

ROMANE  
DENIS

BRETT  
DONAHUE



SEHAR  
BHOJANI

STEPHEN  
BOGAERT

SLAXX

# PRESS KIT

**DIRECTED BY ELZA KEPHART**

**FROM THE PRODUCERS OF TURBO KID**

FILMOPTION INTERNATIONAL PRESENTS AN EMAFILMS PRODUCTION IN ASSOCIATION WITH ENTERTAINMENT SQUAD AND HEAD ON THE DOOR PRODUCTIONS

STARRING ROMANE DENIS, BRETT DONAHUE, SEHAR BHOJANI AND STEPHEN BOGAERT WRITTEN BY ELZA KEPHART AND PATRICIA GOMEZ ZLATAR DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY STEVE ASSELIN  
GRAPHIC DESIGNER BRENT LAMBERT ART DIRECTION GENEVIEVE HUOT COSTUMES ERIC POIRIER KEY HAIRSTYLIST MARIE-JOSEE BEAUDET KEY MAKEUP ARTIST JOAN-PATRICIA PARRIS CASTING DIRECTOR MAXIME GIROUX  
SPECIAL EFFECTS MAKEUP BRUNO GATIEN SPECIAL EFFECTS BLOOD BROTHERS VISUAL EFFECTS SIMON BEAUPRE EDITOR MIRENDA OUELLET ORIGINAL MUSIC BY DELPHINE MEASROCH  
PRODUCTION SOUND YANN CLEARY SOUND SUPERVISOR MARTIN PINSONNAULT RE-RECORDING MIXER GAVIN FERNANDES  
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER SHAKED BERENSON PRODUCED BY ANNE-MARIE GELINAS AND PATRICIA GOMEZ ZLATAR

PRODUCED WITH THE FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION OF

EMAFILMS



SODEC  
Québec

TELEFILM  
CANADA

Québec  
Film and Television  
du Québec

The Canadian Film or Video  
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DEVELOPED WITH THE HELP OF  
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FUND



Filmoption  
International

## Technical Information

Shooting Format	HD
Screening Format	DCP, Bluray & DVD
Length	77 minutes
Genre	Slasher/Satirical Comedy
Original Version	English
Also Available	French
Sound	5.1 Surround
Production Country	Canada

## Crew

Director	Elza Kephart
Producers	Anne-Marie Gélinas & Patricia Gomez Zlatar
Executive Producer	Shaked Berenson
Script	Elza Kephart & Patricia Gomez Zlatar
Director of Photography	Steve Asselin
Art Direction	Geneviève Huot
Costumes	Éric Poirier
Key Make-Up Artist	Joan-Patricia Parris
Key Hairstylist	Marie-Josée Beaudet
Casting Director	Maxime Giroux
Special Effects Make-Up	Bruno Gatién
Special Effects	Blood Brothers
Visual Effects	Simon Beaupré
Editor	Mirenda Ouellet
Sound	Yann Cleary
Original Music	Delphine Measroch

## Cast

Libby	Romane Denis
Craig	Brett Donahue
Shruti	Sehar Bhojani
Harold Landsgrove	Stephen Bogaert
Lord	Kenny Wong

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# Synopsis

**SLAXX** tells the story of a possessed pair of jeans brought to life to punish the unscrupulous practices of a trendy clothing company. Shipped to the company's flagship store, **SLAXX** proceeds to wreak carnage on the staff, locked in overnight to set up the new collection.

When the body count mounts, the panicked staff disbands and the struggle for survival begins. It is up to idealistic employee Libby to uncover the reason behind **SLAXX's** blood thirst before its evil is released into the world.



## Director's Intent

**SLAXX** is first and foremost a movie about killer pants! This totally insane idea came to Patricia Gomez Zlatar and me in a flash. Before we even knew it was going to be a critique of the *fast-fashion* industry, we wanted to see pants that kill! The social commentary naturally wove itself into this outlandish concept, and soon became the heart of the film.

The true monster is not **SLAXX**, but the *Canadian Clothing Clothiers*, who will stop at nothing to make a profit. Fast fashion is an industry that exemplifies how unbridled capitalism and amoral globalization are literally leading us to our deaths; I wanted to bring this criticism to light while using humour and over the top gore. My inspiration for the creation of the **SLAXX** character came from awesome 70's and 80's horror films like *The Stuff*, *The Thing* and *Alien*. These films use suggestion and live-action special effects to create the monster, rather than rely on full-blown CGI. Whenever I see films with organic rather than digital effects, I always believe the monster much more.



It was a fun challenge to figure out how to make **SLAXX** work and imbue it with its own character. After many tests we decided on the use of puppets, manipulated by an experienced puppeteer. Her sensibility and creativity worked wonders to bring **SLAXX** to life.

The visually striking Italian films from the 1960's and 1970's, with their bold visuals, use of colour, symmetry and architectural framing inspired **SLAXX**'s colourful pop explosion while keeping the characters in a tightly controlled frame. This was done to mimic what corporations do to consumers: tantalizing us with fun and distracting surfaces while subliminally controlling us to consume ever more.

Noam Chomsky's description of corporate totalitarianism explains the theory behind my vision for **SLAXX**: "It is ridiculous to talk about freedom in a society dominated by huge corporations... There's about as much freedom as under Stalinism." I use the familiar tropes of totalitarian regimes to subliminally invoke the feeling that the *Canadian Cotton Clothiers* is not a harmless company but a well-oiled machine, with a total disregard for human life in favor of the ever-elusive myth of corporate growth. Graphics, casting and mise-en-scène were influenced by Communist and Nazi references. Since surveillance is a well-known tool not only of the totalitarian state but our own society, I incorporated many of these visual tropes in framing, camera angles and the prevalent use of CCTV cameras.

It was important for me to cast employees from diverse backgrounds, which reflects Canadian society accurately. Unlike the *CCC* that uses diversity as a cover for its nefarious practices, our casting choices were made with a genuine desire to show Canadians as they are, in all their diversity!

In the end, the true monster in **SLAXX** is not **SLAXX** itself (an avenging angel brought forth by the *CCC*'s nefarious practices), but the *Canadian Cotton Clothiers* company; it is no coincidence that Harold Landsgrove survives, like any true villain in a horror film. I want audiences to come out of watching **SLAXX** questioning the part they play in this system of permanent consumption and what they can do to change it.

## Extinction Rebellion - Elza Kephart on being an activist

I was never an activist. I had sporadic experiences throughout my childhood and adulthood (forcing my parents to start recycling in the 80s, protesting outside the US consulate during both Iraq wars, going to countless marches and protests), but never anything sustained or committed. Like a lot of people, I have been aware of the growing danger of climate change, have witnessed the climate changing, but I never thought it was my problem, I always thought someone else would take care of it. I'm a filmmaker, not an activist dammit!



All that changed on October 31st 2018, when a friend showed up at a Halloween party, terrified. She told me about the Secretary General of the United Nations' warning: we have 12 years to get to net zero emissions or we would be, well, toast. I couldn't believe it. If things were so dire, why didn't everyone know? Why weren't governments doing something? My heart sank. 12 years? I honestly thought she had misread the number; I was that shocked. I went online the next day and saw the truth for myself: yes, the Secretary General did indeed say 12 years. *WTF*.

I participated in a march that weekend and, when speeches were made, someone talked about a group in the UK that was doing civil disobedience to force governments to act rapidly on Climate Change. This finally made sense. I went online and found the group: Extinction Rebellion. I loved the name- I am a horror filmmaker after all.

I watched their introductory video: "Heading for Extinction and what to do about it". It's safe to say that after that video my life was never the same. I had to start the Facebook page, and see what happened. A week after I created the page, I met with four young men who had been involved in climate action and wanted to ban together under the XR banner. We met at a bar, and that was the real beginning of XRQC.

It's been over a year since then; the one thing that didn't happen is my neatly handing the group over and going along my merry way. I have become one of the key people in the movement, working almost full time after **SLAXX** wrapped. It has been an insane time: I have organized two large civil disobedience actions and over a dozen direct actions, was charged with obstruction, saw friends get arrested and witnessed first-hand the callousness of our system. It's been a year of realising the enormity of the problem, of suffering bouts of depression and helplessness, of elation and joy, of forming close ties with some of the best people I have ever met. We've forged a tight community, one which I will be relying on to support us in the troubled decades to come. Even my 74-year-old mother joined XR! She is in the finance committee and gives XR presentations. It has been a steep learning curve for her as well, who was never an activist before.

I'm not sure what the coming months and years will bring- the COVID-19 pandemic has halted our activities and put a lot of our campaigns on hold, and when we do start again it will be a new world. When people ask why I bother, what's the guarantee that this will work I say, like everything in life, like art, like love, there is no guarantee, but one thing's for sure is that I am going to keep going. We have too little time, and too much to do for me to stop fighting. We must act now.

# Director's Biography

## Elza Kephart – Director

Elza Kephart writes and directs horror and fantasy films. She holds a BFA from Emerson College (Boston) and the Canadian Film Center's Director's Lab. At 24, she wrote and directed her first feature, *Graveyard Alive – A Zombie Nurse in Love*. It played in over 20 international film festivals including Fantasia, Fantasporto and Sitges, winning the Kodak Cinematography Award at the Slamdance Film Festival. It was distributed on TMN, on DVD by Maple Pictures, and in theaters.

Her second feature film, *Go in the Wilderness*, premiered at the Festival du Nouveau Cinema, played in various international film festivals, and is being distributed on various platforms, including iTunes. **SLAXX**, her third feature, is in post-production. **SLAXX** was picked up for production by Anne-Marie Gélinas of EMA Films (*Turbo Kid*), after pitching at the 2017 Frontières Co-Production Market. It has obtained SODEC and Telefilm production financing, and Harold Greenberg Fund Polish & Packaging financing.

She has obtained development financing from Telefilm, SODEC and CALQ for the feature scripts *Brothers in Arms*, *Chair Obscure*, *Le fantôme de la libération*, *Night of the Pendulum* and *Sweet Blood*. *Sweet Blood* was selected to the 2012 Frontières Co-Production Market, the 2017 Torino SeriesLab, and pitched at the Series Mania Co-Production Forum (Paris). It has been optioned by Attraction Media.

Elza has attended the TIFF Talent Lab, the Berlinale Talent Campus, and the Telluride Student Symposium. She is one of the co-founders of the Montreal chapter of Film Fatales, and one of the co-founders and coordinators of Extinction Rebellion Québec. She has worked for over 20 years in the film industry.



## Filmographie

### **SLAXX**

Writer/Director  
75 minutes – Alexa (2020)

### **Beyond the Pearly Gates of Ill-Repute**

Writer/Director/Producer  
9 minutes - Super 8mm (2006)

### **The Book of Joan**

Writer/Director/Producer  
25 minutes - 16mm (1998)

### **In search of a lost continent**

Writer/Director/Producer  
3 minutes – 5D (2016)

### **Graveyard Alive - A Zombie Nurse in Love**

Writer/Director/Producer  
82 minutes - 35mm (2003)

### **Go in the Wilderness**

Writer/Director/Producer  
61 minutes – Red-MX (2013)

### **Naughty Soxxx - Sock it to me!**

Writer/Director/Producer  
10 minutes - Digital Video (2002)

## Biographical Notes

### Romane Denis – Libby



Romane is a young actress who already has a very impressive resume. Her first role on television, that of Alice in *Sam Chicotte*, earned her a nomination for a G meaux Award in the category Best Actress in a Leading Role: Youth. Following her appearances *Destin es*, *30 vies* and *Nouvelle adresse*, it's her role as M lanie in the popular program *Subito texto* which acquired her local fame. The latter also earned her a second G meaux nomination in the Best Actress in a Leading Role: Youth. Her role as Lola in the series *Pour Sarah*, was another breakthrough performance for the actress. Since then, we have been able to see her in *Feux*, *Au secours de B atrice*, *19-2* and, more recently, *District 31*, *Les pays d'en haut*, *La d rape* and the web series *Les nomades*. Romane is also a great singer and starred in the popular musical *Mamma Mia* in 2019 in the lead role of Sophie. As for feature films, she delivered remarkable performances in *Slut in a Good Way*, a role for which she was nominated at the Gala Qu bec Cin ma in the category Discovery of the year in 2018 and *Les Salopes* or *the Naturally Wanton Pleasure of Skin*.

### Brett Donahue – Craig

Brett is an actor, filmmaker, and theatre creator and a graduate of The National Theatre School of Canada. Since completing his studies, Brett has appeared in theatres across the country including The National Arts Centre in Ottawa starring in a production of *Romeo and Juliet*. He has also had the privilege of being in the Canadian premiere of Matthew Lopez's *The Whipping Man*, Ivan Viripaev's *Illusions*, and Jackie Sibblies Drury's *We Are Proud....* Brett's work has been seen on networks such as CBC, City, USA Network, CBS, CW, Bravo and Reelz, as well as Columbia Pictures and Universal Studios. His independent film work has been featured in film festivals across the world. Brett co-produced/co-starred in his first short film entitled *Come Back*, which had its world premiere at The Canadian Film Festival. He was selected to attend the Glassco Translation Residency in order to prepare the translation of the play *Siri*, created by the acclaimed company, La Messe Basse. In 2018, Brett returned to the Luminato Festival, to revisit and expand the verbatim play *Out the Window*, a play centered around the prevalence of police brutality towards underprivileged communities. Most recently, Brett has produced his second short film and is penning his first feature film.



## Sehar Bhojani – Shruti



Sehar Bhojani is an actor and producer based in Toronto. She is a graduate of the National Theatre School of Canada. As an actor, she has appeared in various commercials, television shows such as *The Handmaid's Tale* (Hulu) and *Coroner* (CBC), and films such as **SLAXX** and *Punchline* (short). As a producer, Sehar has worked with a number of Canadian Theatre companies including: Nightswimming, Theatrefront, SpiderWebshow, Coal Mine Theatre, Native Earth, and Cahoots Theatre. She was Associate Artistic Director of Theatre Direct's 2018/19 Season and Artistic Producer at Common Boots Theatre.

## Stephan Bogaert – Harold Landsgrove

Stephen Bogaert will be starring in the soon to be released 2nd season of Netflix's highly acclaimed series *The Umbrella Academy*.

Recent feature film roles include that of Al Marsh in the box office hits *IT* and *IT: Chapter 2*, *X-Men Apocalypse*, *The Valley Below*, *A Family Man*, *Gridlocked* and alongside Christian Bale in *American Psycho*.

His many television roles include starring as Arthur Miller in *The Secret Life of Marilyn Monroe*, the Ridley Scott produced mini-series *The Company*, *Designated Survivor*, *Blood and Treasure*, ESPN's award winning *Playmakers*, *The Girlfriend Experience*, *Between*, *Swept Under*, *Private Eyes*, *The Firm*, *Haven*, *Nikita*, *Daydream Believers*, *Burn Up*, *The Listener*, *Poe*, *King*, *XIII*, *Bloodwork*, *Starhunter 2300*, *The Border*, *The Good Times are Killing Me* and *Our Fathers*.



Theatre credits include 5 seasons with the Stratford Shakespearean Festival and as a voice artist, over 200 episodes as narrator of the award-winning documentary series *Mayday*.

## Kenny Wong – Lord



Kenny is a Montreal-based actor and violinist with a Bachelor of Music Performance degree from McGill University. On screen, Kenny worked on such shows as *Good Sam* (Netflix), *The Bold Type* (Freeform), **SLAXX** (EMAfilms), *Brad's Status* (Plan B), *Jack Ryan* (Amazon) and *Lost Generation* (New Form). He also had a guest starring role in Season 3 of *Frankie Drake Mysteries* (CBC) and a series recurring role in CTV's new medical drama, *Transplant*, airing now.

Off screen, Kenny writes and produces his own projects. His TV drama pilot, *Death Divided*, was a Top-25 finalist at the WeScreenplay Television Competition. His feature film script, *Dystonia* was a finalist at the Golden Script Competition and received the Telefilm New Voices Award from the Toronto Screenwriting Conference in 2017. In January 2019, production for a short film version began after the script received grants from TakingItGlobal and Jeunes Volontaires. Most recently, *Dystonia* was shortlisted for the National Screen Institute's Features First Program.



## Anne-Marie Gélinas – Producer

With vision and creative drive, Anne-Marie Gélinas, founder of EMAFilms, works with innovative and ambitious writers and directors from around the world.

In 2019, the feature narrative *Third Wedding*, written and directed by David Lambert (*Hors les murs, Je suis à toi*), was released. The film is a Canada-Belgium-Luxemburg coproduction and stars Rachel Mwanza (*War Witch*) and Bouli Lanners (*Les Géants*). 2019 also saw the release of the feature documentary *Lepage Au Soleil - At the Origins of Kanata*, directed by Héléne Choquette on Robert Lepage's play, performed by the famous French troupe the Théâtre du Soleil, which was caught in a media storm in Quebec.

In 2017, *Radius*, a sci-fi feature thriller written and directed by Caroline Labrèche & Steeve Léonard starring Diego Klattenhoff (*Blacklist*) and Charlotte Sullivan (*Rookie Blue*) had its World Premiere at the Fantasia Film Festival and also played at Frightfest, UK and many others. Also in 2017, Héléne Choquette's documentary *Like a Pebble in the Boot* had its premiere at the Vancouver International Film Festival, as well as 1968, Fifty Years Later had its premiere broadcast on Radio-Canada. In 2016, Raphaël Nadjari's *Night Song* was released, a musical feature narrative, a France-Canada coproduction starring Géraldine Pailhas, Luc Picard and Natalie Choquette, played in select festivals in Europe, and also played on screens in France, Canada and Israel.

In 2015, *Turbo Kid* premiered at the Sundance Film Festival, and was selected at SXSW, winning the Audience Award. The film played in more than 60 festivals, garnering 23 international prizes, including Best International Film at the Saturn Awards 2016. Nominated for five Quebec Cinema Gala awards, the film won for Best Makeup. A Canada-New Zealand coproduction, the film is written and directed by the RKSS collective.

Also released in 2015, Héléne Choquette's documentary *A Dog's Life* had its world premiere at the Vancouver International Film Festival, and was selected at the One World Film Festival in Prague, the film also played in Canadian competition at Hot Docs 2016.

Other titles include: *A Bottle in the Gaza Sea* (Thierry Binisti) and *Mars & Avril* (Martin Villeneuve); both 2012 releases, acclaimed in Canada and abroad. Anne-Marie Gélinas also line produced *War Witch (Rebelle)*, winner, amongst others, of a Silver Bear at the Berlinale, and nominated for Best Foreign Film at the Oscars. And more...

EMAFilms is currently in post-production on **SLAXX**, written and directed by Elza Kephart, a slasher about a possessed pair of jeans brought to life to punish the unscrupulous practices of a trendy clothing company; and *The Winter Lake* a film noir in coproduction with Tailored Films of Ireland.

Also in post, Tracey Deer's *BEANS*, a feature narrative about a twelve-year-old Mohawk girl who must grow up fast and become her own kind of warrior when her people oppose the Canadian government in the bloody and turbulent events of the 1990 Oka Crisis. The film is co-written by Meredith Vuchnich.

And in production on the feature documentary *À travers tes yeux*, a Brigitte Poupart's film with her daughter Fabiola as they visit Haiti, the country where Fabi was born and question what would have been her life had she not been adopted and sent to Canada.



## Patricia Gomez Zlatar – Producer & Writer



Patricia Gomez Zlatar was born in Chile, eventually settling in Montreal by way of Pennsylvania. Patricia worked several years as a scientist before opting for a career change to film and forming Head on the Door Productions, a company dedicated to the horror and fantasy genres.

Her credits include the features *Graveyard Alive - A Zombie Nurse in Love* and *Go in the Wilderness*, as well as the shorts *The Chosen Ones* and *Never Tear Us Apart*, which was included in the horror anthologies *Minutes Past Midnight* and *Blood Clots*. She is currently producing the horror feature **SLAXX**, which she co-wrote, and the shorts *Maiden Mother Crone*, and *They're Here*. Patricia is also creating a vampire television series titled *Sweet Blood*, which has been optioned by Attraction Media.



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