

The Sheriff's Children



Based on the Short Story by Charles W. Chesnutt

Produced and Directed by
MICHAEL BOEDICKER

Starring
WILLIAM L. KEPHART
WILLIAM ANTHONY SEBASTIAN ROSE II
ELLEN E.K. MAGEE

SheriffsChildren.com

Title: *The Sheriff's Children*

Genre: Drama

Locale: North Carolina, U.S.

Period: 1883



SYNOPSIS

Based on the acclaimed story by Charles Chesnutt published in 1889, *The Sheriff's Children* dramatizes the conflict between duty and family, as a sheriff guarding a prisoner from a lynch mob faces a crisis of conscience.

DIRECTOR STATEMENT

By Michael Boedicker

Charles Waddell Chesnutt (1858-1932) was an African-American author, essayist, lawyer, and activist. His novels and short stories explore complex issues of racial and social identity in the post-Civil War South, and his body of work is ripe for rediscovery.

I first came across his short story “The Sheriff's Children” in 2014, when seeking source material for my next feature film. I was drawn to the piece yet passed on it at the time, since I believed the story couldn't sustain a feature-length film without heavy padding. It wasn't until a year later, after deciding to pursue a short film instead of a feature, that I re-read Chesnutt's story. The magic still held.

The film is a generally faithful adaptation of the original text, though I had to make some changes in order to translate a literary story into a cinematic one. Like all good stories, “The Sheriff's Children” resists pigeonholing and easy analysis, and in writing the screenplay, I was impressed in how it yielded more questions and more interpretations the deeper I delved. The story, despite its period setting, remains relevant today – and that may be its most unsettling legacy.



PRODUCTION NOTES



Produced in 2016 by award-winning Roselawn Productions Ltd., *The Sheriff's Children* was filmed in rural Illinois and Indiana, including the Manito (IL) jail, Billie Creek Village (IN), and the circa-1870 Bismarck (IL) train depot. No sets were built; authentic period locations were found after extensive research.

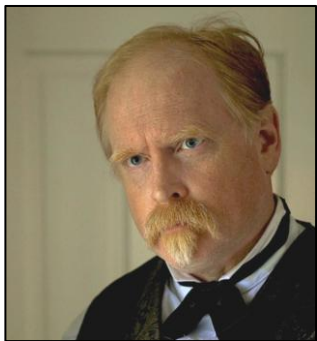
Reproductions of period costuming and props were assembled with the assistance of the Theatre departments of Parkland College and the University of Illinois, among other sources.

An original score was composed and performed by Eric Watkins, alluding to music of the era.

CAST & CREW

Michael Boedicker (Producer/Director/Screenwriter/Editor)

Born in Alabama, Mike grew up in New York State and earned degrees in Communications and Library Science before completing his first feature film, *Show*, in 2005. In 2008, he formed Roselawn Productions Ltd. to further his goal of making low-budget feature films in central Illinois. *Revolting*, a 2010 award-winning tragicomedy, was the first film made under the Roselawn banner, followed by *House of Thaddeus* in 2013. *The Sheriff's Children* marks his first short film in several years.



William L. Kephart (Sheriff)

This is Bill's third film working with director Mike Boedicker, after acting in *Revolting* and writing/producing *House of Thaddeus* with him. They met through a local film group in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, where Bill has lived most of his adult life. Though he has produced, written, and directed, and had success with each, Bill is primarily an actor, preferring film acting over the stage. Bill has a B.A. in English Literature and works as a clerk at the local university.

William Anthony Sebastian Rose II (Prisoner)

This is William's fifth film role. He has worked primarily on the stage in such shows as *Every Brilliant Thing* (2016), *Mine* (2015), and *33 Variations* (2015). Film roles include *Daydreamer* (2017), *Holly* (2015), *Infection: An Independent Zombie Film* (2013), and the upcoming *Greene* (2017 pre-production). He's extremely proud to be a part of telling such an interesting and moving story, with such a dynamic and wonderful cast and crew.





Ellen E.K. Magee (Polly)

Ellen is thrilled to make her onscreen debut with Roselawn Productions. Her theatrical experiences with the University of Illinois's Theatre and Lyric-Theatre Departments include Gertrude in *Failure: A Love Story* by Philip Dawkins, Jenny/Lisa in *Mr. Burns: A Post Electric Play*, Gangster #2 in *Kiss Me, Kate*, and Katie in *Kingdom City*. She also appeared as Cassidy in *Appropriate* at the Station Theatre (Urbana, IL) in 2015.

Thomas Nicol (Director of Photography & Visual Effects)

Thomas is a filmmaker and animator from Champaign, IL. He runs the local filmmakers' networking group Champaign Movie Makers, and helps to put on the annual Pens to Lens Student Screenwriting Competition.

SELECTED ADDITIONAL CREDITS

Featuring

Slade: Matt Hester

McDonnell: Paul Strain

Sam: Elester Wilkerson

Horace: Jim Wolfe

Original Music Composed & Performed by Eric Watkins

Sound Recordist: Johnny Robinson

Continuity & Dialects: Julia Megan Sullivan

Costumes: Malia Andrus

Color; 16x9; Stereo.

Running time: 22 minutes.

Not Rated; contains adult language and situations.

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