

Writer Produces Film About Love, Redemption and Crazy People

Boston, Mass. – When J. Brian Turk of Nashua, N.H. began writing his screenplay three years ago, he embraced the universal themes of love and redemption.

What more appropriate setting for a comedic drama incorporating these expressions of humanity, he wondered, than a psychiatric hospital?

Written, produced and directed by Turk, “Boston Psychiatric” is the story of Dr. Raj, a young, hot-shot psychiatrist turned corporate executive who risks his marriage, fortune and sanity when he accepts tainted start-up money to bring his new psychiatric drug to market. His world falls apart, however, when he is arrested and convicted of fraud. After serving a year in prison, Dr. Raj is offered early parole in exchange for working at a free psychiatric clinic run by the unconventional Dr. Murphy. Can the good doctor deal with the insanity of the patients and staff, or will he end up committing himself?

The 80-minute film stars Raj Jaiswal (as Dr. Raj) of New York, N.Y.; Rich Gustus (as Dr. Murphy) of Needham, Mass.; Harry Gordon of Cambridge, Mass.; Steve Duval of Mansfield, Mass.; Chance Langton of Quincy, Mass.; Marie Gallagher of Malden, Mass.; Paul Moylan of Dorchester, Mass.; Bill Farrell of Holbrook, Mass.; Janet Corner of Jamaica Plain, Mass.; Sarah Blodgett of Chestnut Hill, Mass.; Shawn Doherty of Boston, Mass.; Chrissy Kelleher of Marshfield, Mass.; Jennifer Vaughn of Merrimack, N.H.; Jason Turk of Hobe Sound, Fla.; and Shawn Robbins of San Francisco. J. Brian Turk also appears in the film as the landlord.

Although filming took place in Boston and Seattle, the movie is largely shot on-location in the real-life Codman Square Health Center in Dorchester, Mass. Turk received permission to film in non-patient areas on weekends from Bill Walczak, who founded the Codman Square Health Center and has served as its chief executive officer since 1980. In fact, Walczak is the inspiration behind the character of Dr. Murphy, who struggles to keep Boston Psychiatric open for the benefit of the needy patients it serves.

“I support independent film making, which I believe is critical to the creativity of the film industry, but I also like the concept of this particular film,” Walczak said. “I’ve spent my entire career helping people get access to quality health care they couldn’t otherwise afford. So that’s why this film, which brings attention to someone donating his time to help others in need, is so close to my heart.”

Aside from his career as a film maker, Turk – a former Air Force officer – is a vice president at a defense company in the Boston area. He was raised outside of Cleveland, Ohio, where his father, Jerry Turk, was a commercial writer and producer of his own human interest radio show, “On Location,” which aired for more than 15 years.

“I grew up going with my father on weekends to interview sport figures, research scientists and NASA engineers. Each trip was a new adventure,” Turk recalled. “I really admired how my father could take a sometimes dull story and turn it into a compelling

adventure for his listeners. He was a true storyteller. I guess you could say that he awoke this ability in me.”

Turk received his improvisation comedy training from Improv Asylum in Boston and has written several scripts for Hollywood. One project was optioned by a major star, but has remained stalled in pre-production – or what Turk refers to as “development hell.” Dismayed by the Hollywood process, he decided to finance his own independent feature film. All he needed was a killer script and actors.

Turk said the concept of “Boston Psychiatric” came to him “almost in a flash” as he and Boston comedian Rich Gustus were taking a break from acting in a small political satire film. “We were telling jokes and trying to top one another when I realized that with his quick wit and Jesus-like look, Rich would be excellent as a zany doctor struggling to keep his free psychiatric clinic open to help the needy – similar to Bill Walczak’s work at the Codman Square Health Center,” Turk said. “I pitched the idea to Rich on the spot. To his credit, he said, ‘Sure I’ll do it. Sounds like fun.’”

Even though the film is comedy, its central theme of redemption is serious. When the main character of Dr. Raj falls from grace, Dr. Murphy offers him a chance to redeem himself by treating needy psychiatric patients – something Dr. Raj would never have previously considered. The film also demonstrates how staff members and patients rise to the occasion to help one another – thereby growing in the process.

“Most of all,” Turk said, “I want ‘Boston Psychiatric’ to convey the message that everyone deserves a second chance – and the world can become a better place as a result.”

For more information about “Boston Psychiatric,” please visit www.BostonPsyFilm.com.

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