



MAJORIE MICHAELS presents

# White Elephant

RUNNING TIME . . . . . 7 min  
GENRE . . . . . Comedy/Drama/Romance  
RATING . . . . . G  
YEAR . . . . . 2017  
LANGUAGE . . . . . English  
COUNTRY OF PRODUCTION . . . . . United States  
FORMAT . . . . . 1920 x 1080, 23.98 fps, 1.85:1, Stereo  
SALES/DISTRIBUTION . . . . . Majorie Michaels, LLC - [murtagh.aaron@gmail.com](mailto:murtagh.aaron@gmail.com)  
+1 (910) 547-5299  
LINKS . . . . . Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/206348994>  
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White%20Elephant%20HiRes.zip?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/ihm0pt1ndl34s79/White%20Elephant%20HiRes.zip?dl=0)  
Hashtag: #whiteelephant

## Synopsis

### SHORT/LOGLINE:

A young man's first feelings of love force him to act out of character, leading to a disastrous end.

### LONG:

*White Elephant* is a 2017 short film written and directed by Aaron Murtagh (*Present Company Excluded*) and introducing Henry Janzen.

Janzen plays Allen, a budding adolescent who works at the local bookstore and is the token male employee. Allen is crushing hard on his co-worker, Melissa, the youngest female employee, but still definitely out of his age range. Allen straddles the line of company pet and knight-in-shining-armor the same way he is straddling boyhood and manhood. The film explores the rumblings of sexual desire that happen at an age when society would prefer they didn't exist. At the staff holiday party, adrift in a room of "older women" and pink wine, Allen vies for Melissa's attention and breaks from his 'golden boy' status in a desperate attempt to woo her. Just like the gift swap it is named after, *White Elephant* probes the silent desires that lie in wait when people want more than what they possess.



## Director's Bio

Aaron Murtagh is a filmmaker and founder of the award-winning production company Majorie Michaels. He studied film directing at California Institute of the Arts. He lives and works in Montana.



## Director's Notes

I think the theme of unrequited love is endlessly endearing, it's hilarious and heartbreaking. These are two qualities that I love when I go to the movies. When I started working on this project I wanted to make a film that I would love, regardless of technical achievement or the solving of profound mysteries, just a film that I could watch multiple times. And that is what lead me to Allen: not a boy, not yet a man, and he wants something so badly but he doesn't know how to get it.

In casting the role I knew exactly what I wanted. I went to high school debates, local theaters, and church pageants until I met Henry and I knew he was right for the part. The first time I met him I watched him interacting with two teenage girls, they clearly liked him and he liked them but as with teenagers, their first inklings of flirtation quickly escalated to jealousy and then hitting. It didn't end well for Henry, as it doesn't for Allen, and I felt this was a sign that Henry could fully inhabit the character.





## Credits

ALLEN	Henry Janzen
MELISSA	Melissa Ragain
LISA	Lisa McGrory
CINDY	Cindy Stillwell
ANN RUTH	Christine Gwillim
LAURIE	Lucinda Boles
CARA	Cara Wilder
CUSTOMER	Ryan Mitchell

Written and Directed by Aaron Murtagh

Produced by Aaron Murtagh, Brock Forrette, Jenny Hatchadorian

Director of Photography Sam Hedlund

Edited by Kyle Moriarty and Aaron Murtagh

Assistant Director Brock Forrette

Assistant Camera Mason Harrelson

Sound Recordist Nichole Solberg

Gaffer Matt Wheat

Craft Service Anjali Sundaram

### THANKS

Jill Joyce, Ariana Pagliobasis, Tina Buckingham, Gesine Janzen, Marcia Herzog, Tay O'Neil, Araceli Lemos, Lauren White, Simon Wilder, and everyone at The Country Bookshelf.