

HOUSE OF THE DRAGON

Greg Yaitanes



Re: Recommendation of Morgan Hammen

To Whom it May Concern,

Morgan Hammen is a soulful and deeply talented storyteller and a gifted visualist.

I first met Morgan when I was directing both **THE OLD MAN** and **SNOWFALL** for Hulu/FX. Morgan just graduated Columbia College Chicago and was working as our on-set COVID supervisor, protecting the health and welfare of our crew during the fall of 2020. Morgan approached me and asked if I would watch her student thesis **DEAD MAN'S HAND**. I found her work sophisticated beyond her years, tackling a unique father/son dynamic set against the poverty and desperation of rural Wyoming. She wrapped this work in a genre, thriller-like shell and its message haunts me to this day. Rarely have I been this impressed by the many short films I've seen and many new filmmakers I've met across my thirty year career.

Morgan's ambition to tell socially conscious stories did not stop there.

I've been fortunate to be a mentor to Morgan since and while I was in London Producing and Directing HBO's **HOUSE OF THE DRAGON**, Morgan and I would frequently Zoom about her new project **THE BAD GUY**. The Bad Guy is a powerful script. A potboiler that explores inequality through example. Through the eyes of Briar, we navigate a world built on prejudice and hate, unwilling to give him the second chance he deserves. Though reformed, he is rejected by his family, bystanders, and the judicial/penal system, immediately setting him up for failure. Given only two weeks to find housing, work, and a form of contact on a

\$200 stipend and no work-placement programs, *The Bad Guys* comments on how the for-profit prison systems waste no time in encouraging criminal relapse and, in turn, recidivism. Through Morgan's eyes we see the judicial and penal system is built to benefit those who run it, not to help those who should benefit from it. *The Bad Guy* shines a light on a flawed and merciless system.

Beyond systemic failures, Morgan makes sure to incorporate both big and small forms of racism. Whether blatant, deniable, or simple microaggressions, she demonstrates the consistency and range of racism for "people of color." Whether passive or abrasive, the wear of these acts will diminish any man, no matter how strong his will or how good a person he is. The ending of this script is sublime (which I do not want to spoil in this letter). Morgan has also shared a visual mood board that fully realizes these themes and supports her characters.

Morgan is the next generation of female filmmakers tackling social change through the deceptive genre of "elevated pulp." *The Bad Guy* is a thriller at its core and its themes must be heard.

Morgan will be additive to your program and any support your organization can provide is an investment in her, her future and the importance of telling stories like these, inhabited by scripts like **The Bad Guy**.

Thank you for your consideration,



Greg Yaitanes
Executive Producer/Director