

In 2016, a group of filmmakers disappeared in the mountains of East Tennessee.

Three years later their footage was found.

CHEST



Directed by AARON IRONS
Produced by JOSH CROFT and AARON IRONS
An IFKY Films production
In association with Jcroductions and AI Multimedia

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NASHVILLE, TN - 95 mins - ENGLISH

SYNOPSIS

While filming a documentary series about Appalachian folklore and mythology, a crew of amateur filmmakers uncover the legend of a mysterious box hidden away deep in a wilderness area known as "Jeffrey's Hell" in the Appalachian mountains of East Tennessee. As the mystery unfolds they soon discover that some secrets are best locked away and forgotten. Based on actual events.

ABOUT THE FILM

CHEST is the first feature film written and directed by filmmaker Aaron Irons and is based on the stories and legends he grew up with in East Tennessee. A mysterious box discovered in a cave in East Tennessee was a source of fascination for Aaron for most of his life and this film is the result of that fascination.

Teaming up with fellow East TN native, Josh Croft, they were able to complete this project through self-funding and the help of many dedicated cast and crew despite a global pandemic and endless hurdles.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKER

Aaron is from a small town in East Tennessee but has spent the last 20+ years in Nashville working in the tech industry and playing synth wave music in the underground Nashville music scene. With a degree in music and audio production his first introduction to film was as sound editor and photographer for feature film Make Out With Violence (2008). During a gig as sound designer for a live theatrical production of Terminator 2: Judgment Day performed on stage in the style of Shakespeare called Terminator the Second, he met several cast members who would later have leading roles in CHEST.

In his free time, Aaron builds synthesizers, explores and maps caves, builds websites, gardens and spends lots of quality time with his wife and two cats.

CAST



Dean Shortland - “David Morgan”

Dean Shortland is a film, television and stage actor, originally from Melbourne, Australia. He got his start in the Melbourne theatre community where he performed in various stage productions such as As You Like It and You're A Good Man Charlie Brown. Recent television work includes Dolly Parton's Heartstrings (Netflix), Dynasty (The CW), Callie Khouri's Nashville (ABC) and SIX (History Channel). Recent film work includes supporting roles in Hour of Lead, The Violent Heart and My Best Friend Depression.



Ted Welch - “Yancy Underwood”

Ted Welch was born on August 6, 1979 in Hendersonville, Tennessee, USA. Ted is an actor and writer, known for The Help (2011), Adult Interference (2017), True Blood (2008), Women of the Movement (2022) and most recently the upcoming Martin Scorsese film, Killers of the Flower Moon.



Jasson Cring - “Mark Rogers”

Jasson Cring is an actor, known for Terminator the Second (2011), Four on the Floor (2009) and Ought (2008).



Marissa Kaye Grinestaff - “Stephanie Dobson”

Marissa Kaye is an actress and producer, known for Almost Balanced Foodie (2018), Nashville (2012) and Inside the House (2017).



Sarah Van Arsdal - “Isabella Frerichs”

Sarah Van Arsdal is an actress and cinematographer, known for Black Holler (2017) and her comedy series Sarzy Shorts.



Jessejames Locorriere - “Russel West”

Jessejames Locorriere is an American actor and the proud father of one child. In 1980, he began his acting journey with the Young People's Program at the Lee Strasberg Acting Institute in Manhattan. Years later, he studied with the Atlantic Theater Company at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. He is best known for his work in Holidate (Netflix), Walking Dead, Ozark (Netflix), Ant-Man (Disney), Sleepy Hollow (FOX), Banshee (Cinemax), and Turn: Washington's Spies (AMC).



Henry Haggard - “Atlas Mckersie AKA Bartender”

Henry Haggard is an actor, known for Boulevard (2014), VeggieTales: MacLarry & the Stinky Cheese Battle (2013) and Fogg (2018). Henry has been married to Evelyn Blythe since November 25, 1995.

CAST



Jackson Pyle - "Stan Belcher" AKA "Bar Fly"

Jackson Pyle is an actor, known for Fantastic Four (2015), The Nocturnal Third (2011) and Son of Somerset Files (2014).



JK Gregg - "Laurie Granger" AKA "Granny"

Jk Gregg is an actress, known for Chest (2022), Between Rock and a Hard Place (2015) and Homicide Hunter (2011).



Steve Wedan - "Detective Harold Gardner"

Steve Wedan is an actor, known for I, Tonya (2017), My Fellow Americans (1996) and Reptile (2022).



Tamiko Robinson Steele - "Agent Kara Mills"

Tamiko Robinson Steele is an actress, known for Black Holler (2017), SingleVille (2018) and Beast of the Water (2017).



Josh Croft - "Jeff Granger"

Josh Croft is an actor and producer, known for Generation Mixtape, Chest (2022) and Closer to God (2014).





Frequently Asked Questions

1. What “actual events” is this film based on?

In the theme of found footage, we present the film as if it is “real” even though it is clearly fictional. However, the actual story of the chest in the film is a true story. It was discovered in a cave behind a waterfall back in the late 70s/early 80s but was never opened and could never be found again. There are also mentions of the stories of Jefferey’s Hell which is also a true story from the area.

2. Where was the film shot?

Interior scenes like bars and houses were primarily filmed around Nashville, TN, but the bulk of the production took place during a week in April 2019 where the cast and crew lived in a cabin and shot the film in surrounding locations in Tellico Plains and Vonore, TN.

3. How was the project funded?

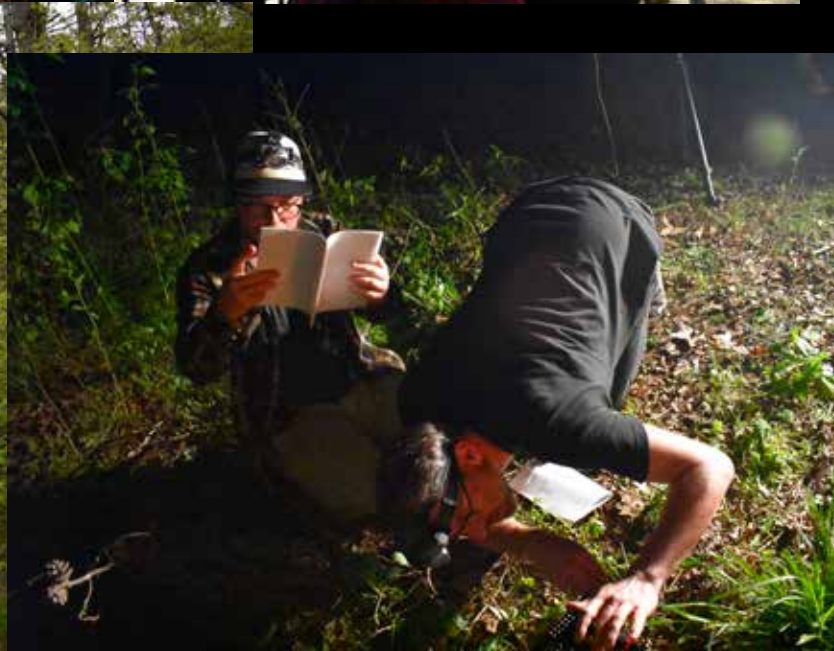
Funding for the project was done entirely by the director Aaron Irons and executive producer Josh Croft through personal loans and savings. We are 100% paid for and don’t owe anyone anything--which was the goal from the start.

4. How did the pandemic effect your production?

While we were on hold for nearly a year and half due to the pandemic, the majority of the film was shot before it occurred and the only remaining scenes were the sections of the film that take place 3 years after the main timeline--so continuity was on our side and we did not have to worry about how the actors looked in those scenes. We were very cautious during the height of the pandemic and we made a lot of tough decisions to put our cast and crew first over finishing the film.

5. Why the found footage format?

Aaron: I am a new filmmaker, and I have always enjoyed the realism of the found footage format and I love how it is unpolished, dirty, and extremely unfriendly in relation to a traditional film. I don’t think films need to look perfect or polished--i think it needs grain and distortion and at the same time the format presents the challenge of also creating a film that can captivate the audience without obvious technical flaws. During the process of making this film I realized that a lot of the liberties you get with the found footage format come with an entirely different set of problems and issues you have to deal with. Despite the challenges I do not see myself doing anything “traditional” in the future--I would shoot entirely on VHS if I could.



Technical Info

Shooting format: digital

Aspect ratio: 16x9

Audio format: stereo

Runtime: 95 min

Rating: 18+ (language, violence)

Language: English