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## **"Dating Games People Play" (A Film Actually Shot In The OC)**

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A Film Actually Shot In The OC

Oh, we've all experienced those dates from hell. You keep glancing at your watch wondering when this date is ever going to be over.

You want to scream and pull your hair out. The date is a total disaster.

Absolutely no chemistry or compatibility and definitely no future chance of a second date.

"A lot of my friends were dating at the time and we're hearing all these interesting and funny stories about their experiences and I thought it would make great material for a screenplay," said Stefan Marc, director/writer/actor/producer of "Dating Games People Play."

Marc who declares his film isn't based on his own personal dating experience adds jokingly "they're kind of loosely based experiences. A lot of it is fictional situations that are kind of based on some truth and things have actually happened."

"Dating Games People Play" is a romantic comedy set in Newport Beach, California that captures the quirks, oddities, and pokes fun at the different perspectives that men and women have on dating and relationships.

Shot on 35mm at various Newport Beach landmark locations including The Bungalow, Muldoon's, Lido Diner, Gallery Cafe, The now defunct Josh Slocums (Rodmans'), The Cannery and much more, Dating Games has an all-star familiar cast including heart-throb Austin Peck from "Days of Our Lives" who plays Nick Jenkins, a striving businessman who enters back into the dating scene after abruptly ending his relationship with his fiancée. With best friend and roommate at his side Jed Rollins (Stefan Marc), Nick jumps back into the dating world.

Shortly after, he meets Leslie Bega from "The Soprano's" (and for you men out there, she is currently ranked #77 on Maxi 100 list of sexiest women) and finds himself in a whirlwind between building his business and becoming financially secure before committing (commitment- such a tough thing) to a relationship.

Also Stephanie Brown plays successful and beautiful, best friend of Leslie finds herself failing to meet Mr. Right.

Stefan Marc, Orange County native lived in Newport Beach for 12 years sought out the best looking locations in Newport to add the OC flare to his project.

"I had a certain vision and a certain idea of how I wanted the film to look so I sought out locations that would really capture Newport Beach."

It wasn't all rosy pink for the making of this film. Finding funding and investors that backed out add stress points.

"I had a couple of potential investors who had pretty much given us a commitment that they were going to come on board. And then everything was locked in as far as the talent and the locations and all that. We had a small window when we could get these pick-up shots done. Basically I had started waiting for their money to come in and started putting [costs] on my own personal credit cards.

As a result Marc had calculated a low six-figure credit card debt and several investors bailed out. "So I was stuck with that and that was a very hard time because then we pretty much ran out of money. And I was stuck with the debt and it was getting to the point that I was getting calls, 30-40 calls per week from creditors wanting to get their money."

"And I couldn't pay it basically and then finally had (took about 9 months) an investor come in and get everything cleared up." Thankfully with a business degree background (business degree in economics from USC) it helped him secure financing the film.

"The business background really helps with the raising money aspect of it with handling all the business aspects of making a film because there's quite a bit [of that involved] and people who got involved with the film who ended up investing like the fact that I also have a business background."

Out of college, he and his partner founded The Entertainment Channel where during that six years they managed every facet of the program including writing, directing and producing the half-hour closed-circuit television program.

Later, Marc worked as Vice President in business development for an international import/export firm selling food products by bulk that took him to countries such as Germany and China. Simultaneously, during his downtime, Stefan wrote screenplays along with "Dating Games People Play."

He quit his job in 2001 and decided to go with his passion, filmmaking and work on his project full-time. Like working on any film, incidents and tales are bound to happen. When they started shooting "Dating Games..." three years ago, the second to last day of filming, lead actor Austin Peck was bitten in the face by a pit bull and was sent to Hoag Hospital for treatment.

Also a camera truck ripped around the corner too fast and took out a brand new Honda accord. That cost about \$12,000 worth of damage.

Also during a break of shooting a romantic love scene between Nick Jenkins (Austin Peck) and Mona Evans (Leslie Bega) while the camera was being reloaded, Bega went outside to the craft service table and a busybody neighbor noticed her sexy blue robe. Startled, she called the police and assumed they were filming a pornography film.

When the police arrived with blaring sirens on, they were screaming and trying to shut the production down, the crew produced their permits and assured them they were filming a regular film.

"Once they saw that everything was legit, it was like they're anger went to disappointment," Marc said laughing. Another incident, the gaffer backed into a water main at the Costa Mesa Quality Inn causing plumbing damage and hotel guests and staff left without water for hours.

This 90-minute film compared to "Swingers" meets "American Pie" has hilarious scenes including a vacuum scene with Marc, which you have to see for yourself, horrible first dates fiascos, and not to mention witty dialogue between characters. Go see for yourself and discover how we all have played dating games sometime in our dating history.

At the U.S. Premiere of the Newport Beach Film Festival, the Lido Theater filled the capacity of 600 seats and over 200 people were turned away while 40 others sat on the floor or stood throughout the entire duration of the screening.

"And on top of that I kept going outside to see if they're were any investors that hadn't made it in yet and people were literally banging on the glass doors wanting to get in."

Because of the overwhelming positive response, an additional screening was held at the Orange County Museum of Art, which coincidentally sold out again.

"I think for this romantic, well I call it more of a comedy with a romance element to it because it's really more of a comedy than a romantic comedy. But it definitely has romance."

And when asked about his decision of ditching his high profile business position and working in the film industry, he's say with self-assurance, "[it's] one of the best decisions I've ever made. One of the hardest but also the best."

Presently "Dating Games..." is being entered into the festival circuit and are hoping it will be picked for distribution. It also might turn into a potential TV Series.

"I can't tell you how many people have come to me who have seen the film and said 'oh my god I have dated that person," (he said with infectious laughter) and they just really respond to it."

"Because of that kind of reaction we're getting, I think that in itself is going to make great material for [a] TV Show."

If you would like to see this hilarious romantic comedy, see "Dating Games People Play" at the LA Premiere Thursday May 12, 7:15 p.m. located at the Laemmle Theatre 4, 1332 Second Street, Santa Monica, CA.

Tickets are \$10 and available at <http://www.danceswithfilms.com/> or call the box office at 310-394-9744

Also post your worst dating experience on <http://www.datinggamespeopleplay.com/> and enter for a chance to win a \$250 gift certificate to Amazon.com and an invitation for 4 to a premiere screening and an opportunity to meet the cast.