

# Ginger

**A 23-YEAR-OLD WOMAN'S  
PRETTY FUNNY, SLIGHTLY SAD, POWERFULLY EMOTIONAL  
GUIDE TO BREAST CANCER**



# OFFICIAL TRAILER




## LOGLINE

A 23-year-old woman's pretty funny, slightly sad, powerfully emotional guide to breast cancer.

## SYNOPSIS

The future seems uncertain for recent college graduate Ginger Mathis. Her English lit degree hasn't miraculously scored her a publishing deal, and her part-time job isn't making a dent in her student loans (or getting her pushy mother off her back). The only thing Ginger knows for sure is that she feels lost trying to navigate adulthood, let alone find her life's purpose. And her recent breast cancer diagnosis certainly doesn't ease that anxiety.

As Ginger's treatment progresses, she encounters uncomfortable truths about living with breast cancer while trying to navigate the other challenges that exist in everyday life. (Dating and chemo go together like cool-mint toothpaste and an orange juice chaser, by the way.) When she crashes and burns trying to avoid the painful twists brought on by her illness, her dearest relationships she are threatened. Only when Ginger faces her greatest fear is she able to awaken to learn life's most valuable lesson: she, like all people, is worthy of unconditional love. Maybe she'll find her purpose after all?



“If my story can help empower at least one person, then it will have been successful.”

MELISSA BORATYN, DIRECTOR

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

**I was 23** years old when I noticed a small lump in my breast. My doctor told me not to worry. It was probably just a cyst.

One week later, I got the call that the “cyst” was actually an aggressive form of breast cancer.

After a grueling year of chemotherapy and radiation, I had lost a sense of identity after shaving my shoulder length red hair. I no longer trusted my body, but I anticipated that the worst of my cancer experience was behind me.

**I was 25** years old when my cancer came back. I decided to remove both breasts to ensure that this would be my last time dealing with this disease.

While I planned my double mastectomy, surgeons said nothing about the possibility of the cancer spreading into other parts of my body after the surgery!

**I was 28** years old when I was diagnosed with terminal breast cancer.

**This is my story.**



As a filmmaker, my life's mission crystallized in the face of my life's greatest sorrow. My experience with the insidious cruelty of breast cancer, especially at such a young age, provided me with two concrete goals:

**I planned to live long enough to see my 30th birthday, and I decided to make a movie that captured all of the pain, suffering, humor, and love that comes along with this disease.**

*Ginger* is first and foremost for all people who have gone through and will go through the horrors of breast cancer diagnoses and treatment. If my story can help empower at least one person, then it will have been successful.

**My hope, however, is that *Ginger* will move and inspire all audience members with its message of hope.**

There is nothing more valuable than the ability to find gratitude in the beautiful things in life. And while illness might make life harder, it does not limit or invalidate the meaning of each and every waking day.





## “How do you learn to be okay with not knowing if you are going to be okay?”

*Ginger* portrays the debilitating anxiety that young people face during and after diagnosis. It forces the audience to come face to face with one of humanity's deepest fears, and begs the question: how do you learn to be okay with not knowing if you are going to be okay? That was an answer I sought for myself, as well as for the movie.

Cancer sucks, and my intention for *Ginger* is to give the world a film that can help make cancer suck just a little bit less. That's why after being diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer just weeks before the start of production, between chemotherapy infusions and scans, I refused to miss a single day on set.

*Ginger* is both educational and inspiring. In addition to building community among filmmakers, the film engages medical experts by inviting them to participate in discussion panels, giving them an opportunity to share information and answer questions. Above all, *Ginger* connects with the many people in our audiences who have experienced a cancer diagnosis themselves or watched someone they love battle this disease.



This film has been a powerful experience of hope for me and my co-director and husband, Jimmy, who has been by my side personally and professionally since my initial diagnosis. *Ginger* has also fostered solidarity among women who have experienced breast cancer, their families and friends, and the medical community.





# CAST & CREW BIOS



**Melissa Boratyn: Director/Editor/Writer**  
Stage 4 cancer thriver Melissa Boratyn makes her directorial debut with *Ginger*. She brings an honest portrayal of her experience as a young woman with breast cancer to the big screen. *Ginger* is the third feature film Melissa has edited, following *Carmilla* and *The Giggles*. *Carmilla* has won several awards, including a best feature nomination at Cinema Soup Film Festival and official selection from CIMM Fest, the Indie Gathering International Film Festival. Melissa was nominated for the best editing award from the London International Filmmaker Festival for World Cinema for her work on *The Giggles*. She has a BA in International Film and Media Production from Loyola University Chicago and an MFA in Film from DePaul University.

**Jimmy Boratyn: Director/Producer**  
Jimmy Boratyn's directorial debut, *The Giggles*, was a semi-finalist at the Swedish International Film Festival and an official selection at the Hudson Valley Comedy Festival, the Indie Film Gathering Film Festival, and the Laugh or Die Comedy Festival. *The Giggles* was also a Best Feature, Best Story, and Best Editing nominee at the International Filmmaker Festival of World Cinema in London. In 2011, Jimmy founded Shot Time Productions Inc., a multimedia company specializing in videography and photography.





# CAST & CREW BIOS



**Ryan Grundtisch: Screenwriter/Producer**

Ryan is a screenwriter, producer, editor and Director of Photography who has written, produced and executed all phases of production on documentaries, promotional videos and original narrative films. Based in Chicago, Ryan received his MS in Cinema Production from DePaul University. Recent works include the documentary feature *An Unfair Burden*, where he serves as Producer and contributing Director of Photography, and the indie feature *Carmilla Vive* as 2nd Unit director and Camera Operator.



**Johnny Woj: Producer/Production Designer**

Johnny Woj is a Chicago-based actor, writer, and production freelancer. Initially drawn to acting, Johnny discovered a similar joy behind the scenes working as a Production Assistant (PA), 2nd Assistant Director (2nd AD) and eventually as a Producer. Recent credits include Steve McQueen's *Widows* (PA), Rupert Wyatt's *Captive State* (PA), Fox's *Empire* S4 (PA), Showtime's *Shameless* S8 (PA), and Stephen Cone's *Princess Cyd* (2nd AD).



**Jeff Harder: Director of Photography**

Jeff Harder is an Associate Professor with the School of Communication at Loyola University Chicago, where he has taught film production and film studies for over 25 years. Jeff has worked as cinematographer on fictional narratives, feature length films, and experimental dance and performance projects. Recently he was producer, director and cinematographer for the feature film *Carmilla*, which has been nominated for Best Feature Film at Cinema Soup Film Festival.



**Susan Gordon: Ginger Mathis**

Susan Gordon is a versatile actress, improviser, and creator native to New Orleans. Her credits include day roles on network series *Chicago PD* and *Empire*, and lead roles in the indie features *Easy Does It* (2018) and *Danger, Dames & Dangerous Games* (2016). Susan is a graduate of the University of New Orleans. Susan recently won Best Actress at the FLIC International Film Festival for her leading role as Ginger.



# CAST & CREW BIOS



**Meghan Flood: Bree**

Meghan Flood is an actress and comedian hailing from Cypress, Texas. After graduating from the University of Oklahoma with a BFA in drama, Meghan moved to Chicago to pursue acting, improv, and sketch comedy. She is a graduate of the Second City Conservatory and is one part of the duo sketch troupe, Fat and Funny.



**Debra Rodkin: Deborah Mathis**

Debra Rodkin spends most of her time on stage, most recently at her artistic home, Redtwist Theatre, in *The Realization of Emily Linder*. She recently completed several exciting seasons of appearing in seldom-produced works by some of our great masters and in her first devised play. She has appeared in indie films and in a webisode for *True Blood*.



**Frankie Weschler: Ben**

Frankie Weschler is an actor and improviser from the Chicagoland area. His most recent performance was with the critically acclaimed musical improv group Buzzed Broadway. Frankie is a graduate of the iO Training Center as well as the Second City Conservatory. He received his BFA in Theater from Ohio Wesleyan University.



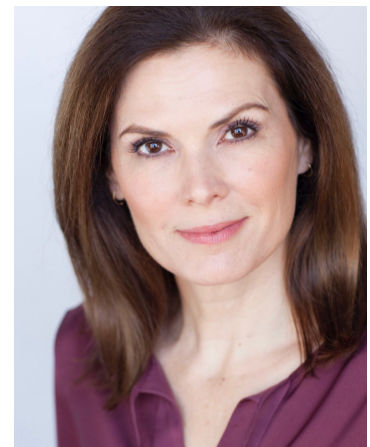
**Nora Fiffer: Dr. Toomey**

Nora Fiffer is an actress, writer, and filmmaker, performing at The Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre, Lookingglass Theatre Company, and The Court Theatre. She has been nominated for two Jeff Awards. Television Credits include *Chicago Med* (NBC) and *Detroit 1-8-7* (ABC). Nora currently teaches drama and filmmaking with Mudlark Theatre. She is a graduate of NYU Tisch and The School at Steppenwolf.



**Tempe Thomas: Scary Mary**

Tempe Thomas is a Chicago-based actor, appearing locally with Drury Lane Theatre, the Goodman Theatre, Northlight Theatre, Lookingglass Theatre Company, Marriott Theatre Lincolnshire, Lakeshore Theatre, Provision Theatre, and First Folio Shakespeare. Regionally, she has worked with Shakespeare Theatre Company, Huntington Theatre, Arena Stage, and Capital Repertory.



**Chandra Michaels: Dr. Lawrence**

Chandra Michaels is an actor and producer based in Chicago. Her work includes an episode of *Chicago Fire*, the feature films *Profile of a Killer* and *Market Value*, numerous commercials, and a stint at Second City's DeMaat Theatre with her improv troupe, Yours and Ours. Chandra has also appeared in Netflix's *Mindhunter*, NBC's *Chicago Med*, FX's *American Crime Story: The Assassination of Gianni Versace* and many others.





# FANS EVERYWHERE WANT MORE GINGER!

We have received requests for screenings in more than 20 states and in several countries. The more we can create a platform for these unique voices, the more healing can happen, which is our ultimate goal.



**Tish** [redacted] Is it coming to California? If so when 🍷?:( )


**Min** [redacted] When can we see this at any theater?  2

**Michele** [redacted] Ginger the movie - Orlando area please.  1

**Amy** [redacted] So awesome, can't wait until I have the opportunity to see this!!!!


**Jacqui** [redacted] Can't wait to see it this weekend!


**Sandy** [redacted] Everyone who is able should get out and see this award winning film-it makes a lasting impression on you that you don't soon forget


**Kristina** [redacted] I saw this in Houston with **Carolyn** [redacted]. Great movie.  1

**Stephanie** [redacted] I hope it makes it way to Sarasota Florida 🍷

**Nancy** [redacted] Hopefully it comes up near Boston

**Jill** [redacted] **Justine** [redacted], I'm hoping this showing comes to Charlotte. You should go see it!  1

**Min** [redacted] Are you coming to FL?  2

**Dafne** [redacted] I hope it makes it way North to Oregon. Or better yet, how can I make that happen?  1

**Heather** [redacted] When will this be in the UK? X

## CONTACT INFO

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