



# SHE'S LOST CONTROL

A FILM BY ANJA MARQUARDT

2014 / USA / English / Drama  
90 min / HD / 16:9 / Dolby 5.1

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## LOGLINE

The professional and personal life of a sexual surrogate begins to unravel when she starts working with a new client.

## SHORT SYNOPSIS

Fiercely independent, Ronah works as a sexual surrogate in New York City, teaching her clients the very thing they fear most – to be intimate. Her life unravels when she starts working with a volatile new client, Johnny, blurring the thin line between professional and personal intimacy in the modern world.

## FESTIVALS

World Premiere Berlin International Film Festival 2014

North American Premiere SXSW 2014

New Directors / New Films 2014

Independent Spirit Awards 2014 - Nominated for Best First Feature and Best First Screenplay

## TECH SPECS

Run Time: 90 min  
Aspect Ratio: 16:9  
Shooting Format: HD  
Sound: Dolby 5.1  
Country: USA  
Language: English

## PRESS

*"Her film sustains tension and is arrestingly lit and shot, exhibiting a sharp eye for expressive compositions, chilling...Bloom is a highly watchable presence."* – Hollywood Reporter

*"Engrossing...a fascinating mood between slow-building angst and cold remove."* – Indiewire

*"Astutely cold and compelling...much to admire in Marquardt's control and precision as well as a well sustained lead performance by lead actress Brooke Bloom."* – Screen International

*"Bloom gives a truly brave performance as Ronah. She is at once strong and vulnerable, wise and naive, plain and seductive...There is an amazing scene with Johnny and Ronah looking directly into the camera and addressing each other. It's one of the most powerful scenes I've experienced in cinema in quite a while."* – Twitch

*"180 degrees away from The Sessions."* – Variety

*"A quiet wonder to behold, and a striking reminder that the world desperately needs more talented women directing films."* – Hammer To Nail

*"Scene to scene, she [the director] and her star, Brooke Bloom, keep you watching and wondering."* – New York Times

*"An unshakeable experience, one that's bound to launch its core creative team into the limelight, a glare that's deservedly intensified as the film has made its triumphant bow."* – Moveable Feast

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

*She's Lost Control* started as a sci-fi thriller. I had read an article about a Japanese geriatrics facility that uses robots not only to lift and feed patients, but also to "caress" them. As a result they were less aggressive and better able to sleep. Around the same time I heard about present-day surrogate partner therapy – a subculture of trained clinicians who teach their clients how to be intimate, sexual intercourse included.

There is something fascinating and unsettling and also deeply moving about the idea that intimacy can be taught, or simulated. It puts a magnifying glass on the basic human need (and inability) to connect. As I was exploring Ronah, the film's protagonist, it soon became clear that what I was really interested in was her "professional intimacy." The inevitable blurring of lines is what I set out to explore.

## Q&A WITH THE DIRECTOR

### How did you find the subject?

This goes back to what drove me to become a filmmaker, apart from the love for film and a great awe of the medium, it's the window that I'm allowed to have into these other worlds, worlds that I know nothing about initially, other people's lives that I get to research; that's just the biggest gift of all. When I first read about surrogate partner therapy, a few years ago, initially I thought it was a relic from the '70s, which was when Masters & Johnson first began using it as a therapeutic tool; and then I realized that the field is still very much alive. There are male surrogates working with female patients. In Holland, some cases are even covered by health insurance. It took me a year or so to gain access to the community. Naturally, there were barriers. There's a lot of misinformation online. It's a subject that's easily exploited. But I was persistent and suddenly I was talking to all these fascinating individuals. Brooke Bloom and I were able to sit down with Vena Blanchard, president of IPSA, the International Professional Surrogates Association.

### What was your casting process?

Casting this film, especially the lead role, was a journey. My casting director, Allison Twardziak and I had a real sense of how Ronah should be. We looked at a lot of up-and-coming actresses in NYC but it wasn't so easy to find her because she needed to be mature enough to carry the role, yet independent and fearless enough to, well, be on set fully nude. There's this thing called a "Nudity Rider" that's an important part of the contract; I had to convince people that it wasn't my intention to make porn or be gratuitous. I had never shot a sex scene before, so trust seemed important. At some point I realized: we have to either limit the nudity to "above waist" or cast an actress who doesn't have an agent. I was prepared to go for the latter, but then Brooke Bloom happened. I have to thank Robert Longstreet (who plays C.T.) for introducing me to her. Suddenly, I saw the movie. Brooke was working in LA at the time and then was scheduled to be back in New York for a play -- I ended up pushing the shoot for 6 months so I could work with her. I took a big risk in doing so.

### How did you find the visual style of the movie?

My Director of Photography, Zack Galler and I set out to create images that are naturalistic, yet infused with tension and darkness. We used available light whenever possible and there are some longer scenes in the film where we just let life in front of the camera unfold, without the restriction of formal boundaries. Yet the rhythm of the story demanded a visual arc. There is definitely a visual acceleration happening as Ronah's life spins out of control. For the sessions between Ronah and her clients, especially when she sees Johnny, I wanted to focus on the immediacy of what's going on between the characters. We used a lot of handheld for those scenes. Zack and I spent a fair amount of time together in prep and although we had never collaborated before, we found our language pretty quickly. Looking back, there is a great sense of freedom in how we shot this film.



## ANJA MARQUARDT

Berlin-born and Brooklyn-based, Anja Marquardt is a filmmaker whose debut film, *She's Lost Control* world premiered at the Berlin International Film Festival 2014 where it won the Berlinale Forum's top prize, the C.I.C.A.E. Art Cinema Award, followed by a North American premiere at SXSW and inclusion in the 2014 ND/NF showcase at MoMA. *She's Lost Control* continues to play the international festival circuit and is now preparing for a 2015 release. With a background in development and working in the fiction department of E.U. broadcaster, arte, Marquardt is an alumna of NYU's Graduate Film Program, an IFP Marcie Bloom Fellow, Berlinale Talent, and a participant of the Berlinale Script Station Development Lab and NYFF Artist Academy. She is currently in development of several projects, one of which is an adaptation of an award-winning novel.

## CAST



## BROOKE BLOOM – Ronah

Theatre credits: *Somewhere Fun* at Vineyard Theatre, *Lungs* at the Studio Theatre in D.C. and Barrington Stage, *Becky Shaw* at the Wilma, *The Grown-Up* at the Actors Theatre of Louisville, *Marie Antoinette* at ART, as well as *A Feminine Ending*, *Completeness* and *Hamlet* all at South Coast Rep and coming this Fall in *You Got Older* at the Here Arts Center. Film: *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*, *Ceremony*, *He's Just Not That Into You*, *Gabbi on the Roof in July*, *Swim Little Fish Swim* (SXSW 2013), and *She's Lost Control* (Berlinale 2014). Television: Series Regular on Amazon's *Alpha House*, guest appearances on *Louie*, *The New Normal*, *Person of Interest*, *Law & Order*, *The Good Wife*, a recurring role on *CSI: Miami*, and various pilots for NBC. The recipient of the 2012 Barrymore and 2013 IRNE awards for Best Actress, Brooke also received a 2013 Elliot Norton nomination.



## MARC MENCHACA – Johnny

Marc Menchaca is an actor and filmmaker whose previous TV credits include *Homeland*, *Law & Order: CI & SVU*, *Generation Kill*, *Treme*, *Inside Amy Schumer*, and the upcoming HBO comedy *Togetherness*. His writing and co-directorial debut, *This Is Where We Live*, in which he also plays the lead, premiered in Main Competition at SXSW 2013 and has played more than a dozen festivals since then and has garnered awards for Best Ensemble and New Filmmakers. The film opened in New York in November 2013 and is currently in a theatrical run at The Angelika Film Center in Dallas, TX. Aside from playing the male lead in *She's Lost Control*, Marc is the lead in the upcoming indie features, *Reservoir* and *Reparation*, opposite Jon Huertas, the latter of which completed principal photography this summer.



## Q&A WITH BROOKE BLOOM

### What did it mean to you to play the role of Ronah?

When I read Anja's script I was immediately interested in the world of the movie. What is this world of surrogacy and what are the boundaries? Who are the kinds of people who practice this work? What are my boundaries in my work... being an actress they are also unique. I also began to think of my own sexuality and intimacy and how hard won it was or is even. Originally I felt that Anja's script gave me the perfect template to explore something provocative and scary but in a controlled manner, in an almost clinical setting (rather naive of me) and I knew that the story would push me into territory that was uncomfortable and I wanted that challenge. As with all projects, you allow the story and the world of the film to take over and I wasn't really sure how I would wrestle with it, in what ways it would reveal itself to me but I knew it scared me to death. This is an important feeling to have I think.

### What was the most challenging part of it?

The most challenging part of playing this role is not necessarily the thing I thought it would be. I have never been in a movie where I was the focus of every scene... where I was in every scene. The first day was terrifying to me. I had done my work... I had talked the talk but I hadn't walked the walk and those first days where Anja and I had to become synchronized or develop our working language were very challenging and I was pretty intimidated. We were creating something together but it took a second to settle into who I thought I was playing. Then after that, living in Ronah's head space for a month every day was getting to me. The trajectory of the character in the film and her loss of control was being mirrored in my experience of making the film... of course! That was challenging to live in and I think I was challenging to be around (laughs).

### How did you prepare?

Anja was so instrumental and helpful in preparing me for this role. She met with me, sent me tons of source material and arranged meetings with people who actually do this kind of work where I would be able to ask questions and listen to their stories and be led through role playing sessions of actual sessions. I met with 2 different surrogates and both of these amazing people gave me insight into the kind of work they did and for whom and why. At a certain point I felt confident in what they actually did but I realized the most important thing that I had to come to terms with for this character is why. Why do certain people practice certain professions? Why am I an actor? Why are some people therapists? Why is Ronah drawn to this work? What is she healing inside herself? I made Ronah the patient. I examined all her relationships with all the characters in the film 1 by 1 and then I had to let the experience of making the film do it's thing. I have always found the role reveals itself to you in your life in some capacity so it's really the willingness to let something take over at a certain point.