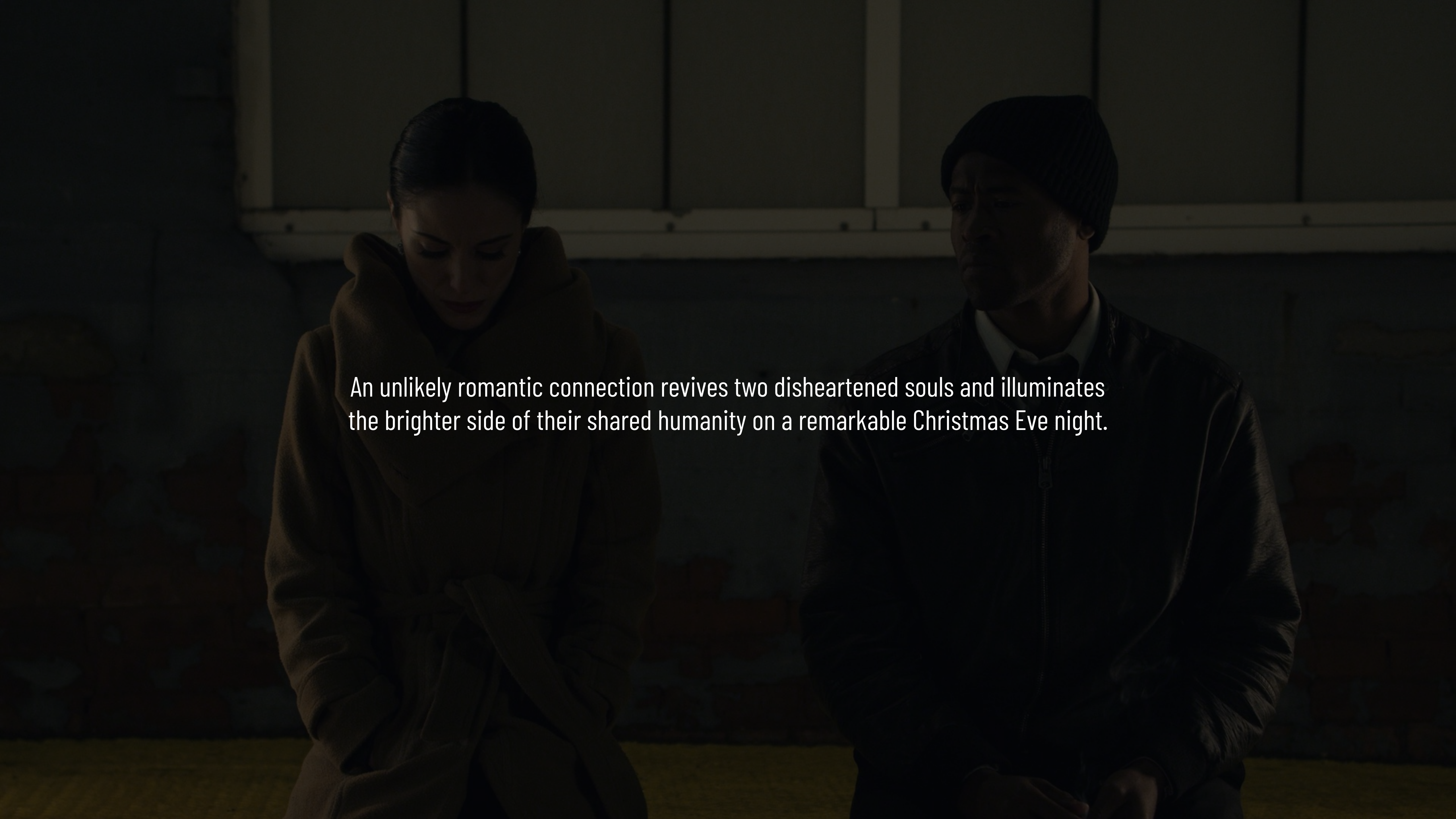




A C&I FILMS ORIGINAL

# CHRISTMAS EVE



A man and a woman are standing in front of a brick wall at night. The woman, on the left, is wearing a light-colored coat and has her hair pulled back. She is looking down. The man, on the right, is wearing a dark jacket and a beanie. He is looking to the side. The scene is dimly lit, with a warm glow from the bottom, possibly from a fire or a light source. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

An unlikely romantic connection revives two disheartened souls and illuminates the brighter side of their shared humanity on a remarkable Christmas Eve night.



# Synopsis

A young man living in New York City struggles to cope with the economical and racial divide separating him from a happy life. It is Christmas Eve and every injustice — every ounce of emotional brutality that he has endured — has reached its tipping point. He battles against depression, but his life is sad and getting sadder still.

During this time of self-reflection and despair, an unexpected encounter with a stranger offers him respite and a glimpse into their shared humanity despite their differing social statuses.

Michael lives in Brooklyn. He works three minimum wage jobs. It's the morning of Christmas Eve and he is late to his first job as a valet at a 5-star hotel. He speeds through city traffic on his bicycle. He frantically parks on the sidewalk outside of the hotel. A pair of keys are thrown in his face. He hasn't even punched in. He rushes into the parking garage to bring the car around. This is his routine.

"My mornings are humbling," says Michael. "There's something about these jobs that have always been hard for me." He's treated to no tip from the owner of the Maserati, reminding him of the harsh reality that is pulling him deeper into depression: *that he is less than*.

*Less than* and it's off to his afternoon job — a line cook at a run-down diner. He's late. Again.

This is where he thinks. Not of getting out but of how he arrived — how his decisions led to him flipping burgers in a shitty diner. "Literally flipping burgers," he repeats to himself. These are deadly thoughts yet he clings to them. Looking out of the back window, he sees a hungry homeless man standing outside in the cold. He feeds him. Though the homeless man does not know it, they share a similar struggle. Michael is fired for giving away food.

Lost, he turns to the only mother figure in his life: an old woman named Yolanda, who he accompanies on walks through the park. While sitting on a park bench, they talk about his life. She's the only person who cares for him — who worries for him. "I can see you, Michael," she says at the end of their conversation. *At least someone does*.

At night, Michael works as a server for a catering company. Tonight, they are catering a lavish fundraising event. The guests are rich and white. The philanthropy is for children who are poor and black. He's the only one to laugh at the irony.

During the event, he meets a woman named Evelyn. She is there with her husband. She doesn't want to be. Though she does not recognize the irony of the event, she sees the charade.

She's attracted to Michael. It's not just physical attraction. It's something much deeper. He carries himself differently. He sees the event for what it truly is. And he laughs at it, too. Their brief, polite (yet genuine) conversation turns into a total escape. They abandon the fundraising event and, instead, take to New York City streets to share their favorite spots with one another — locations that inherently separate people like him from people like her.

It is here where Michael learns how alike they are despite coming from completely different worlds. Through Evelyn, he learns that despair is not absolute. But happy endings don't come easy to guys like Michael. His connection with Evelyn — whatever they feel for each other on Christmas Eve — can only last the night.



## Director's Note

*Christmas Eve* is the Christmas story I've always wanted to tell. It's about the people we see during Christmas. Or, rather, see right through, completely oblivious to their lives and mostly uncaring about who they really are. It's the single mom working the double shift, the cashier at the grocery store. They are almost invisible on this day. Most of us are too focused on holiday plans to notice that these people are fighting to make ends meet when they should be home with their family. That is where we meet Michael. He wakes up on Christmas Eve, hustles to his three jobs, and does everything he can to just make it work. In complete contrast, there are those who have everything — the nice cars, the fancy suits, and all the money in the world — but are left feeling so empty, longing for something more, something real. This is where we meet Evelyn. Ultimately, there is no happy ever after. Not all the time. Not even most of the time. It's often chalked up to the fact that you made some poor choices or life dealt you a poor hand. Either way you have to deal with it. What other choice is there but to stand up and keep pedaling your bike? This film is inspired by those people and because of that it was a magical project to bring to life. The fact that we shot in the most enchanting city in the world, New York City, made it even more special.





## C&I Studios

*Christmas Eve* is a C&I Studios original short film. C&I Studios is a multimedia film and television series production company that conceptualizes and writes original concepts. C&I Studios sources literary property, assembles teams and finances to produce, finalize, and distribute original productions, and packages multimedia projects for mass market. C&I Studios houses a team of creative visionaries determined to bring new concepts to life. We use the highest quality RED Cameras on the market and house a collection of advanced editing software, rendering programs, motion animation software, and audio technologies to ensure each project exceeds its potential. Together, we imagine and produce emotive short films and television series that change perspectives and reshape the arena of multimedia consumption.

























Late nights  
& stops on  
lower level

Nostrand  
Avenue























# Christmas Eve Cast & Crew

Written & Directed by

Joshua Otis Miller

Produced by

Amy Joy Miller

Starring

Rafael Jordan as Michael

Elisabetta Fantone as Evelyn

Carolyn Johnson as Yolanda







Production Date  
December 2018

Cameras  
8k RED Monstro VV  
with Angenieux Optimo 24-290 Lens

Resolution  
4k 3840x1616 ProRes 4444XQ

License  
C&I Studios Inc.

Shot in New York City and Fort Lauderdale, FL





Thank You