

A young boy with dark hair and a serious expression stands in a school hallway. He is wearing a light-colored polo shirt with a circular school crest on the left chest. The hallway is dimly lit with blue tones, and rows of lockers are visible in the background.

# JAMES the SECOND

ELECTRONIC PRESS KIT

DIRECTED BY MAX AMINI

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| LOGLINE |

The coming-of-age story of a teenage boy, suffering from a rare disorder that prevents him from feeling pain. We follow the journey of a single mother as she learns to cope with her son's emerging independence as he experiences both physical and emotional changes.



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| SYNOPSIS |

James Bucke is not your average middle school student. He was born with an incredibly rare nervous system disorder which prohibits his body from registering pain. Coupled with an inability to experience or express emotions and an overprotective mother, James' condition set him apart from other kids. We meet him attempting to ride a bike for the first time, which results in him crashing into a parked car. James jumps right up, completely unfazed by the head-on collision. His mother, Cara, worries he might have broken something or has internal injuries since James is unable to feel whether he's hurt or not. James has no choice but to go to the doctor. It's there we meet Dr. Ramin, a new doctor who sympathizes with Cara's love and concern for her son's safety and pledges to do all he can to help.

At school it's apparent that James is a social outcast, only drawing attention when Scout, the class bully, makes a production of beating him up in front of the other kids. His only friend is an asthmatic boy named Doyle, who acts as an intermediary between James and the "normal world". James catches the eye of a classmate named Kristen, who begins to fall for his perceived flaws and who's infatuation leads to her inviting him to her birthday party. At the party, James is thrust into wildly unfamiliar social territory which ultimately ends in his arm accidentally catching fire. Videos from the party go viral. After school, in an effort to help James process his emotions and learn to fully experience life, Doyle challenges him to a race across the football field. Overexerting himself, Doyle suffers a severe asthma attack and falls to the ground wheezing. James frantically tries to call 911, but is unable to get help in time.

After Doyle's sudden death, James has an "awakening" of sorts. He begins dreaming at night and gains awareness of bodily sensations that are completely foreign to him. As he starts to notice inklings of emotions, James experiences a momentary flash of frustration and stands up to Scout, re-injuring his arm. Scout retreats back to her broken home and stashes her dad's handgun in her backpack to bring with her to school the next day. James hides his newest injury from his mom and visits Dr. Ramin solo to have it looked at. He confides in him about the changes he's feeling. Growing ever more concerned for her son, Cara begins seeking advice from others and shares details that rationalize her extreme fears.

The next day, Dr Ramin invites Cara out to lunch and we see a genuine connection between the two of them. Meanwhile back at school, Scout interrupts James' presentation by brandishing the gun in an attempt to frighten her classmates and make them realize that there isn't anything special about James. The gun accidentally goes off and hits James in the shoulder. The class scatters in fear, but Kristen stays with James as he lies in her lap. The first signs of pain start to register on his face. When his mother and Dr. Ramin arrive at the school, they rush through the chaos to find James. When they finally reach him, although he's clearly wounded, there's a discernible change in him that wasn't there before. As James is carried away on the stretcher, we see him smile genuinely for the first time in his life.



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## DIRECTOR STATEMENT

The plan was always to direct a comedy. As a standup comedian for over 16 years, I know how to make audiences laugh through storytelling. The plan was always to direct a comedy. Not once while searching for a script to take on for my first movie did I ever think it would be anything other than a comedy. When James the Second landed in my lap, I remember reading the script for the first time, tears streaming down my face by the time I was done. I was in bed as my girlfriend slept next to me, and similar to James, she too had been born with a congenital insensitivity to pain. I was fascinated by this phenomenon which felt so close to home, yet was so far from the realms of my understanding. An overwhelming feeling of serendipity washed over me. I knew I had to tell this story.

The collaboration throughout the making of this project brought me immense joy. I was able to gather a wonderful team of talented filmmakers and we wrapped production in high spirits, elated and proud of the work we had done. Post-production brought a new set of challenges and after eight weeks I finally saw the first completed cut of my film. It was so underwhelming that I felt like a failure. I feared I had no movie, that all the time, effort, and money had been a waste. Hopeless and heartbroken, I began searching for any solution that could save the film. I started fresh with a new editor, and after some time and discussion, he presented me with a brand new cut. I knew how important editing was in filmmaking, but the true significance had never hit me prior to this process. I was overcome with relief at the new version of my film as I began to see it come to life. I now feel the weight of how truly collaborative a process filmmaking is with every cell of my body. This experience has been one of my biggest takeaways to date.

This film portrays only one of countless rare medical conditions that exist in our world. I hope the story I have brought to screen will create an emotional experience for viewers that touches their hearts the same way the script originally touched mine.





**MAX  
AMINI**

DIRECTOR / PRODUCER

Max Amini is an Iranian-American director, producer, and world-touring comedian. Born in Tucson, AZ and raised on the east coast, he graduated from UCLA's School of Theater, Film and Television in 2004. Max's intense focus on directing and producing while at UCLA gave him the skills and real-world experience necessary to continue rising in his career.

In 2010, he launched his own production company and began creatively producing and directing commercials, television series, and comedy specials, including *Enissa Amani: Ehrenwort*, which is currently streaming on Netflix.

*James the Second* marks Max's directorial debut into narrative features.



**STEVE  
MIRKOVICH, ACE**

EDITOR

Steve Mirkovich is a veteran editor known best for his work on *Escape Room* (2019), *Con Air* (1997), and *Big Trouble in Little China* (1986). Born and raised in southern California, Steve has cut over 50 films to date as an independent editor.

Steve is a member of the honorary American Cinema Editors and Motion Picture Editors Guild. He lends his vision and 40+ years of experience to help usher in a captivating experience in *James the Second*.



**FELIX  
CRAMER**

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Felix Cramer is a German director of photography and a student of the Baden-Württemberg Film Academy. He graduated in 2003 with a focus in cinematography.

With over 45 feature-length production credits and numerous more commercial, TV series, and short films under his belt, Felix has received several awards and accolades for his work, including a nomination for the German Cinematography Award in 2010.

Felix most recently shot the first season of *Oktobertfest - Beer and Blood* which is currently streaming on Netflix.



**KAMI  
ASGAR**

SOUND DESIGNER

Kami Asgar is an Iranian-American and OSCAR-nominated sound editor with an impressive career spanning over 20 years. Boasting a long list of credits, his work includes projects such as *The Passion of the Christ* (2004), *Apocalypto* (2006), *Zombieland* (2009), and *Venom* (2018).

In 2003, Kami helped found 424 Post, a post-sound and finishing facility located in Hollywood. He has curated one of the most talented teams of audio professionals and has some of the biggest titles in film pass through his doors before hitting the box office.

## SCENE 02

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - DAY

JAMES rides his bike down the street, though his riding abilities do not inspire confidence.



LEAD CAST



**LYNN  
COLLINS**

CARA BUCKE

Viola Lynn Collins was born in Houston, Texas but spent a majority of her formative years abroad in Singapore and Japan. Upon her return to the United States, she studied at the prestigious Julliard drama school in New York. She was soon cast as Ophelia in *Hamlet*, followed by a turn as Juliet.

It was during these roles that she was spotted by director Michael Radford, who cast her in *The Merchant of Venice* (2004) alongside Al Pacino for her breakout role. Lynn is well known for her roles in the television series *True Blood*, as well as leading roles in *X-Men Origins: Wolverine* (2009), and *John Carter* (2012).



**BRYCE  
GHEISAR**

JAMES BUCKE

Bryce Gheiser is an emerging young talent from Dallas, Texas. His previous credits include roles in *Wonder* (2017), *A Dog's Purpose* (2017), and *The 15:17 to Paris* (2018).

Most recently, Bryce has landed a lead role in the new Nickelodeon television series *The Astronauts* which debuted in late 2020.



**ISAIAH  
WASHINGTON**

DR. RAMESH

Isaiah Washington IV began his career in film and television by collaborating with director Spike Lee on the films *Crooklyn* (1994), *Clockers* (1995), and *Get on the Bus* (1996). In 2005, Washing landed a breakout role portraying Dr. Preston Burke during the first three seasons of the hit television series *Grey's Anatomy* from 2005 to 2007.

Most recently, he has starred in the CW series *The 100* and has landed a hosting role on a new travel cooking show set to air on Fox Nation.



**ELLA  
ANDERSON**

KRISTEN

Ella Anderson is another young standout talent. At just 12 Years old Ella was praised by critics for her role in *The Glass Castle* (2017) as possessing acting chops beyond her years.

Most recently, Ella has had a long-standing lead role in the Nickelodeon television series *Henry Danger*, which took home the 2016 Kids Choice Award winner for Favorite Kids TV Show.

SUPPORTING CAST

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**BEAU  
GARRETT**

JUDY



**NICK  
STAHL**

MR. THOMAS



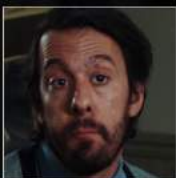
**BRYN  
VALE**

SCOUT THOMAS



**GEORGE  
WALLACE**

DEL MCMURRAY



**JONATHAN  
KITE**

ANGUS



**CONNOR  
ROSEN**

DOYLE



**RAMONE  
HAMILTON**

BILLY



**CARLY  
DUTCHER**

BRIDGET



**MAX  
AMINI**

MR. MORTON



**DOM  
IRRERA**

MILO



**JEREMY  
HOTZ**

TOMMY



**TOM  
DREESON**

PASTOR ROBINSON

# SCENE 34

EXT. SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD - AFTERNOON

JAMES and DOYLE trek off school grounds, toward the open football field.



JAMES TAKES OFF HIS BACK





## PRINCIPLE CREW

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DIRECTOR / PRODUCER:	<b>MAX AMINI</b>	LEAD MAN:	<b>RUSSELL THOMAS</b>	EDITOR:	<b>STEVE MIRKOVICH</b>
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS:	<b>MAX AMINI MERDAD ELLIE FRANK ZARABI KAMI ASGAR DEVIN CUTTER MOHAMAD MIRGHAHARI NATE SIRANG NAVID SHARAFATIAN BITA DARYABARI ARASH SALKHI</b>	COSTUME DESIGNER:	<b>ELIZABETH JETT</b>	ASST. EDITOR:	<b>JASON SACHAROFF</b>
		COSTUME ASST:	<b>SARAH JETT</b>	SOUND DESIGNER:	<b>KAMI ASGAR</b>
		MAKEUP DEPT. HEAD:	<b>BABAK ESKANDARI</b>	SOUND SUPERVISOR:	<b>AILENE ROBERTS SAM FAN</b>
		MAKEUP ARTIST:	<b>LEXI KLEYLA</b>	RE-RECORDING MIXER:	<b>ROBERT CHEN</b>
		STORYBOARD ARTIST:	<b>EVAN YARBROUGH</b>	COMPOSER:	<b>NIMA FAKHRARA</b>
LINE PRODUCER:	<b>BROOKS KEPHART</b>	DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY:	<b>FELIX CRAMER</b>	DATA MANAGER:	<b>RICHARD BURNETTE</b>
PRODUCTION MANAGER:	<b>FRANK PAULINO</b>	CAMERA OPERATOR:	<b>DEVIN CUTTER</b>	POST SOUND MIX BY:	<b>424 POST, LOS ANGELES</b>
1ST ASST. DIRECTOR:	<b>AARON GOTTSCHALK</b>	STEADICAM OPERATOR:	<b>XAVIER THOMPSON</b>	RE-RECORDED AT:	<b>SONY PICTURE STUDIOS</b>
2ND ASST. DIRECTOR:	<b>JOSH LARSEN</b>	1ST ASST. CAMERA:	<b>DAN COOPER DANIEL COLMENARES</b>	VISUAL EFFECTS BY:	<b>LAST PIXEL, AUSTRALIA</b>
CASTING DIRECTOR:	<b>NANCY FOY</b>	2ND ASST. CAMERA:	<b>DEVIN FAY</b>	DIGITAL INTERMEDIATE BY:	<b>BUNTE FARBEN, LOS ANGELES</b>
SCREENWRITER:	<b>TIM TUCHRELLO</b>	DIGITAL IMAGING TECH:	<b>PARISA REZVANI</b>	DI COLORIST:	<b>CLAUDIA GITTEL</b>
SCRIPT SUPERVISOR:	<b>ANNA BOWEN</b>	GAFFER:	<b>JARED BERMAN</b>	ADDITIONAL DI PROCESSING:	<b>D-FACTO MOTION, BERLIN</b>
STUNT COORDINATOR:	<b>COLE S. MCKAY</b>	BEST BOY ELECTRIC:	<b>MICHAEL PROA</b>		
PRODUCTION DESIGNER:	<b>CARMEN NAVIS</b>	KEY GRIP:	<b>JAMES WILDER-HANCOCK</b>		
ART DIRECTOR:	<b>CAITLIN MILLER</b>	BEST BOY GRIP:	<b>DANNY ROY</b>		
PROPS:	<b>WADE VANOVER</b>	DOLLY GRIP:	<b>COREY LOWE</b>		

| PRODUCTION STILLS |







## TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

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TITLE:	JAMES THE SECOND
DURATION:	1H 26M
LANGUAGE:	ENGLISH
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN:	USA
SOUND MIX:	DOLBY DIGITAL / DOLBY SURROUND 5.1
FRAME RATE:	23.976 FPS
ASPECT RATIO:	2.35 : 1
CAMERA:	ARRI ALEXA LF, COOKE S7i
NEGATIVE FORMAT:	DIGITAL / PRORES 4444 UHD
PROCESS:	DIGITAL INTERMEDIATE 2K
PRINTED FILM FORMAT:	DCP, QUICKTIME PRORES 4444

## CONTACT DETAILS

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### MAX AMINI

DIRECTOR / PRODUCER / EP

✉ [max@amediainc.com](mailto:max@amediainc.com)

☎ 310.877.0401

### DEVIN CUTTER

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

✉ [devin@amediainc.com](mailto:devin@amediainc.com)

☎ 907.280.8462



ABSTRACTION  
MEDIA

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ELECTRONIC PRESS KIT

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