



SOUTH

ON THE BORDER OF LEAVING AND BELONGING

SHORE

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY

DEXTER STRONG BUELL

PRODUCED BY KEVIN LOPEZ



A SHORT-SUBJECT MOTION PICTURE

"I WAS ALMOST AS MUCH OF A STRANGER ON BOARD AS HIMSELF."

JOSEPH CONRAD - *THE SECRET SHARER*

A dark, atmospheric image showing a person's hand reaching out from the surface of the water at night. The sky is filled with stars, and the water is dark with some ripples. The overall mood is mysterious and somber.

LOG LINE

**A RECLUSIVE LIVE-ABOARD SAILOR COMES FACE TO FACE WITH
THE YOUNG MAN WHO MAY HAVE KILLED HIS SON.**

A close-up photograph of a man wearing a dark cap and a work jacket, focused on working on a boat's engine. The scene is dimly lit, with a strong light source from the right, creating deep shadows and highlighting the textures of his clothing and the mechanical parts. The word "STORY" is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image.

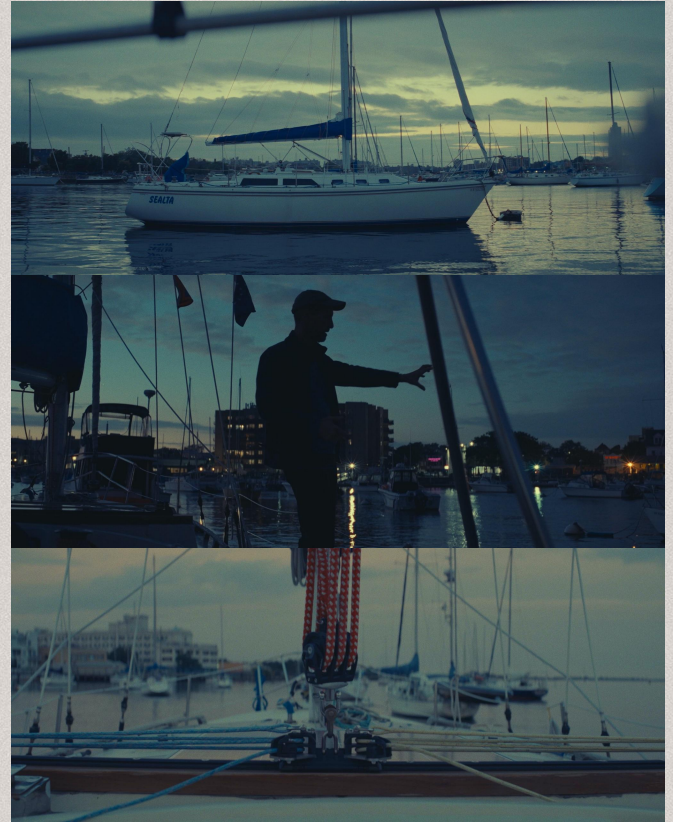
STORY

Russell wants nothing more than to fix the motor on his boat and escape the haunting memory of his murdered son. His isolation is unexpectedly shattered when the young immigrant man he suspects may have killed his boy appears alongside his immobilized craft. Adapted from “The Secret Sharer,” by Joseph Conrad, and real events on the South Shore of Long Island, New York.



FROM THE FILMMAKERS

South Shore captures a pivotal moment in the story arc of a reclusive, live-aboard sailor who comes face to face with the young immigrant man whom he suspects may have killed his son. The script is adapted from “The Secret Sharer,” by Joseph Conrad, and influenced by real events on the South Shore of Long Island, New York. Themes of leaving and belonging, suspicion and mutual aid are captured in a gripping face-to-face confrontation with an unexpected outcome. This "proof of concept" introduces characters and circumstances that animate the feature-length script, which the producers have been developing since their collaboration began in the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic.





CHARACTER: RUSSELL, [40'S]

A professional sailor and former boat captain on a cruise line in NY harbor. Stoic and out of touch with his feelings, he raised a family in Long Island before the death of his son Dylan drives him from his family and stokes a plan to repair his sailboat and depart for the Caribbean, leaving his pain behind.

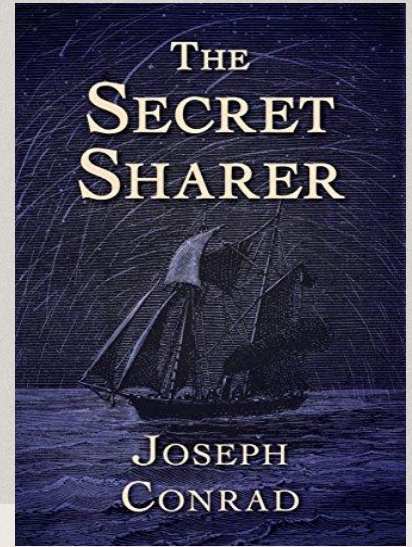
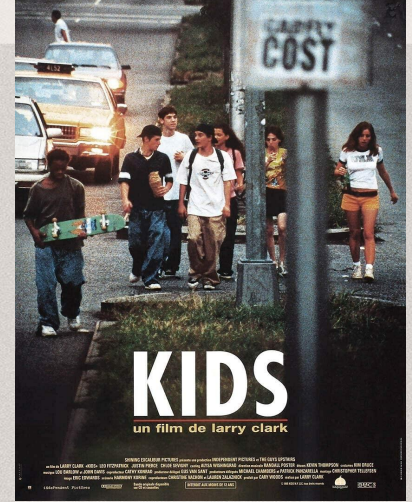
CHARACTER: SHAY, [16]

A smart kid and a good student. Shay arrived in this country from El Salvador at the age of 14 along with hundreds of other undocumented teenagers who were scattered across Long Island. He now lives with a foster family and struggles with his sense of belonging, caught in between a racist system and violence from gangs. This fear propels him into hiding when his friend Dylan is murdered, and he suddenly becomes the prime suspect.



BIG PICTURE INSPIRATIONS

Initially inspired by Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Sharer*, this is the story of irreconcilable loss and the difficult road back to love across the chasm of grief and cultural division. Think Kenneth Lonergan's 'Manchester by the Sea' meets Larry Clark's 'Kids'.



VISUAL STYLE

South Shore's visual style emphasizes the character's desire to belong on the one hand and to flee on the other. Constrained settings: fences, dock lines, cramped boat cabins and crowded suburbs will linger against the long view of sky and water.

Shay's is the plight of an outsider with a compelling urge to belong to a family, and he is pitted against the self-imposed exile of Russell's grief. A physical and social disconnect is framed with a visual language of leaving and belonging.





EXT. BOAT - NIGHT

A gasping sound emerges from the quiet night. Russell looks around. Another splash, then another... It is SHAY, mid-teens.



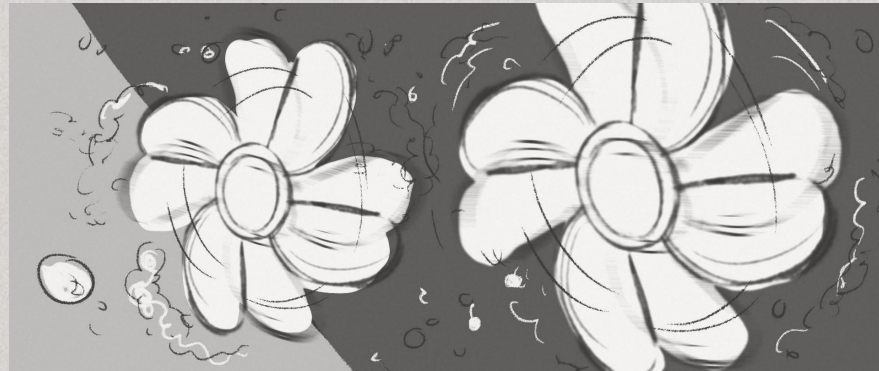
INT. BOATYARD OFFICE - MORNING

ANTHONY, late 60's wearing work clothes, startles him. Russell slides the drawer shut quickly...



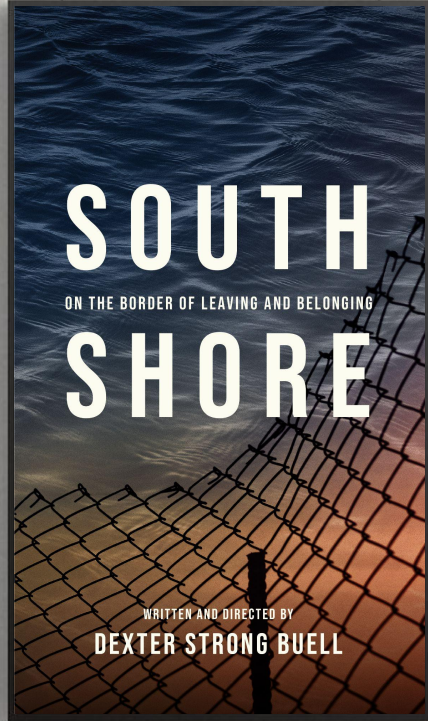
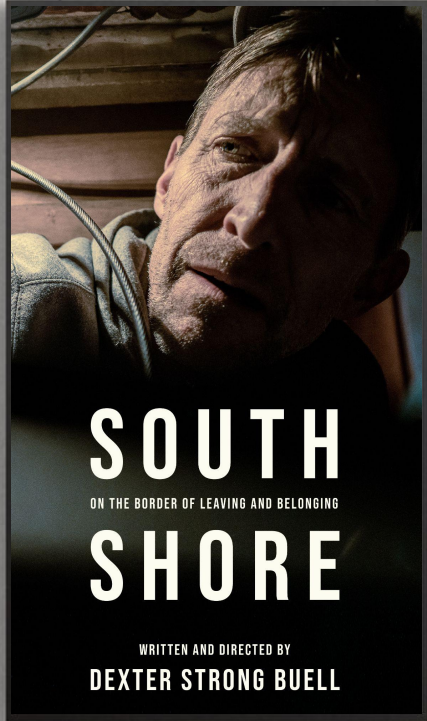
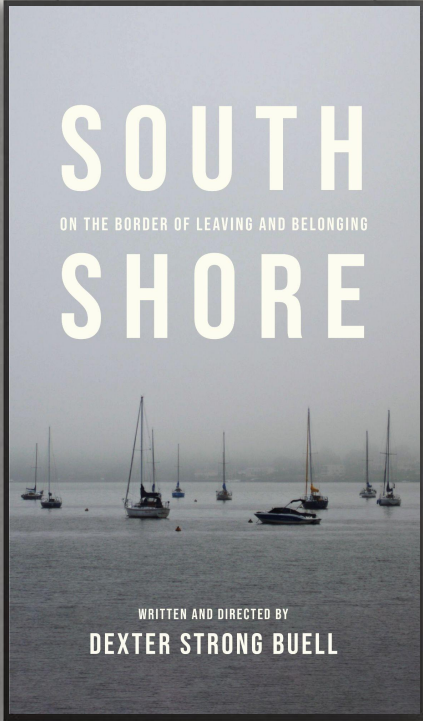
INT. SAILBOAT - INTERCUT

RUSSELL, 50's runs water over the cut at the galley sink and gropes for a roll of paper towel.



EXT. SAILBOAT (WATER SHOT) - SAME

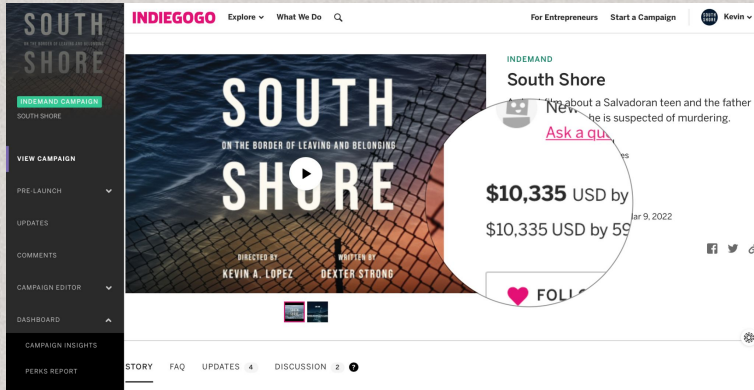
Russell reaches down and cranks the key. The engine sparks and coughs, but fails to start.



WE REACHED OUR #INDIEGOGO GOAL!

Extracted from a feature-length script this 'proof-of-concept' short film is partially funded by our initial IndieGoGo campaign in 2022.

[South Shore IndiegoGo](#)



The screenshot shows the IndieGoGo campaign page for 'South Shore'. The campaign title is 'South Shore' with the subtitle 'ON THE BORDER OF LEAVING AND BELONGING'. The campaign is directed by Kevin A. Lopez and written by Dexter Strong. The funding goal is \$10,335 USD, which has been fully reached by 59 backers as of March 9, 2022. The page includes a navigation menu on the left with options like 'VIEW CAMPAIGN', 'PRE-LAUNCH', 'UPDATES', 'COMMENTS', 'CAMPAIGN EDITOR', 'DASHBOARD', and 'CAMPAIGN INSIGHTS'. The main content area features a large image of the film's title and a 'FOLLOW' button.



FISCAL SPONSORSHIP

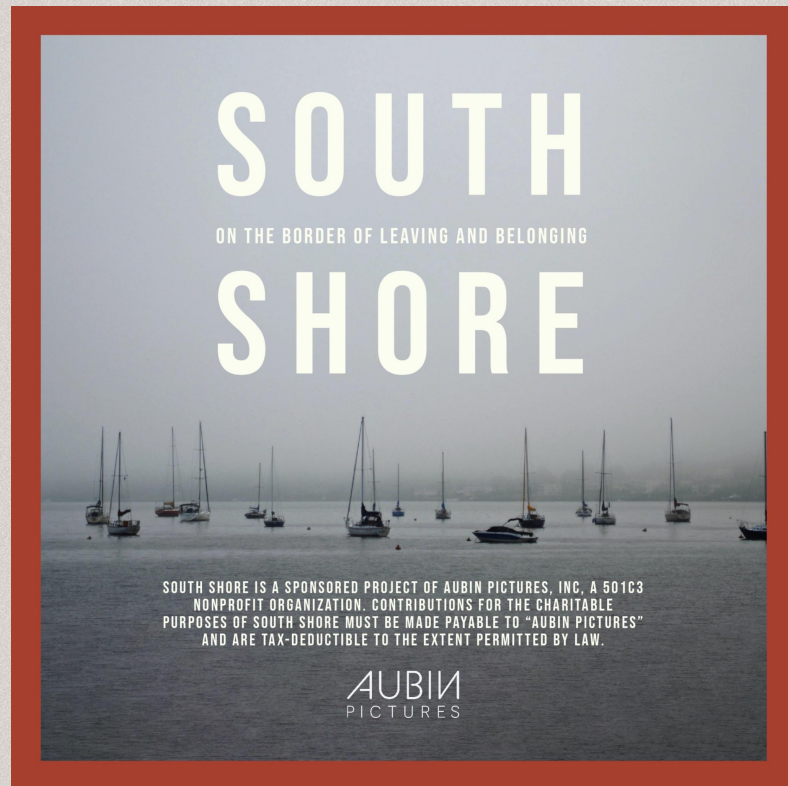
South Shore is also a sponsored project of Aubin Pictures, a non-profit production house dedicated to telling culturally relevant stories.

Donations in support of *South Shore* can be made payable to “Aubin Pictures” and are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

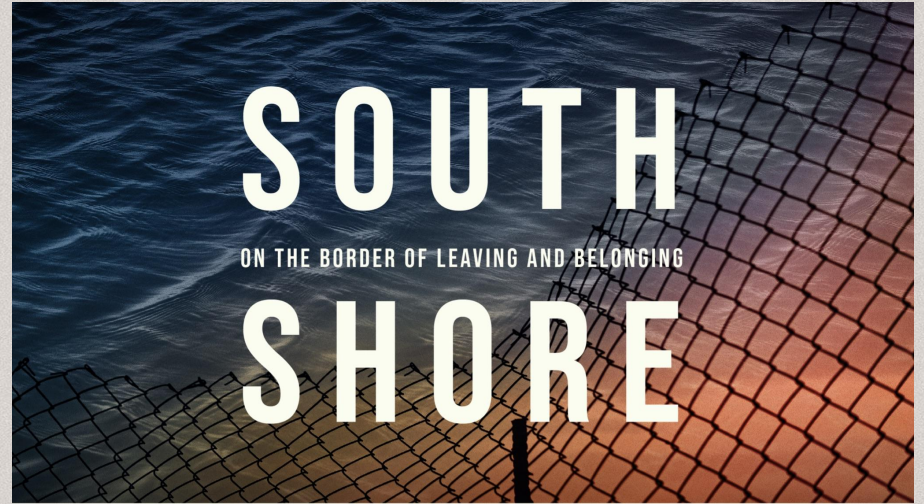
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CARDOZO LAW SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

SOUTH SHORE was selected to partner with The Filmmakers Legal Clinic ([@filmlegalclinic](#)) at Cardozo Law School ([@cardozo_law](#)), who provides free transactional, intellectual property, and First Amendment legal services to visual advocates, filmmakers and video journalists working to move the social justice needle and diversify the stories that are told through media.

[Filmmakers Legal Clinic \(Formerly Indie Film Clinic\)](#)



SOUTH SHORE



FILMMAKERS LEGAL CLINIC
AT THE CENTER FOR VISUAL ADVOCACY

2022 Annual Report



CARDOZO
Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law

Educators explore immigrant experience thru film

BY BRIAN NIEMIETZ
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

When New York City filmmakers Dexter Strong and Kevin Lopez were running the Film and Media program at the Frank Sinatra School of the Arts in Queens, they knew that one day they'd collaborate on a movie of their own.

A decade after starting their collaboration as educators, it's showtime.

"South Shore" tells the story of an undocumented immigrant on Long Island and his encounter with the father of a boy he's accused of killing.

Strong, a retired public school teacher, penned "the semi-autobiographical story" that Lopez is directing. In writing the adult

character, he drew from his own experiences as a father who raised two kids in New York City. The teen character, he said, is "a hybrid of kids I worked with in the city schools."

They're still trying to cast that role with "someone who can capture the dislocated experience of the hundreds of unaccompanied minors who find themselves searching for roots in the towns along the South Shore of Long Island," he added.

Strong and Lopez, 42, will begin working on a short version of "South Shore" in

October that they plan to shop around to raise funding for a feature-length movie. While shooting will begin in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn, Strong says the story is set on Long Island, where relationships between immigrants and "the boating community" tend to be disparate.

"The takeaway might be that people who live right next door have lives and their lives impact our lives," Strong said.

Strong started the film program where he and Lopez met in 2009 and stayed with it

until 2015. Not only did the pair's students inspire a central "South Shore" character – they also motivated Strong to make movies for a living.

"I was teaching kids how to make them and it seemed like so much fun," he said.

Lopez – who lives on Long Island's South Shore – still has a day job as the assistant principal of Art & CTE (Career and Technical Education) at the High School of Art & Design in Midtown.

"I try to gracefully blur the lines between film making and education," Lopez said. "There's a lot of synergy and overlap in both worlds. I live in that realm where my students inspire the work that I create, and I in turn hope to empower them to really explore their voices."



THE
NEW YORKER

OUR LOCAL CORRESPONDENTS JANUARY 1, 2018 ISSUE

THE TEENS TRAPPED BETWEEN A GANG AND THE LAW

On Long Island, unaccompanied minors are caught between the violence of MS-13 and the fear of deportation.



By Jonathan Blitzer

December 25, 2017



Illustration by R. Kikuo Johnson

[Read Full Article](#)

PRODUCERS



DEXTER STRONG BUELL - WRITER / DIRECTOR

Dexter is known for his work in the feature films *The Hudson Tribes* and *Paradise City* as well as numerous award winning shorts. On *zas* appeared as Monkey Man in *Great Falls* by Lee Blessing, and recently performed the role of Claudius in *Ophelia's Ocean*, a work for film and stage by Maya Milenovic Workman, funded by the Guggenheim Foundation. Dexter also holds a Certificate in Arts Education from Pratt Institute and was the founding teacher of the Film and Media Studio at the Frank Sinatra School of the Arts where he and Kevin began their creative collaboration.



KEVIN A. LOPEZ - PRODUCER

Kevin A. Lopez has made his mark in independent cinema, producing powerful social dramas like “The Inquisition of Camilo Sanz” (2014), “The Hudson Tribes” (2016), “Paradise City” (2019), as well as the HBO acquired documentary, “Primera” (2021). He’s also the creative force behind award-winning short documentaries such as “Mind Up” (2014), “Sharing The Stoke” (2016), and “The Mortician Magician” (2018). Beyond his cinematic endeavors, Kevin passionately advances film and media arts education. As a New York City Public High School Principal, Kevin is uniquely positioned to create enduring pathways between CTE Classrooms and the expansive world of Film & Television



JUSTINE LUCAS - EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Meet Justine Lucas, a dedicated New York City principal who has spent her life serving the youth of this great city. With a passion for special education and multilingual education, Justine has streamlined her efforts to ensure that every child has access to the education they need to succeed. As an executive producer of the short feature film “South Shore”, Justine is excited to amplify the voices that promote equitable spaces. Her commitment to creating opportunities for everyone to have a voice and a seat at the table is unparalleled.



CALENDAR

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

January 2022 - December 2022

PROJECT FUNDRAISER

January 2023 - July 2023

'PROOF OF CONCEPT' PRODUCTION

Fall 2023

FILM FESTIVAL SUBMISSION

April 2024

SHORT FILM BUDGET: 35K USD

Creative: 10K

Production: 15K

Post Production: 5k

Marketing / Distro: 5K



THANK YOU

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