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GRAVITAS VENTURES RELEASES "GUYS READING POEMS" FEB. 20TH
INNOVATIVE MINDBENDER FILM EXPLORES MASCULINITY, POETRY

Gravitas Ventures will release the neo-noir mindbender feature film *Guys Reading Poems* on February 20th across digital platforms.

Guys Reading Poems follows an avant-garde painter (Patricia Velasquez, "The Mummy,") whose sanity dissipates when she's abandoned by her handsome lothario husband (Alexander Dreymon, "The Last Kingdom") for his stunningly beautiful mistress (Lydia Hearst, "South of Hell"). In a feature debut performance, Luke Judy plays the resourceful child who creatively uses poetry to survive when his disturbed mother locks him in a box, then transforms the child's makeshift prison into an art installation. The supporting cast includes Rex Lee ("Young and Hungry") and Christos Vasilopoulos ("The Last Ship"). The film, shot in black-and-white, uses 32 poems as a framing device for the story about an artistic but damaged family.

Guys Reading Poems world premiered at Palm Beach International Film Festival and went on to screen at ten film festivals, winning the "Audience Award for Best Feature/Drama" at Woods Hole Film Festival, the "Creativity in Drama" award at Breckenridge Film Festival and "Best in Fest" at the South Texas Underground Film Festival. Early praise for the film includes a rave review from John Paul King of The Los Angeles Blade, who writes, "By channeling the pain of damaged youth into a unique film meditation, [Hughes] has created a touchstone for anyone who struggles to reconcile these psychic scars within their own life. It's an interior landscape that can be recognized by almost anyone, of course; and by treating it with candor, acknowledging its dark beauty, and honoring its inseparability from identity, Hughes has given us a movie that illuminates the path to transcendence...it deserves to be called essential viewing." Alexander Ryll of Gay Essential called it, "a gripping mindbender that compels the viewer to gasp both in

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terror and awe" while Ernest Owens of Philadelphia Magazine describes the film as, "a visual poetic experience and jaw-dropping black-and-white thriller."

According to director Hunter Lee Hughes, the film is "designed as a dream with the dreamer slowly waking up" and is largely based on public domain poetry he discovered in his late grandmother's collection. *Guys Reading Poems* is the feature directorial debut for Hughes, who previously wrote and directed the LGBT internet television series "Dumbass Filmmakers!" and authored two queer plays. Michael Marius Pessah served as the film's cinematographer, after earning the prestigious "Five in Focus" award from OutFest for his work on "Joshua Tree 1951: A Portrait of James Dean." Shpetim Zero created haute couture designs for the film and Joachim Horsley composed the original score.

Gravitas Ventures is a leading all rights distributor of independent cinema. Founded in 2006, Gravitas connects independent filmmakers and producers with distribution opportunities across the globe. Working with more than 500 content partners, Gravitas Ventures has distributed thousands of films into over 100 million homes. Recent releases include Elián from Academy Award® winning Executive Producer Alex Gibney, Katie Holmes' feature directorial debut, All We Had, Jonathan Hock's Fastball, Colin Hanks' All Things Must Pass, Being Evel from Academy Award winning director Daniel Junge and producer Johnny Knoxville, Backstreet Boys: Show 'Em What You're Made Of, and For The Love of Spock from Director Adam Nimoy.

For additional information on the film, visit GuysReadingPoems.com, which is available for pre-order on iTunes at: <https://apple.co/2DGE2dZ>. For trailer and pr videos: <http://youtube.com/fatelinkproductions>.

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