The background of the poster is a dark, teal-colored forest with tall, thin trees. In the lower right, the silhouettes of three people are visible, walking away from the viewer into the woods. The overall mood is mysterious and ominous.

DIRECTED BY BRUCE MCDONALD

# PONTYPOOLCHANGEVERYTHING

A HORROR MOVIE

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY TONY BURGESS

When a bizarre language virus hits rural Pontypool and transforms the quiet townsfolk into jabbering cannibalistic maniacs, Les and Mary must communicate their true love for one another, or die trying.







# CHARACTERS

## LES REARDON

A hard living addict and a rascal from downtown, Les is trying to turn his life around. He wants to kick drugs and alcohol and return to his job as a sign painter. His internal struggles start to manifest themselves in the dramatic events following the bloody Valentine's Day in Pontypool.

## MARY ROSELAND

A grateful member of the A.A. program, Mary is a small town gal who works as a teacher for handicapped kids. She is struggling with an unhappy marriage and wants her life to change.

## BOB ROSELAND

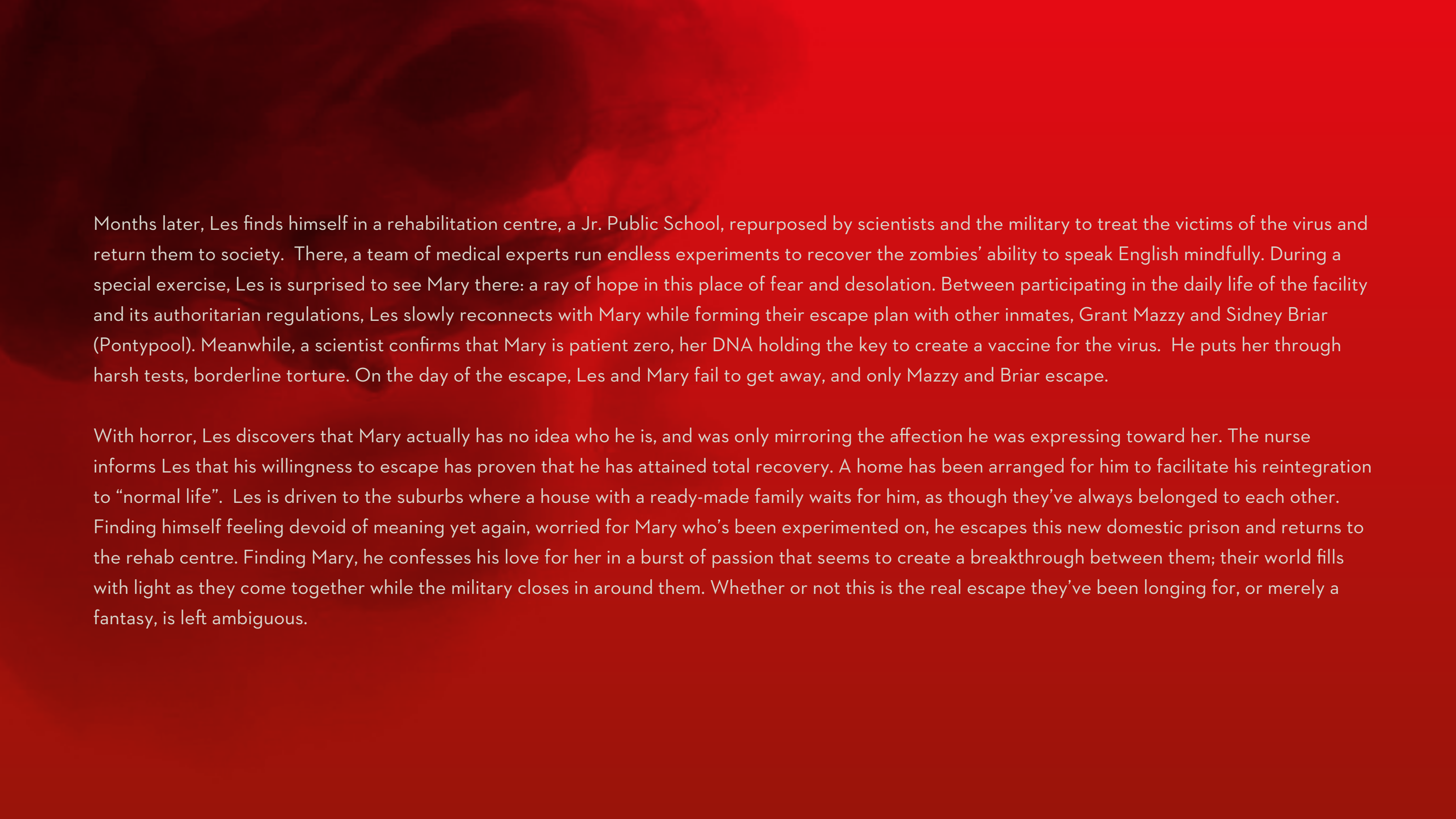
He's a cop. Educated in a small town. Bob walks with a swagger. He demands respect and digs Tom Petty and Rush. He loves his wife Mary, and wants to win her heart back.

# THE STORY

Recovering addict Les Reardon is farm-sitting on the outskirts of rural Pontypool, trying to stay sober under the eye of his sponsor Mary, who is trapped in the dying days of a marriage with local constable Bob Roseland. However, on Valentine's Day, as tensions between the trio start to rise, a bizarre virus breaks out in town, transforming local residents into jabbering, cannibalistic maniacs. Radio broadcaster Grant Mazzy urges everyone to stay home and avoid speaking terms of endearment in the English Language. At home, Bob starts acting strange, calling Mary "sweetheart" repeatedly, in a scary tone of voice. Mary calls Les for help. When he arrives, Bob lunges at him. Mary panics and in order to protect Les, she kills Bob. Les and Mary leave Pontypool.

On the road, Mary is overwhelmed with guilt for having lied to Bob about her love for him. She believes that she may have started the virus with this lie. Les tries to make conversation but his words don't make sense. It's been a stressful day. Eventually they come to a traffic jam caused by an army controlled barricade. The French speaking soldiers are frantic trying to control the people wanting to leave town. Les and Mary attempt to force their way through. Soldiers panic and all hell breaks loose. Les loses sight of Mary and goes crazy looking for her. As he desperately talks to people, he is actually killing them. Realizing that he is gravely infected, Les worries that his zombie self may have killed Mary. He searches for her through the disfigured bodies that lay on the blood-stained snow then walks into the cold dark night looking for her....

CONTINUES...



Months later, Les finds himself in a rehabilitation centre, a Jr. Public School, repurposed by scientists and the military to treat the victims of the virus and return them to society. There, a team of medical experts run endless experiments to recover the zombies' ability to speak English mindfully. During a special exercise, Les is surprised to see Mary there: a ray of hope in this place of fear and desolation. Between participating in the daily life of the facility and its authoritarian regulations, Les slowly reconnects with Mary while forming their escape plan with other inmates, Grant Mazzy and Sidney Briar (Pontypool). Meanwhile, a scientist confirms that Mary is patient zero, her DNA holding the key to create a vaccine for the virus. He puts her through harsh tests, borderline torture. On the day of the escape, Les and Mary fail to get away, and only Mazzy and Briar escape.

With horror, Les discovers that Mary actually has no idea who he is, and was only mirroring the affection he was expressing toward her. The nurse informs Les that his willingness to escape has proven that he has attained total recovery. A home has been arranged for him to facilitate his reintegration to "normal life". Les is driven to the suburbs where a house with a ready-made family waits for him, as though they've always belonged to each other. Finding himself feeling devoid of meaning yet again, worried for Mary who's been experimented on, he escapes this new domestic prison and returns to the rehab centre. Finding Mary, he confesses his love for her in a burst of passion that seems to create a breakthrough between them; their world fills with light as they come together while the military closes in around them. Whether or not this is the real escape they've been longing for, or merely a fantasy, is left ambiguous.



## NOTES FROM DIRECTOR BRUCE MCDONALD

Our low budget cult classic, **PONTY POOL**, is a sketch for **PONTYPOOL CHANGES EVERYTHING**

In our return trip to the town of Pontypool, we continue to generate great suspense, tension and bloody weirdness but also offer up beautiful blasts of horror and love. With an accurate schedule and budget, and with a great cast, we will deliver the goods. As the director, it is my intention to create an emotional and authentic story that will delight and scare the pants off you. At its heart, the movie is a LOVE STORY, well garnished with scares. The winter setting creates a chilly gothic atmosphere to tell our tale, and we trust this will contribute to a surreal foreboding for all the viewers. I look forward to completing this companion to Pontypool and aim for future classic status.

Bruce McDonald  
*Commander of the Northern Tribes*

## NOTES FROM WRITER TONY BURGESS

As students of Lovecraft and *The Song of Maldoror*, we want to build a threat that is original, sickeningly intimate, ruthlessly unfathomable and breathtaking in scope. This monster does not hand you rules before the game. We are talking about the Pontypool Virus, a contagion born by infected words of the English language. The infected word causes a stutter, a compulsion to repeat or a sudden break from meaningful communication.

This virus turns its victims into frantic automatons, who in order to escape their condition, chew their way out through the mouths of others.



## DIRECTOR BRUCE MCDONALD

Bruce McDonald is a Canadian film director, writer and producer. Born in Kingston, Ontario, he rose to prominence in the 1990s as part of the loosely-affiliated Toronto New Wave. McDonald has since directed more than a dozen feature films. Several of his films, ranking from mockumentaries to horror films, have attracted cult followings. His most notable films include Roadkill, Highway 61, Hard Core Logo, The Tracy Fragments, Trigger, Pontypool, Hellions and Dreamland.

Stephen King recently tweeted about his go-to horror film “PONTYPOOL! Now there’s a real creepshow”. Quentin Tarantino saw Hard Core Logo at a film festival and liked it so much that he bought the U.S distribution rights under his Rolling Thunder label. The Hollywood Reporter has called McDonald an “iconoclastic filmmaker”.



## WRITER TONY BURGESS

A fierce and heart pounding writer. A true original. An irrepressible charming madman. Author of novels including *Idaho Winter*, *Caesarea*, *Cashtown Corners* and his writing for the movies: *Hellmouth*, *Septic Man*, *The Hoard* and *Dreamland*. The first album Tony ever bought was *Killer* by Alice Cooper. Three of his favourite books, *Our Lady Of The Flowers* by Jean Genet, *HHHH* by Laurent Binet and *A Spy In The House Of Love* by Anais Nin. He lives in Stayner, Ontario with his wife and two children and still finds time to rock 'n roll on the weekends as the front man for LUCY JINX.

## WRITER PATRICK WHISTLER

Patrick Whistler is the new kid in town. His screenplays for the movies include *Nightlife*, *The Pornographers Poem*, *Distance*, all under option and cooking towards production. He shares a writing credit on *Dreamland* with Tony Burgess. Patrick adores long form television stories and is developing *Revolver* and *American Bastards* for production. The first record he ever bought was *All Mod Cons* by The Jam. Three of his favourite books are *Money* by Martin Amis, *The Executioners Song* by Norman Mailer and *Pimp* by Iceberg Slim. Patrick lives in Toronto with his best girl and enjoys big and small concerts, competitive fencing and a good pint with his mates.



# PRAISE FOR PONTYPOOL

Talky, tense and claustrophobic, 'Pontypool' is a post-modern mash-up of Orson Welles's notorious 'War of the Worlds' radio broadcast and Romero's 'Night of the Living Dead'.

— NIGEL FLOYD **TIME OUT LONDON**

'Night of the Living Dead,' as rewritten by Laurie Anderson and Jacques Derrida.

— ANDREW O'HEHIR **SALON**

It's a thinking man's zombie movie...still hums in the age of blogs and YouTube.

— ROBERT DAVIS **PASTE**

After countless zombie hackworks, here's proof the genre can still be cool...Inventive and genuinely suspenseful, this is a welcome addition to the expanding zombie/virus canon.

— KIM NEWMAN **EMPIRE MAGAZINE**

Tight as a drum and the most inventive spin on a zombie-plague premise in years

— TIM ROBEY **THE DAILY TELEGRAPH**

A Canadian horror film that makes the most of its minuscule budget...the notion that we are all being driven mad by an incessant verbal deluge makes nasty comic sense.

— STEPHEN HOLDEN **THE NEW YORK TIMES**

Compellingly apocalyptic.

— PHILLIP FRENCH **THE OBSERVER**

Big on atmos, low on incident, this claustrophobic chiller captures the hysteria of a town flailing on the frontline of disaster.

— MATT GLASBY **TOTAL FILM**

Pontypool is, in all senses, brain food — and juicy.

— DAVID EDELSTEIN **NEW YORK MAGAZINE**

## PONTYPOOL! Now there's a real creepshow.

— STEPHEN KING (@StephenKing) **X.COM** September 18, 2023

A film that wrings its terror not from gruesome imagery or sudden visual jolts but through a smart psychological rendering of our universal fear of the unknown.

— ROBERT LEVIN **FILM SCHOOL REJECTS**

Crazy-cool... this one-of-a-kind zombie film... Think of this witty, economically gory little tour de force as '28 Days Later' written by linguist Noam Chomsky.

— LISA SCHWARTZBAUM **ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY**







**PONTYPOOL** INTERNATIONAL POSTERS





[www.shadowshows.com](http://www.shadowshows.com)