

A person in a dark jacket with a red cross on the sleeve, holding a rifle, in a wooded area.

DOLDRUMS

A SHORT FILM BY
LE CHAU

PRESS KIT



LOG LINE

The film follows a Vietnam veteran grappling with self-forgiveness and explores healing through acceptance of his past.

SYNOPSIS

In 1972, during a fight in the Vietnam War, Captain Hunter is badly wounded and found by a Viet Cong medic, Lan. The act of kindness from Lan saves Hunter, but it causes a great price. Hunter lives but drowns himself in grief and pain. The narrative shifts when the ghost of his battle buddy pays him a visit.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

I grew up hearing my grandpa's tales, a Vietnam War veteran, about courage and compassion in the midst of the brutal war. DOLDRUMS is a wartime drama that draws inspiration from my grandpa's accounts of his experiences in Vietnam, as well as my own time serving in the US military.

Though the historical context today may differ from my grandpa's experiences in the 1970s, the enduring themes of the ongoing struggle, martial law, and liberation from the heavy burdens of war remain deeply relevant in today's ongoing armed conflicts and wars.

I deeply empathize with the lasting effects of traumatic memories, which affect not only veterans but also all individuals. Through DOLDRUMS, I aim to foster compassion and inspire healing from our shared experiences of the past. Now, it's my turn to tell stories of kindness amid the brutality of war with aging veterans, including those my grandparents would have been a part of, and with all those directly and indirectly affected by the impact of war.



APPROACH

The film's aesthetic boldly blurs the line between reality and illusion, the past and present, by seamlessly integrating the interaction between Hunter and the ghosts as a natural and integral part of the narrative, and shot with a unique blend of 35mm film and digital.

To emphasize the fact that Hunter's mind and soul are stuck in the past, despite physically living in the present, director Le Chau took an unconventional artistic approach. The present story was shot with 35mm film, creating a soft, dreamy texture that evokes the mood of Hunter's mundane and humdrum present life. On the other hand, the war story was shot digitally, resulting in clean and clear visuals with vivid colors, emphasizing its power in Hunter's mind.



THE FILM MAKER WRITER / DIRECTOR

Le Chau

Le Chau is a native Vietnamese film producer, writer, and director born in Sai Gon, Vietnam. She immigrated to the US in 2012 to pursue her dream of being a film director.



Le Chau started working at Cambridge Community Television in Boston for 4 years before transitioning to Los Angeles. She wrote, produced, and directed 14 short films before taking on her most challenging project - a war drama short film, DOLDRUMS, in 2023.

In 2020, Le Chau joined the United States Army to develop her leadership skills as a film director. Being an Asian woman in the US Army gives her a chance to overcome stereotypes about her ability to lead and be accountable for work that is often assumed to be a man's job. Her recent achievements included being a Finalist of the Hedy Lamarr Innovation and Achievement Award 2022, Winner of the Panavision New Filmmaker Program 2022, and Winner of the Jack Nicholson Prize in Screenwriting 2022.

Le Chau has her 1st Bachelor's Degree in Business and is an honor graduate with her second Bachelor's in film from the UCLA School of Theater, Film, and Television in 2023. She continues to work dedicatedly to bringing her perspectives as an Asian female director to the cinema world. Her goal is to make films with her authentic voice that reflect life in its rawest form.

AWARDS

- 2023 – Best Student Film, Ponza Film Awards, Italy
- 2023 – Award of Merit Special Mention, Best Shorts Competition, International
- 2023 – Awards of Excellence, Best Shorts Competition, International
- 2023 – Signature Film Series Short Film Nomination, Asian World Film Festival, Los Angeles
- 2022 – Winner of the Panavision New Filmmaker Program
- 2022 – Finalist of the Hedy Lamarr Innovation and Achievement Award
- 2022 – Winner of The Jack Nicholson Prize for Screen writing, Los Angeles
- 2022 – Quarterfinalist, the Los Angeles International Screenplay Festival
- 2022 – Finalist of the Screen Craft Film Fund, Los Angeles
- 2022 – Finalist of the Barnstorm Fest, Screenplay Competition
- 2016 – Nominated for "Best People of Color in Film", Boston 48 Hour Film Project
- 2015 – Nominated for "Best Director", Boston 48 Hour Film Project

DOLDRUMS Festivals

2024 Los Angeles Film Festival | Houston Asian American Pacific Islander Film Festival

2023 Los Angeles International Screenplay Awards | Los Angeles International Underground Film Festival | Toronto Shorts International Film Festival | Ponza Film Awards Italy | Mometu College Shorts Film Festival | Purple Sky International Film Festival | Best Shorts Competition,



MARSHAL VICTORY (DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY)

Marshall Victory is a LA/NY - based Cinematographer who considers himself a translator between a director's vision and his/her audience. He is experienced with many cameras such as the Arri Alexas, the REDs, Black Magics, Sonys, Canons, and Panasonics. He has also shot 35mm on the Konvas 2M, Panaflex Gold GII, Panaflex Millenium XL2, and the Arriflex 535B. He has shot 16mm with the Bolex and Super 16 with the Eclair NPR.

He is known for his work on *Is This Life?* (TV Series, 2021), *The Organization* (Short, 2020), *The Power Couple* (TV Mini-Series, 2019), *Awakening (V)* (Short, 2019). He is an American Society of Cinematographers (ASC) Master Class Alum '17 and an associate member of the Society Of Camera Operators (SOC.)

Le Chau (EDITOR)

In addition to writing and directing *DOLDRUMS*, Le Chau also assumed the responsibilities of producer and editor for the film, marking it as her most personal project to date.

Luqi Zhao (CO - EDITOR)

Luqi Zhao is an editor based in Los Angeles. She holds an MFA in Film Editing from the American Film Institute Conservatory and a BA in Film Studies from the University of North Carolina Wilmington. She had the opportunity to work on various projects, including two narrative features, one feature documentary, and numerous shorts.

CAST

Robert Fleet (Captain Hunter)

Robert Fleet is an actor, writer and director, best known for his roles in *Player* (2012) and *J. Edgar* (2011) and as the writer/director of *Last Mountain* (Director's Cut 2017) and *The Friends of Harry* (1995). He is also credited as "Robert C. Fleet" as the author of several novels (*Salt City*, *Last Mountain*, etc.) and screenplays (*Player*, *The First Person*, etc.).

Diem Truong (Medic Lan)

Born and Raised in Vietnam, Diem completed in Miss Vietnam, she took home the title then went on to become one of the most successful model at 19. Her debut in acting as Snow White in 2010, then *Six Inches Heels* directed by HamTran. Diem moved to Los Angeles end of 2021 to pursue acting in Hollywood. She landed her first role in *The Sympathyzer* attached with big names like HBO A24 Robert Downey Jr in 2022 set to release in 2024. This is just a beginning of her journey...



CHARLOTTE OXLEY (CO - PRODUCER)

Charlotte Oxley is the Film Director for the UCLA Film and Photography Society (FPS) where she serves as the Executive Producer.

Her career goal is to impact others with the films she creates and to show the beauty of life on film. She aims to put women in front of and behind the camera to showcase the work of talented female artists and filmmakers.

JULIANA NEWMAN (PRODUCTION DESIGNER)

Juliana Newman holds an MFA from UCLA for Scenic and Production Design. The creativity and originality that the craft demanded inspired her to look beyond residential interiors to entire worlds that production designers created for films and television shows.

Her most recent credits include art department production assistant on Bravo's scripted original series *Odd Mom Out*, HBO's *Crashing*, Starz' *Sweet bitter*, *John Wick III* and Amazon's *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*.

MICHAEL BRYAN STEIN COMPOSER

As an extremely versatile and skillful composer working in film, Michael Bryan Stein's love of storytelling has afforded him the opportunity to work on over 65 projects in the last five years in the realm of both live action and animation.

Having earned a PhD in Music Composition for Visual Media from UCLA in 2021, Stein centered his dissertation on three distinct approaches to scoring war films. Working on *DOLDRUMS* as a composer, he is excited to bring in years of his training and knowledge to make an exceptional scoring for his favorite film genre – war drama.



CAST

Captain Hunter (young)

Seth Allyn Austin

Medic Lan

Diem Truong

Private Chard (young)

Anthony Crehan

Captain Hunter (old)

Robert Fleet

Private Chard (old)

Allen Perada

Soldiers

Andrew Tran

Martin Gonzalez

Justin Stapleton

KEY PRODUCTION CREDITS

University

UCLA Theater, Film and Television

Writer / Director

Le Chau

Producers

Le Chau

Charlotte Oxley

Executive Producers

Le Chau

Jonathan Cocco

UCLA Film Committees

Director Of Photographer

Marshall Victory

Art Director

Rye Mandel

Wardrobe

Viktoriiia Vlansenko

Editor

Le Chau

Luqi Zhao

Original Score

Michael Bryan Stein

COUNTRY OF PRODUCTION

United States and Vietnam

Date of Completion

2023

Format

35mm & Digital

Ratio

1:85:1

Duration

15 mins

Genre

Drama