

A FILM BY
CONOR FORREST

BURDENED

L50 AND LITTLE CAT PICTURES PRESENTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL "BURDENED" LAURA AFFLSKIE JACK GREGG ELLIE O'BRIEN LOGAN-MICHAEL SON KELLY FARSON COSTUME DESIGNER SYDNEY ALEXA BANTON PRODUCTION DESIGNER ANDREW BALINT
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY JASON D'SOUZA ORIGINAL SCORE ERICA PROCHNOWER EDITOR CONOR FORREST EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS ALEX MELICHAM RYAN BANNON SANDRA LANDOLT CHRISTOPHER FORREST CONOR FORREST
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS CONOR FORREST DARCY SMITH PRODUCED BY DEVON C. CHORINGTON PAUL PERCIE KAROLI GRENMAN DIRECTED BY CONOR FORREST

L50

8A

ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

OYA
CAREER
LEAP

ACTRA
TORONTO

IMMERSION
ROOM

SAFE
SOUND

ONE
8MM

ONE
8MM



DIRECTOR

Conor Forrest



WRITER

Conor Forrest & Darcy Smith



GENRE

Coming of Age/Drama



RUNTIME

14 min



PRODUCERS

Devon C. Codrington & Karoli
Grenman & Paul Persic

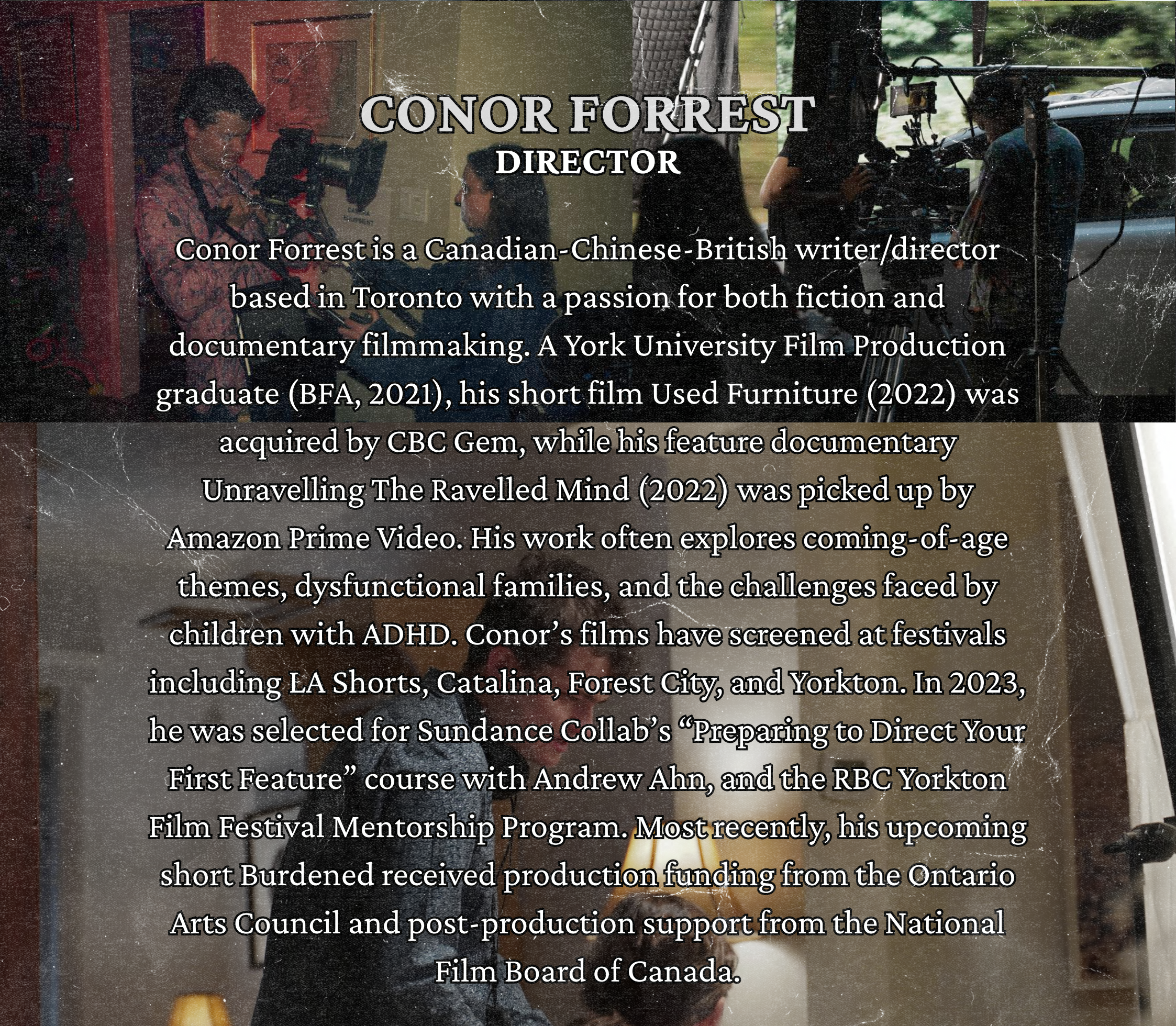
19-year-old Dakota struggles to care for her ADHD-afflicted brother. Overwhelmed by guilt, she seeks to reclaim her future and find balance between duty and self-discovery.

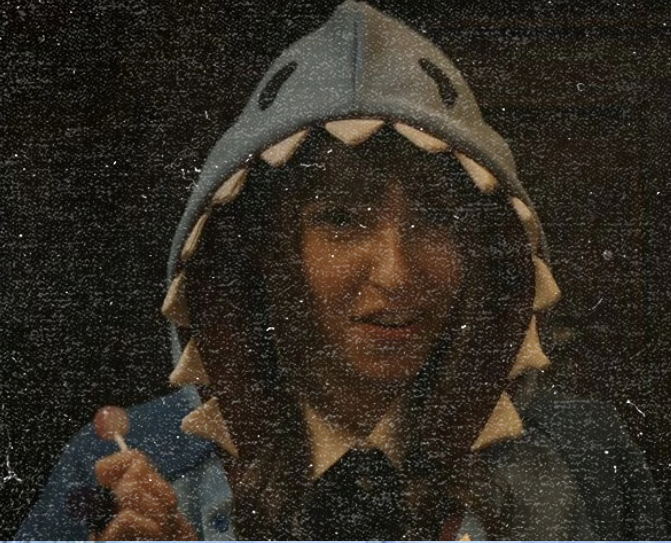
After a tragic car crash leaves their mom in a coma, 19-year-old Dakota finds herself burdened with the care of her younger brother, Zach. Struggling with severe ADHD and enduring the torment of bullies at school, Zach relies on Dakota for support. Amidst feelings of heartbreak and guilt, Dakota grapples with the overwhelming responsibility of not only being Zach's older sister but also filling the role of a parent. When Dakota reconnects with her university friend Jessica, she is hit with the stark realisation of how much her own life seems to lag behind. Determined to rewrite their story, Dakota embarks on a journey of self-discovery, in order to find her own path and break free from the confines of her responsibilities.



CONOR FORREST DIRECTOR

Conor Forrest is a Canadian-Chinese-British writer/director based in Toronto with a passion for both fiction and documentary filmmaking. A York University Film Production graduate (BFA, 2021), his short film *Used Furniture* (2022) was acquired by CBC Gem, while his feature documentary *Unravelling The Ravelled Mind* (2022) was picked up by Amazon Prime Video. His work often explores coming-of-age themes, dysfunctional families, and the challenges faced by children with ADHD. Conor's films have screened at festivals including LA Shorts, Catalina, Forest City, and Yorkton. In 2023, he was selected for Sundance Collab's "Preparing to Direct Your First Feature" course with Andrew Ahn, and the RBC Yorkton Film Festival Mentorship Program. Most recently, his upcoming short *Burdened* received production funding from the Ontario Arts Council and post-production support from the National Film Board of Canada.

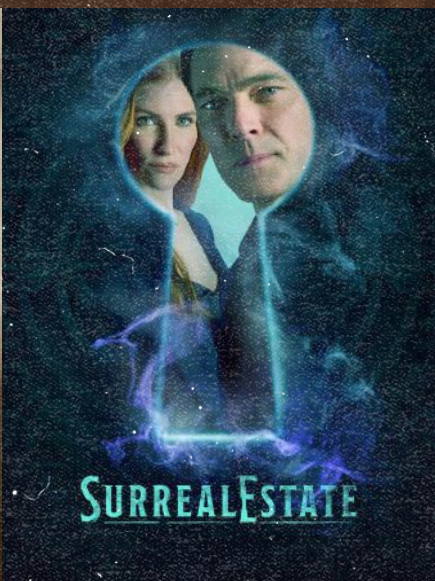




Laura Afelskie is a Canadian actor with credits in Secret Santa, Netflix's Painkiller, CW's In the Dark, and Lifetime's Our Mother's Secret Affair. Most recently, she stars as Runa in Netflix's BET (2025), which has been renewed for a second season.

LAURA AFELSKIE
DAKOTA

JACK GREIG
ZACH



Jack Greig is a Canadian actor with credits including SurrealEstate, Dark Side of the Ring, and the award-winning short film Dirty Bad Wrong, which premiered at Fantasia in 2024. He will next appear in the upcoming reboot of the hit series Malcolm in the Middle.



Ellie O'Brien is best known for her role as Grace in Netflix's My Life with the Walter Boys. Her other screen credits include Designated Survivor, Grand Army, and Workin' Moms. She also stars in Black Fawn Films' feature It Feeds (2024), alongside Ashley Greene.

ELLIE O'BRIEN

JESSICA

LOGAN NICHOLSON

CALEB



Logan Nicholson is a Canadian actor and voice artist known for playing Felix in CTV/Bell's Children Ruin Everything, which won the 2025 Canadian Screen Award for Best Ensemble. Logan is also the voice of Peter in the animated series Pinkalicious & Peterrific, Kevin in PJ Masks (Season 6), and Caillou in the reboot of the beloved children's series.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Burdened is a deeply personal short film for me—and I dare say it's my best work to date. It tells the story of Dakota, a teenager on the verge of adulthood who is forced to grieve while caring not only for herself but also for her younger brother. I believe there is a serious lack of stories about the struggles young people face, particularly the challenge of learning how to look after yourself. In Burdened, that challenge is doubled—Dakota must also care for her brother, who struggles to fit in at school as a child living with ADHD, both socially and academically.

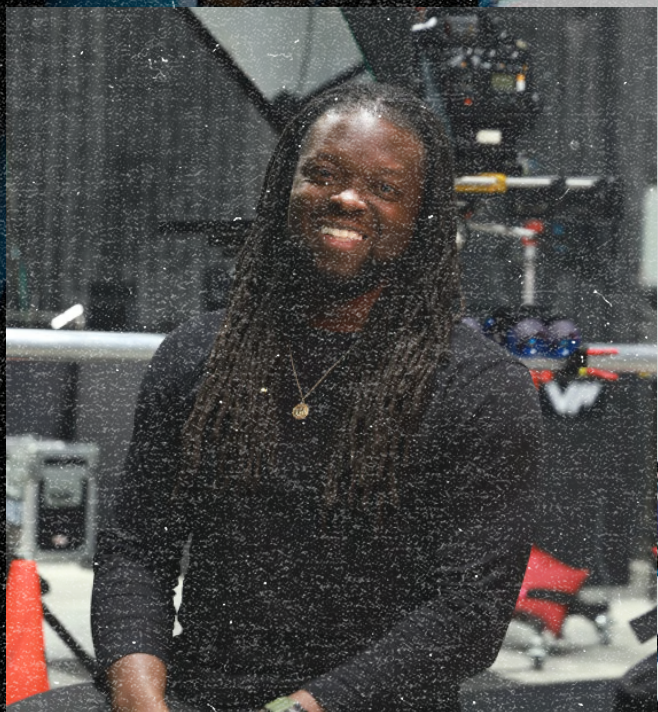
Zach is a character I deeply resonate with, as I too have ADHD and struggled in school in many of the same ways. As a neurodivergent filmmaker, this project reflects my mission to bring rarely-seen perspectives to the screen. Too often, the challenges young people face as they transition into adulthood are overlooked. With Burdened, I want to portray those struggles with honesty and heart—creating space for empathy and awareness.

I was heavily inspired by films such as The Father (2020), Andrea Arnold's Wasp (2003), Fish Tank (2010), and American Honey (2016).

I truly hope this story resonates with audiences, no matter their background, and sparks conversations about resilience, responsibility, and what it means to grow up too soon.

-Conor Forrest (Writer/Director)





DEVON C. CODRINGTON
PRODUCER

Devon C. Codrington is the Founder & Head Producer of LetterFIFTY Productions, a Toronto-based company working across film, podcasting, and photography. As a dynamic producer, he has overseen projects ranging from shorts and commercials to features, with credits including the award-winning *Dear Friend* (2024), the CSA-nominated web series *These Triggas* (2024), *The Unbelievable* with Dan Aykroyd, and *Dimes*. He is currently in post-production on the feature *Trapped*. Beyond producing, Devon is a strong advocate for digital accessibility and an avid motorcyclist, continually pushing creative boundaries through LetterFIFTY.



KAROLI GRENMAN
PRODUCER

Károli Grenman is an Estonian-Canadian producer and production professional based in Toronto. A certified Executive Producer (McGill) with a BA in Film from the University of Kent, her career spans international markets across Europe, North America, and the MENA region. She has delivered projects in film, television, and advertising—ranging from LED virtual production for *Anna's Hands*, *The Ugly Chickens*, and *Modern Whore*, to campaigns for Bell Canada, Audi, and SickKids. Passionate about supporting emerging talent and underrepresented voices, Károli also advocates for sustainable, innovative production practices that promote efficiency and environmental responsibility.



PAUL PERSIC
PRODUCER

Paul Persic is a Chinese-Canadian filmmaker with over eight years of experience as a producer, director, cinematographer, writer, and editor. He has shot more than 25 short films and two features, while directing over a dozen shorts of his own. His work, marked by emotional resonance and striking visuals, has earned recognition at the Independent Shorts Awards, winning Best Director (Silver) for *The Joytale* and Best Student Director (Platinum) for *Red Candle*. A graduate of Toronto Metropolitan University's Film Studies program, Paul continues to create projects that explore complex issues through a personal and authentic lens.



Jason is a talented cinematographer member of the Canadian Society of Cinematographers with over nine years of experience working on feature films, commercials, and music videos. Having developed their craft in creative hubs like Toronto, New York, and Los Angeles, Jason brings a strong visual sensibility and a distinctive artistic approach to each project. Known for their sharp eye for composition and lighting, they excel at using visuals to enhance storytelling across genres. With a passion for collaboration and innovation, Jason continues to push the boundaries of cinematography, delivering striking, emotionally resonant imagery that connects with audiences.

JASON D'SOUZA
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY



Erica Procunier is an Emmy-nominated, Canadian Screen Award-winning composer whose work spans film, television, theatre, and interactive media. She has scored Apple TV+'s Ghostwriter, Thomas & Friends: All Engines Go, TIFF selections Don't Talk to Irene and Mariner, and CBC series including Little Dog and Detention Adventure. Her concert work includes DAM! The Story of Kit the Beaver, commissioned by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and TIFF. A Berlinale Talents alum and graduate of the CFC's Slight Music Lab, Erica teaches film scoring at Humber College and serves on the board of the Screen Composers Guild of Canada.

ERICA PROCUNIER
COMPOSER



ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
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an Ontario government agency
un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

Burdened first received production funding from the Ontario Arts Council. Their support allowed the project to move from development into production and laid the foundation for bringing this personal story to life on set.



Following production, the film was awarded post-production support through the National Film Board of Canada's Filmmaker Assistance Program. This enabled the team to refine the film through editing, sound, and finishing, ensuring it was completed to a professional standard and ready for festivals.



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