

“Very affecting...I couldn’t stop watching.”

– Alli Joseph, TNT’s Rough Cut

**“Simultaneously beautiful and haunting...
Demystifies Chronic Fatigue Syndrome with a
compelling, almost palpable force.”**

–Elizabeth Karlsberg, Santa Barbara News-Press



I Remember Me

a film by Kim A. Snyder

A ZEITGEIST FILMS RELEASE

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Fueled by the same rage at an unresponsive system that has birthed many a great social documentary, filmmaker Kim Snyder has taken up the mantle for the over 500,000 sufferers of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) living in the United States today. Afflicted with CFS herself, Snyder interweaves her own four years of fighting with the stories of others who face the same challenges, from film director Blake Edwards to U.S. Women's Soccer Star Michelle Akers to a high school senior preparing to attend his graduation after a two-year absence.

Traveling cross country to investigate documented outbreaks and interview medical experts, she reveals the secret history of a condition many doctors dismiss as nothing more than “laziness”, a condition that has been on record, and mostly ignored, in various forms since the early 20th century. How does one research a condition with no consistency of symptoms and where nothing seems to be medically “wrong”? Snyder confronts this problem head-on while never letting the vast scope of CFS overwhelm the individual stories of those coping, creating a document as personal as it is fiercely political.

Much more than an account of an epidemic unfolding, I REMEMBER ME transcends the disease and speaks to the universal themes of loss, uncertainty, human perseverance and finally, hope.

– synopsis by The Screening Room, New York

I Remember Me

AWARDS



“A compelling documentary that combines heartbreaking and soul-stirring personal stories with investigative reporting about Chronic Fatigue Syndrome.”



“A compassionate and inspirational documentary forged from the center of the maelstrom, I REMEMBER ME is a step toward overcoming the healthcare industry’s uncertainty, the government’s skepticism and society’s stigmatization.”



Synopsis

Between May, 1984 and late 1986, over 300 people in Lake Tahoe, Nevada became acutely ill with a flu-like sickness. Over fifteen years later, many of them have not fully recovered, individuals across the country have become ill, and the cause remains a medical mystery. Herein begins the bizarre tale of an elusive malady that in 1988 the US Centers for Disease Control named Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (aka CFS, CFIDS, ME).

I Remember Me is the first full-length documentary to explore the controversial and mysterious history of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, an illness that, according to the CDC, is now forty times greater in prevalence than previously estimated. Once dismissed as Yuppie Flu, this mysterious syndrome, for which there is not yet a universally acknowledged cause or cure, has prompted fierce debate within the medical community.

"How do you come to know fact?" the filmmaker asks. Without scientific proof, she concludes "you're left with personal anecdote". So Snyder sets off on a four year journey to investigate. Through the poignant testimonies of dozens of individuals—including film director Blake Edwards (*Pink Panther, 10*), and Olympic gold Medalist and Women's World Cup Soccer star Michelle Akers, whose brilliant career was recently cut short by the illness, (set to the evocative music of legendary jazz musician Keith Jarrett who was also sidelined by the illness for four years)—a chilling human drama unfolds which continues to baffle scientists worldwide.

In her search for answers, Snyder unearths clusters of the illness dating back to 1936. Residents of a sleepy Florida gulf coast town are united forty years later to reflect on the illness that devastated hundreds of folks in 1956 and was never diagnosed. We hear strikingly similar accounts from local doctors in Incline Village, Nevada, the site of the original Lake Tahoe cluster, and Lyndonville, New York, a rural upstate town where more than 200 people became ill in the mid-80's.

The story builds to an emotional climax as Steven, the severely disabled Connecticut teen, attempts to make his high school graduation by way of ambulance and gurney.

More than an account of an epidemic unfolding, **I Remember Me** speaks to the universal themes of loss, human perseverance, and our difficulties in grappling with uncertainty.

About the Filmmakers

Director/Producer **Kim A. Snyder** graduated with an MA from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies in 1986. She worked as an international film consultant for and produced several highly acclaimed international film workshops bridging the film communities of the United States and Eastern/ Central Europe (The Film Workshop At Prague 1991, New Europe/New York 1992.) Subsequently, she became a U.S. Producer's Representative for several critically acclaimed Eastern and Central European films including *Shadow on the Snow* (Hungary, 1990 New Directors Festival) and *Crows* (Poland, 1992 Telluride, Toronto, Cannes film festivals), which secured theatrical distribution in the U.S.

In 1994, Kim Associate Produced the Oscar-winning short film *Trevor*, directed by Peggy Rajski, a film that was used as the cornerstone of a not-for-profit educational media campaign addressing issues of teen suicide, homophobia and diversity, and was later broadcast on HBO. At the time her illness struck, she was assisting in the production of *Home For the Holidays*, directed by Jodie Foster.

I Remember Me is Kim's directorial debut.

Editor Paula Heredia is a New York based director and editor whose award winning work has been shown theatrically and on television series such as Frontline, American Playhouse, POV-The American Documentary, Vanguard-Cinemax, Bravo-Performance , HBO and BBC Fine Cuts. Her directorial credits include, The Couple in the Cage, selected for the 1993 New York film festival, Slings and Arrows, best screenplay and audience award at the Avignon film festival, and collaborated directing Free Tibet, with Beastie Boy's Adam Yauch. Editorial credits include Unzipped, winner of the American Cinema Editors Artistic Achievement Award and the audience award at the Sundance film festival, Emmy nominated Life After Life, and HBO production, Modulations Cinema for the Ear, which premiered at The Sundance film festival. Most recently Paula served as an editorial consultant to filmmaker Errol Morris in his new film Mr. Death. Paula is currently directing Portraits of Clementina, a dramatic feature film that explores a twentieth century history of Latin American art through the life of one renowned woman.

Co-Producer/Director of Photography Sam Counter is a New York based filmmaker who has been working in documentaries for the last four years as a Producer, Director and Director of Photography. Most recently, she was a Director for the forthcoming documentary series, Totally Hoops, which chronicles a season in-the-life of a 13-year old girls' basketball team and is scheduled to air on the Disney Channel in the fall of 2000. She is also currently Co-Directing and Producing an hour-long documentary tentatively titled Intersex which follows the lives of three intersexed individuals. Sam was the Director of Photography for a number of short narrative films and her directorial debut, the short film "Delish," enjoyed a healthy run at film festivals nationwide.

Director of Photography Don Lenzer has 30 years of DP and Cameraman experience and over 45 documentary credits to his name. His films include the 1998 Feature Documentary Academy Award winner The Long Way Home, the 1997 Academy Award nominee Suzanne Farrell: Elusive Muse, the 1996 Primetime Emmy winner Itzhak Perlman: In The Fiddler's House, 1995 Academy Award winner Maya Lin: A Strong, Clear Vision, and the 1984 Academy Award winning documentary He Makes Me Feel Like Dancin'. His 1988 television special I Have AIDS, A Teenager's Story won the prestigious Peabody Award.

Director of Photography Lee Daniel is an Austin based cameraman best known for his work in the independent feature film world. His features include Slacker, Dazed and Confused, and Before Sunrise (Dir. Rick Linklater). His documentary work includes: Letter from Waco, Secrets of the CIA, The Hunt for Pancho Villa as well as numerous television pieces for American Experience, PBS and others.

Coordinating Producer Heidi Zecher is a New York based producer and editor. She was formerly lead producer and editor for six years at a Washington, DC based documentary production company where she worked on numerous award-winning productions including Get Real: Straight Talk About Women's Health (CINE Golden Eagle; Gold Award, 1995 Charleston WorldFest International Film Festival; Silver Apple, National Education Media Network), Silent No More (Bronze Telly; Award of Distinction, The Videographer Awards), and Through My Eyes (Gold Award, WorldFest Flagstaff). Her award-winning work focusing on social issues has appeared on CBS News Productions Eye On People, NBC News Today Show, CBS News This Morning, CNN, C-SPAN, Court TV, and been included NAB satellite feeds across the country.

I Remember Me

a film by Kim A. Snyder

Directed, Produced and Written by Kim A. Snyder

Co-Produced by Sam Counter

Edited by Paula Heredia

Camera Sam Counter

Camera Lee Daniel

Camera Don Lenzer

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