



SMALLTOWN FRONT

Full length feature film by Andy Lauer (The Tehuacan Project, The One I Write for You)

Written by Adam Burch (Author of Song of Edmon and Nicholl Fellowship Quarterfinalist)



THE STORY

“If you cannot get rid of the family skeleton, you may as well make it dance.” – George Bernard Shaw

Upon learning of his mother’s untimely death, a brave but troubled war vet returns to home to attend her funeral, only to discover the thriving local business she started and still run by family members is a facade for a devious drug and prostitution ring.



THE WORLD

Smalltown Front exists in a world where guts and hustle are the surest ways of getting ahead. This isn't a place where opportunity thrives. Matriarch of the McCourt family, Franky McCourt, knew that that better than anyone. So, she did what she had to in order to carve a piece for her family—even if it meant harboring dark secrets and setting in motion a chain of events leading ultimately to tragedy...



RHETT CORKER

Rhett is the most influential man in this small Kansas town. A powerful Real estate Developer, Rhett has shaped the fortunes of his community along with those living in it. None more so than the McCourt family, with whom he shares a twisted history. Rhett hopes now that his respected rival Franky McCourt has conveniently passed, business will continue as usual with the rest of the McCourt clan.

Kevin Pollak is an actor, comedian, impressionist and podcast host. He has appeared in over 80 films; his roles include A Few Good Men, Grumpy Old Men and its sequel Grumpier Old Men; The Usual Suspects, Casino, End of Days. Since 2017, Pollak has been a regular on the critically acclaimed Primetime Emmy Award winning show The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel on Amazon.

SARAH MCCOURT

The younger sister of Franky McCourt always felt lost in her older sibling's shadow. She helped raise her nephews, helped make the business run, but was never given the credit she felt she deserved. Now with her sister gone, Sarah steps from the shadows in order to claim what is rightly fully hers.

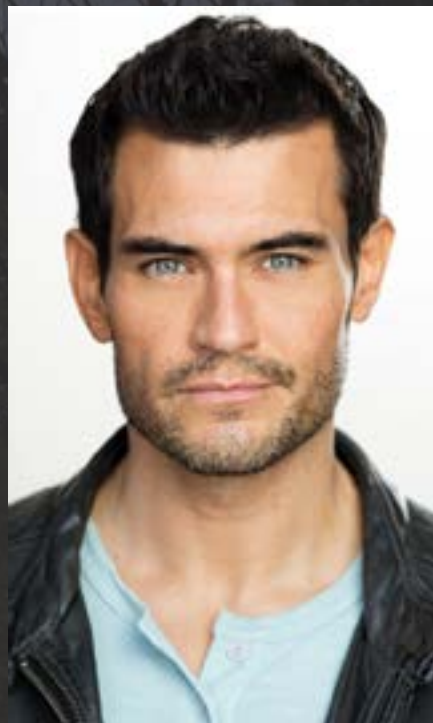
Lea Thompson is best known for her role in the Back to the Future trilogy and as the title character in the 1990s NBC sitcom Caroline in the City. Other films for which she is known include All the Right Moves, Red Dawn, Howard the Duck, Some Kind of Wonderful, and The Beverly Hillbillies. From 2011 to 2017, she co-starred as Kathryn Kennish in the ABC Family-turned Freeform series Switched at Birth. Lea is an actor, writer, producer, director and has worked with some of the biggest names in Hollywood.



MATT MCCOURT

The impulsiveness and destructive independence that younger brother Matt McCourt exhibited growing up may have mellowed some, but there's still a hair-trigger streak in him. Survivor's guilt from the war and a sense of duty to his best friend's widow drive his decisions now. The same truths that lead his brother into the darker corners of their typical Midwest Suburban home town, reveal in Matt a newfound purpose.

Up and comer Joe Mackey has roots in the Midwest as well as deep history in the arts (being great nephew to American stage and screen icon-Tallulah Bankhead). His first feature was notably titled Wichita. Joe has also appeared in the Lifetime movie If Looks Could Kill and will star in the upcoming drama feature LA Crime Story. Joe has starred in six feature films, Smalltown Front being his fourth as a lead.



JAY MCCOURT

Older brother Jay McCourt has always done what's expected of him. There might not be much to the boat, but there's no sense rocking it. However, this mode of existing which began out of self-preservation, takes on a surprising new life when he learns some uncomfortable truths upon his mother's death. He is a man primed to stop hiding and finally take some action.

Adam Burch is a classically trained actor having appeared in over 50 stage productions. He has had turns in features such as 40 Days and 40 Nights, Nazis at the Center of the Earth, on ABC TV's Scandal, as well as the soon to be released horror feature This Land. Adam is also a two-time published science fiction author, a Nicholl Fellowship Quarterfinalist for screenwriting, and has been recently accepted to USC Gould School of Law for the 2021 Fall semester.





CESAR OCHOA

Cesar knows what it's like to live on the wrong side of the powerful forces in a small town. Having been deprived of his livelihood, Cesar let bad habits become worse. However, he's finally trying to turn his life around and salvage what he can be reconnecting with the most important thing he was denied—a relationship with his estranged son.

Danny Trejo was born in Los Angeles. A child drug addict and criminal, he served time in San Quentin, where he won numerous boxing titles. Imprisoned for robbery and drug offenses, Trejo changed his life. In 1985, he met a young man who called him for support. Trejo went to meet him at what turned out to be the set of *Runaway Train* (1985), where he was offered a job to train the actors for a boxing match. Director Andrey Konchalovskiy saw Trejo training Eric Roberts and immediately offered him a role in the film. Trejo has subsequently appeared in many other films, usually as a tough criminal.

JESSICA RUIZ

A female police detective has to be tough as nails; a single mother must be even harder. Jessica has lived the last few years setting aside her grief at the loss of her husband, Tim. However, when Matt McCourt returns to town, his presence ignites a flood of emotion and memory. Their rekindled attraction combined with a mysterious murder case leads Jessica on a collision course with dark forces within the town.

DIANA MCCOURT

It was fait accompli in Diana's mind that as the high school home coming queen, she would marry her baseball star sweetheart, Matt. Things haven't quite turned out as Diana McCourt expected— Her prince charming went off to the war and Diana settled for the next best choice, his brother. Diana is a woman on edge pushing her husband to give her the life she deserves. If he doesn't, she'll tear down the house, pour gasoline over it, and light the match as she walks away.

TRAVIS CORKER

Travis took all the tried-and-true lessons of bullying others into submission from his father, Rhett, but learned none of the subtlety which makes dominance an art. Raised in the lap of luxury, Travis has had everything handed to him as well as his mistakes swept under the rug. His one enduring desire is to prove to his father that he is a worthy successor of the empire.

THE DIRECTOR

Andy Lauer is an American feature and documentary filmmaker, actor, and social activist. He's best known as 'Charlie' in the long running hit TV show *Caroline in the City*, however, as a storyteller he has mentored under the direction of some of the most renown filmmakers in the industry including Oliver Stone, David Fincher and James Burrows. He has shot in the toughest of conditions and the most unique situations. Lauer's features as a director include *Going Beyond* about a ragtag but heroic group working together to fight HIV in India with Academy Award winner, Jeremy Irons, *Adventures of a Teenage Dragon Slayer* starring Lea Thompson and Wendie Malick, and *The One I Write For You*. His documentary project, *Gridiron Heroes*, followed fallen high school football players and featured Taylor Kitsch, as well as Football legends Mike Ditka and Kurt Warner. He also had triple duties directing/writing/producing *The Tehuacan Project*, a story about deaf children in rural Mexico. Lauer is the Founder President & CEO of ReelAid, a non-profit organization made up of filmmakers producing low-cost promotional videos for non-profit organizations. He's also father of three and a damn good soccer coach.



THE PRODUCER

Anthony Cook is a graduate of Wittenberg University where he created his own major: Screenwriting/ Film Production and wrote his first screenplay, *Walbobs*, which he has since developed for production. His career in LA began at POW! Studios, the company of comic book legend Stan Lee. Anthony has a Master of Fine Arts degree in filmmaking from the New York Film Academy where he is now a full-time professor. He has over 10 years of experience writing, directing, and editing. Films include *Long Way Home*, *Too Good*, *Boots and Recruits*, as well as the upcoming horror film *This Land*.



THE PURPOSE

Producers Adam Burch and Joe Mackey sat down in 2018 to conceive of a project. They wanted something dramatic and emotional. They conceived a story of two brothers, one light and the other dark, with each casting his shadow over the other. From the outset, they wanted the location to be at the heart of the film. Middle America is not always portrayed with the greatest effect in Hollywood. Kansas seemed a natural fit given its geography— in the heart of the country— as well as providing access to the landscapes needed. Inspired by films like *Manchester by the Sea* and *The Departed*, *Smalltown Front* aims to portray the struggle for the American Dream amidst a story of crime, revenge, love, and redemption.



THE APPROACH

Simple. Elegant. Composed. Professional. Performances and actors take center stage in this character driven piece. The location, a character in its own right, also remains a strong presence. An idyllic Midwest Town in Kansas will serve as a façade and mirror for the cracks in our characters' veneers. In many ways this is reflective of the experiences and attitudes in the country as a whole— strong, square chin thrust forward, yet dealing with inner divisions and turmoil. The problems our characters face are heightened and dark, but real and complicated: There are no easy answers. There is a strong narrative spine to the film which is set in a stark realism— detailed attention to the art department, costumes, cinematography, casting (local hire whenever possible) followed by excellent editing and post production will set the stage for everyone to showcase their best work.



THEMES

Several universal themes are woven into the fabric of this film. Whether through dialogue or action, every beat and scene of the film should serve them.

Brotherhood- At the heart of *Smalltown Front* is the relationship between two brothers who are equally haunted by their history and have taken quite different paths.

Duty- This takes on a larger meaning in the context of war and its aftermath. Matt struggles with addiction, a psychological wound left over by his days in combat. He's desperate to fulfill his oath to a fallen comrade.

Secrets - There are dark corners in every man's mind. Each member of the McCourt family comes to know this and either faces the demon or is swallowed by it.



FINANCIALS & ROI

The team behind Smalltown Front brings to bear competence, experience, planning, and is committed to making this project yield a return for everyone involved. They have a solid base, having produced Indie films of studio quality with shoestring finances. The proposed budget has been meticulously planned. Statistically, the films that are bringing in the most ROI are those under \$1 million and those over \$10 million. At a proposed \$350K, Smalltown Front is poised right in the pocket.

Initial capital has been secured. Extensive industry connections have attracted “A Quality” talent. Production plans to take full advantage of tax incentives in Kansas to film and employ local hires whenever possible in cast and crew to keep costs low and showcase homegrown artists.

The team has connections for distribution with major streaming services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime, hungry for original content in the wake of the pandemic which severely stunted Hollywood production. Submission to prestigious film festivals like Sundance and Toronto will be helped by the team’s established connections. Marketing and Publicity will also be secured to ensure that Smalltown Front is not simply another film being screened but is being talked about.