

Hastings natives' 'Lunch Ladies' to show at renowned horror festival

By [Maureen McMullen](#) on Oct 8, 2017 at 8:00 p.m.

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Fraternal twins LouAnne and Seretta's days of serving ghastly glop to ungrateful high school students are numbered when their recipe lands them a job as personal chefs for the object of their adoration, Johnny Depp.

The sisters' road out of their hellish circumstances, however, is wrought with obstacles: travel expenses, a stingy school principal with impossible expectations and torment at the hands of an instantly insufferable head cheerleader.

Invoking the wisdom of their idol, the sisters ask themselves "WWJD?"—"What Would Johnny Do?"— in "Lunch Ladies," a short film written and produced by Hastings native Clarissa Jacobson.

A showing of "Lunch Ladies" will follow the premier of "Leatherface," a much-anticipated feature film showing in only 10 cities, at the late October Nightmares Film Festival in Ohio.

The film will also show at the HollyShorts Film Festival in Hollywood and Tulsa American Film Festival, where Jacobson said she hopes to gain interest in funding a feature-length film.

Dark humor

A grisly twist in "Lunch Ladies" does little to dampen the film's humor.

The script marks the first dark comedy for Jacobson, whose repertoire includes several comedy screenplays.

Her interest in more macabre themes first manifested in a screenplay she wrote about Elizabeth Bathory, a 17th century Hungarian countess credited as history's most prolific female murderer.

"I didn't think I knew much about writing horror, but I went to my screenwriting class with a lot of ideas," she said. "It's fun to write in that dark place."



LUNCH LADIES - OFFICIAL TEASER 01

from Joshua M Logan

00:16

[LUNCH LADIES - OFFICIAL TEASER 01](https://vimeo.com/234882786) (<https://vimeo.com/234882786>) from [Joshua M Logan](https://vimeo.com/jmlogan) (<https://vimeo.com/jmlogan>) on [Vimeo](https://vimeo.com) (<https://vimeo.com>).

Although Jacobson started as an actress, earning a degree in theater and training with American Musical and Dramatic Academy in New York City, she said she "didn't really like being looked at."

"I wasn't part of the thespian club, I didn't really relate to that," Jacobson said. "At the time, it was very clique-y, but I tried out for a lot of plays. Speech team was my thing. I'd go every weekend; I was in creative expression and I wrote all my speeches."

A "weird series of events" led Jacobson to write her first screenplay, which she submitted to a competition in New York City. That process introduced her to a writing coach who offered her a free class, which sparked her leap to screenwriting.

Family legacy

Jacobson said she drew inspiration for "Lunch Ladies" from her father, lauded outdoors author Cliff Jacobson, who penned more than a dozen books on camping and canoeing.

She described the film as a part "ode" to her father, who taught high school for almost 30 years, as well as cafeteria staff.

Tasked with serving edible meals on a miniscule budget, Clarissa said lunch ladies "have the hardest job in the world," for which they rarely receive due credit.

"I love the idea of the classic underdog," she said. "Everyone's against them and you get to live vicariously through them when their dream comes true."

Her father also helped her brainstorm names for the characters — Seretta was the first girl he kissed, while LouAnne was a lunch lady in his childhood cafeteria.

Although "Lunch Ladies" doesn't land within the genre of movies Cliff would watch, he said it's one that everyone can enjoy.

"I basically don't like horror films, and I don't like comedy that much, but it's a great little film — all of a sudden I thought, 'Where did the time go?'" he said. "She writes brilliantly, and I'm very, very proud of her."

More information about the movie is available at www.lunchladiesmovie.com (<http://www.lunchladiesmovie.com>).