

Bethalto native working on big budget film projects in L.A.

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BETHALTO – Local filmmaker Matthew Gowan has been working on making films for a great portion of his adult life.

A single-take film he created has been featured in film festivals across the country. Called [*The Lachrymist*](#), it can be found on online video outlet Vimeo in its entirety. It is around 25 minutes long, and is a story about a young man disappearing from a hotel, which causes his wife to begin questioning not only the staff, but her own sanity. Gowan said he created the film on the advice of fellow local filmmaker, Brian Jun, who said a short film would be something of a “calling card” for getting future films made, as many investors and people in the industry often ask about a filmmaker's previous work.

Gowan reached out to several friends and people in the industry. He credited Clayne Crawford, who acted in Jun's film, *Steel City*, for a lot of help in making the film. Crawford was originally slated to play the lead role, but could not due to scheduling conflicts.

Crawford then introduced Gowan to James Harvey Ward, who Gowan said “worked out perfectly.” He also introduced Gowan to Navi Rawat and Paul Rae, who were also essential in the film's ultimate completion.

“Paul was a Hail Mary pass, as he replaced another actor who backed out at the last minute,” Gowan said in an email. “I only had one conversation with him two weeks before we shot, but he showed up on shooting day with everything perfectly memorized. That guy is amazing. Ultimately, Clayne was able to record a voice-over, so it was nice to have him a part of the film after all.”

Another person who played a key role in the film was Brian Massie, who connected Gowan to the Luxe Hotel, where the film was shot. He also played a security guard at the end.

“My parents, Harvey and Elaine, were the greatest help of all,” Gowan said. “They've always been supportive of my entire career, through thick and thin. I owe them everything, from my love of film to everything I am and have today. They took care of me most of my life and now it's my job to take care of them.”

Gowan has worked with Crawford since that film, on the *Lethal Weapon* TV series. As for *The Lachrynist*, it has been well-received, but not a lot of people have seen it.

“It's played two film festivals – The Pittsburgh Independent Film Festival and the Hollyshorts Film Festival – but basically played to no one. Unfortunately, no one wants to watch a 25-minute short film, unless it's somehow revolutionary or has a big name talent attached. At least everyone who has seen it has told me they like it, so that's something.”

Currently, Gowan is in Los Angeles working on his first screenplay. He also purchased the rights to a book directly from the author, which he's trying to adapt into a film. He's also worked as a crew member on several big name productions such as *Aquaman*, *First Purge*, *Captain Marvel*, *American Horror Story*, *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*, *Westworld* and *Fair and Balanced*.