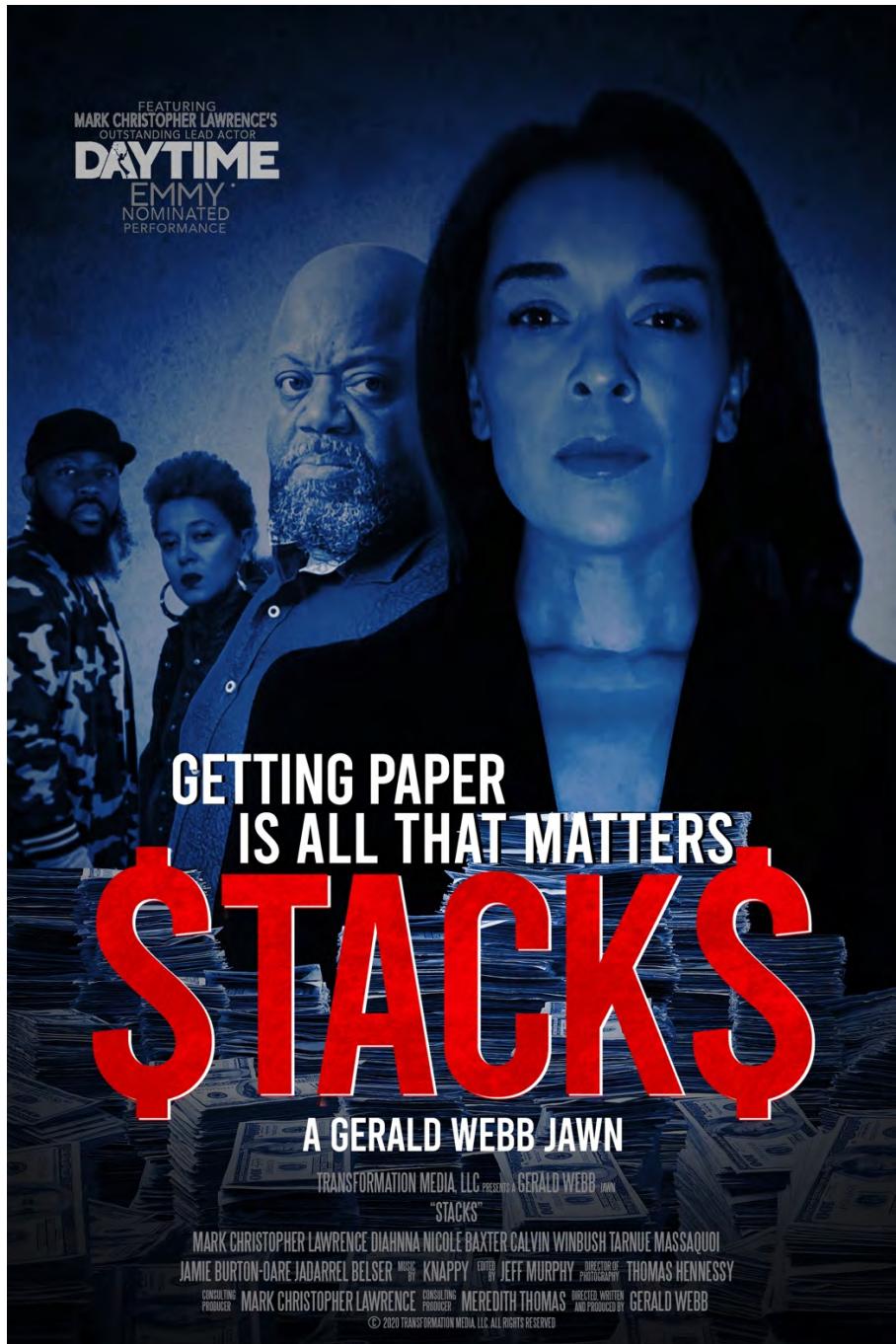


Transformation Media, LLC presents

The Directorial Debut of Emmy® Award Nominee Gerald Webb



## Starring

2x Emmy® Award Nominee  
**Mark Christopher Lawrence**

Emmy® Award Winner  
**Diahnna Nicole Baxter**

# **\$TACK\$**

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# \$TACK\$

**Synopsis:** An unprecedented pandemic forces two fierce rivals to come face to face for the first time in over a decade, to close a deal for the most valuable substance on earth.

**Director's statement:** \$TACK\$, is my sarcastic plea for every viewer to be responsible for the attitudes, assumptions and judgments buried deep inside themselves. It's timely message taunts, teases and dares the audience to discover the film's hidden twists and clues before their own biases and assumptions lead them down the wrong path.

## DIRECTOR/ WRITER / PRODUCER GERALD WEBB:



[Gerald Webb](#) directed, wrote and produced \$TACK\$. While the film marks Webb's directorial debut, the Daytime Emmy® Award nominated producer, actor and former casting executive is no stranger to filmmaking. He has produced 30+ films, cast 100+ films and has portrayed roles in over 150 films and television shows including: BARRY, LA'S FINEST, BULL, CRIMINAL MINDS: BEYOND BORDERS, IT'S ALWAYS SUNNY IN PHILADELPHIA, AGENT CARTER, 9-1-1 and many more.

In 2012, Gerald co-founded production company, DeInstitutionalized, LLC, with Christopher Ray. The company has produced and delivered films to partners including Netflix, Paramount, Syfy Network, Lifetime Network, ION Television, Saban, and Cinedigm. Gerald is also executive producing DeInstitutionalized's new scripted digital series, FraXtur. Prior to co-founding Deinstitutionalized, Gerald through his other company, Transformation Films, cast 100+ feature films

including Syfy network's mega-hits SHARKNADO 1-3 and the first season of Syfy's series Z-NATION. Gerald worked his way up to the executive position of Director of Talent for The Asylum studios, producers of Sharknado and Z-NATION. He immediately went to work to transform the diversity of the studios' films. Under Gerald's stewardship, star name casting for The Asylum's films grew by 380% and diversity in casting across all categories more than doubled all in less than 5 years.

In 2019, Gerald was nominated for a Daytime Emmy® Award as a producer. In 2021 he was nominated for outstanding comedic writing and outstanding comedic direction for \$TACK\$ at the Micheaux Film Festival with \$TACK\$ winning outstanding comedic short at the festival. He's also garnered 7 Telly Awards in 2018 for Circus Kane, two in 2019 for 2nd Chance For Christmas and one for Assault On VA-33. Gerald is a member of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, The Screen Actors Guild (SAG/AFTRA) and the National Association of Television Program Executives (NATPE).

Currently Gerald can be seen on Fox's L.A.'s Finest and 9-1-1, as well as in Deinstitutionalized's upcoming action film ASSAULT ON VA-33, as Virgil on Studio71's The Shadow Diaries scripted podcast and in the hilarious music video for DROPPING DEUCES from the \$TACK\$ soundtrack.

# \$STACK\$

## STACK\$ CAST

### Mark Christopher Lawrence as HECTOR

You may recognize [Mark Christopher Lawrence](#) from his series regular role as Big Mike on NBC's CHUCK or from studio films like Pursuit of Happyness, Terminator II and Fear of a Black Hat or possibly from his Drybar standup comedy clips that have amassed over 18 million views.

His 35+ year career hit a high note in 2021 with a Daytime Emmy® nomination for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Daytime Fiction Program for his gritty portrayal of Hector in [\\$STACK\\$](#) and a Southwest regional Emmy for narration! He was also nominated for Outstanding Comedic Actor at the Micheaux Film Festival where [\\$STACK\\$](#) was nominated for outstanding directing, writing and took home the festival's prize for Outstanding Comedic Short. The veteran actor was the 2012 recipient of the San Diego Critics Circle's Craig Noel Award for Outstanding Actor of the Year and is a 2021 Pacific Southwest Regional Emmy® Award nominee for his narration of THE FLOURISH. Mark is an international headlining comedian that has worked with the likes of Sinbad, Jerry Seinfeld, Rodney Dangerfield, and Jeff Foxworthy.



This past holiday season Mark was an ensemble lead in the OWN network's "ONE FINE CHRISTMAS" and Deinstitutionalized Films' "2<sup>ND</sup> CHANCE FOR CHRISTMAS." Mark's television appearances include Black Jesus, recurring on PureFlix' Malibu Dan The Family Man, Disney Channel original movie LIFE IS RUFF, Lab Rats, Good Luck Charlie, Heroes, Weeds, My Name Is Earl, and Grounded for Life. He just released his hilarious talk show Pure Comedy on Pureflix.com. In addition to his leading man status, Mark also served as a consulting producer on [\\$STACK\\$](#).

### Diahnna Nicole Baxter as MAGDALENA

[Diahnna Nicole Baxter](#) is a ruthless storyteller who addresses trauma as an opportunity for transformation through storytelling. She embodies this in her portrayal of Magdalena in [\\$STACK\\$](#). The Duke University graduate is a pioneer of the web. She co-created, co-wrote and starred in SATACRACY 88, the first web series to win an Emmy® Award. She also took home the People's Voice Webby Award for the series.



Diahnna has been on a multitude of television shows: Scandal, The Terminalist, The Connors, Jane the Virgin, The Fosters, Tell Me Your Secrets and American Crime Story: The Impeachment. She wrote, produced, and starred in her first short film, Cowboy's Girl and her solo directorial debut, Epigenetics, is hitting the festival circuit. Beyond creating stories, Diahnna embodies the transformation of body, mind, and spirit as a certified Kundalini Yoga Teacher and transformational coach.

**\$STACK\$**

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# \$TACK\$

## Calvin Winbush as TY

[Calvin C. Winbush](#), a native of Detroit, Michigan and graduate of Michigan State University started acting while living in New York City to pursue music production and songwriting.

While working on the set of Lipstick Jungle (2008) for a day job, he received advice and encouragement from Timothy Busfield and Brooke Shields to pursue acting. After enrolling in acting classes at the Sledge Project Studios as well as studying under the instruction of Wynn Handman, Calvin began booking work on range of projects in New York City. Now relocated to Los Angeles, Calvin continues to chart a steady course in the industry as a dynamic, talented and professional working actor appearing in Whiplash, New Girl, Nashville, Straight Outta Compton and This is America.



## Jamie Burton-Oare as JORDAN

[Jamie Burton-Oare](#) graduated from Howard University and immediately moved to New York City to pursue her acting career. Her hard work paid off commencing with her being accepted into the prestigious Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts (RADA) in London for their Shakespeare Acting course. Jamie landed her first starring role in the multiple award-winning feature film, Amour Infinity. She followed that up with a starring role in an American Film Institute thesis film titled, Shooter. Shooter was accepted into the newly developed Short Film Buyer's Corner at the world-renowned Cannes International Film Festival. Shooter won first place at the Hatch Film Festival and was a finalist at the American Black Film Festival and HBO Short Film Competition in 2004. Jamie can also be seen in episodes of CSI:NY and Eleventh Hour.



## Tarnue Massaquoi as REUB

[Tarnue Massaquoi](#), was born in Brooklyn, NY but at the age of four relocated to Liberia, West Africa. He lived there for 12 years including during a civil war until migrating back to New York at the age of 16. Tarnue exudes this rich background in every moment he's on screen as Reub in \$TACK\$.

After graduating from Michigan State Tarnue focused on his career in film and television. His hard work has paid off with appearances in: Terminator Dark Fate, Seal Team, The Rookie, Boomerang, NCIS: Los Angeles, Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders and Days of Our Lives. Off screen, Tarnue enjoys being part of FLIP, Father's Lifetime Involvement Program, that helps unite, encourage and assist fathers strengthen their relationships with their children.



## JaDarrel Belser as Momo

[JaDarrel Belser](#), JD to his friends, brings a quiet and deep intensity to the role of Momo in \$TACK\$. JD admirably served his country for five years as a Hospital Corpsman in the US Navy. His TV credits include: Syfy's "MegaShark Vs Crocosaurus" and "Geeks Who Drink", Vin Diesel's "The Ropes", HBO's 'Insecure' and Kendrick Lamar's 'Humble' music video. His commercial bookings include: Geico, Tekkan, and Kelley's Blue Book. JaDarrel is a writer and host for the pop culture site 'God Hates Geeks'. JaDarrel is also currently a member of the sketch show ' TMI Hollywood' and co-host of the pop culture podcast 'Droppin That Culture with JD and AJ'.



# \$STACK\$

## STACK\$ CREATIVES

**Director of Photography Thomas Hennessy:** The Chicago native spent 11 years in the US Navy and served in Iraq in 2005. Upon moving to Los Angeles, Thomas attended Columbia College Hollywood, graduating Magna Cum Laude with a BFA in Cinema Arts. He wrote and directed the feature film ANOTHER TIME, starring Justin Hartley and Arielle Kebbel. Thomas has served as a cinematographer and in the camera department for over 50 films and TV shows. He is the Cinematographer for the documentary BROTHERS AT WAR II, directed by Jake Rademacher and Executive Produced by Gary Sinise, and the feature film 20 MINUTES.

**Editor Jeff Murphy:** Daytime Emmy® winning producer, Jeff Murphy, is a member of the Motion Picture Editors Guild and Television Academy. He's worked on over 120 feature films and is the editor on the "#1 Preschool kids show in the country", RYAN" MYSTERY PLAYDATE. He was also the lead editor for 76 episodes of Nickelodeon's Emmy® Nominated hit series MUTT & STUFF and 7 episodes of Amazon Studios' SIGMUND AND THE SEA MONSTERS, produced by the legendary filmmakers Sid and Marty Krofft. He is also the Visual Effects Supervisor for NBC's PUNKY BREWSTER, Disney's COOP AND CAMI ASK THE WORLD, and Disney's EARTH TO NED. Jeff also recently edited and post supervised Universal Studios' feature Justice. Jeff graduated Magna Cum Laude from Columbia film school and now teaches Motion Picture Editing and Visual Effects at Los Angeles Valley College. He is also the founder and co-owner of the award-winning post-production studio, Quest Pacifica LLC.

**Composer Knappy:** Delaware based musician, DJ and remixer, Knappy, scored \$STACK\$. Knappy is a Billboard reporting DJ whose remixes have topped the Billboard Dance charts. He's also a founding member of the band Engine No.9. In the 1990s Knappy and director Gerald Webb were in a hip-hop group together named ONE a.d.

**Music Video Editor Ken Prieto:** Ken Prieto is a graduate of California Pacific School of the Arts and the Los Angeles Film Academy. He works consistently on independent feature films and commercials as a DP and editor.

## STACK\$ SOUNDTRACK- DROPPING DEUCES

While director, Gerald Webb, was on quarantine awaiting the second edit of the film he came up with the idea of returning to his former national award winning DJ and rap backgrounds by writing a parody song about the toilet paper hoarding that plagued our country in the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic. The result was the hilarious [DROPPING DEUCES](#).



When Webb and the song's producer, billboard dance chart topping remixer, Knappy, couldn't get through the song without stopping to laugh, Webb decided he had to shoot a video



for the song and have it play during the end credit sequence of \$STACK\$. The music video for Dropping Deuces is purposely silly and downright slapstick funny. Webb hopes this will disarm the audience enough for them to really look in the mirror at where they may be responsible for hoarding toilet paper too!

*"When I felt utterly ridiculous on camera while filming the DROPPING DEUCES music video, I knew it was hitting the exact prescription of laughter so many of us need during this terrible pandemic"* – Webb said.

# \$TACK\$

## Festival Awards and Nominations



**2021 Daytime Emmy® Award Nomination-**  
Outstanding Lead Actor in a Daytime Program—  
Mark Christopher Lawrence for his portrayal of Hector in  
**\$TACK\$.**



**\$TACK\$' Dropping Deuces Music Video has been an official selection of:**



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# \$STACK\$

## PRODUCTION NOTES

1. Late on a Saturday night, Gerald Webb had an idea for a short film inspired by what he was seeing happen in the early stages of the covid-19 pandemic. Knowing a quarantine was imminently coming, he decided to write and shoot \$STACK\$ as quickly as possible. Amazingly, **68 hours** later and just 46 hours prior to Los Angeles' Safer at Home Covid-19 quarantine order going into effect, principal photography on \$STACK\$ was wrapped.
2. Director Gerald Webb wrote and performed the song [DROPPING DEUCES](#) form \$STACK\$' credit sequence. The idea for the song came to Gerald why he was waiting for the second cut of \$STACK\$ to come from the editor. Gerald and the film's composer, Delaware based remixer, Knappy, who produced the song, were in a rap group together in the late 1990s called One a.d. They remotely recorded vocals for DROPPING DEUCES with Gerald in Los Angeles and Knappy in Delaware.
3. Diahnna Nicole Baxter previously played Director Gerald Webb's wife in the film A HOUSE IS NOT A HOME. They were both nominated for best actor and actress respectively by the Burbank International Film Festival for their performances in the film.
4. In 2006 at the request of a friend, \$STACK\$ star, Mark Christopher Lawrence took a 5-minute phone call from a stranger seeking advice on starting a career in Hollywood. That stranger was Gerald Webb. The two have since formed a close friendship and Gerald has been able to pay Mark's kindness back by bringing him onto numerous projects.
5. Diahnna Nicole Baxter won the first Emmy® Award given out for broadband content as a producer on the digital series SATACRACY-88.
6. As a precaution due to the threat of the Covid-19 pandemic, \$STACK\$ was shot without the following crew members: 1<sup>st</sup> AD, 2<sup>nd</sup> AD, script supervisor, production designer, set dressers, hair or make-up artists. The G&E team was 1 person, camera team 2 people and total on set crew count was 7 people consisting of the director, DP, focus puller/1<sup>st</sup> AC, 1 G&E member, sound mixer, associate producer and 1 production assistant.
7. There are 9 “easter eggs” in \$STACK\$ foretelling what’s to come. Most people watch the film and don’t catch any of them! Gerald purposely placed them in the film daring the audience to figure out the twist in \$STACK\$. Did you see them? SPOILER ALERT!!!!
 

Visual:

  - a- The car license plates in \$STACK\$ are from Gerald’s state of birth Pennsylvania and each has secret message if you pay close attention. One says “P8PR2P” (Paper 2p) and the seconds says “T01L3T5” (toilets)!
  - b- The logo on the center of the front grill of the SUV in stacks says ‘DIVOC’ that’s COVID spelled backwards!
  - c- The aerial shot at 0:07 is actually played backwards. There is a car backing away from the intersection and a person crossing the street backwards. Gerald decided to use this shot as a metaphor for some of the “backwards” actions he’s seen from people during the Covid-19 pandemic.
  - d- Reub played by Tarnue Massaquoi is wearing a scarf/ face covering / MASK around his neck the entire film.

Audio- there are several lines in the film that reference what is to come and the Covid-19 pandemic:

- e- “Our whole territory goes down the TOILET” at 0:40.
  - f- “Let’s ROLL” at 01:10. (Toilet paper rolls)
  - g- “Keep your DISTANCE” at 02:25. (social distancing)
  - h- “DON’T TRY TO SQUEEZE ME Hector, first I see the product” at 02:41.
  - i- “Pure, CHINA (origin of Covid-19), WHITE” at 02:51. (China origin of Covid-19, white/pure toilet paper)
  - j- “This oughtta keep you FLUSH” at 03:10.
8. At the opening film, over the aerial shot of the nighttime Philadelphia skyline, there is a credit: “A Gerald Webb jawn”. The title pays homage to Gerald’s birth city of Philadelphia. Jawn is a decades old but highly popular slang term in Philly that can replace almost any noun and in this case it replaces “film”.

# \$TACK\$

## Production Stills



Pictured L-R: Jamie Burton-Oare, Mark Christopher Lawrence



Pictured: Jamie Burton-Oare



Pictured: Tarnue Massaquoi



Pictured: Diahnna Nicole Baxter



Pictured L-R: Jamie Burton-Oare, Mark Christopher Lawrence, Jadarrel Belser



Pictured L-R: Tarnue Massaquoi, Calvin Winbush III

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# \$TACK\$



Pictured L-R: Tarnue Massaquoi, Calvin Winbush, Diahnna Nicole Baxter



Pictured L-R: Mark Christopher Lawrence, Diahnna Nicole Baxter

## Behind The Scenes



Jamie Burton-Oare, Diahnna Nicole Baxter, Jadarrel Belser, Gerald Webb  
Mark Christopher Lawrence, Calvin Winbush III, Tarnue Massaquoi



Director Gerald Webb, Diahnna Nicole Baxter



Diahnna Nicole Baxter, DP Thomas Hennessy



DP Thomas Hennessy, Director Gerald Webb

*GETTING PAPER IS ALL THAT MATTERS*

**\$TACK\$**

# \$TACK\$

## Reviews

“Ominous, intense, full of passion—these things and more are what viewers get throughout the duration of Gerald Webb’s **\$TACK\$**. The intensity that exists throughout the film is mesmerizing; what Webb is able to accomplish in this regard is phenomenal, and he allows viewers to remain engaged from beginning to end as a result”. **Rated 8.5 Stars – Kyle Bain, Bain’s Movie Reviews**

“Webb makes us all feel the same tension, fear, anticipation, release, humour in the same places in the film. He played us. It takes a maestro to do that, someone who can instruct and arrange each element: actor, dialogue, location, scenery, music, pace, mood, lighting, audio, cameras, editing — to integrate each element like instruments in an orchestra.” – Cherryl Bird, **CoreMagazines.com**

“**\$TACK\$** feels like something that should be shown in cinemas before every feature film, just something that’s short enough to keep you engaged, and really sets the mood in one direction before slapping you in the face with another. It’s very clever, wonderfully executed and the payoff was certainly unexpected. A great twist and a great short film. Clocking in at 7 mins, **\$TACK\$** really is 7th heaven... Relevant, amusing and with an unforeseen twist, **\$TACK\$** will certainly wipe a smile on your face.” **Rated- 5 out of 5 Stars.” – BackToTheMovies.com**

“This is a very ingenious short which takes the tradition of a gang warfare narrative and subverts it to deliver a very honest and real message at the end, both in the short and the song DROPPING DEUCES.” – **FilmandTVNow.com**

“The high production values and quality of actor on-screen just add to the overall feeling. It is a clever and confident debut that pays off superbly due to the meticulous lead-in. The film, at only seven minutes in length, boasts an atmospheric soundtrack and as a nice surprise a theme song that fits nicely with the drama on screen.” – **MovieScramble.com**

“*The film is timely; I think entertaining and has an interesting twist in the end*” – Ukee Washington, **CBS News 3 Philadelphia**

“Mr. Webb delivers a clever tongue-in-cheek commentary on the current pandemic, and it’s one that proves quite relatable to most everyone. Written, filmed, and produced quickly prior to the mandated shutdown of Los Angeles, the film provides a nice 7-minute escape...” – **RedCarpetCrash.com**

“Be sure to track down **\$TACK\$**, it’ll make you laugh and that’s an important thing right now.” - **Unobtainium13.com**

“As a human race when things are difficult, we look to humor for comfort and hitting the comedic nail on the head is Gerald Webb’s short film **\$TACK\$**.... **\$TACK\$** is a must-see film that will leave you with a big smile.” – **Film-Business.com**

“As they say, the brilliance is in the simplicity. **\$TACK\$** is in the running for one of my favorite short films of this year.” – Nic Larue, **FilmSnobbery.com**



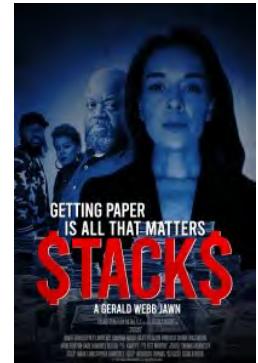
## \$TACK\$ review

Cinema-level production value and great casting make it easy to sit up and take notice of \$TACK\$, the latest film by director/writer Gerald Webb. The roughly four-minute runtime is just enough to realize you were holding your breath the whole time the tension-filled piece was on your screen. I can imagine some viewers would be lucky enough to catch this at a film festival on the big screen, as a laptop just doesn't do it justice.

The story is set up simply enough. One gang is looking to hold onto their territory so they're meeting with a rival gang to pay them off in exchange for a bag of drugs, except it isn't, and that's where the movie takes a fantastic turn. As they say, the brilliance is in the simplicity.

Mark Christopher Lawrence is intense, and Diahnna Nicole Baxter gives it right back to him in tight performances all around.

I'm not going to give away the trick to \$TACK\$, because I really do feel it needs to be seen fresh in order to absorb the full impact of it, but needless to say it will stick in your mind long after the credits roll.



### FILM INFO

- **Directed by:** Gerald Webb
- **Written by:** Gerald Webb
- **Produced by:** Gerald Webb, Mark Christopher Lawrence, Meredith Thomas
- **Starring:** Mark Christopher Lawrence, Diahnna Nicole Baxter, Calvin Wibush, Jamie Burton-Oare, Tarnue Massaquoi and Jadarell Belsar

Direction	★★★★★
Screenplay	★★★★★
Cinematography	★★★★★
Sound	★★★★★
Acting	★★★★★
Total Score	★★★★★

**\$TACK\$ is in the running for one of my favorite short films of this year.**

<https://www.filmsnobbery.com/stacks>

#\$TACK\$ #CINEMA #COMEDY #FILM #REVIEW #GERALD #WEBB  
#INDIEFILM #NICLARUE #SHORT FILM

## 2022 THE REVIEWSHUB 2022

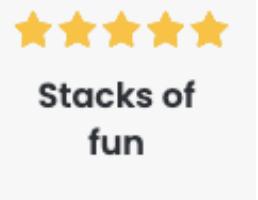
CHAMPIONS OF TRULY NATIONWIDE THEATRE COVERAGE

[Home](#) / [Review](#) / Short Film Review: \$tack\$   [The Reviews Hub - Film](#) 06/28/2022 1 minute read   Reviewer: Jane Darcy

## Short Film Review: \$tack\$

**Writer and Director: Gerald Webb**

\$tack\$ is a witty, stylish short that has already garnered much praise on the circuit. Writer, director and producer Gerald Webb sets up the scenario in a few deft moves. We look down on an urban landscape at night, hearing the sirens wail. Then we're in a dark underground carpark, the camera seeming to creep along the side of a car before revealing two figures waiting silently by a black car. Thomas Hennessy's cinematography is sure-footed and the slow steady pulse of music adds to the constant tension.



Stacks of fun

The men are waiting for a rendezvous. They're clearly anxious: "If they don't show up, the whole territory goes down the toilet," one says. There's the squeal of tires and a second car inches into view. One by one three figures emerge – a slight female driver, then a huge man, then an even huger man, Hector. The two sides square up to one another. Hector demands to see the Boss.

Then there's that classic introduction of a femme fatale – a black-stockinged leg in killer heels emerges seductively from a car door. The sexy woman, Magdalena, wears an enigmatic smile as she saunters in slo-mo towards Hector. A smile plays over his face too. We await the deal. And we're in for a surprise.

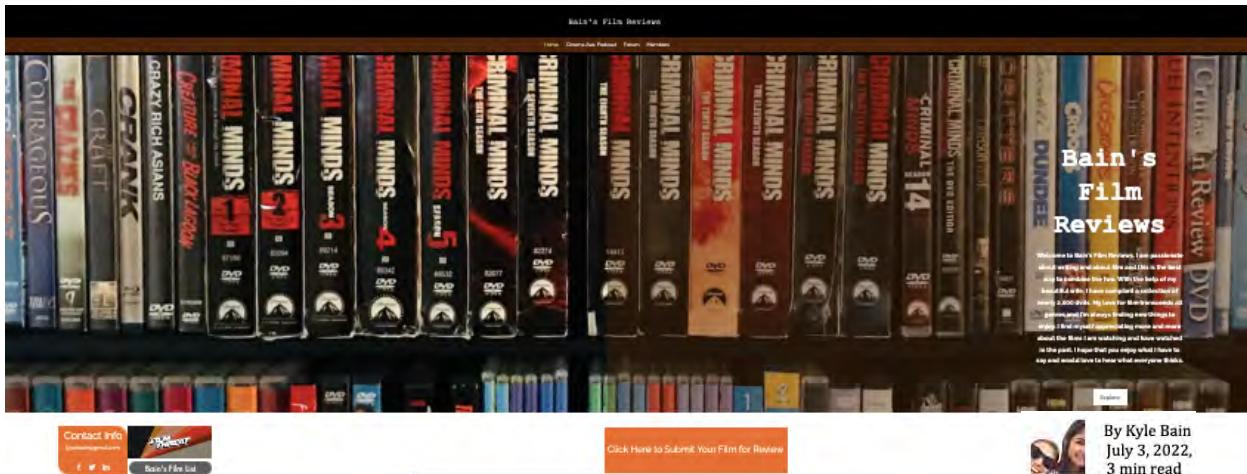
Diahnna Nicole Baxter and Mark Christopher Lawrence clearly relish playing Magdalena and Hector. The payoff is hilarious and only on a second viewing do you start to notice the clever little jokes hidden in the script. Look out for the car numberplates too. The track over the final credits is a fabulous rap number by Webb. Check your urban dictionary for the meaning of 'Dropping Deuces'. You might even begin to suspect that Webb's credited co-writer Knappy is not what he seems.

\$tack\$ is currently screening at international film festivals including the [Long Island International Film Expo](#) on 16 July.

**The Reviews Hub score:**



<https://www.thereviewshub.com/short-film-review-tack/>



## \$TACK\$ (2020)

Hector (**Mark Christopher Lawrence**) and Magdelena (**Diahnna Nicole Baxter**) are enemies, and they've avoided one another for years. Now, however, in unprecedented times, they will have to put their differences aside and do what they can for the greater good. **\$TACK\$** tells the story of these two individuals, two tough guys, coming face-to-face to make an exchange—and what's on the surface may not always be the whole story.

Ominous, intense, full of passion—these things and more are what viewers get throughout the duration of **Gerald Webb's \$TACK\$**. The intensity that exists throughout the film is mesmerizing; what Webb is able to accomplish in this regard is phenomenal, and he allows viewers to remain engaged from beginning to end as a result. From music to camera placement, Webb works the room with great aplomb, and he knows how to read both his own film and his potential viewers. With Webb's clear understanding of filmmaking, passion and emotion transcend **\$TACK\$** in its entirety, and it's able to wrap its powerful fingers around the throats of everyone watching. Webb doesn't aim to strangle his viewers, but rather to prove how powerful and in charge he is—and he accomplishes this feat with what appears to be ease. He's in charge from the start, and he asserts himself into each and every facet of his riveting short film.

Just as viewers begin to grasp all that **\$TACK\$** is, the narrative shifts in a compelling and completely unexpected fashion. What the world could have never expected comes to be in brilliant and hilarious fashion. Webb doesn't attack comedy head on, however, he allows it to slowly develop and reach viewers in a more subtle and effective way. Through the slow development of **\$TACK\$**, viewers become part of the journey, intertwined with each of the characters on screen, and the payoff is brilliantly successful as a result. Viewers are invested in what they believe to be happening, and when that unexpected twist comes at the film's conclusion, all can't help but to laugh at the perfectly developed narrative.



**\$TACK\$** comes down to what Webb is able to bring to the table, and while there are other factors that contribute to the film, Webb is ultimately the reason the film is as entertaining as it is. His brilliant storytelling, his ability to create a film full of finesse, and his unprecedented ability to develop subtle and effective comedy play major roles in how **\$TACK\$** is received. However, another aspect of Webb's prowess shines beautifully throughout the entirety of the film as well, and that's his understanding of cinematography (along, of course, with Director of Photography **Thomas Hennessy**). His ability to manipulate a camera to capture every intricate detail of his film, to develop intensity, and ultimately reveal his grand idea at the end of the film is truly beautiful. What he's capable of doing in regard to the cinematography in **\$TACK\$** is much like what the best in Hollywood has to offer, and to say the very least—I'm impressed.

**\$TACK\$** is a dramatic telling of the world in which we live, but it dabbles, perfectly, in comedy to offset the intensity present throughout. Webb is the piece of the puzzle that makes everything work. I believe that the actors and other members of the crew, as effective as they are throughout **\$TACK\$**, could have been replaced and Webb still would have found success. He's a cinematic genius, and even with all that he's already accomplished in his career, I believe he's just scratched the surface.

Written & Directed by **Gerald Webb**.

★★★★★½/10

Starring **Mark Christopher Lawrence, Diahnna Nicole Baxter, Calvin C. Winbush, Tarnue Massaquoi, Jamie Burton-Oare, & Jadarrel Belser**.

<https://baintrain08.wixsite.com/bainsfilmreviews/post/tack-2020>

## ENTERTAINMENT

## Mark Christopher Lawrence talks about his 2021 Daytime Emmy nomination for 'Lead Actor'

By [Markos Papadatos](#) Published June 30, 2021



Mark Christopher Lawrence. Photo Credit: Transformation Media

Veteran actor and comedian Mark Christopher Lawrence chatted with Digital Journal's Markos Papadatos about his 2021 Daytime Emmy nomination for "STACK\$."

Lawrence is one of five nominees that is vying for the 2021 Daytime Emmy Award for "Outstanding Daytime Fiction Program." He stars in the show as Hector. "Playing Hector was different for me," he said. "It was a really dark character for me, and I believe that I am a better dramatic actor than I am a comedic actor even though my career has mostly been in comedy."

On receiving an Emmy nod for this role, he said, "That felt pretty good. I earned a regional Emmy nod earlier in the month for another project, so to be up for a Daytime Emmy is really exciting."

He co-produced the show "STACK\$" with director, writer, and producer Gerald Webb, and Meredith Thomas served as a supervising producer. "Working with Gerald was fantastic. He knew what he wanted to see," he said. "The good thing is that he had trust in my abilities. He allowed me to ad-lib and a couple of good moments came out of that."

Lawrence praised Meredith Thomas as a "beautiful and sweet-spirited woman." "I hope to have a friendship with her for years to come. To be able to co-produce with Meredith and Gerald was a blessing," he said.

For young and aspiring actors, he encouraged them to "work hard on their craft." "When you get to a certain level everybody is good. At that point, it's about bringing something different to the table and being solid in your work ethic. Just be the best that you can be," he said.

On the title of the current chapter of his life, he said, "Survival to Rebound." "I am surviving the pandemic. I lost all of my work last year but now I am rebounding and getting back out there in a different way," he said.

Lawrence defined the word success as "being happy in his day-to-day life." "If I can be happy in my day-to-day, then I can be successful," he said.

For fans and viewers, he concluded about "STACK\$," "Don't take yourself too seriously. A lot of times, people form opinions about what they see and then it's hard to let go of the original thought so don't take yourself too seriously."

To learn more about "STACK\$," or to stream the show online, check out its [official website](#).

In this article: Actor, Comedian, mark christopher lawrence

News Review Preview Box Set Second Chance Cinema

## \$TACK\$ - Review

May 17, 2020 John McArthur 2020, Comedy, Crime, Drama, Review No comments



\$TACK\$ is a film that is very much of its time. With the world still dealing with the global pandemic, the short movie takes a look at a very particular problem associated with everything that is going on. The film is the directorial feature debut from Gerald Webb, who is best known as a producer and actor with over one hundred and fifty credits to his name. While watching the lead up to the Covid-19, Los Angeles Stay at Home mandatory quarantine, Webb quickly penned the screenplay, cast, crewed up and shot \$TACK\$ all in a 48-hour window just as Los Angeles and our world were all shutting down due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Set in a neon-lit car park, two local gang members are anxiously awaiting the arrival of their suppliers. Without the re-up they know their businesses in trouble. Tensions are high as they wait, hoping the lateness of the suppliers' arrival is not a bad sign. Just as it looks bleak, A car draws up, the rival Boss gets out the car and the deal is on.

The film uses assumptions and stereotypes to reinforce its message and subvert audience expectations. The conversations and the way the actors present themselves indicate a certain type of drama, especially involving black gang members. The language including certain trigger words leads you to believe that what you are seeing is a tried and tested formula for storytelling. The high production values and quality of actor on-screen just add to the overall feeling. It is a clever and confident debut that pays off superbly due to the meticulous lead-in. The film, at only seven minutes in length, boasts an atmospheric soundtrack and as a nice surprise a theme song that fits nicely with the drama on screen.

The film debuted on the 12th of May and you can watch it below. The theme song, Dropping Dueces is available on youtube and all music streaming sites.



About Latest Posts



John McArthur

Editor-in-Chief at Moviescramble. A Fan of all things cinematic with a love of Film Noir, Sci-Fi and Julia Roberts in Notting Hill. He hopes to grow up some day.

## \$TACK\$ made its' network streaming premiere on Fox Soul's Screening Room hosted by Vivica A. Fox

*"I love that film! I could not stop laughing. It was hilarious. It had all kinds of twists and turns, it was completely entertaining. You had an amazing cast that kept the tension going until the very end."*

-Vivica A. Fox



# FOX SOUL

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=quyom52xPKA>



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Sean Evans



June 5, 2022



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### \$TACK\$ Short Film Review: Amusing with an Unforeseen Twist

An amusing short as we bring you our thoughts on STACKS Short Film

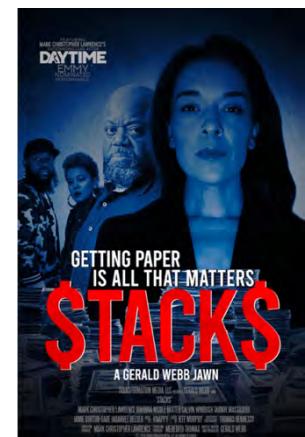
Synopsis: An unprecedented pandemic forces two fierce rivals to come face to face for the first time in over a decade, to close a deal for the most valuable substance on earth. Directed, written and produced by Gerald Webb, \$TACK\$ is a short and sweet little display of necessities with a criminal underworld twist.

The scene is set in an underground parking lot where a deal is about to go down, the mood is set, the filters on the camera are perfectly set and the whole short is shot like a top-end budget cop show. Diving in on gang warfare these two underworld titans meet up and with the state of affairs in the world only just starting to head on the road to recovery this film is still very relevant and hilarious.



The film boasts a diverse cast and the producing team consisted of 67% African Americans and 33% women. The supporting cast includes Mark Christopher Lawrence (NBC's Chuck), Diahnna Nicole Baxter (The Fosters), Calvin Winbush (Straight Outta Compton), Jamie Burton-Oare (Shooter), Tarnue Massaquoi (Terminator Dark Fate) and JaDarrel Belser (Geeks Who Drink).

Laughter is something many of us has needed for quite some time now. The world was such an uncertain and scary place for the last two years and short reliefs like this are certainly welcomed. A time when streaming services were our go-to methods of escapism when the outside world was no longer an option.



Concluding the short with a big smile on my face \$TACK\$ feels like something that should be shown in cinemas before every feature film, just something that's short enough to keep you engaged, and really sets the mood in one direction before slapping you in the face with another. It's very clever, wonderfully executed and the payoff was certainly unexpected. A great twist and a great short film. Clocking in at 7 mins, \$TACK\$ really is 7th heaven.

Rated- 5 out of 5 Stars.

<https://www.backtothemovies.com/stacks-short-film-review-amusing-with-an-unforeseen-twist/>

## Core Magazines

<https://www.coremagazines.com/culture/stacks-film-written-shot-in-two-days/>

CULTURE, MUSIC

# '\$TACK\$' FILM WAS WRITTEN AND SHOT IN TWO DAYS

JULY 30, 2021 CHERRYL BIRD



\$TACK\$ (*STACKS*), the directorial debut from Gerald Webb, is a nail-biting, dramatic short film dripping with social commentary on our post COVID-19 world. If you like heavy suspense-drama with a Pacino feel, you'll enjoy watching this short movie. And it's even better if you love comedy and a great soundtrack.

\$TACK\$ stars Mark Christopher Lawrence in the role of Hector, for which [he was nominated for a Daytime Emmy award](#), and Emmy Award-winning actress and Duke University alumna Diahnna Nicole Baxter (*Scandal*, *A House Is Not A Home*) in the role of Magdalena.

Alongside Lawrence and Baxter are actors Calvin Winbush (*This Is America*, *Nashville*), Tarnue Massaquoi (*Terminator: Dark Fate*), Jamie Burton-Oare (*CSI: New York*) and Jadarrel Belser (*Zombie Apocalypse*).

The characters meet up in an underground parking garage under very tense circumstances for the trade of in-demand commodity for paper. Paper is used as a slang for money, as is the word stacks, like stacks of hundred-dollar bills. There are also other meanings to words used in the dialogue that will become clearer as you watch the film.



\$TACK\$ gives us a bit of introspection into our own behaviour, allowing us to step back and reflect on how Hollywood has trained us as viewers to expect very specific actions and outcomes with the positioning of characters, lighting, particular notes and style of music. Even the colours have come to have deep meaning over years of watching movies with the same elements repeated.

It's not hard to decipher these elements to figure out their meanings but for a director to put them all together into a language that speaks to a wide audience while evoking the same emotion in everyone at the same time, takes skill. Webb makes us all feel the same tension, fear, anticipation, release, humour in the same places in the film.

He played us. It takes a maestro to do that, someone who can instruct and arrange each element: actor, dialogue, location, scenery, music, pace, mood, lighting, audio, cameras, editing — to integrate each element like instruments in an orchestra. He built up our adrenaline, then he twisted the plot at the last minute and sedated us with laughter and hip hop.

The film was an official selection at the Micheaux Film Festival in Los Angeles during the 2021 season in April-May. \$TACK\$ won Outstanding Comedic Short and was nominated for Outstanding Comedic Directing, Outstanding Comedic Writing and Outstanding Comedic Actor for Lawrence's role.

Webb got the idea for the film while watching the lead up to the Los Angeles COVID-19 stay-at-home quarantine order unfold. He quickly penned the screenplay, cast, crewed up and shot *\$TACK\$* all in a 48-hour window just as the world was shutting down due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

In addition to directing, writing and producing \$TACK\$, Webb returned to his early roots in the DJ and hip hop worlds to pen and perform the single *Dropping Deuces*, a hilarious, and possibly not so elegant COVID-19 themed parody song, which he used for the film's soundtrack. He performs as G. Webb in the video at the end of the film.

Webb is a former casting executive for the first three *Sharknado* feature films and Syfy's *Z-Nation*. He has appeared in over 100 film and television shows, cast over 150 films, has produced 35+ films and the upcoming series *FraXtur*, was the American DJ Association's 1998 nightclub DJ of the year and is the co-founder of DelInstitutionalized Films.

*Dropping Deuces* has been viewed millions of times on major streaming and social media platforms and is being distributed by Distrokid. The comedic parody song was created to raise awareness and remind people to [#Stayhome](#) to [#FlushCovid](#).

That reminder is especially relevant again as we try to manage and adapt to new, more robust strains of the virus.

by Cherryl Bird – Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
Twitter [@ladybird](#) | Instagram [@cherrybird](#)

Core Magazines

<https://www.coremagazines.com/culture/stacks-film-written-shot-in-two-days/>



**With Film and TV Production hanging in the balance, it is always inspiring to hear of somebody's own initiative and inventiveness winning through to create something that will certain endure and demonstrate their clear and evident talent.**

**The brand-new short \$TACK\$ takes a familiar style of filmmaking to create a very funny pay-off. Additionally, it is amazing how something was conceived so quickly.**

*Film And TV Now was delighted to speak with director Gerald Webb about the project – and he also shared some pointers about how to create and make films during these challenging times.*

**FILM AND TV NOW: This is a very ingenious short which takes the tradition of a gang warfare narrative and subverts it to deliver a very honest and real message at the end, both in the short and the song DROPPING DEUCES. How long did it take to put together?**

**GERALD WEBB:** We had to be super quick because I was pretty sure a mandatory quarantine was going to be ordered any day. Basically, from conception to completion of principle photography was a 63-hour window. I got the idea for the story around 11pm on Saturday night and quickly wrote the script. Slept for 4 hours, the whole time my brain churning with ideas. I woke up at 5am, did a round of revisions to the script and sent it to Mark Christopher Lawrence to read. By 10am he got back to me and asked, "when are we shooting?" Over the next few hours I made calls and put our mini crew in place starting with the DP, Thomas Hennessy.

Next were calls to an amazing cast of actors, all of who I had worked with previously. Monday was spent confirming our location, securing props, craft services, remotely viewing wardrobe photos etc. We shot that Tuesday night. We wrapped at 2am Wednesday morning and L.A. went into quarantine 46 hours later.

We slowed down a bit for post-production which took 5.5 weeks with everyone working part time and remotely from home.



**FTVN: During the end credits there is a caption that talks of how the crew worked within key COVID-19 Health and Safety guidelines. Given the state of production at the moment as it has effectively been shut down, although there are reports that production has resumed with stringent conditions, what pointers could you give other filmmakers and people who want to make films in this period of enforced lockdown?**



**GW:** I was fanatical about having hand sanitizer readily available, access to hand washing, pre-cleaning all common touch surfaces etc. I went thorough and cleaned our entire location myself a few hours before our call time than had crew members clean doorknobs, elevator buttons etc every hour or so. All of our crafty was individually wrapped food and snacks. Lunch was individually packaged meals.

Mark Christopher Lawrence said when he got to the building, he hit the elevator button and was dismayed to find out it was wet. Then a second later he realized it was probably Lysol from the smell! On \$TACK\$ we actually had a star name cast member who called me the day before we were filming and said he had woken up feel out of sorts but had hoped it would pass. Unfortunately, as the day went on he developed a slight cough and while he felt he could get through the shoot, I had to make the responsible choice to recast in order to protect him and the entire cast and crew. The good news is he fine and it wasn't Covid related and our cast and crew were all kept safe.

**For other filmmakers, here are some things I'd suggest:**

1. You take it seriously. Make sure everyone on your crew takes it seriously. If anyone doesn't replace them.
2. Have a formal set of health and safety guidelines. Make sure each cast and crew member get a copy and acknowledges they will follow the guidelines.
3. Have a dedicated sanitizing crew member(s) whose sole job is to keep common areas super sanitized and to remind people to practice good use of PPE.
4. Only have individually packaged food and crafty items on site. No buffet style meals or snacks.
5. Every hour rotate your cast and crew for quick trips to wash their hands.
6. Plan for delays due to implementing and maintaining Covid preventive practices.
7. Err on the side of caution and always make the tough decisions in favor of safety. This sounds easy but I guarantee your resolve will be tested sooner than you think.
8. As much as possible segregate your team members and limit the size of interacting groups as a way to limit as much potential cross contamination as you can between set, base camp, etc.

This list will continue to grow.

**FTVN: Tell us about your cast.**

**GW:** I think their performance speak for themselves.

The Emmy winning Diahnna Nicole Baxter who plays bosschick Magdalena is just plain fierce. She and I played husband and wife in the feature **A HOUSE IS NOT A HOME** and had the most real and raw argument on screen I've ever been a part of. Crew members came running to set thinking we had an actual fight! She was my first choice for Magdalena and didn't disappoint.

Mark Christopher Lawrence is the most under used talent in L.A. He's been a series regular on 4 or 5 shows and has been in classic movies like Fear of a Black Hat, Pursuit of Happyness and his stand-up clips get millions of views. Most people see him as a great comedic actor but I think he's an even better dramatic actor. The power dynamic between him and Diahnna was exactly what I saw when writing. Their performances real give the feel of a long and complicated history in every moment they are on screen together.

Calvin Winbush plays Ty and just has a great natural feel and casualness in his performances. His stillness and grounding really helped ramp up the tension in the film.

Tarnue Massaquoi and I took acting classes together years ago. As Reub he brought an intensity that really raised the stakes right from the start of the film. You sense his worry and it can't help but make you wonder and worry yourself.

Jadarrel Belser quietly matched Tarnue's intensity. His no-nonsense, everything is cool- unless you screw it up, demeanor also really pushed the tension for the audience. With one word, you knew he was all about business.

Jamie Burton-Oare brought a raw and unrefined quality to the character of Jordan. That rawness was a wildcard and also kept the audience on edge. She and I played husband and wife in a play 7 or 8 years ago.

**FTVN: Tell us about your production team.**

**GW:** We had a skeleton production team for two reasons:

1. We shot this on a pocket change budget with almost everyone volunteering their time because they believed in the project. For which I am forever grateful.
2. We wrapped shooting just 46 hours prior to L.A. County's "Safer at Home" quarantine decree going into effect. We wanted to be responsible by limiting our total crew size and some people that normally would have jumped in had already gone into isolation.

Let's be clear this was a bunch of very talented people who generously loaned me their time and talent to collectively create **\$TACK\$**. Besides me, the crew consisted of the DP (Thomas Hennessy), the 1<sup>st</sup> AC/focus puller/still photographer (Kasee Shambora), the one man grip electric team and camera assistant (Curtis Davis), the sound mixer (Alex Hutchinson), catering set up, lock downs, etc. were handled by an associate producer (Meredith Thomas) and we had one production assistant (Yolanda Edme).

Offsite in Buffalo, NY the production coordinator (Sam Qualiana) helped prep the call sheet and other details in our super quick pre-production. With the exception of Yolanda, I've worked with every one of these crew members numerous times but usually with all of us filling other positions. Notice: no 1<sup>st</sup> ad, no 2<sup>nd</sup> ad, a 1 man G&E team, 2 man Camera team, no vanities etc. Everyone was pulling double and triple duty.



For post we added several members, who all worked remotely: editor and post supervisor (Jeff Murphy), the composer and VFX artist (Knappy) in Delaware and the music video editor (Ken Prieto) and Public Relations by Catherine Lyn Scott for London Flair Public Relations.

It was the first time I chose to direct a film (not counting b-unit directing on a few previous movies), one key thing for me was to make sure working on \$TACK\$ was also an opportunity for each of the crew members that graciously offered to help me out. For example, Thomas the DP loves the crime genre but rarely gets to DP that type of shot. Curtis generally works as a 1<sup>st</sup> AC but is transitioning to grip work and welcomed the opportunity to switch positions on \$TACK\$.

**FTVN: The music plays a vital part in the film. Tell us about your working relationship with Knappy.**

**GW:** Knappy and I go back 20+ years. We've worked on countless project together during that time. Long ago we were in a rap group together called 1 A.D., I was a groomsman at his wedding and he did the score for our film **A HOUSE IS NOT A HOME**.

He's a great music producer and his remixes for major artists have topped the Billboard dance charts. Because of our long history, it's really easy to communicate my artistic thoughts to Knappy. I also know he's going to elevate what I communicate to him and ultimately make the project better. It's really rewarding to be able to work with old friends and give them an opportunity to shine and showcase their work.

In the end I benefitted more than I gave! Knappy did a great job on the score and on the song **DROPPING DEUCES**. He also did the visual effects for the film. And if you didn't think there were any VFX in the film, it's because Knappy did such a great job with them.

**FTVN: The film is getting an online premiere on YouTube and other platforms. What are your hopes for the short and song in terms of your objectives and where you want it to play?**

**GW:** I've already won. \$TACK\$ came out better than I could have ever hoped my first project as director and writer would turn out. It's a film I can show anyone and be proud of it. I just wanted to get it out there during this critical time in our history for audiences, people and our society to hopefully be impacted by. I'm open and curious as to how far and wide it could reach, only time will tell.

It will definitely have a festival life whenever we can have film festivals again. I also hope it will open doors to more projects as a director possibly opportunities with some of network and studio's director development programs.

Dropping Deuce was really an after-thought. As we were waiting for edits and revisions, Knappy sent over a beat he thought might work over the credit sequence. I listened to it on loop and got the idea for a crazy rap song. I started writing to the beat and thought my ability to wrap had disappeared!

The track was about 130 beats per minute and I just couldn't rap fast enough. I took a break (and almost gave up) to look at a tutorial for creating specialty shots with a gimbal and came across a music video that was completely shot on the pocket Osmo gimbal. I loved the beat from the song and it was much slower at 90ish beats per minute.

I started writing dropping deuces over that beat and the verse just flowed out effortlessly. I recorded a rough vocal and sent it to Knappy who then produced the beat for Dropping Deuces which is a much better fit what I was able to write. The song is built for the internet for people to have a quick chuckle at and hopefully share with their friends so add it to your Spotify playlists!

**FTVN: How long did it take to shoot?**

**GW:** Our one shoot day was 7.5 hours from call time to wrap.

**FTVN: The film does have the basis for a feature length parody in the tradition of I'M GONNA GIT YOU SUCKA' which parodied the Blaxploitation films like SHAFT and COFFY. Is this something you would like to do as a follow-on feature if all gets back to a more reasonable way of production?**

**GW: I'M GONNA GIT YOU SUCKA'** is one of my favorites. There are scenes in that movie that are flat out hysterical and there is definitely some Antonio Fargas inspiration in the **DROPPING DEUCES** music video performance! I'm flattered by the comparison though I feel like the films are fundamentally different from one another. At its core, \$TACK\$ is a drama while **I'M GONNA GIT YOU SUCKA'** is a comedy. Their similarity is that they both make strong social statements.

But I do have an idea for a spoof movie that involves hip hop, poking fun at classic urban films with some major modern twists. It's not really a feature length version of \$TACK\$ but Hector, Magdalena and the gang would definitely make an appearance.

I've also thought about doing four other short films and packaging them with \$TACK\$ and the **DROPPING DEUCES** video as stand-alone episodes in a variety style web series. At least two of the episodes would be animated including one retelling a true a greatly exaggerated story of my cousin getting a well-deserved whooping in the 1980s called The Ballad of Stephanie Parks and the second retelling a crank call I made imitating Ving Rhames to a writer friend.

**FTVN: Given that films and television are even more important in terms of helping people and keeping them entertained through lock-down, what are the most important things for you when you are creating work like this short and the music video?**





**GW:** In the past I've worked on a lot of formulaic projects like Christmas films, sci-fi films, MOW thrillers etc. all of which have a place as an escape for audiences. But as a director the most important thing for me is: what is the base message behind the project and how can I guide, mentor, compel or even manipulate the audience to see, feel, experience and hopefully embrace that central message.

**\$TACK\$,** at its core, is a film that allows me to hold a mirror up to every viewer and every member of our society offering them the opportunity to see the best and the worst in themselves. Making films is not easy so I want something that on a base level compels me to keep pushing through the tough times and to continue striving for ways to have it connect for the audience. Our world learns so much through art. I have a sincere reverence for the gateway art can be to communication and understanding on an interpersonal level as well as on a grand scale.

To me that is the director's most sacred duty and partly why I

was scared of directing for so long.

**FTVN: Overall, how are you and your production team coping with the lock-down in general?**

**GW:** Everyone is restless and worried about their finances, health and when we can all get back to normal. But overall, they all seem in fairly good spirits. My sleep was completely jacked up for two months and just recently got back to normal.

Having **\$TACK\$** to work on actually kept me busy and a bit distracted in a good way during this quarantine. In a way I feel exhausted from all of the work on the film but at the same time I've been cooped up at home for two months and just want to get back to work, see some friends and go to a restaurant after wrap.

Most of the team has done something to keep busy but I can sense a tenseness and worry eating at most of them.

**FTVN: Finally, what are you most proud of about the film?**

**GW:** I'm proud of everyone's contributions to the film. From the actors to the DP to the editor and Knappy, everyone across the board. They all really did a fantastic job and the film greatly benefitted from each of their contributions.

In addition, I'm happy that the underlying message I intended for the film is connecting with audiences. It's hard to get people to watch short films but when we can get someone to watch **\$TACK\$** they are all taken by the drama and unexpected consequences of the film. I think that's the whole point.

Author: [John Higgins](#) Film and TV Journalist Follow: @Higgins99John Follow: @filmandtvnow

<https://www.filmandtvnow.com/interview-special-gerald-webb-tack/>

## CBS News 3 Philadelphia

Local Director Gerald Webb Explains How He Completed Project During Pandemic

By Ukee Washington May 26, 2020 at 7:06 pm Filed Under: StuckAt, Gerald Webb, Local, Local TV

**PHILADELPHIA (CBS) —** Movie studios continue to draw up plans when it comes to the release of summer blockbusters during the pandemic. Smaller filmmakers are dealing with the same issues as well.

CBS'3 Ukee Washington introduces us to a local filmmaker who's based in Los Angeles and how he actually completed a project during the pandemic.

The film is called "\$tack\$." It's only 7 minutes and 26 seconds long and it's the directorial debut of Gerald Webb. The film is timely, entertaining and has an interesting twist in the end.

**Watch the video to hear more from Ukee Washington on "\$tack\$"**

<https://philadelphia.cbslocal.com/video/4565957-how-one-local-filmmaker-completed-his-project-during-pandemic/>

# Red Carpet CRASH

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## Virtual Premiere Announced For Gerald Webb's \$TACK\$ And Accompanying Covid-19 Themed Parody Soundtrack DROPPING DEUCES

12 May 2020

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**Starring Mark Christopher Lawrence and Emmy® Award Winner Diahnna Nicole Baxter**

Transformation Media, LLC is pleased to announce the lead cast and virtual premiere for the nail biting **\$TACK\$**, a drama is dripping with social commentary on our post Coronavirus world.

**\$TACK\$ and Dropping Deuces**, a Covid-19 themed parody song and music video soundtrack are available NOW.

The live action short film is the directorial debut for Daytime Emmy® Award nominee, producer and actor, **Gerald Webb** (Barry, Players, LA's Finest). In addition to directing, writing and producing **\$TACK\$**, Webb returned to his early roots in the DJ and hip-hop world to pen and perform the single **Dropping Deuces**. The track was produced by Billboard chart topping remixer Knappy.

The film boasts a stellar cast including Mark Christopher Lawrence (Chuck, The Pursuit of Happyness) and Emmy® Award winner Diahnna Nicole Baxter (Scandal, A House Is Not A Home) star alongside Calvin Winbush (This is America, Nashville), Tarnue Massaquoi (Terminator: Dark Fate), Jamie Burton-Oare (CSI: New York) and Jadarrel Belser (Zombie Apocalypse).

Webb is a former casting executive for Sharknado 1-3 and Syfy's Z-Nation. He has appeared in over 100 film and television shows, cast over 150 films, has produced 35+ films and the upcoming series FraXtur, was the American DJ Association's 1998 nightclub DJ of the year and is the cofounder of DelInstitutionalized Films. While watching the lead up to the Covid-19, Los Angeles Stay at Home mandatory quarantine, Webb quickly penned the screenplay, cast, crewed up and shot **\$TACK\$** all in a 48 hour window just as Los Angeles and our world were all shutting down due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

**\$TACK\$** was produced by Gerald Webb and associate produced by Mark Christopher Lawrence and Meredith Thomas (A Christmas in Vermont, The Wrong Boy Next Door and creator of FYC Independents).

**Dropping Deuces** is available on all major streaming and social media platforms and is being distributed by Distrokid. The comedic parody song was created to raise awareness and remind people to #Stayhome to #FlushCovid

**\$TACK\$ and Dropping Deuces are available NOW**


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## Movie Short Review: '\$stack\$'

David Ferguson May 26, 2020

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Greetings again from the darkness. The set-up is a familiar one. Two tough guys, armed with weapons, snap at each other about the meeting that is about to go down. Tensions are high. Taking place in an underground garage for privacy, and as the SUV approaches, the two men bow up – looking ready for action. We've seen this encounter many times, whether it's a drug deal, a weapons deal, or the exchange of a hostage for bounty.

Writer-director-producer Gerald Webb gives us the familiar, but with a twist. Two rival bosses meet face-to-face for the exchange. Magdalena (Diahnna Nicole Baxter) and Hector (Mark Christopher Lawrence) may have had previous business dealings, but this transaction requires both parties to confirm.

Mr. Webb delivers a clever tongue-in-cheek commentary on the current pandemic, and it's one that proves quite relatable to most everyone. Written, filmed, and produced quickly prior to the mandated shutdown of Los Angeles, the film provides a nice 7 minute escape that includes a closing rap song "Dropping Deuces" noting the COVID-19 challenges, and paying tribute to the heroic essential workers. On a side note, it includes some of the cheesiest looking "money" you'll likely ever see on screen – just an added element of lightness.

[Author](#) [Recent Posts](#)

**David Ferguson**

David Ferguson is a lifelong movie lover and passionate reviewer. He is also a husband, father, business owner, Longhorn, and baseball aficionado.

Twitter: @fergusontx

(<https://unobtainium13.com/2020/05/03/short-film-review-tacks-dir-by-gerald-webb/stacks/>)

Sometimes, you have to laugh.

That may seem like odd advice to give at this moment in history because, right now, there's a lot of people who are convinced that we'll never share a joke or a smile again. They look at the news about the spread of COVID-19 and the empty grocery store shelves and everything else that's going on and they say to themselves, "Laughter is dead." Of course, what they're failing to understand is that often, it's laughter and comedy that help people survive tough times. It's much easier to deal with a problem if you laugh at it first. Sacrificing one's sense of humor is the first step towards surrender and surrendering is not what we, as a people, are about.

The 7 and a half-minute short film, *\$tack\$*, opens with a familiar cinematic situation. Two men are in an underground garage, standing next to their car and waiting for someone else to arrive. They exchange a few words, the type of tough guy talk that we've heard in countless crime films. Both of them are armed. Both of them know that the situation is serious. Both of them are ready for whatever happens.

Another vehicle pulls up and more people get out. More guns are displayed. A sell is being made. The second group of people is assured that they're getting the best, "pure white."

As I said, it's a situation that we've seen in countless crime films but this one has a humorous COVID-19 inspired twist, one that I will not spoil here. It's a clever little twist, though and it's one to which everyone — and I do mean everyone — will be able to relate. Making his directorial debut, Gerald Webb plays the action straight, even when *\$tack\$*'s main joke is revealed. The audience may laugh but, to the characters in the film, there's nothing more important than the business transaction being conducted in that underground garage. And really, who can blame them?

A rap and a music video play over the end credits, on that not only details the hardships of living in the COVID-19 era but which also pays tribute to all of the essential workers on the front lines, which is a nice touch. If nothing else, it'll make you feel better about the times that we're living than watching a hundred "this is the new normal" brand name commercials will.

Be sure to track down *\$tack\$*. It'll make you laugh and that's an important thing right now.

This entry was posted in [Film](#), [Film Review](#) and tagged [\\$tacks](#), [Alicia von Rittberg](#), [Calvin C. Winbush](#), [COVID-19](#), [Diahnna Nicole Baxter](#), [Film](#), [Gerald Webb](#), [Jadarrel Belser](#), [Jamie Burton-Oare](#), [Lisa Marie Bowman](#), [movie](#), [review](#), [Stacks](#), [Tarnue Massaquoi](#). Bookmark the [permalink](#).

## FILM & TELEVISION BUSINESS



Covid 19 has been a strange time in our lives, not being able to hug family or friends, not being able to buy essentials and worrying about the unknown. As a human race when things are difficult we look to humor for comfort and hitting the comedic nail on the head is Gerald Webb's short film Stacks.

Webb created this short film with an all-star cast, including Mark Christopher Lawrence and Emmy® Award Winner Diahnna Nicole Baxter. The film opens up into a tense atmosphere, the late arrival of a business partner, the hot female executive and a meeting with a few little surprises. Being that the film is under 8 minutes we don't want to give away too much but can say Stacks is a must see film that will leave you with a big smile. There is no need to wait as you can watch it right here, right now. Stacks is a must-see film that will leave you with a big smile.

Webb is a former casting executive for Sharknado 1-3 and Syfy's Z-Nation. He has appeared in over 100 film and television shows, cast over 150 films, has produced 35+ films and the upcoming series FraXtur, was the American DJ Association's 1998 nightclub DJ of the year and is the cofounder of DelInstitutionalized Films. While watching the lead up to the Covid-19, Los Angeles Stay at Home mandatory quarantine, Webb quickly penned the screenplay, cast, crewed up and shot STACKS all in a 48-hour window just as Los Angeles and our world were all shutting down due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Stacks, was produced by Gerald Webb with consulting producer Mark Christopher Lawrence and supervising producer Meredith Thomas. <https://film-business.com/2020/06/09/stacks/>

## Core Magazines

<https://www.coremagazines.com/corelife/stacks-earns-veteran-actor-daytime-emmy-nomination/>

CORELIFE, CULTURE

# STACKS EARNS VETERAN ACTOR DAYTIME EMMY NOMINATION

JULY 30, 2021 CHERRYL BIRD LEAVE A COMMENT

Actor and comedian Mark Christopher Lawrence shines as the lead in his co-produced project, \$TACK\$ (STACKS) earning himself a 2021 Daytime Emmy nomination for Outstanding Daytime Fiction Program. Along with his Daytime Emmy nomination, he also received a nomination for a Regional Emmy for his work on *The Flourish*.

Lawrence has acted in film and TV for decades in popular crime dramas, comedies, and has opened up for comedians like Jerry Seinfeld. Upcoming work includes a role in the highly-anticipated Tyler Perry series *All The Queen's Men*, which will premiere on BET+ this summer. But \$TACK\$ is a short film that was released during the pandemic.

The [Gerald Webb](#) directed, written and produced \$TACK\$ is described as a sarcastic plea for every viewer to be responsible for the attitudes, assumptions and judgments buried deep inside themselves. An unprecedented pandemic forces two fierce rivals to come face to face for the first time in over a decade to close a deal on one of the most valuable substances on earth. Its timely message taunts, teases and dares the audience to discover the film's hidden twists and clues before their own biases and assumptions lead them down the wrong path. The short film also stars Diahnna Nicole Baxter and Calvin C. Winbush.



Receiving a nomination for a 2021 Pacific Southwest Regional Emmy for his work in narration, *The Flourish* tells the story of a young girl on a quest to become a famous magician, despite the struggles in her personal life. The short film also won at the San Diego Film Festival for "Best Child Actor."

With a career spanning over 35 years as an actor and comedian, the Compton, California native's road to success began in high school when one of his teachers helped get him involved with the debate team.

Immersing himself in forensics competitions and theatre, Lawrence would win the school district's Literary Olympiad competition and go on to compete at the collegiate level to capture the Bovero-Tabor Award, as the top community college speaker in the country.

While in college, he traveled the nation competing in tournaments. Meanwhile, he was gaining valuable experience in his craft by moonlighting at the Los Angeles Theater Center. There, a Hollywood talent agent noticed his skill and landed Lawrence his first job in television, a role on *Hill Street Blues*.

After graduating from college in California, Lawrence worked with the San Francisco Mime Troupe while also performing stand-up comedy throughout the United States, Australia, and Canada, opening for major acts, such as Seinfeld and Rodney Dangerfield. Lawrence's work in live theatre led to a Dramalogue Award for his performance in Reza Abdooh's, *Minimanta*.

He won an NAACP award for his work in Ken Davis' *The Glass House* in 1990. It was this role that attracted the attention of director, James Cameron, who then cast him as the "burly insane asylum attendant" in *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*. Mark is also known for his work on other hit series including *The Island*, *K-Pax*, *The Pursuit of Happyness*, NBC's *Chuck*, and *Tales from the Hood*.

by Cherryl Bird – Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
 Twitter [@ladybird](#) | Instagram [@cherrybird](#)

Core Magazines

<https://www.coremagazines.com/corelife/stacks-earns-veteran-actor-daytime-emmy-nomination/>



Pump it up  
MAGAZINE

From Left To Right:

Jamie Burton-Oare, Diahnna Nicole Baxter, JaDarrel Belser, Gerald Webb, Mark Christopher Lawrence, Calvin C. Winbush, Tarnue Massaquoi

### INTERVIEW WITH GERALD WEBB FILM MAKER, ACTOR, PRODUCER AND DJ.

**Gerald Webb** is a Daytime Emmy nominated producer, actor, director, writer and former casting executive and DJ. The Philadelphia/South Jersey native has been involved in the entertainment business since he was break dancing as a kid and DJing as a teenager. From those humble beginnings and being mentored by Jam Master Jay of RUN DMC, Gerald has gone on to produce 35+ films as a partner at Deinstitutionalized, LLC, cast 100+ films including Sharknado 1-3, Syfy network's television series Z-Nation, and has appeared as an actor in over 150 films and television shows including BARRY, L.A.'s FINEST, PLAYERS and IT'S ALWAYS SUNNY IN PHILADELPHIA. \$TACK\$ and DROPPING DEUCES bring Gerald's career full circle bridging his musical past and filmmaker present.

Pump It Up Magazine caught up with film maker, Actor, rapper, and DJ Gerald Webb and asked him about his 7 minute short film \$TACK\$!

#### 1. WHAT MADE YOU PURSUE FILM MAKING?

I think it's in you or it's not. I just got to a point where despite being a very successful DJ, I wasn't fulfilled and did a lot of soul searching for what I really wanted. I did a lot of soul searching, read books, took personal development classes. Acting, film making and moving to L.A. kept popping up in my thoughts. I finally decided to choose whether to go for with everything I had OR to give up the idea of pursuing film making forever and never say would of, could of or should of in the future. When I realized I couldn't give it up completely, what had always be in me, made the choice for me.

## **2. WHAT ROADBLOCKS DID YOU FACE WHEN YOU WERE STARTING OUT?**

Sometimes I feel like I ran into EVERY road block. The biggest one early was just not knowing what I was doing while thinking I did. I had to really humble myself and approach the industry from a place of knowing nothing in order to start finding my way. Money was also a big obstacle.

It takes a lot more money than most people think to start your acting business- photo shoots, head shot printing, memberships to casting sites, acting classes etc. Access is also a big roadblock that doesn't really go away. You get into one room and there you see another door, and another with each level you rise through.

## **3. WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT TO DATE?**

To have the opportunity to pursue my dreams and make art. Awards come and go but not everyone is fortunate enough to be able to choose to do what they love. It's a rollercoaster with many ups and lots of downs but being able to pursue it every day is an amazing achievement for me and just about any one.

## **4. HOW DID YOU COME UP WITH THE IDEA FOR YOUR FILM \$TACK\$?**

I was watching the early stages of the Covid-19 toilet paper hoarding and was really upset by the selfishness and complete lack of concern shown by some for other human beings. Rather than get into a fight at a retail store, I tried to find a better way to express my frustration and frankly anger with what I was seeing materialize in front of me. As I got home and stewed, the idea for \$TACK\$ came to me.

## **5. CAN YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT YOUR UPCOMING PROJECT(S)?**

I'm currently writing a PSA type project inspired by seeing the beautiful response to the murder of George Floyd. Seeing this generation stop the world by standing up against racial inequality was beautiful despite the tragedies that created the backlash.

I'm also developing a film based on black voting rights and the abolition movement in the late 1800s. And at Deinstitutionalized Films, my business partner and I are in post-production on the digital series FraXtur, a post apocalyptic coming of age story and the film ASSAULT ON VA-33 starring Michael Jai White, Mark Dacacos, Sean Patrick Flanery and Abigail Hawk.

## **6. CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE GREATEST MOMENT IN YOUR FILM CAREER?**

I'm not sure but it might be the moment I truly realized I was a professional and could work with anyone at any level in this industry. I was working as an actor on the film Zombie Apocalypse with Ving Rhames, Taryn Manning, Lesley Ann Brandt and Eddie Steeples.

I had a death scene and after we wrapped, I was about to head back to base camp and Ving pulled me aside. He then said, 'that was really nice Webb. That was really nice work.' I had given up my DJing career, moved to Los Angeles and worked for 5 years to be a 'professional actor'. To hear a legend like that validate all of the hard work that was put into that performance was a key moment for my confidence and my career.

## **7. DO YOU THINK IT IS ESSENTIAL TO GO TO A FILM INSTITUTE IN ORDER TO BECOME A SUCCESSFUL FILM MAKER?**

It is absolutely not essential. There is no right way to become a filmmaker. School and institutes can be really helpful but just making a film with whatever gear and team you can put together can be invaluable.

## 9. IF YOU GOT THE OPPORTUNITY TO REMAKE A CLASSIC, WHICH ONE WOULD YOU GO FOR?

I'd remake the TV series M.A.S.H. or Scarface.

## 10. ANY ADVICE TO YOUNG FILM MAKERS STARTING OUT?

Be prepared to work ridiculously hard. Seriously, you will have to work 300 times harder than you think you will to be successful in this industry. It's uber-competitive but that doesn't mean everyone is against you. You're really only competing against yourself. Learn everything you can about the film industry, it will come in handy. Believe in yourself but also humble yourself.

Remember you have to develop all sides of your filmmaking business technical, artistic, political, financial etc. The more you know the better off you'll be..

### TO KNOW MORE ABOUT GERALD WEBB, PLEASE VISIT:

INSTAGRAM/TWITTER: @GERALDWEBB

FACEBOOK: [HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/ACTORGERALDWEBB](https://www.facebook.com/actorgeraldwebb)

WWW.STACKSMOVIE.COM

WWW.GERALDWEBB.COM

**DROPPING DEUCES** was Webb's both hilarious and biting response to seeing people hoarding toilet paper during Covid-19 outbreak and quarantine.

The comedic parody song was created by Webb to raise awareness and remind people to remember kindness and to be human during our unprecedented times.

It's the quarantine theme we didn't realize we needed. "**DROPPING DEUCES**" - is available now on all major streaming and social media platforms and is being distributed by Distrokid.

### FILM DETAILS:

**DROPPING DEUCES** by G. Webb from the \$TACK\$ motion picture soundtrack

Directed, Written and Produced by: Gerald Webb

Performed by: G. Webb

Associate Produced by: Mark Christopher Lawrence and Meredith Thomas

Music Video edited by: Ken Prieto

Music by: Knappy

Location: Burbank, CA

Post Production by: Quest Pacifica



"**DROPPING DEUCES**" - is available now



Spotify



amazon



# \$TACK\$

## Audience Reactions

### Youtube viewers:

“This should have several million views by now!”

“The setup was perfect: I’m all set at that point for a gritty urban crime drama... and then the big reveal. Dialogue and acting spot on, great dramatic timing. Production value right up there, good work all the way around.”

“This was hilarious! Especially the song at the end. It kept you in suspense with the music, well-placed shots, and great acting. I want a sequel!”

“A short film so very suspenseful, fully compelling, Wow!”.

“This short film was hilarious. The suspense in the beginning had me ready to see what was in the bag. I was not expecting to see toilet paper. 🤣 When the song at the end came on, I lost it. A whole quarantine vibe. 🥰🥰”

“This is funny AF!”

“I had to immediately press pause because I was laughing so hard. I want “Dropping Deuces” as my new ringtone. This is a MUST SEE short!!!”

### Facebook viewers:

“This made my day! “Every second was on point! Sharing!” “You got me! Well done”

“Fabulously Fantastic!!! It’s a mini Masterpiece on all aspects! You’ve truly outdone yourself! Kudos to all involved!”

“You Stoooopid! Loved it. I needed that laugh.”

“That’s pure genius. Well done. I’m sharing it.”

“Great Job man!!! Loved it!!”

“Awesome! I loved it!!” “You had me holding on!!”

“Command performance. Watched it, loved it!!”

“The music video was brilliant also! You’re ready for a feature length movie!”

“Wow! I hope there is a \$TACK\$ 2!!” “That was awesome. 100”

### IGTV viewers:

“It had me Hollerin!!!” “Crazy creative” “Props!! Hilarious!! And great production!!”

“I am WEAK over here!! Never saw it coming...”

“Yooo! I wasn’t expecting that. My man! Good job”

“Bruh! Hahaha! Completely caught off guard! Loved it! Very creative!”

“I couldn’t stop laughing”

# \$TACK\$

## \$TACK\$ Links:

\$TACK\$ official website: [www.StacksMovie.com](http://www.StacksMovie.com)

\$TACK\$ (media link) (7:26 run time): <https://vimeo.com/415010732/27c3555710>

\$TACK\$ media partners assets folder (downloadable interviews, artwork, production stills, bios etc):  
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/x71hkphfdn6o8oc/AACAsf0Eul0H9D0IVVC8xZCJa?dl=0>

Director/Writer Gerald Webb's website: [www.GeraldWebb.com](http://www.GeraldWebb.com)

DROPPING DEUCES music video (stand-alone): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfbH-jnsTbE>

Dropping Deuces on Disco Kid: <https://distrokid.com/hyperfollow/gwebb1/dropping-deuces>

Talent	IMDB	Social Handle	Website
Official \$TACK\$:	<a href="#">\$TACK\$</a>	@StacksMovie	<a href="http://www.Stacksmovie.com">www.Stacksmovie.com</a>
Director, Writer, Producer:	<a href="#">Gerald Webb</a>	@GeraldWebb	<a href="http://www.GeraldWebb.com">www.GeraldWebb.com</a>
Hector/Consulting Producer:	<a href="#">Mark Christopher Lawrence</a>	@MarkChristopherLawrence (Instagram) @MarkChrLawrence (Twitter)	
Magdalena:	<a href="#">Diahnna Nicole Baxter</a>	@DiahnnaNicole	
Ty:	<a href="#">Calvin Winbush</a>	@Calvintheii	
Reub:	<a href="#">Tarnue Massaquoi</a>	@TarnueMassaquoi	
Jordan:	<a href="#">Jamie Burton-Oare</a>	@SoulfulStepsjj	
Momo:	<a href="#">Jadarrel Belser</a>	@TheBelser	
Cinematographer:	<a href="#">Thomas Hennessy</a>	@AngryJimmyFilms	
Editor:	<a href="#">Jeff Murphy</a>	@JeffMurphyQuest	
Music video editor:	<a href="#">Ken Prieto</a>	@KenPrieto	
Composer:	<a href="#">Knappy</a>	@Knappy	
Supervising Producer:	<a href="#">Meredith Thomas</a>	@MeredithActress	
Publicist:	<a href="#">Catherine Lyn Scott</a>	@LondonFlairPR	
Post Production Services:	<a href="#">Quest Pacifica</a>		

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