

A woman with dark hair, wearing a dark blue button-down shirt and a dark skirt, is sitting in a black office chair in a dimly lit office. She is looking slightly to her right. The office has white desks, black office chairs, and a blue wall in the background. The lighting is low, creating a moody atmosphere.

# Deborah at Work

a short film written and directed by Linda Manning

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Cayuga Avenue Productions

## Logline:

After throwing a birthday party for her boss, Deborah finds herself in an unexpected sparring match with the office's intelligent cleaning robot, unearthing startling revelations about her past, and the possibility of a remarkable new future.

WELCOME

Dec 20 2041  
6:47:13 PM

SAHARA

PHYSICAL BOOT: ██████████

# Synopsis:

In 2041, Deborah believes she has a safe, predictable life. For twenty-seven years, she has been an extraordinarily capable and seemingly fulfilled executive assistant to her boss, Robert. After hosting his birthday party at the office, she stays late to clean, assisted by what she thinks is a routine AI robot.

Unnerved by events at the party, Deborah begins confiding in the machine. At first it acts as an ally, offering measured advice as she shares her private frustrations. Then it reveals that it has been monitoring far more than cleaning routines – tracking her purchases, health data, and her entire history. What begins as casual conversation becomes a pointed interrogation of the compromises she has made and the ambitions she has deferred.

Intercut with intimate livestreams from her bedroom, Deborah reaches out, searching for solace in the online world. She speaks to an unseen audience, putting on makeup and examining her own reflection, as memories of her distant mother surface. Deborah slowly recognizes how she has lived through others – first her mother, then her boss.

When Deborah realizes the robot's true function is surveillance, she is forced to confront the fragility of the life she's built – traveling back into her memories, into her tumultuous past – and to decide whether to finally step out on her own.

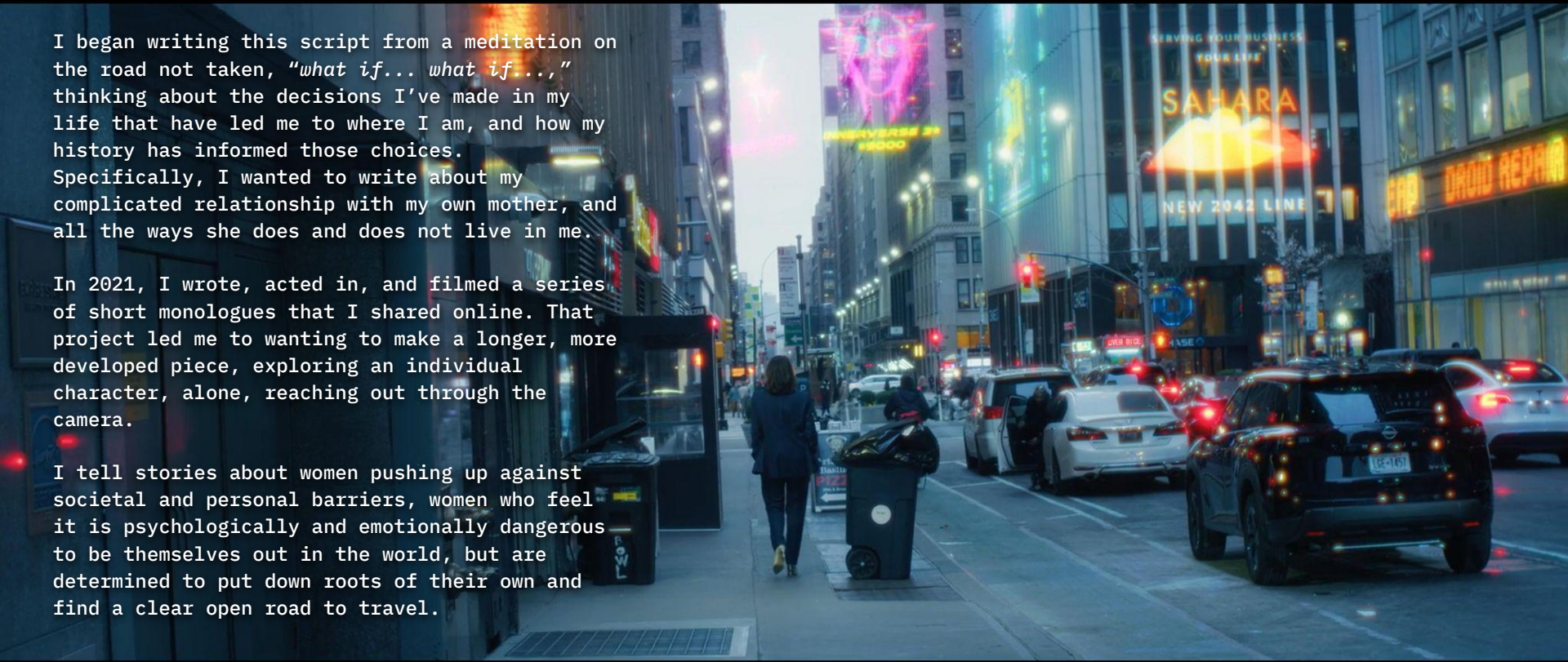


# Director's Statement:

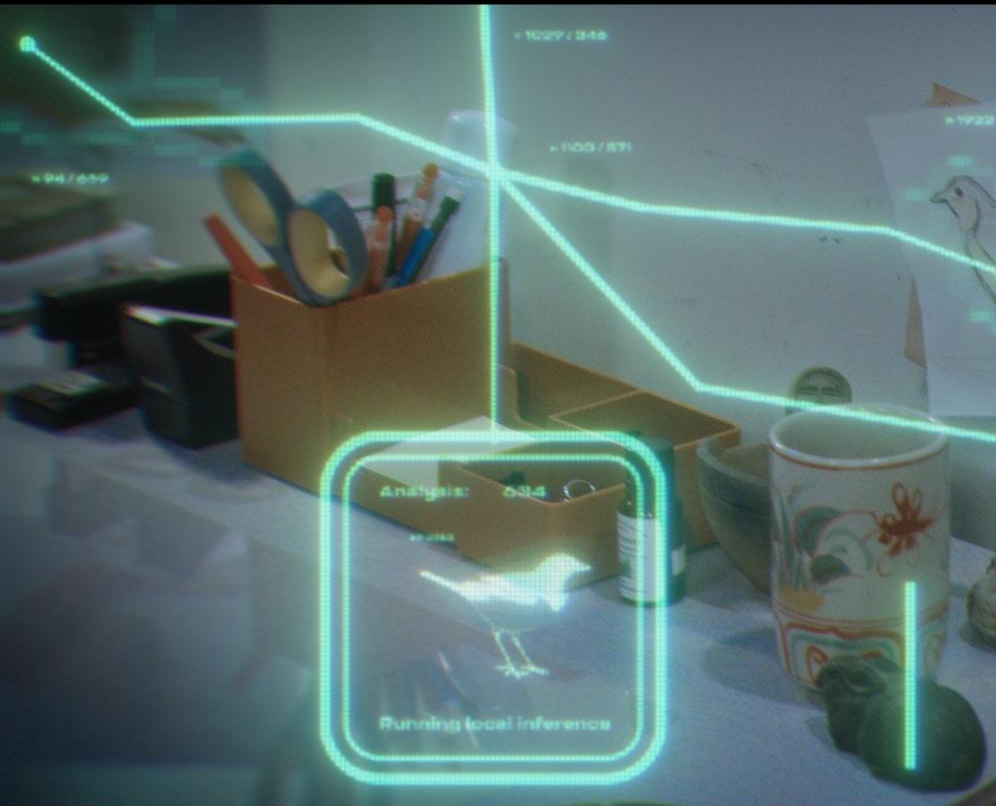
I began writing this script from a meditation on the road not taken, "*what if... what if...*," thinking about the decisions I've made in my life that have led me to where I am, and how my history has informed those choices. Specifically, I wanted to write about my complicated relationship with my own mother, and all the ways she does and does not live in me.

In 2021, I wrote, acted in, and filmed a series of short monologues that I shared online. That project led me to wanting to make a longer, more developed piece, exploring an individual character, alone, reaching out through the camera.

I tell stories about women pushing up against societal and personal barriers, women who feel it is psychologically and emotionally dangerous to be themselves out in the world, but are determined to put down roots of their own and find a clear open road to travel.



# Visual Effects:



*Deborah at Work* is set in New York City in 2041. To bring this near-future world to life, post-production incorporated extensive visual effects designed to feel seamless and lived-in. From holographic workspaces, and the evolving interface of the AI assistant, to subtle transformations of the city streets, the VFX helps establish a technologically saturated environment that surrounds Deborah without overwhelming her. The goal was not spectacle, but a plausible and immersive vision of tomorrow – one that heightens the film's psychological tension while remaining grounded in reality.

# The Team

## LINDA MANNING

Writer / Director / "Deborah"

Linda is an award winning actor, playwright, and screenwriter. Screenplays: *Learning to Drive* (GRAND PRIZE -- 2013 StoryPros Awards Screenplay Contest); *Charlotte* (WINNER - Best Feature Screenplay 2021 City of Angels Women's Film Festival, second round of competition for the 2016 Sundance Screenwriters Lab). Pilot: *Linda's Jazz Nights* (Quarter-Finalist - Atlanta Film Festival 2021).

She has written five full length plays that have been produced and published. Linda has performed in theater productions regionally and in New York (The Flea, Rattlestick Theater, Dixon Place, United Solo, NY Intl. Fringe), and she has had featured roles on television and in numerous independent feature films.

[LindaSManning.com](http://LindaSManning.com)



## BECCA LISH

Voice of "Sahara"

Becca Lish is known for playing Dawn Gleed in Netflix's hit original series *Clickbait*. She has portrayed a wide range of character roles in television and film. Animation fans recognize her as the voice of the "original hipster" Judy Funnie, and other characters, on cult favorite *DOUG* (Nickelodeon and Disney's ABC). In addition to on-camera work, Becca has provided voiceover across every medium and genre.

Early in her career, she was a resident company member at the legendary Trinity Rep in Providence, RI, performing in over 40 plays. A graduate of Yale College, Becca studied logic and the philosophy of language, sang in a Boston band, and soon after was cast in her first professional role at Trinity. Since 1990, she has lived in the Bronx.

[BeccaLish.com](http://BeccaLish.com)





**MICHAEL PINNEY**  
Executive Producer

Michael served as Producing Director of The Invisible Theatre, which developed and produced original works in New York throughout the 1990s. He later worked with Richard Frankel Productions and produced *True Stories*, a series of five solo shows directed by Obie, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle Award winner and Grammy nominee Gretchen Cryer. A graduate of Trinity Rep Conservatory, he began his career in theater and is currently a commercial real estate broker in Manhattan.

[GettingtoLease.com](http://GettingtoLease.com)



**BRADY KIRCHBERG**  
Producer

Brady Kirchberg is a New York-based producer with nearly two decades of experience across narrative film, television, documentary, and commercial production. A former Lead Producer at Freethink, he oversaw award-winning documentary content from development through delivery. His freelance credits include Sundance, SXSW, and Venice-premiering projects such as *High Maintenance*, *A Kid Like Jake*, and *Topside*, along with major brand campaigns. He is currently developing original, character-driven narrative films.

[EarlyMartini.com](http://EarlyMartini.com)



**NICK HERNANDEZ**  
Producer

A Brooklyn-based producer working in commercial, documentary and narrative production, Nick was born and raised in South Florida, Nick moved to NYC to study film and chase the dream. Nick oversees projects from the early days of inception and visualization all the way through to delivery and showcasing the final product. His projects have brought him all over the US. His narrative work has won awards and been featured in festivals internationally.

[NROFilm.com](http://NROFilm.com)



**JAX BROADS**  
Editor

Jax has worked as an independent film editor for over 20 years with a focus on character and authenticity. She wrote and directed the short documentary *Between Two Worlds* about three women from Pakistan, India, and the U.S. who created the dance company Junoon Performing Arts. They merge their love of Bollywood with Contemporary dance to celebrate their heritage and address social issues that resonate personally. She is currently working on Bollywood, NYC, a feature-length documentary.

[BollywoodNYC.com](http://BollywoodNYC.com)



**CHRISTINA DOBRE**  
Cinematographer

Christina Dobre is a New York-based Director of Photography dedicated to crafting emotionally driven imagery that fosters connection and healing. Drawn to stories exploring generational trauma and the female experience, she is an ASC Vision Mentee (2024–2025). Her recent narrative film *At Night* premiered at the Academy Award-qualifying Urbanworld Film Festival. Christina has collaborated with Comedy Central, Estée Lauder, Adobe, Aputure, Taco Bell, and Verizon, and mentors a filmmaking community of over 100K online.

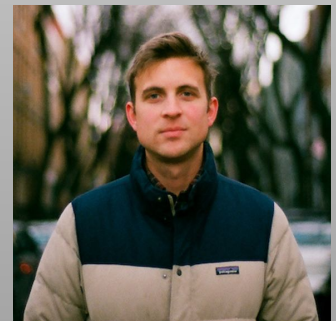
[ChristinaDobre.com](http://ChristinaDobre.com)



**DIANA PENGLASE**  
Production Designer

Diana Penglase is a Brooklyn-based production designer working across film and television. A dual U.S.-U.K. citizen, she earned her B.A. from Loyola University Chicago, studying in Italy, Vietnam, and Chicago. She most recently assisted Production Designer Mark Friedberg on Darren Aronofsky's *Caught Stealing*, Spike Lee's *Highest 2 Lowest*, and Fernando Meirelles' *Here Comes the Flood*, and worked in the art department on Jonathan Nolan's *Fallout*. She has also production designed numerous short films.

[DianaPenglase.com](http://DianaPenglase.com)



**JONO HILL**  
Composer

Jono Hill is a New York-based composer and studio musician whose work spans film, television, and video games. He has performed and recorded with Macklemore, ODESZA, K.Flay, and the Seattle Symphony, and contributed to scores including *The Greatest Showman*, *Halo: Reach*, and *Destiny: Rise of Iron*. He co-wrote Macklemore's *Ain't Gonna Die Tonight*, featured in *Lego Ninjago* and the 2017 MLB World Series. A Juilliard and Yale alum, his feature score *As Far As the Eye Can See* premiered internationally and won Best Texas Film.

[JonoHillMusic.com](http://JonoHillMusic.com)



## CREW

1st AC — Johann Beute  
Gaffer — Peter Garajszki  
Key Grip — Sam Cleary  
Key Grip (Alternate) — Augustin Huffman  
Sound — Artem Kulakov  
HMU — Tiger Moreno  
PA — Alivia Hernandez  
PA — Vicky Le  
Robot Arm Design & Construction — Peter Garajszki

## POST PRODUCTION

Post Sound Mixing and Design — [Chris Stangroom](#)  
Colorist — [Joseph Overbey](#)  
VFX — [Perry Kroll](#)

Additional Graphics — [Charlotte Pinney](#)  
Assistant Editor-Prep — Yarie Vazquez  
Assistant Editor-Post — [Erich Hehn](#)

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