

# New Low

a film by Adam Bowers

82 min.

[www.newlowmovie.com](http://www.newlowmovie.com)



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## SYNOPSES

### One-Liner

A neurotic twentysomething struggles to figure out which girl he belongs with: the best or the worst one he's ever known.

### Synopsis

Who do we really belong with? Wendell is a neurotic twentysomething with no future. Vicky is a dirty, mean bartender who's dating Wendell. Their relationship is based on a mutual lack of ambition and cleanliness, and the most refined thing they do together is go to art galleries for the free food. When Joanna, a nice, stable social worker, invites Wendell to a meeting with one of her many activist groups, suddenly Wendell feels like he might be capable of doing something worthwhile after all. He starts to date Joanna, who brings him into her alien world where people actually care about things. But is his newfound selflessness who he really is? A classic love triangle becomes much more, and Wendell has to decide not only who he belongs with, but what kind of person he is underneath all that neuroses.

Written and directed by Adam Bowers, *New Low* is a fresh, laugh-out-loud comedy with a punk aesthetic and razor sharp dialogue.

## PRODUCTION NOTES

Production lasted five weeks during August and September, 2008. Almost all of our equipment was borrowed: Toby Turner, who plays Dave, let us use his Panasonic DVX-100B and boom mic; a friend lent us his 35mm lens adapter; and an old professor lied to his boss to get us some borrowed equipment from the university (which, after a week, we were forced to return. But, hey, it was fun while it lasted). Most of the movie is entirely lit by a china ball lantern and practical lighting. We also didn't have a stand for the light, so someone had to hold it for every shot.

I had two crew members who were with me the entire shoot: Ryan Moulton, the director of photography, and Tito Alverio, the assistant director who also doubled as a china ball-holder-upper when we needed him to be. Any other crew members were basically friends who said they were available the day of, so we really only had about 3 members of the crew at most of the shoots.

During the summer in Florida, cricket-like bugs called cicadas basically take over any area that has a tree. A lot of times, the sound of the chirping was so intense it was louder than the actors' dialogue. So, everyone on set also doubled (or maybe it's "tripled" by now) as a rock-thrower-upper-into-trees, which in retrospect should have ended up killing one of us.

One night, we were shooting scenes at Wendell's apartment (which was the cinematographer's), and the neighbor's window A/C was creating a lot of noise. The neighbor wasn't home, so we climbed on the roof and put a sound blanket over the A/C. That apparently scared one of the other neighbors, who called the cops on us. No one got arrested, but it's kind of a fun example of the types of situations you find yourself in when you're shooting a movie without permits or a budget. We spent a lot of time making sure no one was looking while we were doing what we needed to do to shoot our scenes.

The final scene was shot during Tropical Storm Fay. You can see the strong gusts of wind in some shots, as we raced to complete the scene in time.

Also, if you know your Olympics history, the comedian in one of the final scenes is Bernard Williams, a gold medalist in the 4x100m relay at the 2000 Summer Olympics.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

*New Low* is based off a short film I made in college. After I graduated, I was planning on moving to Los Angeles, but during a screening of Gus Van Sant's *Paranoid Park* I was inspired to make a movie on my own, coming from a world that I lived in but never saw on screen. I knew it would be very hard to make a small, truly independent movie out in California, so I stayed in Florida, adapted the short's script into a feature, got together with some friends, and shot it. A week after production wrapped, I loaded my car and moved to Los Angeles.

A lot of the story is pulled from my actual life. The initial idea, of a guy being unable to have a successful relationship with a girl because she's "too good" is based on an unsuccessful one of my own. I met her at a protest rally for farm workers' rights, and she spent most of her time volunteering. I, on the other hand, am definitely not that selfless, and I desperately wanted to like this girl because it would, through proximity, validate my goodness as a human being. But, I couldn't, because we were just too different. At the same time, I kept finding myself getting interested in these girls who were terrible, usually drunk, people. So the film is an exploration of that idea: finding out that the reason things don't work out with the girl of your dreams is because you're not as wonderful as she is, and the reason you don't find yourself in the perfect life is because you don't deserve it.

The movie takes place in and around Gainesville's great punk scene. It was a perfect fit for the story, where there really are two types of people: socially-conscious activists and destructive, hard-partying slackers. The story and characters came from a very specific time and place in my life, and that's exactly where we were able to shoot it. It's a great town that I miss constantly, so I hope I've done it justice on-screen.

Another possibly interesting, definitely personal, fact about the movie is that Jayme Ratzner (Vicky) and I were in an on-again-off-again relationship for years. While shooting our "break-up" scene, we were actually in the middle of one of our thousand break-ups, in some strange coincidence of life imitating art. I should probably mention that Jayme is not "playing herself" in the movie. I'd like to think that if I based the part of a dirty, alcoholic dumpster diver on her, I would have the common sense to not ask her to play it. But that's probably not true.

## ABOUT THE CAST

VALERIE JONES (Joanna) grew up in Blountstown, Florida. She graduated from the University of Florida in 2006 with a major in Public Relations and a minor in Art History. While attending UF, she participated in several student films, including her role as Joanna in Adam's short, *New Personal Worst*. Valerie now lives in Tallahassee, Florida where she is a Legislative Assistant for the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. Although she hasn't continued acting after college, she is fulfilling a lifelong dream of learning how to ballroom dance.

JAYME RATZER (Vicky) was born in Colorado but spent most of her formative years in humid Florida. She studied sociology and acting at Flagler College in St. Augustine, and also portrayed Vicky in the short version of the film, *New Personal Worst*. After graduating, she backpacked Europe before moving to Los Angeles in 2009, where she is working as an actress, model, and jazz dancer.

TOBY TURNER (Dave) was born in Mississippi to a family with 73 first cousins. He wishes that was a joke. After a few weeks of that, he packed up his diaper bag and got the hell out. Unfortunately, it was too late - he was already named "Toby Joe." He grew up in Niceville, Florida, and has performed at dozens of clubs across Florida and California as a comedian, musician, or both. When he isn't channeling his humor on stage, he makes YouTube videos for his more than 150,000 subscribers. His YouTube channel has garnered over 22 million views, and led to sponsorship by FOX, Disney, FlipVideo and more. His videos range from sketches to vlogs to original songs and parodies, and he recently started a series called "Russian Recommendation for Recession," which has received network attention. Some of the buzz from his videos has led to voicing the main character in an upcoming PS3/XBOX 360 title from Ignition Entertainment. In 2009, Toby moved to Los Angeles to pursue his lifelong dream of being in Los Angeles. His dream was achieved immediately upon arrival.

## ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

ADAM BOWERS (writer, director, producer, editor, Wendell) was born and raised in Dunedin, Florida. His pediatrician said he had the biggest hands he had ever seen on a child. After a “fun” adolescence being freakishly tall and skinny, Adam attended the University of Central Florida where he was rejected from film school one year and forgot to apply the next. He transferred to the University of Florida in Gainesville, where he treated his telecommunications degree like a film degree and made a bunch of student films. His student short, *New Personal Worst* (which *New Low* is based on), won awards at the college and was an official entry at the 2008 Central Florida Film Festival. Being part of both the local comedy scene and the local punk scene allowed him to place the film’s setting in a unique, but true world. He frequented the bars and record store in the film, walked the streets the characters walked in the film, and even worked at the same video store as the one in the film. *New Low* is pretty much a funhouse mirror of his life at the time. A week after shooting wrapped on the film, he packed his car and moved to Los Angeles, where he can be seen performing comedy regularly at the Upright Citizens Brigade Theatre and iO West. He was a contributing writer for The Onion News Network. *New Low* is his first feature. He uses grape halves on his PB&Js instead of jelly, and thinks you should too.

RYAN MOULTON (director of photography) was born in Maine, raised in Florida, and recently graduated from the University of Florida with a degree in Journalism. Instead of doing journalismy things, Ryan spent his college career making short films, performing sketch and improv comedy with Theatre Strike Force and doing daily political cartoons for the student paper, the Independent Florida Alligator. Ryan also shot Adam Bowers's original short film, *New Personal Worst*. Since graduation, Ryan has been working with TSF to produce a 9-episode TV series called *Oppie's Friend, Gene*. When that's finished, he plans to move to New York or Los Angeles.

# New Low

WRITTEN, DIRECTED, PRODUCED, & EDITED BY  
Adam Bowers

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY  
Ryan Moulton

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
Tito Alverio

BOOM OPERATOR  
Filup Molina

KEY GRIP  
Zach Bernardo

GRIPS  
Christopher Kell  
Skyler Scott Kern

ELECTRICIANS  
Erik Voss  
Cory Draper  
Spencer Hamilton  
Thiago Santos  
Wes Campbell  
Nick Boisson

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS  
Tom Bowers  
Jan Bowers

RE-RECORDING MIXER, SOUND SUPERVISOR,  
SOUND EFFECTS EDITOR, & DIALOGUE EDITOR  
Alan McAdam

BACKGROUND SOUNDS EDITOR  
Craig Polding

MUSIC EDITOR  
Noah Kass

PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS  
Torey Greenwald  
Zach Feinberg

SET PHOTOGRAPHERS

Ricky Klopfenstein  
Valerie Jones  
Christopher Kell

CAST

Wendell- Adam Bowers  
Vicky- Jayme Ratzer  
Joanna- Valerie Jones  
Dave- Toby Turner

*(rest of cast listed in order of appearance)*

Amber- Torey Greenwald  
Customer #1- Brock Savage  
Kid at College Party- Skyler Scott Kern  
Curator- Houston Welles  
Ernie- Brian Jaeger  
Food Not Bombs Activist- Cory Draper  
Human Rights Activist- Christopher Kell  
Food Shortage Activist- Frankie Gonzalez  
Cici- Emily Woodruff  
Party Hostess- Amy Smith  
Freckles- Ricky Klopfenstein  
Girl at Party- Adrienne Doyle  
Miscarriage Guy #1- Tito Alverio  
Miscarriage Guy #2- Brooks Heatherly  
Guitar Guy- Mark Levy  
Girl with Guitar Guy- Jennifer Mathis  
Girl Talking to Joanna- Brit Garner  
Creepy Guy at Party- Erik Voss  
Christian- Calvin Cole  
Dave's Date- Marcella Rodriguez  
Movie Star- Chris Fontakis  
Movie Star (voice)- Ryan Moulton  
Movie Starlet- Carly Hallam  
Movie Starlet (voice)- Emily Woodruff  
Receptionist- Wes Campbell  
Dave's Coach (voice)- Eric Schackne  
Volunteer Organizer- Maxx Mann  
Suicide Helpline Operator- Nicole Christiansen  
Redneck Guy- JC Currais  
Redneck Girl- Stephanie Bell  
Comedian- Bernard "Hollywood" Williams  
Beer Spiller- Chris Kummer  
Comedy Club MC- Filup Molina



## MUSIC

“Gainesville in the Summer”

written by Nicole Christiansen

performed by Courtney Pape

“Kibbles & Bits”

written and performed by Radon

courtesy of No Idea Records

“All Talk”

written and performed by The Enablers

courtesy of Mars Motors Records

“I Love You”

written and performed by Andrew Jackson Jihad

courtesy of Plan-It-X Records

“Better Friend”

written and performed by The Enablers

courtesy of Mars Motors Records

“Nancy Plays Chess”

written and performed by Eric Schackne

“Global Warming is a Joke”

written and performed by Potion Sex

“Help a Kid Out”

written and performed by Paul Baribeau

courtesy of Plan-It-X Records

“(Crack) Rock Opera”

written and performed by Billy Reese Peters

courtesy of No Idea Records

“Storms”

written and performed by The Deep and Holy Sea

“Escaping XI City”

written and performed by Laserhead

courtesy of Barracuda Sound

“I Don’t Wanna Go Out”

written and performed by Averkiou

courtesy of Barracuda Sound

“Elegies”

written and performed by The Deep and Holy Sea

“Black and White”  
written and performed by Kyle Vegter

“Nothing to Say”  
written and performed by Paul Baribeau  
courtesy of Plan-It-X Records

“Apologize”  
written and performed by The Enablers  
courtesy of Mars Motors Records

“South Wall”  
written and performed by Averkiou  
courtesy of Barracuda Sound

“Escape Myself”  
written and performed by Virgin Forest

“Grandma’s Cootie”  
written and performed by Radon  
courtesy of No Idea Records

JOANNA’S PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF  
Ric Savid

GAINESVILLE ZINE CLIPPING BY  
Nick Borges

CREDITS BY  
Nick Lowe

DISTRIBUTION ADVISOR  
Josh Braun/Submarine Entertainment

HD SERVICES BY  
Different by Design & HD Cinema

SHOT ON LOCATION IN  
Gainesville, FL, Summer 2008

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