

HAUNTED HEART



A comedy about love, loss, and what comes after

A Ghostly Romance From Writer/Director Mike Bencivenga

About 'Haunted Heart'...

GENRE: Supernatural
Romantic Comedy

RATING: PG-13 or R

BUDGET: \$3.7 Million

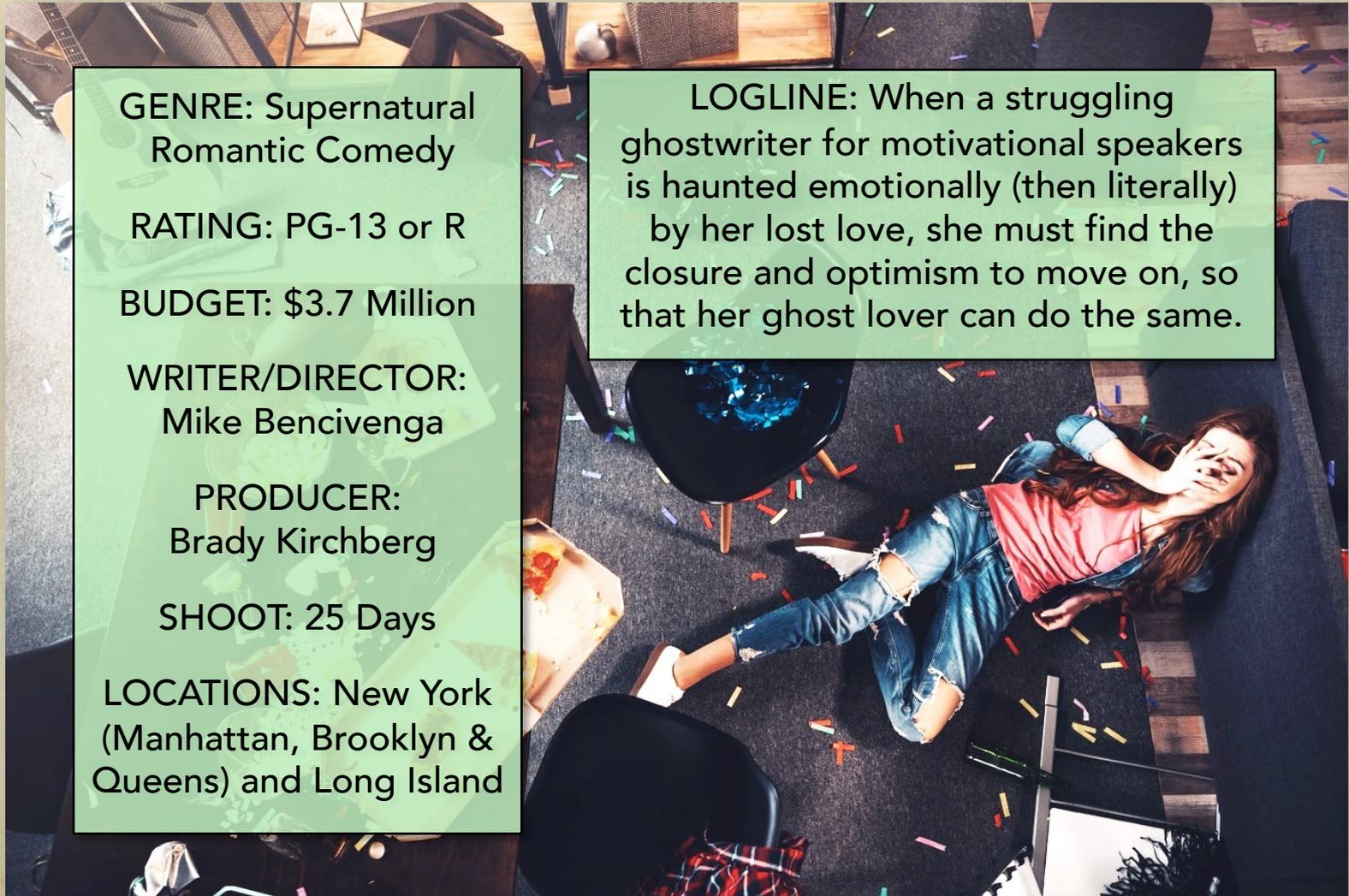
WRITER/DIRECTOR:
Mike Bencivenga

PRODUCER:
Brady Kirchberg

SHOOT: 25 Days

LOCATIONS: New York
(Manhattan, Brooklyn &
Queens) and Long Island

LOGLINE: When a struggling
ghostwriter for motivational speakers
is haunted emotionally (then literally)
by her lost love, she must find the
closure and optimism to move on, so
that her ghost lover can do the same.



So what's the story?



Brenda fell for Emily. Hard. Not only was this her first same-sex relationship, but also Brenda's first time in love ever. Serious stuff.

But way too serious for Emily, so she ended it. Brenda longed to get her back but, tragically, Emily became ill and died before they could reconnect.



This double dose of despair drives Brenda to drink. A lot. What she doesn't realize is that Emily's ghost is hovering nearby, watching her go to pieces. Emily wants to help, but Brenda can't see or hear her. Bummer, right?



As Brenda's rotten luck would have it, she gets hired to write speeches for a relationship guru, Sharon Steel, to help boost her sagging radio ratings.



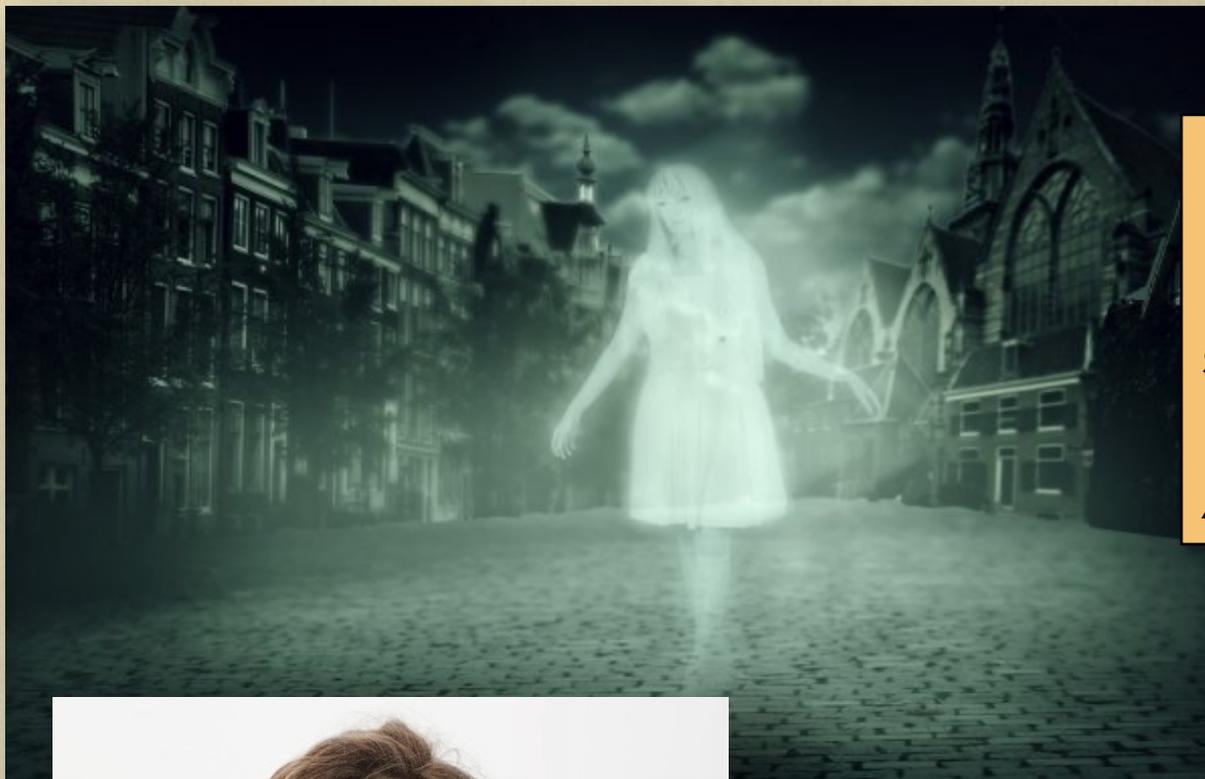
Writing touchy-feely copy for the 'love doctor' is the last thing Brenda wants to do, and Sharon's appalled by the 'hot mess' sent to work with her.



But Brenda's bitter thoughts on love bring a welcome harder edge to Sharon's stale message. And her listeners love it! Thrilled by the response, Sharon invites Brenda to her estate for the weekend.

Brenda thinks she's flirting and impulsively kisses her. A bit shocked, Sharon explains she invited Brenda so she could meet her son, Reuben. Oy!





Meanwhile, Sharon's house turns out to be a portal to the great beyond. So the ghost of Emily appears! And she's pissed.



When Brenda gets over the shock of seeing her, Emily explains she's trapped and unable to move on because Brenda won't let her go. "Get on with your life," Ghost Emily pleads, "So I can get on with my afterlife."

As Sharon's ratings improve, so does her opinion of Brenda. And being around the 'guru of good vibes' helps Brenda begin to heal her broken heart.



So Brenda decides to take Emily's advice and 'move on' by having a fun fling with Reuben.



But Ghost Emily won't let her. "You don't need sex!" she barks, "You need love." Brenda ignores her and goes after him anyway. Furious, Emily starts a fire in the mansion to stop them.

It works, but when Sharon sees the damage, she flies into a rage and fires Brenda.



Getting canned is just the wake-up call Brenda needs. She quits the booze, quits writing for other people and finally shares the tender 'goodbye' with Emily that they both needed. And Brenda finds the strength she needs to let her go.



To reclaim her life and voice, Brenda tells her 'ghost story' at a Spoken Word show. And Emily's spirit makes sure Sharon's there to hear it.

The 'love doctor' is so touched by the tale that Sharon forgives Brenda and boldly asks her out for coffee.



Startled but delighted, Brenda says 'yes.'

Casting "HAUNTED HEART"



In the film, Brenda and Emily go from falling in love, to a nasty split, to patching things up in the end. The actors playing these roles will have the challenge to play every comic and dramatic moment of that journey.

The important third lead, Sharon Steel, and the juicy supporting role of Jack Masters, Brenda's former boss, will give those actors the chance to lovingly lampoon the many superstar life coaches out there, like...



Marianne Williamson



Tony Robbins

Not just another 'Ghost' story



Many successful movies in the past have told supernatural love stories, ranging from the highly sentimental...

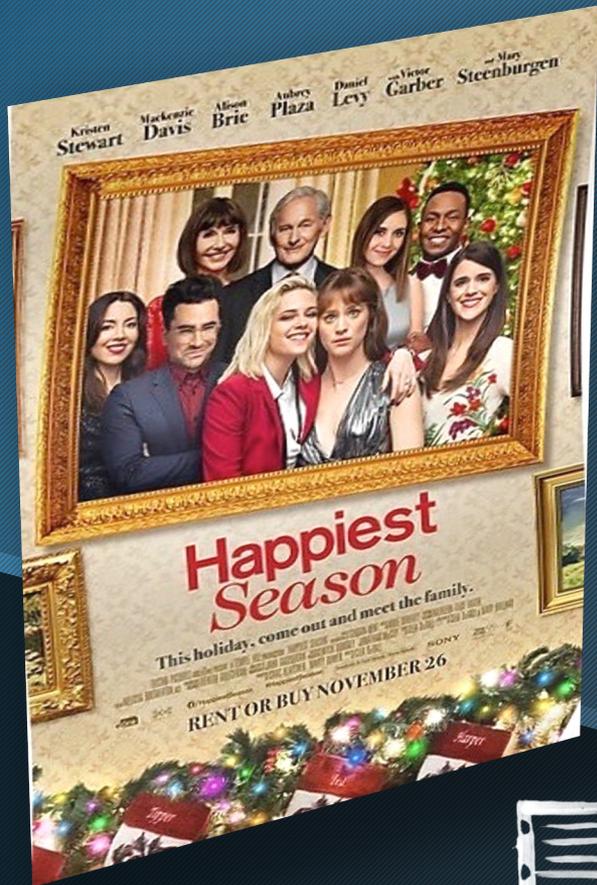


To the



decidedly silly.

HAUNTED HEART is a comedy that has more in common with these recent, genre-redefining hits. Take a look at what a reader for *THE BLACK LIST* said about the script.



"HAUNTED HEART is an incredibly poignant, incredibly lovely romantic comedy with a ghostly twist."



The screenplay for HAUNTED HEART has won over 20 top honors at script competitions, beating out both comedies and straight dramas.

OFFICIAL SELECTION:
Festival du Film de Paris
AFI Film Festival
Austin Film Festival
Sidewalk Moving Picture Film Festival
Cleveland International Film Festival
Sonoma Valley Film Festival

WINNER 2004
VERONA FESTIVAL
SCHERMI D'AMORE
Best Actor
Anthony LaPaglia

WINNER 2004
NEWPORT BEACH
FILM FESTIVAL
Best Actor
Anthony LaPaglia

WINNER 2004
PRISM AWARD
Best Festival Film
Best Actor
Anthony LaPaglia

WINNER 2004
FLORIDA
FILM FESTIVAL
Audience Award
Best Film

Happy Hour

"Terrific performances infuse this well-written comic drama with a realistic ease."
—Sheri Linden, THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

"The great Anthony LaPaglia is never less than 100 percent convincing."
—David Chute, LA WEEKLY

"Captivating."
—Phillip Jordan, BIRMINGHAM WEEKLY

"Absolutely Authentic."
—Robert Draper, GQ and other publications

And writer/director Mike Bencivenga has successfully blended comedy and romance in the past. Most notably in his film HAPPY HOUR.



About The Team

Mike Bencivenga – Writer/Director



Mike Bencivenga is an award-winning writer/director in theater, film and television. He's authored 11 full-length plays that were produced Off Broadway, including one directed by the legendary Garry Marshall. Mike's debut feature, *LOSERS IN LOVE* (1993), won best film at the Houston Intl. Film Festival. His next film, *HAPPY HOUR* (2003) starring Anthony LaPaglia and Eric Stoltz, won top festivals honors before going into theatrical release. Mike's also a multiple Emmy winning editor/producer at WABC-TV in NYC. For more go to: www.MikeBencivenga.com

Brady Kirchberg – Producer

Brady Kirchberg is a New York City based producer and location manager, creating content across all mediums, including print, TV, film, and commercials. He has worked on a number of award-winning series and independent feature films, many of which have had their premiere at the Sundance Film Festival, including *A KID LIKE JAKE* (2018) and *THE SOUND OF SILENCE* (2019) and *TOPSIDE* (2021), which premiered at the Venice Film Festival. Brady is also a founding member of The Drawing Board, a collective of writers, actors and other artists that workshops and develops original works in NYC.



The Budget



Acct#	Category Description	Page	Total
101-00	DEVELOPMENT	1	8,000
103-00	RIGHTS AND WRITING	1	20,000
105-00	PRODUCER'S UNIT	1	142,600
107-00	DIRECTOR'S UNIT	1	30,312
109-00	TALENT UNIT	2	272,542
111-00	ATL TRAVEL & LIVING	5	6,100
Total Above-The-Line			479,555
113-00	PRODUCTION STAFF	7	331,177
115-00	EXTRAS & CASTING	8	71,068
117-00	CAMERA OPERATIONS	14	141,467
119-00	PRODUCTION DESIGN	17	78,505
121-00	SET CONSTRUCTION	19	21,273
123-00	SET OPERATIONS	20	125,152
125-00	LIGHTING OPERATIONS	24	95,966
129-00	SET DRESSING	26	140,355
131-00	PROPERTY	29	51,145
133-00	PICTURE REVISIONS	30	11,850
139-00	WARDROBE	30	79,954
141-00	HAIR & MAKEUP	32	76,107
143-00	PRODUCTION SOUND	34	40,640
145-00	LOCATION OPERATIONS	35	176,414
147-00	STYLING	36	7,500
149-00	TRANSPORTATION	39	165,969
151-00	PRODUCTION HARDDRIVES & BACK-UPS	43	2,600
155-00	FACILITY EXPENSES	43	12,400
Total Production			1,629,542
156-00	EDITING & PROJECTION	44	80,425
157-00	MUSIC	45	36,000
159-00	POST-PRODUCTION SOUND	45	35,957
161-00	POST-PRODUCTION VISUALS	46	17,400
165-00	TITLES & OPTICALS	47	3,500
Total Post-Production			173,281
181-00	INSURANCE & MEDICAL	48	36,250
185-00	COPYRIGHT AND TITLE CLEARANCE	48	2,500
187-00	GENERAL EXPENSES	48	36,500

OVERVIEW:

**25 Day Shooting Schedule
in the New York Area**

Budget Total: \$3.7 Million

**Minus NYS Tax Incentive of
\$673,321**

**Cash To Be Raised:
\$3,075,273**

(A full budget is available on request)

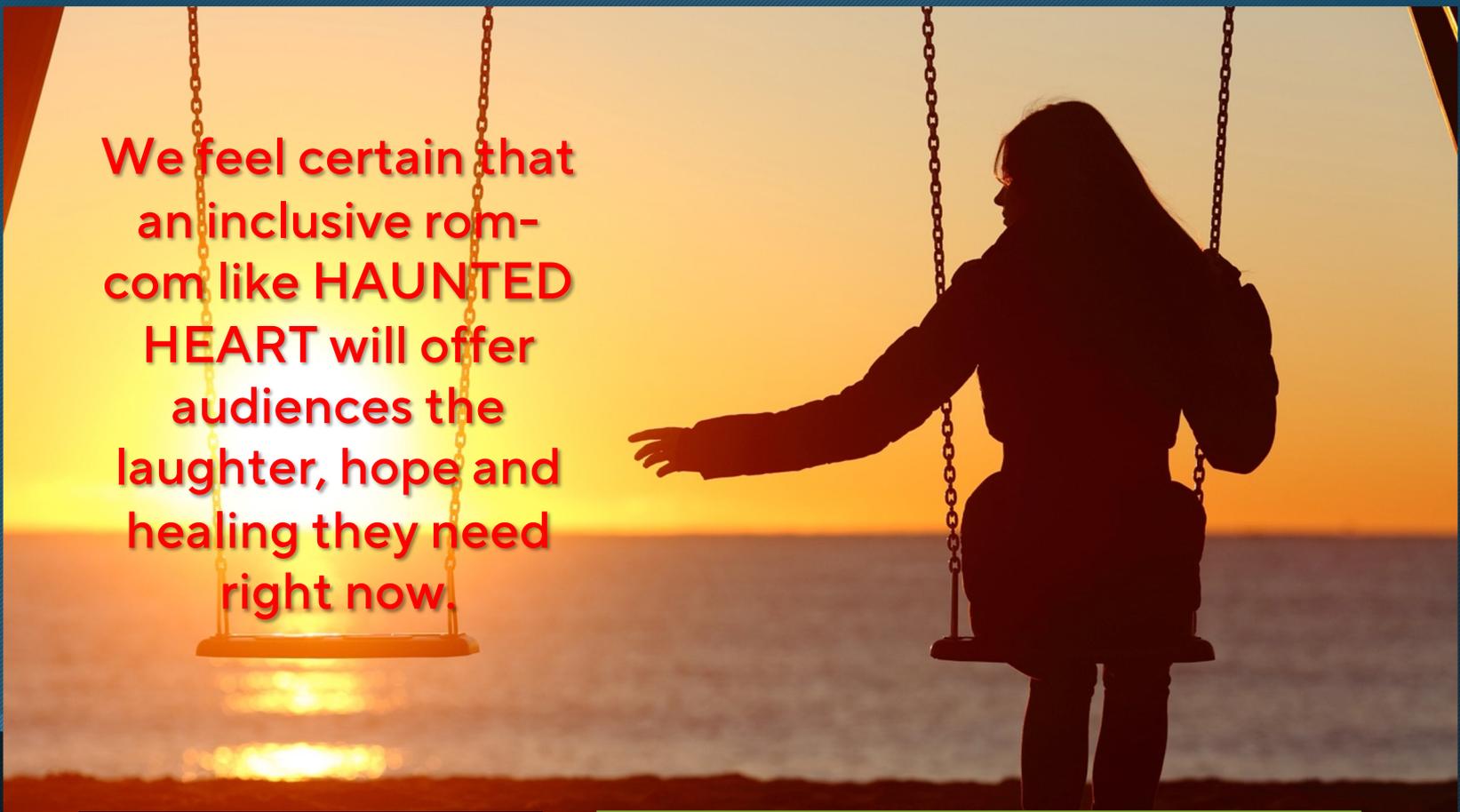
The Marketplace



A 2022 article in Cosmopolitan declared, "The Romantic Comedy is back! In a big way." They pointed out it was the most popular genre on all major streaming platforms.



And, as the world exhales after the pandemic, people will continue to look to entertainment to help them regain a sense of normalcy.



We feel certain that
an inclusive rom-
com like HAUNTED
HEART will offer
audiences the
laughter, hope and
healing they need
right now.

THE 2022
PAGE
INTERNATIONAL
SCREENWRITING
AWARDS

CONTACT FOR THE PROJECT
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