



# THE JUDAS HORSE

**WRITER / CO-PRODUCER:**

Vickery Eckhoff

**PRODUCERS:**

Adam Scherr

Marcia Gay Harden

**EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS:**

Jacqueline Miller

Andrew Michael

Partnerships for Change

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**STAGE:**

Script Completed,

Awaiting Production

**TOTAL CAPITAL REQUIRED:**

\$6.7 MM

**SYNOPSIS:** After her father is savagely beaten at the family lumberyard, Paula Bacon returns home to Kaufman, Texas and takes on a local equine slaughter plant that brutalizes not just horses, but a small black neighborhood next door. Paula runs for mayor and wins, joining forces with Mary Nash, a local atheist, and Robert Eldridge, who lives behind the plant. Against huge odds, they shut it down, exposing decades of good ol' boy corruption and a trail of tainted horse blood running from their small East Texas town, through the state capital and all the way to Capitol Hill. Based on the true story appearing in *Forbes*: "Texas Mayor Paula Bacon Kicks Some Tail." (A more detailed summary may be found on page 3).

**MARKETING & DISTRIBUTION:** Movie audiences have shown in the last few years that they are hungry for films that present a mix of redemption, love and inspiration. With a combination of courageous main characters and an issue-driven story line, *The Judas Horse* has the potential to appeal to a broad demographic. Inspirational messages and social causes

have proven marketable across all film genres, particularly as audiences long for meaningful and dramatic content in film. For example, the film *Heaven is for Real* has grossed \$100 million+ worldwide on a budget of \$12 million since its release in 2014. The Company will generate revenue by selling the movie's worldwide exhibition rights, including theatrical, television, DVD and digital/online in both domestic and international markets. As a result, the Company's primary customers will be distributors and sales agents who purchase such rights. Mr. Jack Foley (bio on p. 3) has unmatched experience in this area, which uniquely positions the Company from a distribution standpoint.

**COMPARABLES:** While an investment in any pre-production project should be considered highly speculative, the returns can be extremely attractive. The script for *The Judas Horse* can be compared to films such as *Erin Brockovich*, *Norma Rae* and *Seabiscuit*. These three films had box office returns averaging \$69M. While any valuation would need to be subject to an aggressive discount rate to reflect the inherent risk, there is precedent for highly favorable returns.

<i>Film</i>	<i>Attachments</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Box Office</i>
<i>Erin Brockovich</i>	Julia Roberts, Albert Finney, David Brisbin	\$52M	\$257.8M
<i>Norma Rae</i>	Sally Field, Beau Bridges, Ron Leibman	\$4.5M	\$ 22.2M
<i>Seabiscuit</i>	Tobey Maguire, Jeff Bridges, Elizabeth Banks	\$87M	\$148.7M

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**NOUS ENTERTAINMENT**

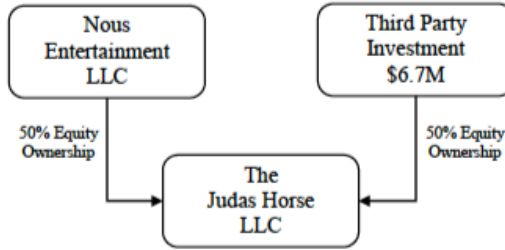
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# THE JUDAS HORSE

## PROPOSED INVESTMENT STRUCTURE:



## USES OF CAPITAL:

Having completed the script, additional capital is required to move the project through production and into distribution. Production expenses are separated into three main categories, as follows:

- *Above-the-Line*, including scripting, producing, directing, casting and travel and living expenses.
- *Production*, including production staff, set design and construction, lighting, camera, sound, wardrobe, location, transportation and travel and living expenses.
- *Post Production*, including visual effects, editing, music, sound, finishing and archiving and film deliverables.

Above the Line	\$1.867M
Production	\$3.438M
Post-Production	\$0.362M
<u>G&amp;A</u>	<u>\$0.987M</u>
Total:	\$6.654M

## CREATIVE TEAM:

**Vickery Eckhoff** is a New York City-based writer whose coverage of the horse slaughter trade has been at the forefront of an ongoing discussion by the news media, legislators, lobbyists, industry and the public. Vickery's *Forbes* article on Paula Bacon (on which *The Judas Horse* is based) was the first to chronicle slaughter's exploitation, not just of horses, but of small-town people and their way of life. Her story has been cited by lawmakers—from US congressmen to members of Parliament in Canada—looking to shut down this unregulated, predatory industry. Part of an extensive, popular series praised for its accuracy and research, Vickery's writing has also exposed the pipeline of racehorses to slaughter, wild horse politics and roundups (for *Forbes*); billionaire welfare ranchers (*AlterNet* and *Salon*); and horse drugs and food hazards (*Newsweek/The Daily Beast* and the *Huffington Post*).

**Adam Scherr** has a proven track record of handling complex issues: ecumenical, financial, healthcare reform, entertainment and more. As a National Media Director, Adam led a team of 60 health writers helping them navigate the wild west of health journalism and editorial comment for the owner of *The Christian Science Monitor* (csmonitor.com). Specifically hired to help the church with its media outreach in New York City and state, Adam quickly helped facilitate and build relationships with CBS, *The New York Times*, Fox News, *The Washington Post*, *LA Times*, CNN and many others. Seeing the results the media team received, the legislative team tapped him to do the same in both Albany and on Capitol Hill. Adam has extensive business culture turnaround experience. His first client was an independent film-maker and his latest an international church with a Pulitzer Prize winning newspaper. His diverse background in entrepreneurialism, business management, media relations, social causes, film and theater gives him a unique perspective to help companies and organizations navigate and thrive in this complex 21st century culture. Adam also founded and built Infintee Kids Corp., a high-end graphic tee shirt line. The company quickly grew to over \$300K in yearly sales and was carried by Barneys, FAO Schwarz and hundreds of retailers throughout the US, Canada and Europe.



# THE JUDAS HORSE

## CREATIVE TEAM:

**Marcia Gay Harden** is a world-renowned award winning film, television and theatre actress who has forged a remarkable body of work, always staying true to her chameleon style of “becoming the character.” From the artist Lee Krasner in “Pollock” (for which she won the Best Supporting Actress Oscar), to the down-and-out Celeste in “Mystic River” (Academy Award nomination) Marcia has created a signature style based on character transformation. Her versatility and wide-range have been praised in such films as “Millers Crossing”, “The First Wives Club”, “Meet Joe Black” and “Mona Lisa Smile.” Her exceptional performance in “God of Carnage” garnered her the Best Actress Tony Award. Other nominations include a Tony nomination for “Angels in America” and multiple Emmy nominations. Having graduated from the University of Texas with a B.A. in Theatre and an MFA from the Graduate Acting program at New York University, Marcia is also a skilled author and speaker.

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## STORY SUMMARY:

**Paula Bacon**, 39, interrupts her graduate studies in comp lit at Harvard to care for her aging father, **Grandon (“Daddy”)**, after he’s savagely beaten at the family lumberyard in Kaufman, Texas. But her plans to sell it and bring him back East quickly fall apart. The business is insolvent and property values have sunk because of Dallas Crown, a local horse slaughter plant whose brutalization of horses and an adjacent black neighborhood — Boggy Bottom — has turned Kaufman into a dystopia.

Blood is rising up into people's bathtubs and toilets, and oozing out of storm drains and manhole covers. Leg bones with horseshoes attached are showing up on people's lawns. There's a deathly stench and an infestation of snakes, rats, roaches and vultures that a Boggy Bottom resident, **Robert Eldridge**, protests unsuccessfully. He and his neighbor, **Squeaky Cave**, have been fighting the plant for years, but no one listens or seems to care.

Stuck with Grandon in a town she'd escaped years earlier, Paula meets the outspoken **Mary Nash** (45). Mary's a local beauty, atheist and political firebrand whose 40-acre farm runs from an antebellum mansion overlooking Kaufman's nicest street, to Dallas Crown's horse pens and Boggy Bottom. Soon, she's taking Paula to spy on the pens from her pasture and telling her of dirty deals involving local good ol' boys and **Olivier Kemseke**, the slaughter plant's lawless, effete, Belgian owner.

A horse owner, Mary tells Paula of a pending state ban that could shut Kemseke down and encourages her to fill an upcoming vacancy on the town's planning and zoning commission. Paula hesitantly steps in and proceeds to confront the good ol' boys over a land deal involving mayor **Dennis Berry**, and his predecessor. Angry, Berry tries to force her to resign. Paula refuses and with Grandon and Mary's support, runs for mayor — and beats Berry, earning instant enemies.

The state ban goes into effect in 2003, but Kemseke obtains a temporary injunction against closure. Paula and Mary know that a legal decision will take time and quietly strategize on shutting Dallas Crown using a new ordinance that Mary writes.

Mary helps Paula uncover ongoing wastewater violations, ignored court orders and unpaid fines by Kemseke that threaten to bankrupt the town. Their work gains them attention, something they revel in — particularly when it involves exposing the good ol' boys and their foolishness. But their fun is cut short when Mary is diagnosed with lung cancer — a tragedy for which Mary refuses sympathy.

Mary continues to watch the horse pens until late in her illness, dying in 2005 as Paula wins a second term. There is no funeral in line with Mary's wishes, but poignantly, her husband (Steve Hulme) and



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son (Nash) sprinkle her ashes over her horses' graves next door to Dallas Crown. It's a place Paula will return to for solace and to read passages from the subject of her graduate work — Homer's Iliad — as she continues fighting the battle Mary started.

Paula soon joins forces with Robert Eldridge; a striking cruelty investigator from Houston; and a folksy pro-bono attorney that Mary lined up to represent Boggy Bottom. Together, the three help Paula expose Dallas Crown in a series of local hearings by Kaufman's Board of Adjustment (BOA) on which Steve and Jimmy Reed sit — relationships that Kemseke's legal team will try and exploit to their advantage.

They're ruthless, fighting the BOA's unanimous vote to close the plant as well as two measures recently introduced on Capitol Hill, for which Paula testifies and lobbies. Both pieces of legislation succeed, but a backroom deal struck by the USDA and a bait-and-switch tactic by a prominent senator allow Dallas Crown and two other US plants to continue killing horses, dragging Kaufman closer to ruin.

When a Texas judge finally rules in Dallas Crown's favor on the state ban, it appears that nothing can stop Kemseke. An appeal is filed by the local prosecutor's office at the same time that Congress orders the USDA to follow the law. Robert Eldridge and several prominent humane groups sue.

Legal tensions climb. These drag on through the end of 2006, with no sign of resolution. Paula's now facing a tough third election with no Mary to support her, and Grandon's memory is fading — the aftereffect of head trauma sustained during the assault that brought Paula home.

But in early 2007, the courts act decisively: The USDA's deal with Kemseke is found to be illegal and the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals reverses the judge's earlier decision on the Texas horse slaughter ban. Dallas Crown must close — but Kemseke won't stop slaughtering horses.

He appeals to the Supreme Court, as hundreds of horses stand in limbo in Dallas Crown's pens, awaiting their fate. It's now February, 2007. Twelve days pass.

On the last night, someone enters Dallas Crown and sets them free. They escape, only to be hit by cars as some wander down onto the highway. The next morning, the Supreme Court rejects Kemseke's appeal just as a Judas horse is released and the horses are rounded up from Boggy Bottom and Mary's neighboring farm. By afternoon, they're all dead — but one.

In the following weeks, Paula loses her election by one vote and Dallas Crown finally shuts its doors. The lumberyard, too, closes. After a long struggle, Boggy Bottom and Kaufman are finally free.