

# My Christmas Guide



## Johnson Production Group Press Kit

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### One-Liner

A single dad who suddenly loses his sight bonds with the trainer of his new seeing-eye dog.

### Synopsis

Trevor, a college literature professor, has recently and suddenly lost his sight. A single dad to his daughter Annie, Trevor is badly shaken and barely hanging on. To make matters worse, a new construction project at his college poses everyday dangers for him, and the head of his department worries for his safety and suggests that Trevor take some time off until the project is complete. Concerned for her dad, Annie decides that a seeing-eye dog would help him enormously, and she convinces him to visit Best Friend Dog Guides, a facility that trains dogs for the vision impaired. There they meet Peyton who introduces them to the perfect guide dog, Max. As Peyton trains Trevor with Max, the two bond, and Peyton helps Trevor regain his old self-confidence. But when Trevor is finally forced to take leave from his department, he fears bringing Max into his life was all for naught. But His students rally around him, insisting that he's the best professor in the department, and their heartfelt display renews his faith in his abilities -- and paves the way for romance with Peyton, just in time for Christmas.

### Producers

Executive Producers  
TIMOTHY O. JOHNSON  
OLIVER DE CAIGNY  
ANDREW C. ERIN

Co-Executive Producers  
JOSEPH WILKA  
LISA ALFORD

Producer  
TARALEE GERHARD

### Key Cast

<u>CHARACTER</u>	<u>ACTOR</u>
Peyton Lewis	AMBER MARSHALL
Trevor Donovan	BEN MEHL
Annie Donovan	AVA WEISS
Chad	JUSTIN GERALD NURSE

## Key Cast Biographies

### AMBER MARSHALL



Amber Marshall is a rare find in the busy world of today. A strong role model for many, she captivates audiences across the globe in her leading role as Amy Fleming on Heartland. This popular television drama set on an Alberta ranch has been in the homes of millions for well over a decade. Not only does Marshall play a horse lover on television; she lives the cowgirl lifestyle. Hardworking, independent and talented, Amber has been pursuing her life goals since she was old enough to voice them.

Born and raised in London, Ontario, Amber grew up with a blend of big-city smarts and down-home groundedness that has enabled her to accomplish success in each of her many passions. She was introduced to horses shortly after saying goodbye to her toddler years and it was a match made in heaven. Amber also engaged with her other love, acting, at an equally young age. Joining The Original Kids Theatre Company she performed in many productions and attended Lester B. Pearson School for the Arts for her elementary teachings. Developing rapidly as an artistic presence, Amber obtained an agent in Toronto by the age of 11, and within the year was cast as a young Lorna Luft in her first major production, a mini-series called Me and My Shadows: The Life of Judy Garland. Soon after, she was cast as Ally on the YTV Network's Super Rupert. This was her first opportunity to play a principal character, and she quickly demonstrated that her combination of talent, charisma and passion for her work enabled her to carry a grand production on her young shoulders.

When she was 14, Amber was cast in the title role in The Elizabeth Smart Story, a movie-of-the-week based on the true story of the 2002 abduction of a Utah teenager. Amber's unique combination of strength and vulnerability shone through this role. People took notice and rewarded her performance with a nomination for the Los Angeles-based Young Artist Award for Best Actress in a Movie. At this point, Amber could clearly see the career path that lay before her and she pursued it with all her being. She made the most of her opportunities to show her range as an actor, appearing in such varied productions as Resident Evil, Doc, Power Strikers and Dark Oracle. It was at this time that the hand of fate brought together her two great passions, horses and acting in her role on Heartland.

For over 15 years Amber has starred as a cowgirl who uses her intuition to help heal troubled horses. Marshall plays a role who rings true with the show's millions of fans around the world. At 20 years old Amber left behind the rolling hills of southwestern Ontario to make her home in the same beautiful terrain of southern Alberta that is depicted on Heartland. Horses are as big a part of her home life as they are of her workday. Amber and her husband, Shawn currently have several horse companions on their ranch as well as cattle, dogs, cats and a variety of other critters.

Never one to become involved in organized sports, Amber has nevertheless always led a very active life. Whether it is daily farm chores around her ranch or riding her beloved horses, Amber is a living example of the old adage that an active life is a healthy life and a healthy life is a happy life.

## BEN MEHL



Born and raised in Toronto, the legally blind Ben Mehl graduated from the University of Toronto where he double majored in Astrophysics and Drama. He was accepted to both NYU's Graduate Acting Program and Julliard but received his MFA from NYU. Mehl has performed largely in theater but has also appeared on television such as "The Good Wife." In addition to acting, Mehl also teaches acting, voice and movement for actors in NYC. He has taught Movement and Shakespeare's Clowns at the NYU Graduate Acting Program in addition to Voice and Movement, Physical Characterization and Combat at the New York Film Academy.

Ben starred as 'Dante' alongside Penn Badgley in the third season of Netflix's hit series "You." where he plays Dante, a veteran whose eyesight was damaged. Dante is a dedicated family man with a husband and two stepchildren, who longs to expand his family and delights in helping his friends with their children.

## AVA WEISS



Young Ava Weiss is a Canadian actress, based in Northern Ontario. She received her first role on Honey Bee exactly one year to the day that she started her series regular role on When Hope Calls. Ava is also known for roles in the films A Christmas Letter, Moonfall, Lemonade Stand Romance, The Breach, The Most Colorful Time of the Year and Twas the Night Before Christmas.

## JUSTIN GERARD NURSE



Justin Nurse is a multifaceted performer with a wide range of talents and professionally honed skills. As an actor he is capable of taking on both comedy and drama with remarkable skill. Justin is reliable and versatile. As both an exceptional singer and gifted actor Justin can deliver topnotch performances every time. Currently Justin is recording a number of Radio and Tv Commercials in his home province of NFLD and performing with his cover band Stixx N Stones and his big Band 709. His recent TV appearances include Behind Closed Doors, The Death of Winter, Hudson and Rex, Spin and Republic of Doyle.

## Production Credits

### Full Cast

#### Actors

AMBER MARSHALL  
BEN MEHL  
AVA WEISS  
JUSTIN GERALD NURSE  
BRIDGET WAREHAM  
JONATHAN VALVANO  
LESLIE TAKEDA  
VOX SMITH  
RORY LAMBERT  
PETER SOUCY  
ERIN MACKEY  
PATRINA BROMLEY  
AIDAN KALECHSTEIN  
HEATHER REARDIGAN  
DAVID FRASER  
EVAN STERN

#### Role

Peyton Lewis  
Trevor Donovan  
Annie Donovan  
Chad  
Katie  
Nathan  
Dr. Shaw  
Sean  
Foreman  
Dr. Lewis  
Chef  
Principal Harris  
Older Boy  
Receptionist  
Audiobook Narrator  
Phone App Voice

### Casting

RON LEACH, c.d.c.

### Composer

RUSS HOWARD III

### Costume Designer

MORGAN TODD

### Editor

DAVID J. CAIN

### Production Designer

STEPHEN BUTLER

### Director of Photography

JUAN MONTALVO

### Associate Producer

ALEXANDRA WARING

### Written by

KEITH HEMSTREET

### Directed by

MAXWELL MCGUIRE

## Other Crew

BORYS SHAPOVALOV	First Assistant Director
RACHEL DEAL	Second Assistant Directors
JEFF LEWIS	
MALLORY HORSMAN	Third Assistant Director
DION EMBERLEY	Fourth Assistant Director
BARRY REID	Animal Wrangler
MALLORY HORSMAN	Associate Casting Director
ZOË BALSOM	Production Coordinator
VICTORIA PICKETT	Assistant Production Coordinator
LOU MARTIN	Office Manager
DEBORAH HORSMAN	Production Secretary
LOGAN WAGNER	Production Accountant
MATTHEW CARVELL	Post Production Accountant
JAMES BERESFORD	Petty Cash Officer
STEPHEN BUTLER	Production Designer
DEENA RIGGS	Art Director
KOBE DILLON	Set Decorator
NATHALIE JAVALT	Art Department PA
MITCHELL MCGEE-HERRITT	
KIRSTI MIKODA	
GERRY RIGGS	
TREVOR WHITE	
MICHAEL LAWLOR	Graphic Designer
MICHAEL LAWLOR	Props Master
MORGAN LEIGH TODD	Costume Designer
KELSEY MAYE	Wardrobe Assistant
JUAN MONTALVO	Director of Photography
ADAM PENNEY	B Camera Operator
JOSEF GERHARDS	A Cam - First Assistant Camera
NICK EDGAR DUNNE	A Cam - Second Assistant Camera
SPENCER THOMPSON	B Cam - First Assistant Camera
RILEY HARNETT	B Cam - Second Assistant Camera
MATTHEW FITZGERALD	Camera Trainee
AARON ELLIOTT	Lab Technician
SARAH HOWSE	Stills Photographer
CHRISTOPHER LEO	Gaffer
GRANT COURTNEY	Best Electrics
ROBERT ALEXANDER PIKE	
TIM SULLIVAN	Grip / Electric Swing
ANDREW HAMOND	Key Grip
LIAM SMALL	Best Grip
COLIN MERDSOY	Grips

ALEX TUCKER	
NICK MASTERS CONTENT INC.	Third Grips
DAVID FLEMMING	
CHRIS HANLEY	
JIMMY KEAN	
DIEGO MEDINA	Sound Mixer
NEIL MCINTYRE	Boom Operators
STEPHEN POND	
OTTO QUINTON	
DAVE CONNORS	Script Supervisor
DANNY NOSEWORTHY	Location Manager
ALEXANDER PIERCE	Assistant Location Manager
CAMERON COURTNEY	Location Production Assistants
AVALON	
DAN GILL	
CHRISTIAN HEFFERNAN	
BRANDON LAWLOR	
ALEXANDER PIERCE	
ALEX TOPOLNISKI	
LAUREN SNOW	Key Makeup Artist
MEGAN GREGORY	First Assistant Makeup Artist
ZACK CLARKE	Key Hairstylist
SAMANTHA KOSUB	Makeup & Hair Assistant
PAUL ELLIOTT	Transport Coordinator
JAMES WALL	Transport Captain
DONNA CORCORAN	Driver
RHODA PENDER	
JAMES MICHAEL WOOLRIDGE	Off-Set Labour
JENNIFER NORMAN	Food & Beverage Manager
JOHN MACKINNON	First Assistant Caterer
MELANIE GIBBONS	Assistant Craft Service
DANICA SANTUCCIONE	
THE NO CONFLICT CLEARANCE COMPANY	Script Clearance
HALL WEBBER LLP	Legal Services
DANNY WEBBER	
ABOVE THE LINE MEDIA SERVICES	Business Affairs
BRENDAN MCNEILL	
ARTHUR J. GALLAGHER CANADA LTD.	Insurance
ALEXANDRA WARING	Post Production Supervisor
RICHARD FRAZIER	Post Production Coordinators
URBAN POST PRODUCTION	Post Production Services
JOSEPH FACCIUOLO	Dialogue & ADR Editor
EHREN PFEIFER	ADR Recordist
KIRSTY SMITH	Sound FX Editors
LUKA TOMA	

JESSICA SEVIER	Foley Artists
DAWN LEWIS	
JESSICA SEVIER	Foley Recordists
MIKE POISSON	
FIL HOSEK	Re-Recording Mixer
KENT MCCORMICK	Colorist
KALI RAIGH	Online/Packaging Editors
RICHARD DORMAN	
PETER TOKARSKY	Project Manager
BRUCE REES	Picture Operations Manager
ROBERTA BRATTI	V.P. of Operations
PETER BENISON	Stock Footage
ARTGRID/21AERIALS	
ARTGRID/ARTEMMEDVEDIEV	
ARTGRID/OLEKSANDROSTAPCHUK	
ARTGRID/OMRIOHANA	
ARTGRID/ROSSHILLIER	
ARTGRID/THESTOCKSTUDIO	
POND5/BLACKBOXGUILD	
POND5/BRENDANRILEY	
POND5/RSTOCK	

Cold This Christmas  
courtesy of Extreme Production Music USA and Artfully Entertaining Music Library

Christmas Cocktail Hour  
by Russell L. Howard III and Massimo Sammi  
courtesy of Sweaty Avocado Music and Astral Avocados Music

Jive With Me  
by Russell L. Howard III  
courtesy of Sweaty Avocado Music

Santa's Got Something For You  
by Russell L. Howard III and Todd Herfindal  
courtesy of Sweaty Avocado Music and Valley Vista Music LLC

Not Going Anywhere  
courtesy of Extreme Production Music USA and Artfully Entertaining Music Library  
courtesy of Sweaty Avocado Music and Valley Vista Music LLC

## **Producer Biographies**

### **TIM JOHNSON – Executive Producer**

Tim Johnson is among the most active and reliable producers in the business thanks to top rate productions and global distribution appeal.

Johnson is also responsible for producing the international hit series, DR. QUINN, MEDICINE WOMAN for CBS for over 5 seasons. During his 100-episode tenure, he also developed and produced the original docu-drama COLD CASE for CBS network, which was the very first program to integrate television with the Internet.

Johnson has produced over 150 movies, 15 globally released series for every major US network - including ABC, Disney, CBS, NBC, Netflix, FOX and Sony.

## **JOHNSON PRODUCTION GROUP**

The Johnson Production Group contracts globally to produce television content for international networks, studios and distributors. Based in Los Angeles and Vancouver, British Columbia, the company manages production, facilitates development and financing, procures distribution and guarantees quality and timely execution of its programs. While costs have gone up, so has the demand for quality. No longer is good enough, good enough. Johnson Production Group serves that segment when a show needs to be "A" quality, but produced efficiently enough to meet a locked budget. JPG specializes in value, protection of creative elements, and delivery of a quality finished product.

### **ANDREW C. ERIN – Executive Producer**

Andrew Erin is a Canadian Writer/Director making a big splash in the US, and has produced, written and directed numerous commercially successful films. His directorial debut, SAM'S LAKE, was an official selection at the Tribeca Film Festival and did an excellent theatrical run in select theaters around the country; distributed by Lionsgate Films. Andrew also wrote the script for the film. Andrew's directorial credits include, SIMPLE THINGS, produced for Screen Media Ventures and Universal Studios. Besides winning The Bob Clark Award for Best Director at the California Independent Film Festival, the film was commercially received. Andrew has worked continuously as a writer/director, building a strong library of films in the Thriller/Horror genres with: Embrace of The Vampire, The Clinic, Final Sale, Confined and Toxic Skies.

### **OLIVER DE CAIGNY – Executive Producer**

Oliver De Caigny is a Canadian producer originally from Belgium, his background in financing, production, and post production makes him a well-rounded producer for any type of production. His experience in financing and production agreements (film and TV series and movies-of-the-week), distribution agreements (both domestic and foreign) as well as international co-productions, Canadian tax credit, Telefilm Canada and Canada Media Fund incentives provides him with a well-rounded background in development, production and distribution for motion pictures, television series and productions.

### **JOSEPH WILKA – Co-Executive Producer**

Joseph Wilka is the Head of Production for Johnson Production Group. Los Angeles-based, Joseph had already produced and directed several feature films before serving as the senior marketing executive for Gravitax Ventures. While at Gravitax, Wilka helped pioneer new distribution models for independent films including day-and-date theatrical releases. It was also at Gravitax where Joseph first worked with Johnson Production Group to facilitate the release of their films to the worldwide Video On Demand



audience. After serving as the Director of Distribution and Production for Viva Pictures, where he produced English-language versions of foreign animated titles for DirecTV, Wilka officially joined Johnson Production Group. As Head of Production, he oversees the development, production, and distribution of films from multiple production units for release on broadcast and streaming platforms.

### **LISA ALFORD – Co-Executive Producer**

Lisa Alford is a development executive at Johnson Production Group. A Massachusetts native, Lisa has lived and worked in Los Angeles for over a decade, always in support of excellent storytelling. Prior to joining Johnson Production Group, Lisa worked as an executive at TriStar television where she specialized in identifying IP that supported TriStar's mission to feature diverse, authentic characters and champion underrepresented voices. Lisa came up at Sony Pictures Television where she worked as a production coordinator in the Television Movies and Miniseries department and in the writers room on the WGN hit series OUTSIDERS. In her current role, Lisa shepherds projects from the concept phase through story development,

### **TARALEE GERHARD – Producer**

Taralee Gerhard committed to following her dream of making movies almost 20 years ago when the film industry was in its infancy in Ottawa. She spent several years with Fireside Pictures in Ottawa and truly cares about the family culture that Fireside has fostered amongst the crew, supporting each other's big sky dreams, making movies to be proud of. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the spirit of taking risks and following her heart lead Taralee to Newfoundland and she remains truly grateful to be able to continue working with Fireside Pictures as an in house Producer opening a new territory, expanding the Fireside Family and helping to foster the independent film industry in Newfoundland.

**Billing Block**

JOHNSON PRODUCTION GROUP PRESENTS **MY CHRISTMAS GUIDE**

starring AMBER MARSHALL BEN MEHL AVA WEISS JUSTIN GERALD NURSE Casting  
RON LEACH, c.d.c. Composer RUSS HOWARD III Costume Designer MORGAN TODD  
Editor DAVID J. CAIN Production Designer STEPHEN BUTLER Director of Photography  
JUAN MONTALVO Co-Executive Producers JOSEPH WILKA LISA ALFORD Executive  
Producers OLIVER DE CAIGNY ANDREW C. ERIN TIMOTHY O. JOHNSON Producer  
TARALEE GERHARD Written by KEITH HEMSTREET Directed by MAXWELL MCGUIRE



**ACTRA**



The Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit

**Canada**

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THIS HAS BEEN A HALLMARK MOVIES & MYSTERIES PRESENTATION

JOHNSON PRODUCTION GROUP

## Meta Data

### LONG (max 3000 characters) synopsis

Trevor, a college literature professor, has recently and suddenly lost his sight. A single dad to his daughter Annie, Trevor is badly shaken and barely hanging on. To make matters worse, a new construction project at his college poses everyday dangers for him, and the head of his department worries for his safety and suggests that Trevor take some time off until the project is complete. Concerned for her dad, Annie decides that a seeing-eye dog would help him enormously, and she convinces him to visit Best Friend Dog Guides, a facility that trains dogs for the vision impaired. There they meet Peyton who introduces them to the perfect guide dog, Max. As Peyton trains Trevor with Max, the two bond, and Peyton helps Trevor regain his old self-confidence. But when Trevor is finally forced to take leave from his department, he fears bringing Max into his life was all for naught. But His students rally around him, insisting that he's the best professor in the department, and their heartfelt display renews his faith in his abilities -- and paves the way for romance with Peyton, just in time for Christmas. (1116)

### MEDIUM (max 500) synopsis

When Trevor, a college professor and single dad, loses his sight, his daughter Annie convinces him to get a seeing-eye dog from Peyton at Best Friend Dog Guides. As she trains Trevor with his new dog, he regains his old self-confidence. When a campus construction project poses too many dangers, Trevor is forced to take leave until his students rally around him, urging the college to find a safe solution. Their display renews his faith – as does a romance with Peyton, just in time for Christmas. (501)

### SHORT (max 100 characters) synopsis

A single dad who suddenly loses his sight bonds with the trainer of his new seeing-eye dog. (92)

### 5 KEY WORDS

Seeing-eye dog, romance, dad, professor