

TELEPHONE



WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY ANDREW SHORT
AND VERONICA ORCIARI

SATORU

SOMETIMES IT'S BETTER NOT
TO KNOW...



"We wanted to make an horror film without the traditional horror tropes. In *Satoru* real horror lies in Stephanie's desperate search for her daughter. No parent should have to go through something like that."

Andrew Short and Veronica Orciari



PLOT

Divorced mum Stephanie has desperately been investigating the abrupt disappearance of her daughter Abi, which occurred after a typical Sunday morning church service. With the police seemingly incapable of finding any clues to what happened, Stephanie has gone to increasingly extreme lengths in her search, inquiring at adoption clinics, employing private investigators and engaging with psychics.

On the anniversary eve of Abi's disappearance, Stephanie has renewed hope at an evening dinner party at her sister Emma and brother-in-law Jacob's house, when she learns about the myth of Saturo, a horrifying spectre who can answer any questions posed to it. To summon Saturo, the urban legend outlines that the 'receiver' must go to a payphone at midnight, dial their mobile phone number and say 'Saturo, Saturo, please come to me.' For the ritual to be successful, 'The Messenger' must appear. Following this, Saturo will call the receivers mobile phone and appear to them, at which point the question can be asked.

On the walk home that evening, Stephanie is intrigued when she spots a London red pay-phone box. At home, she finds a website dedicated to Saturo, where people from different countries are seemingly filming themselves asking their question to an-offscreen Saturo. The evening ends when a terrified Stephanie witnesses a 'receiver' seemingly hearing bad news from Saturo, when they get on their knees and give out an unearthly scream to the heavens.

On the anniversary day of Abi's disappearance, Stephanie calls her ex-husband Ben to ask whether he would like to visit the church where Abi disappeared, but he declines. Later that day, Stephanie visits the church and spots a young girl who looks like Abi. She walks towards the young girl but is embarrassed when her mother calls out her name. Before leaving the area, Stephanie again spots a London red pay-phone box.

That night, Stephanie approaches that same London red pay-phone box and begins the Saturo ritual. For a moment she thinks the ritual has failed when a shadowy figure approaches the phone-box and passes by. As she is about to leave, The Messenger appears and takes the phone receiver from a terrified Stephanie, who leaves abruptly.

Later that night at home in her bedroom, Stephanie receives a call from an unearthly sounding Saturo, telling her that it is next to the phone box and getting closer to her. Realizing that she may have made a mistake, she calls Emma and Jacob to come over. Before they reach her, Saturo calls Stephanie, telling her it is behind her. Without looking at Saturo, Stephanie asks what happened to her daughter. When Emma and Jacob enter the bedroom, they find Stephanie in a catatonic state, on her knees giving out an unearthly scream to the heavens.

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CHARACTERS



Stephanie (Sarah Lambie)

She is a mother consumed by the disappearance of her daughter, which has damaged her relationships and behaviour. Her sister Emma and brother-in-law Jacob want her to move on, while her ex-husband Ben refuses to revisit the disappearance. After mistaking another girl for her daughter, Stephanie becomes desperate to try the Satoru ritual.



Emma (Kara Pearl)

Heavily pregnant with her husband Jacob's child, she has a loving but strained relationship with her sister Stephanie. Having supported Stephanie's search, Emma now believes she must move on. She is also aware that her sister envies her life. Emma loves Jacob deeply but is often irritated by his humour and fascination with urban legends, including Satoru.

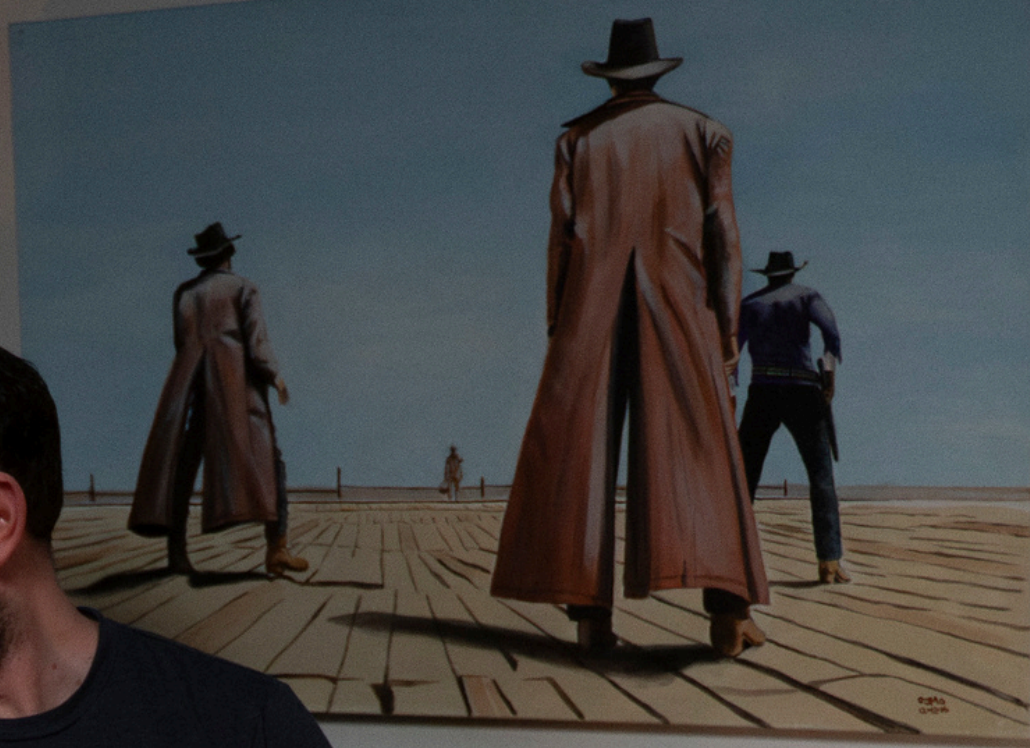
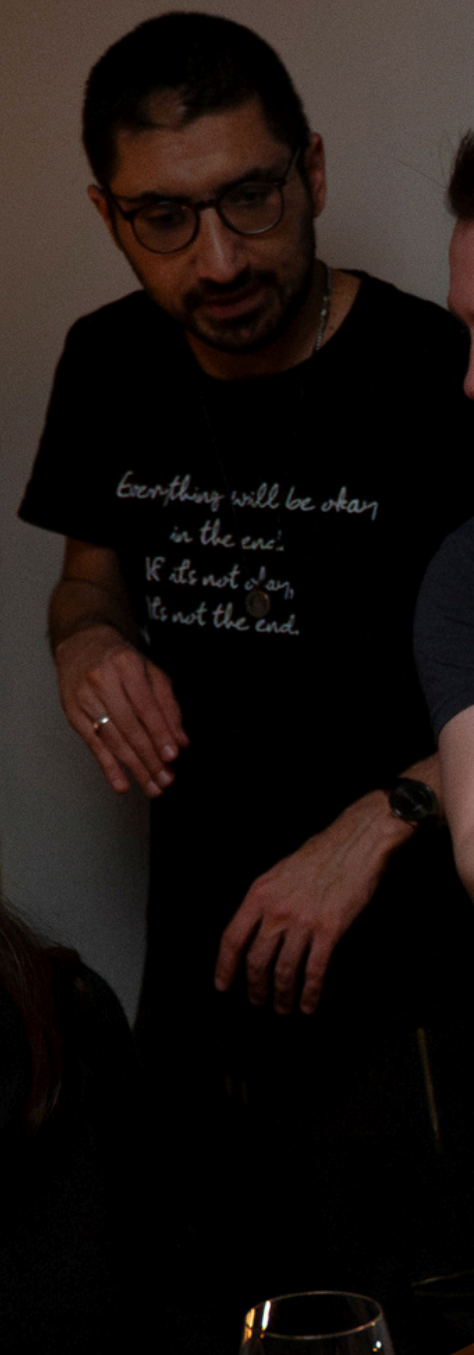
Jacob (Andre Frey)

He is loving towards his sister-in-law Stephanie but their relationship has become fractured, similarly to Emma. He loves his wife but often irritates her with his humour and fascination with urban legends. Unlike Emma, he believes in Satoru and understands its consequences. Although he has hesitated to tell Stephanie about it before, he now feels the time may be right.

Abi (Eva Bannister)

The little girl that Stephanie mistakes for her lost daughter Beth.







THE DIRECTORS

Andrew Short is an English independent writer and director, originally from Liverpool. In 2023, he earned a Filmmaking certificate at MetFilm School in London. He directed Fragile Reflections, which captures a snapshot of a troubled relationship, mapping out a simple, trivial argument that quickly descends into a profound and intense conflict. The short was a winner at the London Independent Film Awards and was a finalist at the Liverpool Indie Awards and a semi-finalist at the Lonely Wolf International Film Festival, among other festivals.

Veronica Orciari is an Italian film critic. She regularly writes for Cineuropa, The Animation Journal, Licensing Magazine and Filmexplorer. She is editor, contributor and translator at the English edition of Cinecittà News and serves as programmer for the Torino Film Festival. Her bylines include Modern Times Review, postPerspective and Horror Movie Blog. She is a staff writer at Directors Notes. In 2022 she earned a three-year degree in Film Critic and Journalism from film school Sentieri Selvaggi and in 2023, she got a Filmmaking certificate at MetFilm School in London.



CREW

DOP/ COLOR CORRECTION

Julio Cármenes

1ST AD

Hayden Devlin

SOUND

Micheal Griggs

SOUND ASSISTANT

Ryan Ristic

1ST AC

Marshall Aariah,

2ND ACS, GAFFERS, FOCUS PULLERS

Jayne Combremont, Jingyuan Tian

EDITOR

Annie Baldwin

ORIGINAL SCORE

Haana Lee

PRODUCER

Andrew Short







REVIEWS

Lambie is absolutely terrific in the leading role, and it's the director's trust in her charisma that solidifies Satoru's status as a film worth seeking out for its central performance alone. Stephanie is a character with strong wants and needs established from the very start, and her portrayal is grounded and relatable. Even if finding her long-lost daughter seems like an impossible task, you feel a great deal of sympathy for her, especially as the web of Satoru begins to slowly close in on her.

TAKE2 REVIEWS

With all this considered, and a simply spectacular emotional performance from lead actor Sarah Lambie, Satoru is a near-perfect horror from imaginative concept to meticulous execution. Compelling acting, a score that keeps the heart racing, and a story that makes the heart ache – this film is sure to stay with audiences long after the credits roll...

UK FILM REVIEW

Along with a poignant performance by Sarah Lambie as Stephanie, filmmakers Andrew Short and Veronica Orciari use the camera, aided by a haunting soundtrack, to keep her off-balance. It's as much about the feelings the film evokes as the actual supernatural plot. Best to watch this in the dark. Satoru is perfect for your festival midnight block.

FILM THREAT