



**In the beginning...sperm came from men.**

Two adventurous women in love are desperate to have their own biological child. They take a chance on an experimental scientific process and make sperm from their own stem cells. Pregnant with humour and unexpected twists, their journey tailspins out of control when their families discover there is no father.

**RUNNING TIME: 81 minutes**

**FORMAT: HDCAM SR, COLOR**

**SOUND: DOLBY 5.1**

**COUNTRY: CANADA**

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## Production Notes

*The Baby Formula* is truly a story of life imitating art: The coincidences that occurred in the making of this film blur the line between fiction and reality.

Director, Alison Reid was on the festival circuit with her short film, *Succubus* – a dramedy about Athena and Lilith, a lesbian couple attempting to conceive a baby that is a true biological combination of them both – when she discovered that lead actresses, Angela Vint and Megan Fahlenbock, were both pregnant!

Reid immediately saw an opportunity for a feature length sequel. The premise of the *The Baby Formula* would be that Athena and Lilith are the first women in the world giving birth to each other's babies.

In real life, scientists have been able to produce offspring from two female mice, without the involvement of male mice. In 2004, Dr Tomohiro Kono of Japan created fatherless mice by fusing two eggs. In 2006 Dr Karim Nayernia in the U. K. produced six live mouse pups using artificial sperm made from embryonic stem cells. In *The Baby Formula*, Athena works in a lab where similar research is happening. She and Lilith have made sperm from their own stem cells and fertilized each other's eggs.

Alison wanted to shoot over the course of Angela and Megan's pregnancies, so time was of the essence. There was no opportunity to raise funding. The Actra TIP Program (low budget) and executive producer, David J Woods (supplying the camera, grip and electric equipment) were key in allowing Alison to bring the project to fruition.

There was also no time for the normal development process. Richard Beattie immediately started writing the script, and shooting began before it was completed. *Succubus* producers James Mou and Stephen Adams sprang back into action. New characters were cast as they were written. Rosemary Dunsmore, Michael Hanrahan, Sarrain Boylan, Hal Eisen, Roger Dunn and Dmitry Chepovetsky all came to the project at various stages.

And when the unexpected happened... new scenes were written on the spot: Originally, the script called for Athena to have her water break while she and Lilith were attending the Pride Parade. Lilith would put her wife on the back of a Harley Davidson and whisk her away to the hospital in the middle of the Pride festivities. Permission was gained for *The Baby Formula* to shoot during Toronto's Pride Week. A special effects plastic bag was to be strapped under Angela's skirt to simulate her water breaking. However, during rehearsals, Angela got off the motorcycle and quietly told Alison that her water had just broken in real life! Angela went to the hospital to give birth to her baby, and *The Baby Formula* Pride shoot went on.



Shooting *The Baby Formula* over the course of the pregnancies enabled Vint and Fahlenbock to draw on real emotions and experiences which were key in creating the atmosphere in the film. Reid also cast actors who were comfortable ad-libbing and encouraged them to use the charm and wit in Beattie's script as a spring board for their own creativity.

One of the many gems that resulted was Angela Vint's suggestion that she and Megan do a lip sync dance to the Black Eyed Peas song "My Humps" with their big pregnant bellies exposed. After a quick sampling of what this would look like, Reid couldn't resist. The sequence was shot on spec, and the footage was then sent to the music publisher, who loved it. With the help of Vapor Music, this small indie film was able to secure rights to the hit song for its end credit sequence.

In researching the scientific aspects of *The Baby Formula*, Alison spoke to scientists and bio-ethicists around the world. The scenes that were written with Dr Oldenhoff (RD Reid) and Lab Technician, Jim (Matt Baram) were directly based on her visit to Dr Andras Nagy at the Mt Sinai laboratory of stem cell research. Although extra humour has been sprinkled in for good measure, the substance of what is said about the science is accurate.

The synergy on set was amazing. Cast and crew all commented that The Baby Formula was a special film. Paul Zimic from Grindstone Media felt the same way and became a partner in the film. Momentum continued when Telefilm Canada granted completion funding. Super Channel has licensed the film and will broadcast it after the theatrical release.



### **Director's Statement**

Until recently, it has been impossible for gay couples to conceive of the idea of being able to combine their genetics and have their own biological children. That has always struck me as sad. When I read an article about some science that made it possible to create offspring from two female mice, it resonated with me, and inspired me to make this film.

The Baby Formula follows a lesbian couple through their pregnancies as if they are the first women in the world giving birth to each others babies. The two actresses I cast were both pregnant in real life, and this resulted in some incredible experiences in shooting the film. We have real footage of the pregnancies, and of the mothers with their new born babies. Life did indeed imitate art when Angela Vint (who plays Athena) had her water break as we were rehearsing the scene in which her character's water breaks.

In researching the film, I spoke to stem cell experts around the world. For the purposes of the story, we have assumed that the science is further along than it is in real life, however the scientific explanations are accurate. This scientific backdrop becomes a pallet for a story that is ultimately about family, and the common ground facing us all despite our diversity.

I hope you enjoy The Baby Formula, and get a few good laughs as well as some food for thought!



## **The Baby Formula – Long Synopsis**

Athena and Lilith are two women in love who are about to make history by having the first baby born to two biological mothers and no father.

The couple wants a biological child of their own so badly that they use an experimental scientific process to make “female sperm” from Lilith’s stem cells. The process was developed as a fertility treatment in a lab where Athena works. It has been successful in mice, but has never been tried in humans. When the process works and Athena becomes pregnant with Lilith’s baby, the two are thrilled. However, some rules were broken, and they must keep what they’ve done a secret.

Tension builds when Lilith becomes jealous and uses the same method to get pregnant behind Athena’s back. Adding to the turmoil is Athena’s brother, Larry who claims to be the father of Lilith’s baby. To prove him wrong, the couple is forced to divulge the truth of their experimental conceptions to their families. Pregnant with humour and unexpected twists, the family meeting results in a collision of differing views.

Athena’s religious right-wing mother, Wanda wavers between total denial and going through the roof. Her father Karl seems dumbfounded. Grandma Kate accepts the news with quips of humour, wisdom and love. Lilith’s gay alcoholic parents, Daniel and Edward, are ready to be granddads but have their own troubles to face.

While everyone sits back to digest the surprising news of the pregnant couple, Karl makes an announcement that sends the family meeting into a tailspin. The trauma that results brings life’s blessings into perspective and acts as a catalyst for change and growth. What begins as a story of advancements in science, THE BABY FORMULA ultimately ends in a tale of love, acceptance and family.



## About The Cast

**ANGELA VINT (Athena)** Growing up in the suburbia of small-town Oshawa, Angela Vint is a long way from where she started. While landing her first tv gig on "TRADERS", which also gave her a Gemini nomination, she was still in Universtiy. Since then she has tried to make a name for herself as an established Canadian actor. She has gone on to star in both Canadian and New Zealand tv series such as "Mercy Peak", "This is Wonderland", "Blue Murder" and many more. Her film credits include leading roles in features such as "Urban Legends", "19 Months" and "Slatlands" as well various stageworks such as "Closer" and "Dangerous Liasons".

After starring in her first short film, "Succubus", Angela is thrilled to join forces once more with director, Alison Reid in "The Baby Formula": "It is very rare to land such a great role, in a great script and get to work with such talented cast and crew. To find that combination all in one project is a luxury and I loved every minute of it."

**MEGAN FAHLENBOCK (Lilith)** is a reputable, Canadian actor with many credits to her name. Her most recent film, "Sam's Lake", which she starred in opposite Fay Masterson and Sandrine Holt, will be screened at the Tribeca Film Festival this April. Other film credits include "Resident Evil: Apocalypse", "Get Over It", "Countdown" and "Pulling Punches" in which she received a Best Actress award at the Toronto On-line Film Festival.

Fahlenbock's work in television includes "La Femme Nikita", "Mutant X", "Blue Murder", "Witchblade" and "The 5th Quadrant". She is also the voice of Jen in the hit animated series, "6Teen", and Deets in Disney's "Get Ed". Fahlenbock will be on stage at the New York Fringe Festival this summer playing nice gal Eddie in, "The Reservoir Bitches".

**ROSEMARY DUNSMORE (Wanda)** – Rosemary is an award winning actress whose career has taken her across Canada, the United States and Europe. She was awarded the Masque Award in Quebec for her performance in Wit, the first English speaking actress to be so honoured. Her first major television appearance in CBC's Blind Faith won her the Earl Grey Award. Her frequent television appearances have garnered her four Gemini nominations. She is probably best known for her role as Katherine Brooke in Anne of Green Gables-The Sequel, Aunt Abigail in The Road



to Avonlea and the title role in the CBC series Mom P.I. Some favourite roles: Total Recall, Dreamcatcher, The Interrogation of Michael Crowe, Profoundly Normal, The Winning Season, Hotel and Citizen Duane. Recent theatre directing credits include: Whale Music, Jane Eyre, Hockey Mom, Hockey Dad, Virginia, Measure for Measure, Dinner with Friends, Wuthering Heights, Fighting Words and The Glace Bay Miner's Museum. She teaches at Equity Showcase, the National Theatre School, University of Toronto, George Brown College, SIFT and independent workshops across the country. She is the Actor in Residence at the Canadian Film Centre. She was chosen by Macleans Magazine in 1990 for the Honour Roll of Canadians Who Make a Difference. Rosemary most recently appeared on stage in The Glass Menagerie (Toronto), in Glorious! and Long Day's Journey Into Night (Montreal). She will be seen on TV in the mini-series St Urbain's Horseman and Guns.

**OTHER CAST MEMBERS:**

Karl	Roger Dunn
Grandma Kate	Jessica Booker
Larry	Dmitry Chepovetsky
Edward	Michael Hanrahan
Daniel	Hal Eisen
Dr Oldenfield	RD Reid
Jim	Matt Baram
Ultrasound Tech	Sarain Boylan
Radio Interviewer	Maggie Cassella
Doc. Interviewer	Alison Reid
Drag Queen	Rory Moy
Muscle Guy	Brock Burford



### About The Filmmakers

**ALISON REID (Director/Producer)** makes her **feature film directorial debut** with **“The Baby Formula”**.

Reid won the 2007 Crystal Award, presented by the Director’s Guild of Canada for Emerging Director.

A native of Toronto, Canada, she is a respected stunt coordinator with over 200 film & television credits including the features “Blindness” and “Saw II, III & IV”. After second unit directing on several television shows including Showtime’s “DC 911: Time of Crisis” and USA Network’s series “The War Next Door”, Reid made her short film directorial debut with “Succubus” which she also co-wrote and produced. “Succubus” has screened at over 50 festivals worldwide, and is currently being broadcast in several countries. (2006, 14min 25 sec)

Reid’s professional development includes being one of six women chosen to participate in the ‘Women in the Director’s Chair Workshop’ (2001) at Banff Centre for the Arts, and participating in ‘The Producers Workshop’ at the Canadian Film Centre. Alison has a B.A.A. in Radio and Television from Ryerson Polytechnic University.

Alison Reid is now focused exclusively on her directing career and has several projects in development, including a television series based on “The Baby Formula”.

**PAUL ZIMIC (Executive Producer)** President, Grindstone Media Inc.

Paul Zimic began his work in the movie business at the age of 14 working as an usher in his hometown movie theatre. He graduated from studying Communications at the University of Windsor and took a job in Toronto buying television advertising on behalf of film distributor, Twentieth Century Fox.

Over the next 10 years, Zimic enriched his passion for movies by coordinating the international sales department for Alliance Independent Films and later moved to Communications Manager at the Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television and eventually Associate Publisher with the infamous industry trade magazine, Playback. Zimic witnessed the true capacity of television while selling advertising and sponsorships

for the CBC during the 2004 Summer Olympics Games. In November 2004 Paul Zimic formed Grindstone Media, a film and television production and distribution company.



**DAVID J WOODS (Executive Producer)** President, DJ Woods Entertainment.

**JAMES MOU (producer)** has worked in the TV and film industry as an executive producer and unit production manager for 22 years. Feature films and TV series to his credit as producer include “Perseverance”, “Circuit II”, and “Ice Planet”. His credits as unit production manager include “The Life & Hard Times of Guy Terrifico”, “The Dark Hours”, Left Behind II: Tribulation Force”, “Deceived” and “Lunch With Charles” which received a 2002 Genie Award nomination and won 3 awards at Leo Awards 2001.

Mou served as Executive In Charge Of Production at ‘Po Cheung Films Production Co.’, General Office Manager at “Metro Communication Co. Ltd”, Line Producer/Production Manager at ‘United Film & Video Services Ltd’ and Assistant Producer at “Asia Television Ltd.’. Mou currently has 2 projects in development: “Hit Me With Your Best Shot” and “Iron Road”.

**STEPHEN ADAMS (Producer)** He has been a professional actor in Canada for over twenty-five years and has performed in many theatres across the country including the prestigious Shaw Festival. Some of his numerous film and television works include Affliction, Hollywoodland, The Dead Zone, Possible Worlds, Truth, Stardom, Confessions of a Dangerous Mind, Blue Butterfly, Savage Messiah, IMAX:Ultimate G’s, X-files, Wiseguy and Nuremberg. Stephen has written, produced and directed several

short films and co-produced the short film Succubus with Alison and James. Stephen is currently in the process of writing and developing his feature length script “Sissiboo” with Alison Reid, who will also be directing it. He is the past President of ACTRA B.C. and a former Board member of the B.C.M.P.A. (British Columbia Motion Picture Association) and at MAIN FILM, and indie co-op in Montreal, Quebec. He currently sits on the board of directors at LIFT, an independent filmmaker's co-op in Toronto. Stephen teaches/coaches actors and directors working with actors across Canada and has studied filmmaking/screenwriting at George Brown College, MAIN FILM, The Summer Institute of Film and Television (SIFT) and UCLA’s On-line Screenwriting Program.

**RICHARD BEATTIE (Writer)** has acted as writer and creative consultant on more than 15 films. Some of his credits include “Almost Heaven”, “Unquiet Dead”, “The Highwayman” and “No Contest II”. Other films to his name include “Boulevard”, “Prom Night: IV: Deliver Us From Evil” and “Cold Comfort” for which he won a Genie Award for ‘Best Adapted Screenplay’.



**BRIAN HARPER (Cinematographer)** Brian Harper, has decades of experience in commercial, theatrical film and television production. In his 30+ years in the industry he has accumulated experience as a film editor in broadcast television, as a principal technical assistant to three Oscar-winning cameramen, and as a Cinematographer on numerous television series, movies and commercials. Brian has a BA in Communication Arts from Loyola College, University of Montreal.

**MARK ARCIERI (Editor)** Mark's career began by editing the news and feature Documentaries at Northern Cable and for MCTV, a CTV affiliate in Timmins, Ontario. He moved to Toronto and began a job immediately at D.A.V.E. (Dave Audio Video and Effects) for 2 years. After gaining the experience he needed, Mark went freelance and began to work as an assistant editor and editor on over 120 hours of television on such shows as TWITCH CITY, COVER ME, BLACK HARBOUR, THE REZ, THE, and Editing award winning show such as, THE SEVENTH GENERATION, THE FAMOUS JETT JACKSON and DEGRASSI: THE NEXT GENERATION. Recently Mark worked with Apple Computers and Digital Film Tree in California to build and use one of the worlds first Xsan networks using Final Cut Pro on the ESPN series "TILT". Mark also enjoys working on Independent productions when his time allows, lending his skills to up and coming filmmakers.

**BOB SHER (Production Designer)** Bob Sher has been in the film business since 1979. He first started out as a carpenter building sets for seven years and then moved up to Construction Co-coordinator, which he did for 10 years. His background of dealing with budgets, reading blueprints, organizing with other departments in executing set construction was a natural progression into the art department. Bob joined the Directors Guild of Canada in 1996 as an art director. In a few short years, Bob entered the world of production design where he can apply all the skills he's learned throughout his career. Bob was born in Los Angeles, California and grew up in Brooklyn, New York. He moved to Toronto in 1977.

**LESLIE KAVANAUGH (Costume Designer)** Leslie Kavanagh has been working in Film and Television for the past 12 years. She has been in the Wardrobe department on popular films such as "Harold and Kumar Go to White Castle", "Saw II, III, IV, and V", "How She Move", and "Land of the Dead". Her Television credits include being Wardrobe Supervisor on "Across the River to Motor City", "Perfect Strangers", and Showtime's "Leap Years". Leslie Has Designed the Costumes for episodes of "Blueprint For Disaster", Mario Moriera's film "Bedwetter", and Allison Reid's featurefilm "The Baby Formula".

**ROBERT CARLI (Composer)** is one of Canada's busiest and in-demand music composers for film and television. Since scoring his first film in 1998, his music has received numerous industry awards and nominations, including 8 Gemini nominations,



and Gemini Awards for Best Dramatic Series (2006) and Best Documentary (2004). He is the recipient of the 2007 SOCAN Award for domestic television. Most recently, Robert composed the score for the 13 episode first season of Shaftesbury Films' "The Murdoch Mysteries," and the indie comedy feature "Breakfast With Scot."

The diversity of Robert's music can be attributed in part to his years of experience as a performer of musical styles ranging from avante garde and classical, to jazz and rock. After graduating from the University of Toronto with a degree in composition, he began performing as saxophonist with The Toronto Symphony, The National Ballet of Canada and The Esprit Orchestra. He has toured with rock bands and jazz groups across North America and throughout Europe, and he has worked with such artists as the Barenaked Ladies, Julie Andrews, David Byrne , Bob Newhart, Polaris Prize winner Owen Pallett, and soprano Mary Lou Fallis.

Additionally, Robert teaches saxophone at the University of Toronto, has written a Scale and Technique Book for saxophone, and has authored several music related articles for industry periodicals.