



Vitals Interview Series Part 3: Christopher Showerman

By Staci Layne Wilson
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Although Christopher Showerman is a very fit actor (having swung from a vine wearing only a loincloth and muscles in the *George of the Jungle* sequel, to mention just one rather physical role), he spends most of his time in the new horror movie *Vitals* unconscious, semi-conscious, and about to be knocked unconscious.

He plays Richard Carson, a man who's taken his wife on vacation to India in hopes of fixing their severed marriage... unfortunately, it's he who is severed when he runs afoul of some nasty organ-snatchers who kidnap him and start a'cutting.



Dread Central: How'd you first hear about this role?

Christopher Showerman: They sent me the script when I was on vacation in another state, and it showed up on my phone.

DC: It would have been better if it was in another country. Next time, adjust your story. Like, "Yes, I happened to be in India vacationing..."

CS: I happened to be going to India at the time, location scouting... [laughter] Anyway, yeah - it showed up on my phone and my friend Kalex who is producing this sent it to me and asked me would you take a look at this and see if you would be interested. I wanted to at least read a couple of pages so I can talk intelligently about it before I came home. Then I'd read the whole thing on my computer just as a favor to him. I started reading it on that tiny phone screen and I got so engrossed I read the entire script that night on my phone. It was that exciting and knowing too it's a limited location movie. I thought this is going to be a little drudgery because it's so difficult to make movies that don't go anywhere. You truly have to rely just on the story between the characters, we're not blowing up a robot.

DC: How's the experience been so far?

*CS: Well, it's great because a lot of this movie will happen in the editing. Marc is shooting this very strategically so we can make the most out of everything that we've got and the people that we have on board and monopolize the least amount of their time while we're doing it. So creating the tension, tension and suspense is so much in timing and it's so much in editing so as long as you have the time and knowing how long you can keep an audience held at the edge of their seats without doing anything. As soon as the shark comes out of the water the tension's broken. Now you're into the horror but the tension is that moment right before the shark breaches the water. So that's what we're doing. How long can we keep that shark under the water and still have the audience excited about it? So I think that's how Marc is approaching this. His hero is Alfred Hitchcock and it's Hitchcockian as we can, believe it or not. So I think it looks to people at first especially with a premise of it like torture porn, like a *Hostel* or something Eli Roth might do. But when you really get into it that's just a back draft for the more suspenseful thing which is, Oh my God... how did these two people who are married, how did their relationship go so south and that like an onion starts to unpeel as the story goes on.*

DC: The husband and wife are separated by a wall throughout much of the movie, right?

CS: Exactly, exactly, and that adds another element, another obstacle I should say, between us because you can say one thing and make your voice sound one way and your face may betray that you're thinking something else that they can't see so.

DC: It's like texting gets misinterpreted so much, unless there's an emoticon involved, right? As an actor that must be really fun for you, to find different ways to play at some of the same dialogue.

CS: We do. Yeah we get to throw things different ways. Ultimately it's up to Marc and the editing room how he wants to cut that, but if I throw him a few options and something that I think is really interesting and then the final judgment is if he still thinks it's interesting when he's in a dark lonely editing room.

DC: Well you know I saw an interesting movie a few years back, it's called *End of the Game*, and even though it stars Jon Voight, Robert Shaw and Jacqueline Bisset, the most memorable person of all is Donald Sutherland who is a corpse. We never see him alive in the movie, yet he manages to be such a scene-stealer.-

CS: The corpse does?

DC: Yes. I don't know how he did it! So, how do you make yourself stand out in this movie, where you're just lying down most of the time?

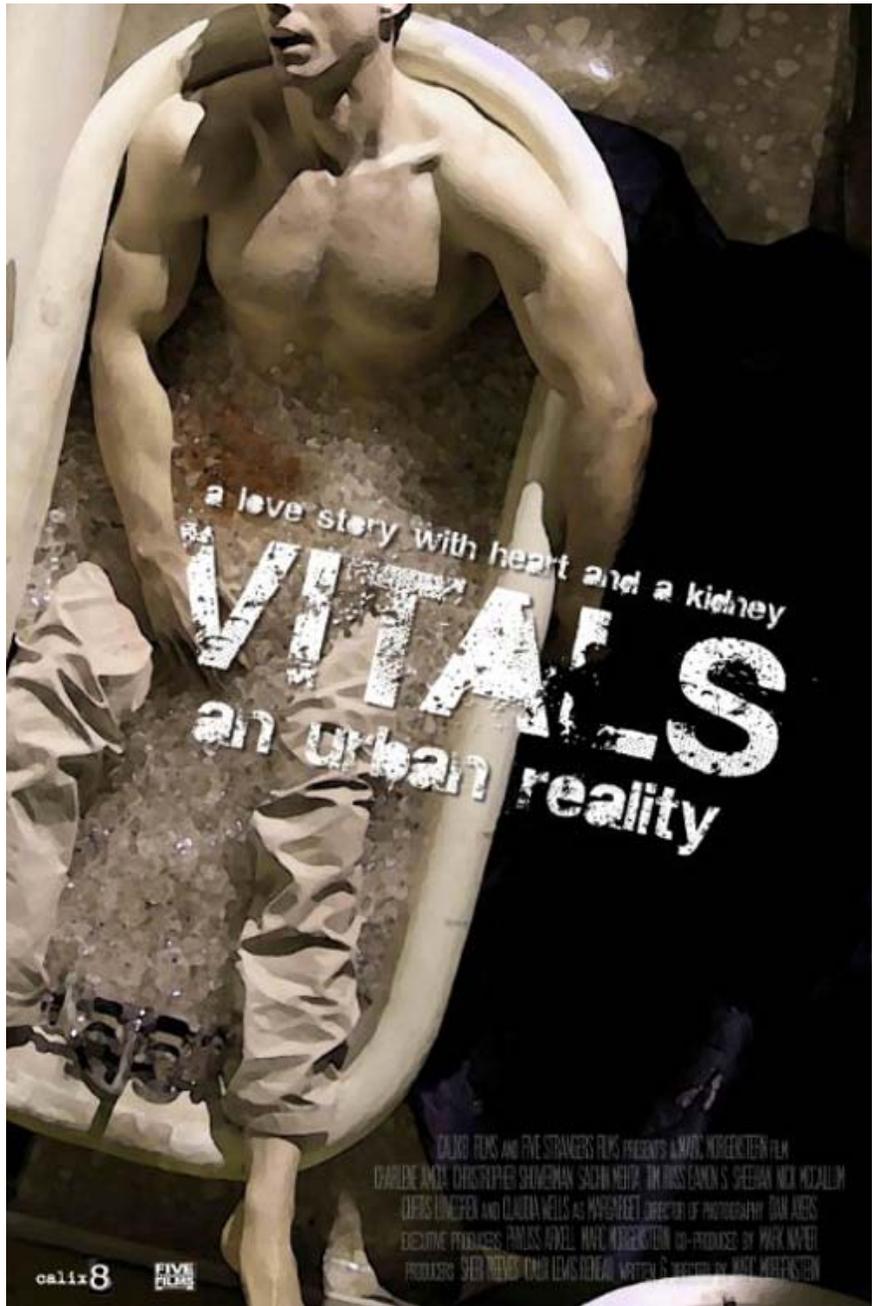
CS: That's a fantastic question. There are things you could do. I don't want to do them though honestly because the story- Well yeah it's about both of our experiences but I don't want to make it about me the actor. I'm sure Charlene doesn't want to make it about her the actress. We're trying to tell a story and what best serves the story. So if I do something that draws more attention to me when I should just be a limp body. So I want to, I guess, play this as truthfully as I can. I hope that answers your question...?

DC: Yes, thanks. I really enjoy talking to actors because although I don't act myself, I love hearing about all the different choices that you can make, all that you can draw from, and the things that you learn. So if I ask five different actors in similar roles that same question, I would have five different answers, which I think is so interesting.

CS: You probably know a lot about acting, having come to so many sets.

DC: Yeah, it is a pretty great job, actually, to be able to talk to writers, directors, cinematographers, and actors every day. Speaking of cinematographers, another thing that I noticed about the shooting here is that you seem to have your camera pretty locked down.

Vitals comes to us from writer/director Marc Morgenstern. Charlene Amoia, Sachin Metha, Tim Russ, and Claudia Wells co-star. In it Showerman stars as an unassuming electrician who wakes up in an abandoned motel room in a tub of ice with his kidney missing. It's only a matter of time before he finds his wife in the adjacent room waiting to be the next victim to a horrible organ harvesting organization. Now they must use each other's wits and skills to escape before their captors return and their dark secrets are revealed.



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