



MOSES

a film by Daniel Peddle

THE STORY



A young man finally escapes the shadow of his mother's death and his father's detachment in this Southern Gothic coming-of-age tale.

On his eighteenth birthday, Moss's isolated rural existence is turned inside out when he meets a mysterious hiker named Mary along the banks of the Cape Fear River. Worldly and independent, she becomes his guide through an unexpected rite of passage.

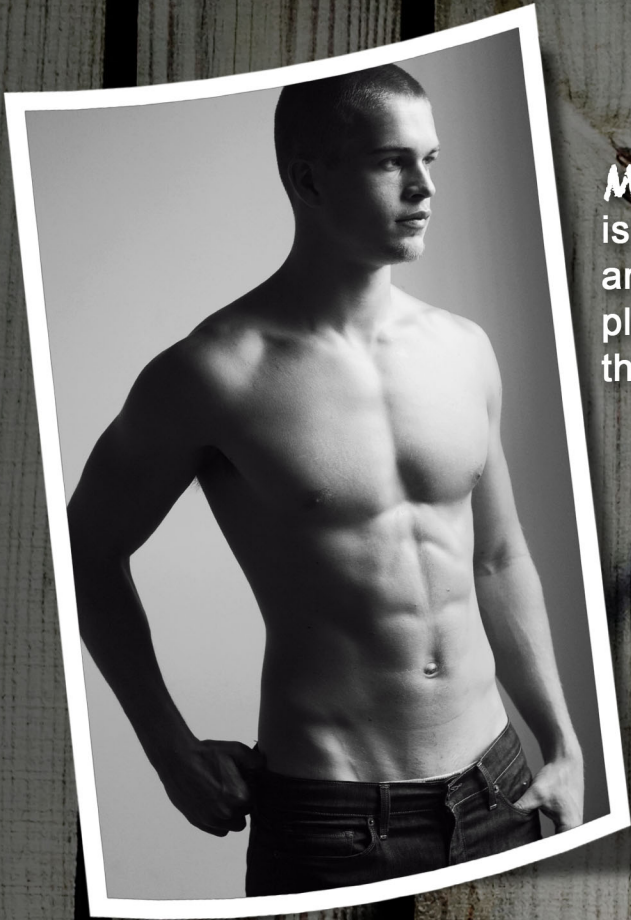
Over the course of one devil-may-care day, Moss and Mary do things two strangers normally would not.

But as their adventure comes to an end, neither proves to be who they thought they were.

CAST

MOSS (18yo)

is a striking young man with innocent eyes and a sturdy build. Our protagonist will be played by Mitchell Slaggert, discovered by the director in Wilmington, NC.



RAY (60's)

Moss's Dad, is a rugged ex-Marine of few words. He has the face of an artist, focused and obsessed. Played by, Billy Suggs, Mitchell's real-life mentor. The film's dynamic between father and son will be enhanced by this true relationship.



MARY (20's/30's)

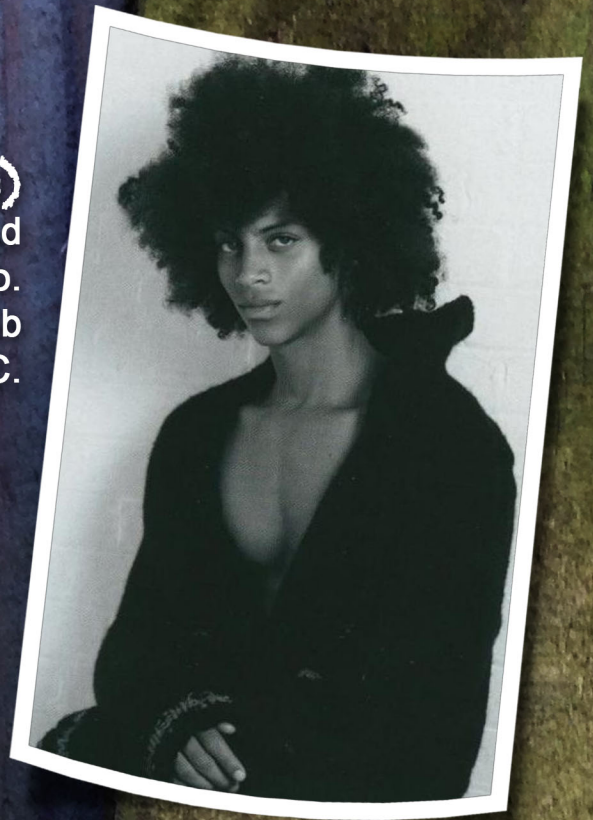
is a beautiful mysterious drifter. Independent and edgy. She's a seasoned hiker passing through.



CAST

BLAZE (20s)

is Moss's best friend, a wild-eyed beach bum with a wafting Afro. Played by rising actor Dorian Cobb discovered by the director in NYC.



FRECKLED KID (12yo)

The neighborhood trickster, this local "river rat" runs wild and pulls pranks.

GRAMMA (80's)

A silver haired tough woman with soulful eyes will be played by Liliane Gillenwater who featured in the director's first narrative film.



LOCATION

MOSS is set on Carolina Beach, a small island off the coast of North Carolina. It is ripe with cinematic potential.



On the west side, rolling dunes covered with live oaks line the Cape Fear River. And on the island's east side, long pristine beaches are often empty.

MOSS will proudly capture this strangely intoxicating American brew of working-class river life, mellow island vibes and the country traditions of the South.



PRODUCTION DESIGN



The main locations of the film will each have a unique picture-book quality.

Moss's yard is brimming with his Dad's outsider art so the immediate impact will be of an eerie kooky insulated world.

Gramma's house will be straight out of Grimm's - albeit with a country twist. The haunting vibe of swaying Spanish moss mingled with too many wind chimes will do the trick of transporting the viewer to the edge of a dream.



PRODUCTION DESIGN



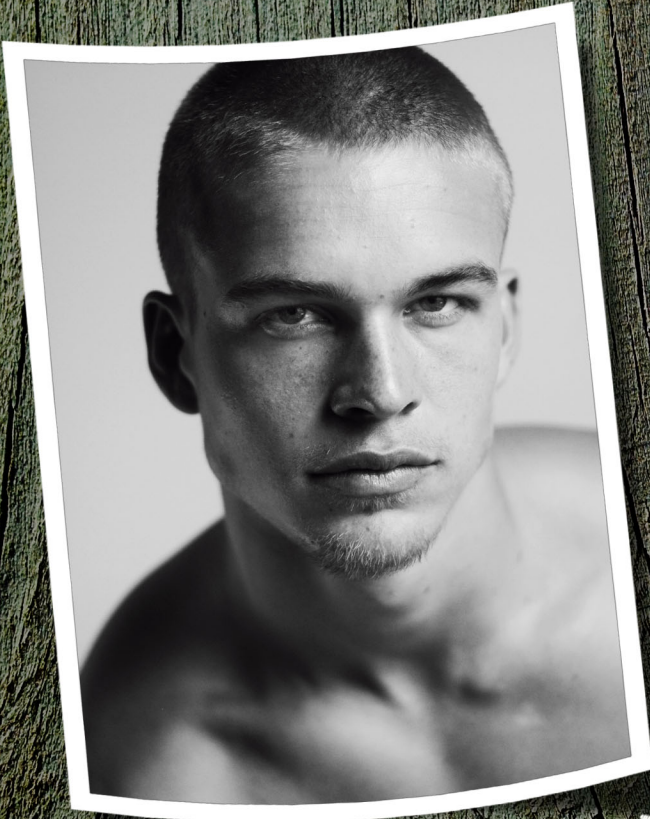
Blaze's rafthouse will be a whimsical wonderland of repurposed trash. The entire structure will be built of buckets, pails, crates and shipping pallets.

Using only natural light, the film will have a syrupy texture – rich and sweet. As most of the narrative unfolds in the woods, on the Cape Fear River, over the dunes or at the beach, we will fully drench the viewer in the languid quality inherent to this magical place.



Overall our goal is to create a memorable unique vision through a heightened reality.

FULL SYNOPSIS



Moss's eighteenth birthday is marred by the unfortunate facts of Moss's birth. His mother died delivering him. Today his dad, Ray, a retired veteran-turned-outsider-artist is in full retreat from reality. Detached and distant, he spends all his time making eerie sculptures fashioned from river wash-up. Ray hasn't even remembered it is his son's special day and instead tasks him with a visit to Gramma to deliver her some pills. This is a dreaded chore because Gramma lives down river and is so hard to get to it will take all day. Ray and Moss get into a fight but Moss finally sets off in his canoe.

First he visits his only good friend, Blaze who lives alone on a rafterhouse cobbled together from buckets and crates. A runaway from a meth infected family, Blaze has found his peace living solo off the grid. Moss and Blaze smoke weed and shoot the shit.



When Moss carries on down the river, he's met with the surprise of his life—a bathing beauty has set up camp on the riverbank.

Their eyes meet and soon she's lured him over. Mary is a drifter ten years older than Moss. She's an experienced free-spirit. Moss has never met a woman like this. When she learns it's his birthday she offers a special treat — psychedelic mushrooms!

Together they trip and make their way to the beach. Under the sway of the 'shrooms, Moss's barriers collapse and he regales her with his distinct emotional problems. Mary is a good listener. She's captivated by his naïveté. In an abandoned WWII bunker hidden in the dunes, they have sex. It's Moss's first-time.



FULL SYNOPSIS



Then, after a swim, Mary spots Moss's wrist-scars from an unmentioned suicide attempt. The day turns heavy and she leaves him saying she needs to be alone.

As the sunsets, Blaze barrels by in his truck and finds Moss on the road walking. Moss shares his days' adventure over a bottle of whiskey back at the rafterhouse.

Meanwhile Ray has spent the day brooding. By nightfall his head is spinning with memories and moonshine. He waits for Moss and drinks alone. Then in a fit of passionate clarity, he makes a huge bonfire and burns all his sculptures.

The next morning, barely awake, Moss rushes from Blaze's to his Grammas - spurred on by a foreboding dream and a surge of guilt.

But when he arrives, she's dead.

There are strange signs that someone has been there before him. Was it Mary? What did she want? What did she take?

He runs like the wind to her campsite, but there's no trace of her. She's long gone, and stolen his canoe.

Moss gets home covered in mud. He's transformed. He finds the yard purged of the sculptures, the house clean and a birthday present from his dad. A note says: "Gone fishing. Come."

At the end of the long fishing pier, Moss meets his Dad to tell him everything. But his Dad has changed overnight. He's finally let go of some pain. And the news of Grandma's death comes as a relief. He's just happy to see his son.

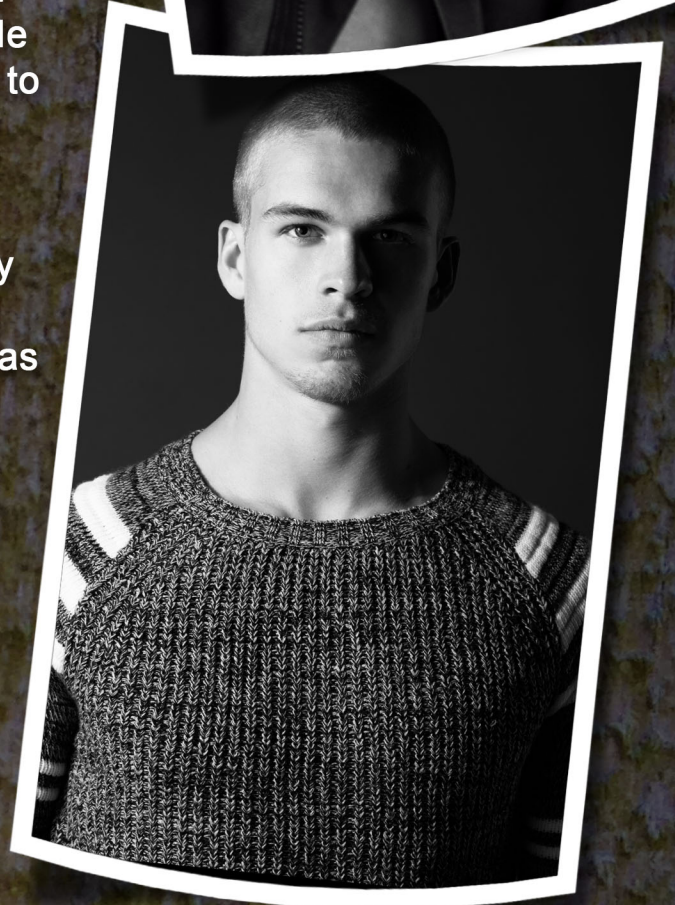
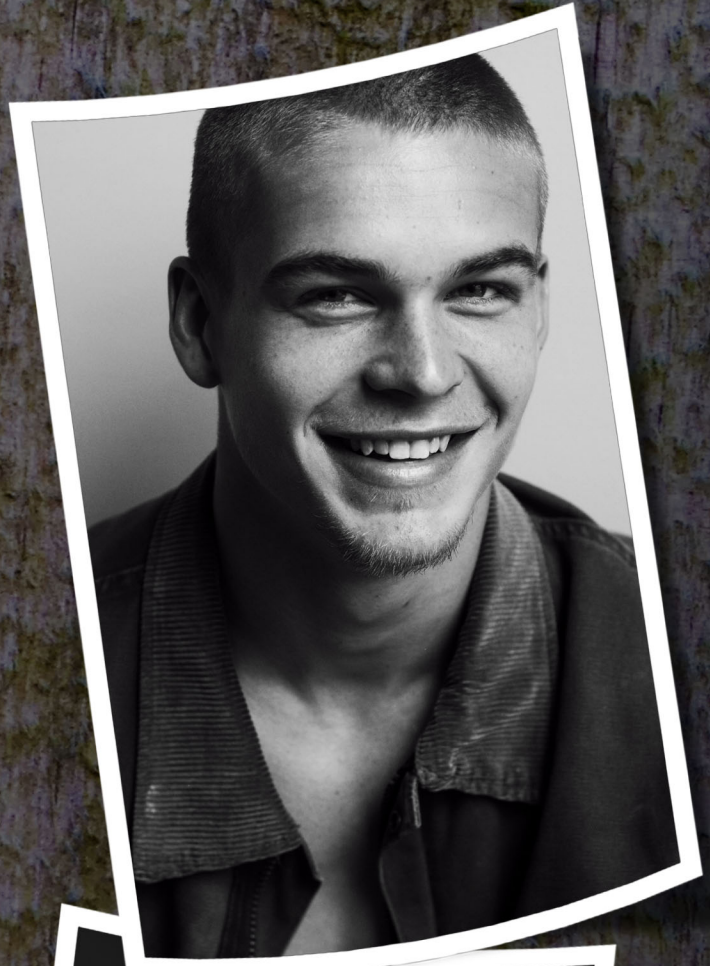
A ribbon of seagulls pass overhead. The two men stare at the churning ocean together. They have each other at least.



DIRECTORS STATEMENT

I met Mitchell Slaggert, who will star as Moss, by accident in Wilmington, NC. I was rushing to the premiere of my first narrative feature, *Sunset Edge*, screening at the local Cucalorus Film Festival. I saw Mitchell pass me out of the corner of my eye. I kept on to my venue as I was running late. But it was like the universe tapped me on the shoulder and said “go scout him!” So I ran back. Of course when I reached him, I was out of breath and talking fast and he was rightfully unnerved. He hesitantly took my card and gave me that “this is creepy” look I’ve become accustomed to.

I was not really that surprised when a few months later I was happily explaining to Mitchell that he would be flown to Milan, Italy to debut on the Calvin Klein runway as an exclusive model. Mitchell has that special “it” quality that even comes through in photos. He got signed to a top modeling agency, moved to NYC and has since been setting the fashion world on fire with a string of covetable campaigns and fashion editorials. Normally this takes a male model several years, if they are lucky. Mitchell’s star however started ascending in a matter of days. His agency was even shocked, telling me — “We don’t know what it is about this kid but he’s fantastic!”



DIRECTORS STATEMENT

When Mitchell told me he wanted to try acting, I was thrilled. On his very first audition for a director friend of mine, he nailed a cold reading. This was the first time he had ever held a script. Damn! There's that Universe tapping me on the shoulder again! "Make a movie with him Daniel," it said.

MOSS was written for Mitchell. As his first film, I wanted something to encourage a full range of emotional display but also be within a world he knows and is comfortable with. Luckily this world is one we both share. Being Southern, we have an unfettered love of nature and the woods which is deeply rooted in the script. (You may also pick up on a nod to *Little Red Riding Hood*!)

Moss was written and designed to be produced with a limited budget, skeleton crew and local talent and support. We are prepared to do a lot with a little.

Me and Mitchell are excited to bring this film to life!

Daniel Peddle
Writer & Director



ABOUT THE DIRECTOR



Daniel Peddle's debut narrative feature *Sunset Edge* was set in an abandoned trailer park and features local teen actors. While attending graduate film school at NYU, Peddle worked as a "street scout" finding undiscovered talent. This unconventional means of casting soon evolved into a thriving fashion casting company with an international clientele including Comme des Garçons, Phillip Lim, and Givenchy. His discoveries range from Donald Cumming, former lead singer of "The Virgins", to Academy Award winner Jennifer Lawrence, who he discovered when she was fourteen-years-old. It was through street casting that Daniel first encountered the subjects of his debut feature documentary film *The Aggressives* about a world of butch women of color passing as men. An influential work on modern gender identity, the film was awarded the Kinsey Honor from the Kinsey Institute and numerous "Best of" awards at documentary film festivals worldwide. His second feature documentary, *Trail Angels* debuted on The Documentary Channel and follows four unsung heroes, who make it their quest to help the seasonal thru-hikers of the Appalachian Trail, a pilgrimage of five million footsteps. In Dec 2015, Daniel finished his third feature documentary — *Garden of the Peaceful Dragon* — an intimate and transformative portrait of an elderly African-American veteran who occupies an abandoned piece of government property on Kauai, Hawaii.