2008; distributed by Wolfe Releasing; aired on Warner PPV, Logo, and is available on VOD and DVD in the US, Canada, Australia, France, Germany, Benelux countries, and the UK; Best First Feature Audience Award, San Diego FilmOut, 2007, Honorable Mention, NewFest, 2007

SuperStore, short film, 2004; aired on WNET Reel New York

Stefan's Silver Bell, short film, 2001; aired on WNET Reel New York

Smear, short film, 1998; distributed on compilation, *Boys Briefs*, and on IFC

Festival Lists available upon request.

ELLEN UMANSKY (short story author) has published fiction and nonfiction in a variety of publications, including the *New York Times*, *Salon*, *Tablet*, *Jane*, *Playboy*, *Lilith*, and the short story anthologies *Lost Tribe* and *Sleepaway*. She holds a B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania, an M.F.A. in fiction from Columbia, and has been awarded a residency at the Millay Colony for the Arts. Her first novel is forthcoming from William Morrow.

ALEXANDRA BARRETO (producer) has guest starred and/or recurred on a wide range of TV shows from *CSI* to *Justified* to *Parenthood*. Currently she recurs on the ABC Family show, *The Fosters*. As a producer, she most recently produced the feature film, *Too Late*, starring Academy Award Nominees John Hawkes and Robert Forster. Previously, she wrote, directed, and produced, with Rider and Shiloh Strong, the first political commercial to air on Comedy Central, and then produced two short films with this team: *The Dungeon Master* (Best Short, Tribeca Online Film Festival; Best Comedy Short, Sonoma International Film Festival) and *Method* (Opening Night, Palm Springs International ShortFest), which *The Huffington Post* singled out as one of the "best of the fest." Shorts International is distributing both films. She also produced *F the Parents*, starring twitter sensation Rob Delaney and Pamela Adlon (*Californication*).

ANGELA DEMO (casting director) has cast projects from independent films to major studio productions. She began her career with renowned casting director Denise Chamian and now has her own casting shingle with Barbara McCarthy. She has worked with A-list directors, such as Tony Scott, Gore Verbinski, and Michael Bay, and top acting talent, including Johnny Depp, Will Smith, Denzel Washington, and Reese Witherspoon. Her credits include *Rango*, *Unstoppable*, *Water for Elephants*, *The Pursuit of Happyness*, *Seven Pounds*, *Pirates of the Caribbean 2 & 3*, *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen*, *The Thing*, and indie features *Two Night Stand* and *Electric Slide*.

MIKE TESTIN (cinematographer) is a cinematographer/director based in Los Angeles. He attended the Los Angeles Film School after moving west from the Chicagoland area. His recent credits include *Contracted* and his upcoming directorial debut, *Dementia*.

RACHEL PAYNE (production designer) earned a Master of Arts in Production Design from the American Film Institute. She has production designed 18 feature films across the globe; commercials for Ask.com, Time Warner, and Ortho mattress; music videos for the Rose Bowl's 100 Roses Celebration and the band Dirty Projectors, spots for Showtime and web sensations The Next Game Boss & Compulsions, along with numerous award-winning shorts. Her design talent received a write-up in the Hollywood Reporter for her film *Sassy Pants*, which premiered at the 2012 Santa Barbara Film Festival. She just finished designing *Pound Of Flesh* starring Jean-Claude Van Damme, which will premiere in 2015.

JACOB CHASE (editor) directed the feature film *The Four-Faced Liar*, which premiered at the Slamdance Film Festival and went on to win the HBO Audience Award for "Best First Feature" at Outfest. Jacob's feature editing credits include *The Secret Lives of Dorks*, *Best Friends Forever*, *Helicopter Mom*, and the upcoming *The Inherited*.

JOHN TURNER (composer) created the score for Sam's feature *You Belong to Me*, featuring strings by the powerhouse NYC band ETHEL. He recently completed the score for the feature documentary *Do I Sound Gay?*, featuring David Sadaris, Margaret Cho, and George Takei (world premiere, Toronto International Film Festival). Other scores include the indie feature *Alma Mater* (Austin Film Festival Audience Award), and shorts *Slo-Mo* (Sundance, Telluride, HBO) and *Passengers* (Sundance; Deauville, Special Jury Prize). John's music was part of multi-media artist Romeo Alaeff's work for the Brooklyn Academy of Music and the Chelsea Art Museum video installation, *Crybaby*. Other work has been heard on NBC's *The Voice*, CBS, Bravo, Sundance Channel, and The History Channel.

DAVID BRIGGS (sound designer) was the Supervising Sound Editor for Sam's feature *You Belong to Me*, as well as for *The Red Road* (Sundance Channel series), *Bottled Up*, *My Best Day*, *3 Backyards*, *Diminished Capacity*, *Teeth*, and the documentaries *Kate Bornstein is a Queer*, *Pleasant Danger* and *Do I Sound Gay?* Other sound editing credits include *Moonrise Kingdom*, *Concussion*, *Black Nativity*, *We Are What We Are*, *The Wire*, *Bachelorette*, *New York*, *I Love You*, and *Friends with Kids*. He holds an MFA in film from New York University and teaches sound design in the graduate program of City University of New York.

**For more information,
please contact:**

Sam Zalutsky
SaZam Productions LLC
225 West 25th Street, #3L
New York, NY 10001
917-653-6756
sam@sazamproductions.com
www.sazamproductions.com
www.facebook.com/HowToMakeItToThePromisedLand