

## ***DON'T GO***

### **Cast Bios**

#### **SKYLER COOPER**

**“Bone”**

*A frequent visitor to the fourplex and Jaden's best friend, Bone is a constant support to Jaden during her pregnancy. A mirror-image of Jaden's muscular, butch persona, Bone should be the rock necessary to help Jaden maintain her identity while defining motherhood on her own terms. Unfortunately, Bone harbors a secret, which may irreparably harm their relationship.*



Skyler Cooper's passion for acting started 7 years ago in a Liquid Fire production. The performance art piece, entitled "Butch Love," took place on a small San Francisco stage in the Mission District. This performance sent such shock waves through her community that she was encouraged to take her talents to a larger audience, leading to her love affair with the theatre.

Skyler studied 3 years with renowned acting coach Phil Bennett, ACT, and was selected for a prestigious internship with California Shakespeare Company. In the interim, she was the lead in a sexy rock narrative for a Hail Mary music video, cast in student and independent films, and was featured in the award-winning documentary "Butch Mystique." She then returned to the stage to enrich her body of work, performing in numerous plays in the San Francisco Bay Area. This ultimately led to her breakthrough performance as Othello, which played to sold-out crowds and created record-breaking ticket sales! Presently she is performing in the West Coast premiere of the SF Playhouse production of "Three Seconds in the Key," as a New York Knick. The unprecedented role came as a result of her critically acclaimed ability to play both male and female characters.

Skyler is pleased to be a part of "Don't Go." Her wish is that her passion on the stage transfers to the project so that she may share it with others who give a damn about creating great art.

#### **JANORA MCDUFFIE**

**“Cindy”**

*Cindy's "traditional" family has problems of its own. A talented lawyer, Cindy left her comfortable life as a partner in a corporate law firm to pursue a job as a talent agent in the entertainment industry. Currently paying her dues as the assistant to an anal, controlling, perfectionist agent, Cindy struggles to maintain her focus as she deals with a mother who suffers from a mental illness and the return of a father she's never known.*

Janora Mcduffie is best known for her recurring role as FBI Special Agent Abbot on the sizzling MyNetwork television series "Desire," as well as guest appearances on "Veronica Mars" (CW), "Without A Trace" (CBS), "The Unit" (CBS), and "Close To Home" (CBS).

(Janora McDuffie cont'd)



On the silver screen, this smart and sexy Durham, North Carolina, native adds her Southern charm to award-winning short films, such as "Endangered Species" (*Urbanworld Film Festival in NY, Winner of the Independent Film Festival in Atlanta, Winner of the Best Dramatic Short film in the Action-On Film Festival in Long Beach, CA*), "The Message" (*screened at the 2006 Cannes Film Festival, Pan African Film Festival, Hollywood Black Film Festival*), and "Be the Man" (*San Francisco Black Film Festival, Independent Black Film Festival*), for which Janora was nominated for Best Actress at the Biola Film Festival.

Janora's passion for acting ignited during her first stage performance in the second grade. In the 6th grade musical *Carnival*, the budding talent brought down the house as "Carrot Top" and signed her first autograph. Bitten by the acting bug, she wrote and performed an original stage play while still in grade school. Janora honed her natural talent at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Performance Studies and Psychology.

Just like her character Cindy in "Don't Go," Janora chose to pursue her dreams in the entertainment industry rather than continue to climb the corporate ladder. She left a lucrative position in a major Atlanta accounting firm to make it in Hollywood. Her gamble is clearly paying off as she will be seen in several high profile films slated to be released later this year – *Clarksdale*, starring Boris Kodjoe; *Uncle P*, starring Master P and Lil' Romeo; *Be My Baby*, starring Chris Judd and Lacey Chabert; and *Drifter*, starring Australian star Cameron Daddo.

## MÉLANGE LAVONNE

### "Jaden"

*Jaden struggles with the rapid change of identity an unexpected pregnancy can bring. Her journey is all the more riveting because she is a butch lesbian and her long-term partner, Melody, was born a hermaphrodite. After four years of domestic bliss and joint ownership of the fourplex and a thriving sex shop, the couple finds their foundation shaken to the core when Melody, the more feminine partner, accidentally impregnates her bodybuilding, masculine-identified spouse.*

Mélange Lavonne's mission is raising awareness about homosexuals like herself who want to paint a beautiful picture of what the majority of us represent. We are lesbian wives, gay husbands, doctors, lawyers, artists, parents; we are just like straight society and should be allowed all the rights they have. Mélange, currently working on a sophomore album due out later this Fall, articulates this through her song lyrics. Her album will address the discrimination in all aspects of the lifestyle. Her accomplishments include doing shows for AIDS benefits, youth organizations, and cancer causes.



*(Mélange Lavonne's cont'd)*

Mélange is currently working on her degree in graphics and business. She is also set to kick off 2007 with "Homo-Revolution," which is a tour that represents different kinds of styles of hip-hop performed by openly GLBT artists. A cancer survivor, she is very dedicated in making an impact to the lives of those who are also survivors.

She is scheduled to shoot the video "Gay Bash," directed by Camrin Pitts, in early March. The video will give a detailed insight to the viewer on the struggles and discrimination that homosexual teens face.

Mélange is the artist to watch for in 2007.

## **YANIV MOYAL**

**“Jess”**



*Five years after the death of the love of his life, Jess has sold his interior design firm and hides behind his family by working in their home security business. When Jess unexpectedly agrees to redecorate the home of a client, he is surprised to find himself reawakening to life, both professionally and personally, as this gay man starts to have feelings for his female client.*

Yaniv Moyal is an up and coming actor from Israel. Raised in a tough neighborhood, Yaniv moved to the city of Tel-Aviv to leave his 'bad boy' past behind. In Tel-Aviv, he was discovered by an acting coach who recommended that Yaniv attend the local acting academy. At the end of his first year, Yaniv had the privilege of representing Israel during the national "Olive Festival" where he thrilled the audience with his portrayal of the female Mirandolina.

After graduating from the academy, Yaniv initially honed his acting skills in the theatre as a member of a traveling stage production. His experience on the stage drove the young actor to seek out meatier roles which challenged him to get inside the souls of his characters. In an effort to reach a broader audience, Yaniv began to seek out roles in film in television. He became the lead in a television series, entitled "The Red One," which lasted for two years. In 2002, Yaniv also landed the role of a member of an Israeli army unit in which two soldiers become lovers, much to the discomfort of the rest of the unit. The director of the film, Yossi & Jagger, encouraged Yaniv to take his talent to Hollywood, despite the fact that he did not speak English.

The young actor followed his director's advice and moved to Hollywood. One year after arriving, Yaniv is lending his immense talent and tenacity to the cast of "Don't Go." He wants everyone to know that "no matter what, if you really want something, and you put everything that you have into it, work hard and let God lead you.... YOU CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN!!!" His motto is: "Keep dreaming, 'cause dreams are all we have in life!"

## GUINEVERE TURNER

### “Melody”



*After years of domestic bliss, Melody's relationship with her long-term partner, Jaden, is tested when Melody, who was born a hermaphrodite but is the more feminine partner, accidentally impregnates her bodybuilding, masculine-identified spouse. Although Melody is comfortable with her own identity, the amount of discomfort all of these new changes are causing Jaden is starting to worry her.*

Guinevere Turner's career began as writer, producer, and star of the feature film *Go Fish* which premiered in dramatic competition at Sundance in 1994. She co-wrote the film with Rose Troche for whom she lent her voice as a doll in Troche's feature film *The Safety of Objects*. Turner went on to collaborate with director Mary Harron on the screenplay adaptation of Bret Easton Ellis' *American Psycho*, in which she co-starred. Her next effort with Harron, *The Notorious Bettie Page*, is an HBO film which had its theatrical release in April 2006. The project is directed by Harron and produced by Christine Vachon, who also served as executive producer on *Go Fish*.

Turner's additional film credits include roles in *Kiss Me, Guido, Latin Boys Go To Hell, Pipe Dream, Watermelon Woman*, a dominatrix in *Preaching to the Perverted* for BAFTA-winning director Stuart Urban, as well as roles in filmmaker friend Kevin Smith's *Chasing Amy* and *Dogma*. Her feature script *Blood Rayne*, based on the video game of the same name, was released in January 2006, and stars Ben Kingsley and Michelle Rodriguez. She worked for two seasons as executive story editor on the television show "The L Word," on which she also had a recurring role. Two of her directorial efforts, the short films "Spare Me" and "Hummer," premiered at the Sundance Film Festivals of 2001 and 2004, and her third short "Hung" has screened at festivals worldwide. In 2007, she will appear as Marcy Maloney in Jamie Babbit's upcoming feature *Itty Bitty Titty Committee*, and her script *Just Listen* will go into production with Lifetime Television.

## NISHA GANATRA

### “Shanti”

*Shanti is full of new and confusing feelings. This young woman moves into the fourplex in order to escape the cultural restraints of her traditional Indian family. Intent on finding the husband of her dreams without her family's interference, Shanti discovers that her "husband to be" may not arrive in the package she expected.*

Nisha Ganatra's debut feature film, *Chutney Popcorn*, received much acclaim, garnering Audience Awards at the Berlin International Film Festival, Newport Film Festival, Paris International Film Festival and Madrid International Film Festival and Best Feature Film Awards at the Outfest Los Angeles and San Francisco film festivals. Nisha wrote, directed, and starred in the hit film, *Chutney Popcorn*.



*(Nisha Ganatra cont'd)*

Nisha recently completed *Cosmopolitan* starring Carol Kane and Roshan Seth for PBS and ITVS. *Cosmopolitan* was selected by Input as one of the top ten films shown on public television this year. It was the only narrative film chosen for this distinction. Nisha most recently directed the romantic comedy *Cake*, with Heather Graham. The film also stars David Sutcliffe, Sandra Oh, Taye Diggs, Cheryl Hines and Sarah Chalke.

Last year, Nisha directed "The Real World: New York" for MTV and "The Road Rules/Real World Challenge," which is currently airing. Nisha is in development for feature films with Jane Startz Productions (*Tuck Everlasting*, *The Baby Sitter's Club*, *The Mighty*) and also working to adapt the documentary *The Education of Shelby Knox* into a narrative feature with the Sundance Award winning documentary makers.

"Junky Punky Girlz," the short Nisha directed while at NYU's Graduate Film School, has won extraordinary recognition and many awards including: the prestigious Tisch Fellowship and the PBS Grand Prize for Most Outstanding Short Film of the year. Over 60 national and international film festivals have selected "Junky Punky Girlz," including the Walker Art Center and the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. Most recently, Nisha was presented with the Docker's Original Vision Award, and the Max Factor Filmmaker Award for her work.

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