

A close-up, profile shot of a Black man with a beard and mustache, wearing a plaid shirt. He is looking towards the right side of the frame. In the background, a woman is standing in a dark room, holding two small cups or glasses. The scene is dimly lit, with a warm glow from a window on the right.

IT'S TIME

a film by Wyonna Rutledge

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About the Film

Logline

A single father struggles to make life changing decisions for his bedridden brother.

Synopsis

Cedrick Smythe is a single father who struggles to come to terms with his brother's illness and the life changing decision he must make for his brother's future. With no help from his sister to sign life care directives, he ignores a series of phone calls from the Tilden Nursing home where his brother resides. Cedrick's daughter, Nicole, sees him ignore the calls and out of curiosity decides to answer his phone without permission. Cedrick becomes upset which leads Nicole to confront him about what's really go on. Cedrick confesses his dilemma to Nicole, blaming his sister for his inaction. Nicole sees through this and asks if she may ultimately become the person making the decisions. This makes Cedrick realize he can't continue to avoid the situation.

Filmmaker's Statement

It's Time is a film about the challenges of making life care decisions for someone, and the family conflicts that arise when there's been no discussion, will, or guidance given to family members. The story is based on true events within my extended family after a stroke left my uncle bedridden and in a nursing home for over a decade. When my aunt moved out of state, my father became his younger brother's sole healthcare advocate. It's a story about facing our own mortality through having to make decisions for someone who's fallen ill and the fear which can inhibit our ability to make common sense decisions.

As a mother of two approaching middle age I've always made healthcare decisions for myself and my family. I've wanted to tell my father's story for years now. It was hard to see him struggle making decisions while my uncle's quality of life declined. In telling this story my hope is to spark conversations about the importance of making our last wishes clear.



Making the Film

As a first time filmmaker, pulling together all the details to create a film were daunting, and to do so during Covid seemed impossible. However, because I read and research screenwriting and filmmaking extensively, I knew productions were back shooting in the fall of 2020 based on SAG pandemic guidelines. I realized my story might be doable as a short. With collective encouragement from my nephew, film editor and director *Tim Rush*, my college mentor, documentarian *Kelly Anderson*, and support from my family, I set out to tell this story.

To create a safe work environment, the original script was adapted to be shot in one day with minimal cast and crew. The family home was our set and we made each room look like a different location. We hired a Covid compliance officer to implement all SAG pandemic protocols on set and held our breath as PCR tests rolled in for each cast and crew member in the days prior to principal photography.

Under these constraints, I worked with our director Amanda Hanna-McLeer on casting and to consolidate the script in a way that didn't rush the pace of the scenes. We were incredibly lucky to get cinematographer and lighting magician Brandon Lee who worked quickly against the challenges of the short February daylight to maximize the natural lighting available. In the end, it was Amanda and Brandon's collaboration on the pre-production shot list that proved invaluable in wrapping within a day.

I'm proud to have assembled a talented New York area cast and crew, diverse in gender and ethnicity, representing Latinx, Asian, African-American, and Caucasian backgrounds. I also cannot thank my nephew and editor Tim Rush enough for his help on this film from concept to post production, and for his tireless work with Amanda and me to push the story forward in post to make it a compelling piece.

Main Crew



Wyonna Rutledge is a producer and writer based in New York. Graduate of CUNY Hunter College's Media/Film program she has credits on award winning short film *Tolerance*, Dir. Marc I. Daniels and documentaries *My Brooklyn* and *Never Enough*, Dir. Kelly Anderson. She's currently co-producing a narrative short on cerebral palsy *I Want To Hear My Voice* (*New York Women In Film & Television script finalist*), Dir. Julia Aldana.



Amanda Hanna-McLeer is a writer, director and post producer from Brooklyn, New York. Her post credits include *High Maintenance* (HBO), *Broad City* (Comedy Central), and *The Americans* (FX). She is currently pitching a half-hour dramatic series, *Lucy(fer)* which was accepted to the 2019 IFP Project Forum.



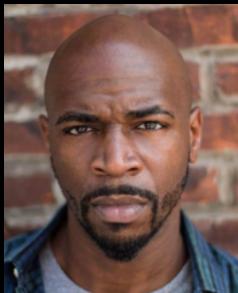
Tim Rush is a Los Angeles-based editor who has been working in documentary and unscripted TV since 2003 with the Sundance winning *DIG!* Dir. Ondi Timoner. His first narrative feature, *Collection*, Dir. Marianna Palka, will be released summer '21 by Vertical Entertainment. Not only is he proud to be a part of the *It's Time* team, he is also proud to call several of them family.



Brandon Lee is a cinematographer based in New York. Dedicating his life to images, he has shot numerous short films, many of which are currently making rounds through various film festivals. In his off time, he enjoys taking photo walks and capturing street photography. He is currently shooting a feature length documentary titled *The Walk On*.



Principal Cast



LaRese King is a New York based actor, producer, director & photographer. Originally, from South Jersey, making various appearances on *Discovery ID* and *BET television shows* along with lead roles in short and feature films. He's worked alongside *Joyner Lucas*, *J.Cole*, *Godfrey*, *Action Bronson*, *Dylan Walsh*, and more. LaRese is active in the YouTube community with a growing fan base of 50k subscribers under the name *PUBLICDWEEB*.



Akira Golz is a New York based commercial, voiceover, and Broadway actress. She's been acting since age 7 in lead and supporting roles in various film, television, and theater projects. Some credits include, *Nella The Princess Knight*, *Saturday Night Live*, *Matilda The Musical on Broadway*, and an upcoming role on Season 2 of *Amazon's Modern Love* based on the New York Times' column of the same name.

Full Credits

Directed by: Amanda Hanna-McLeer
Produced & Written by: Wyonna Rutledge
Editor: Tim Rush

Cast
LaRese King, Akira Golz, Mishaku Jones, Wyonna Rutledge

Director of Photography: Brandon Lee

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| Gaffer: Dylan Louie | Sound Recordist: Walter Jackson |
| Sound Editor: Tim Rush | Props: Peggy Kurz |
| Set PA: Israel Golz | COVID Compliance Officer: David Lester |

Casting Support Services - Breakdown Services
Production Company: IZAKproductions

Genre: narrative dramatic short film

Format: 4k

TRT: 7:18min | color | digital | 1.90:1 | stereo | 23.97fps | English

