



DEAD LOVER

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STORY

LOGLINE

A lonely Gravedigger who stinks of corpses finally meets her dream man, but their whirlwind affair is cut short when he tragically drowns at sea. Grief-stricken, she goes to morbid lengths to resurrect him through madcap scientific experiments, resulting in grave consequences and unlikely love.

SHORT SUMMARY

Dead Lover is the story of a lonely Gravedigger who reeks so strongly of corpses that she can't attract a lover. She concocts fragrant perfumes in her workshop, but nothing can save her romantic prospects from her ghastly odor... Until one day, when Gravedigger meets Lover, an aristocratic dandy in town for his sister's funeral. Lover is different: numb to the pampered palette of the aristocracy, his loins are downright aroused by Gravedigger's morbid stank. Before long, Gravedigger and Lover begin a rapturous love affair, become engaged, and dream of starting a family.

As Gravedigger slips her engagement ring on Lover's finger, she remarks to him: *"the reason why you put the ring on this finger, of your one and only true lover, is because the vein right here runs all the way up to your heart."* But suddenly, Gravedigger's dreams are ripped away when Lover tragically drowns in a shipwreck - and all that is recovered is his severed finger, still wrapped in his engagement ring.

Delirious with grief and enduring love, Gravedigger resolves to bring Lover back to life using only his ring finger. Holed up in her workshop, she plants the severed digit in a flower pot and subjects it to madcap scientific experiments. Finally, one stormy night, Gravedigger's attempt at reanimation is successful - but not how she expected. The finger bends at the knuckle and squirms in the soil, then grows lengthwise by several feet and develops an independent personality.

While it can be okay company, the limitations of a four-foot finger for a spouse start to show themselves, and Gravedigger finally makes a grave realization: she needs to find a body to serve as the vessel for Lover's re-animation. *But where would someone like her get a body...?*

Dead Lover is a hilarious, delirious, beautiful, horny, and wholly original Frankensteinian tale about the limits one Gravedigger will go to hold onto love. It is the sophomore feature from Grace Glowicki, who directed and stars as the love-obsessed, shovel-wielding Gravedigger turned mad scientist. Ben Petrie, Leah Doz and Lowen Morrow comprise the colourful cast of supporting characters, each playing multiple roles in the style of great romps such as *Monty Python and Dr. Strangelove*.

LONG SUMMARY

A lonely Gravedigger (GRACE GLOWICKI) spends her days burying the dead and aching for love among the living. Haunted by memories of the bodies she has buried with nobody to grieve for them, Gravedigger prays to her only confidant, the full moon, for a Lover to be by her side in life and death. But the many years digging all day with the dead in the dirt have left Gravedigger with a stench so foul that no suitor will come near her. Rejected by men and relentlessly mocked by the town's clucking chorus of Gossips (BEN PETRIE, LEAH DOZ, LOWEN MORROW), Gravedigger lives a solitary life and yearns for love.

Until she meets an aristocratic dandy, Lover (PETRIE) at his Dead Sister's funeral. Gravedigger's interest is aroused when she overhears Lover give a eulogy about the primacy of love, before fleeing to the woods in a fit of grief. Knowing the dangers that lurk nearby, Gravedigger chases after him. A grisly meet-cute ensues, and sparks fly. Lover is different: benumbed by the pampered palette of the aristocracy, his loins are downright aroused by Gravedigger's morbid stank.

Before long, the two begin a passionate love affair, become engaged, and dream of starting a family. As Gravedigger slips an engagement ring on Lover's finger, she remarks to him: "the reason why you put the ring on this finger, of your one and only true lover, is because the veins right here run all the way up to your heart." For the moment, Gravedigger's life of loneliness is filled with the crackling fires of love.

But Gravedigger and Lover's relationship is halted when Lover unceremoniously vanishes, leaving only a note explaining that he is infertile and has sailed across the ocean to an experimental fertility clinic. He promises to return "once the doctors have reversed the death inside of me", and leaves a sapling of roses for Gravedigger to tend to - a token of their growing love.

Gravedigger adheres to Lover's wishes, and tends to the bush with a special fertilizer she brews herself in her workshop. After a tortured separation, interspersed with increasingly horny postcards, Gravedigger receives a final letter from Lover: the experiments have been successful, and he's returning home to start their family at once.

As Gravedigger fantasizes about his return, a terrible storm hits Lover's vessel during his homeward voyage. Tragically, Lover drowns at sea... and all that is recovered from the wreckage is his severed finger, still wrapped in his engagement ring. A group of Sailors (PETRIE, DOZ, MORROW) inform Gravedigger of Lover's death, returning his finger to her in an unceremonious canvas sack.

Meanwhile, Lover's brother-in-law, Widower (MORROW) -- the surviving husband of Lover's Dead Sister (DOZ) -- wastes away in a drug-fueled haze. Desperate to evade the grief of his wife's passing, Widower badgers his butler for "the poppy"; he escapes into hallucinations of his wife revived and singing operatically, to avoid the blunt reality of her death.

Meanwhile, Gravedigger outright refuses the death of her Lover. Delirious with grief and transfixed with love, she resolves to bring Lover back to life using only his precious ring finger. Holed up in her workshop, she plants the finger in a flower pot, and subjects it to madcap scientific experiments. One stormy night, using her shovel as the conductor for a miraculous bolt of lightning, Gravedigger's attempt at reanimation is successful - but not how she expected. Lover's finger bends at the knuckle and squirms in the soil, then grows lengthwise by several feet and develops an independent personality.

While it can be okay company, the limitations of a four-foot finger for a spouse start to show themselves, and Gravedigger finally makes a grave realization: she needs to find a body to serve as the body for her Lover's full re-animation. *But where would someone like her get a body...?*

Dead Lover is a hilarious, delirious, beautiful, horny, and wholly original Frankensteinian tale about the limits one Gravedigger will go to hold onto love. It is the sophomore feature from multi-hyphenate Grace Glowicki, who directed and stars as the love-obsessed, shovel-wielding Gravedigger turned mad scientist. Ben Petrie, Leah Doz and Lowen Morrow comprise the colourful cast of supporting characters, each playing multiple roles in the style of great romps that came before us, such as Monty Python and Dr. Strangelove.

PRODUCTION DETAILS



Dead Lover was shot in January 2023 entirely in-studio in Toronto, Canada. Despite being Glowicki's sophomore feature, it was in many ways a new experience: the first time casting, shooting on film, and working with a more sizeable crew of largely new collaborators.

The choice to shoot on a soundstage was inspired by the stylishly minimalist aesthetic of a black-box theatre production and German expressionist cinema. The characters are typically spotlit, enveloped in a void of lonesome darkness. The story's environments are suggested through the use of key set pieces and props, expressive make-up, sound design and camera work. The sparse visual style is counterbalanced with flourishes of vivid color, playful practical prosthetics, and analog in-camera visual effects. The project was shot on 16mm Kodak film.

This is the second feature from writer, director and actress Grace Glowicki. Glowicki gained acclaim early in her career for her performance in "Her Friend Adam", earning her a Special Jury Award for Outstanding Performance from the Sundance Film Festival in 2016. Later that year, she was named one of TIFF's Rising Stars. She has starred in numerous celebrated features such as *Tito* (SXSW '19), *Strawberry Mansion* (Sundance '21), *Until Branches Bend* (TIFF '22, SXSW '23), and *Booger* (Fantasia '23).

Glowicki broke out as a fearless directorial voice with her debut feature *Tito*, which she wrote, directed and starred in. The film premiered at the 2019 SXSW Film Festival, where it won the Adam Yauch Hörnblowér Award, presented "in honor of a filmmaker whose work strives to be wholly its own, without regard for norms or desire to conform." Richard Brody at *The New Yorker* said "This movie is a tour de force—of performance, in Glowicki's astounding display of choreographic expressionism... An instant classic of acting."

PRODUCTION DETAILS



Dead Lover reunites Glowicki with her frequent on- and off-screen collaborator Ben Petrie. Since their first collaboration on Sundance-premiering “Her Friend Adam” (Petrie wrote, directed and stars opposite Glowicki), they have starred in four feature films together, including Glowicki’s *Tito*; Petrie’s feature directorial debut, *The Heirloom*, which premiered at International Film Festival Rotterdam in 2024; and the upcoming *Honey Bunch*, which will premiere at the 2025 Berlinale in the Special program. Together, Glowicki and Petrie penned the screenplay for *Dead Lover*.

Other notable talents include Rhayne Vermette, the project’s Director of Photography. Rhayne is an experimental Métis filmmaker from Canada. Her debut feature *STE. ANNE*, which she also wrote, directed, starred in and shot premiered at the Berlinale Film Festival and screened at TIFF and NYFF. On *Dead Lover*, Rhayne shot using Kodak 16mm film on the ARRI SR3 and Bolex cameras. She worked with a team of only four technicians throughout principal photography, often implementing practical effects to achieve the movie’s surreal and distinctly hand-crafted aesthetic.

The movie is produced by Glowicki, Petrie and Yona Strauss. Yona is currently participating in the Sundance Producers Lab with what will be Glowicki’s third feature, *The Glob*. Her previous work includes *Quickening* (TIFF ’21), and Brandon Cronenberg’s “Please Speak Continuously...” (Cannes ’19 and TIFF ’19) and *Infinity Pool* (Sundance ’23 & Berlinale ’23) starring Alexander Skarsgård and Mia Goth and released by NEON and Focus Features.

The film was produced by Featured Creatures, a production company founded by Glowicki, Petrie and Strauss.

PRODUCTION DETAILS



Dead Lover features music by U.S. Girls - the first foray into film composing for the experimental pop project's helmer, Meg Remy. Originally from Illinois, Juno Award-nominated Remy is established as one of the most acclaimed songwriters and performers to emerge from Toronto's eclectic underground music scene where she currently lives. As U.S. Girls, Meg's celebrated discography has spanned 15 years. She released music under a variety of independent record labels before signing to 4AD in 2015, which released her acclaimed albums *Half Free*; *In A Poem Unlimited*; *Heavy Light*; and 2023's *Bless This Mess*.

TECHNICAL DETAILS



Runtime: 83 minutes
Format: 16mm Color
Aspect Ratio: 1.33:1
Language: English
Country: Canada

CAST

GRAVEDIGGER
Grace Glowicki

LOVER, SWIMMER, GOSSIP, SAILOR, NUN, BUTLER
Ben Petrie

DEAD SISTER, CREATURE, PRIEST, GOSSIP SAILOR
Leah Doz

WIDOWER, DEAD LADY, GOSSIP, SAILOR, NUN
Lowen Morrow

DIRECTOR
Grace Glowicki

WRITERS
Grace Glowicki & Ben Petrie

PRODUCERS
Yona Strauss, Ben Petrie & Grace Glowicki

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS
Rhianon Jones, Tristan Scott-Behrends, Matthew Miller,
Lexi Tannenholtz, Olivia Niuewland

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY
Rhayne Vermette

EDITOR
Lev Lewis

PRODUCTION DESIGNER
Becca Brooks Morrin

FEATURING MUSIC BY
U.S. Girls

COSTUME DESIGNER
Courtney Mitchell

MAKEUP DESIGN
Joseph Hinds & Samantha Breault

WIG DESIGN
Joseph Hinds

PRACTICAL EFFECTS
Michael Harmon

COLORIST
Rhayne Vermette

VISUAL EFFECTS
Luca Tarantini & AOK

POST SOUND
James Bastable & Formosa Group Toronto

POST PICTURE
Picture Shop Toronto

FILM PROCESSING & SCAN
MELS Montreal

CREW

CAST BIOS

Grace Glowicki *Writer / Director / Producer / “Gravedigger”*

Grace is an actor, writer and director with a focus on unhinged yet emotional comedies. Her debut feature, *Tito*, premiered at the 2019 SXSW Film Festival, where it won the Adam Yauch Hornblower Award which honors “a filmmaker whose work strives to be wholly its own, without regard for norms or desire to conform.” Richard Brody at the New Yorker called it “an instant classic of acting”. The film was acquired by Visit Films and distributed by Factory 25.

Glowicki has starred in many acclaimed independent films such as *Strawberry Mansion* (Sundance ‘21), *Until Branches Bend* (TIFF ‘22, SXSW ‘23), *Booger* (Fantasia ‘23), *The Heirloom* (Rotterdam ‘24), and “Her Friend Adam” (SUNDANCE ‘16, SXSW ‘16) for which she won a Sundance Special Jury Award for Outstanding Performance. *Dead Lover* is Glowicki’s sophomore feature. It will have its world premiere in the Midnights Section at the 2025 Sundance Film Festival.

Ben Petrie *Writer / Producer / “Lover” & Other Roles*

Ben Petrie is a Canadian actor and filmmaker. He co-wrote, co-produced and performs six characters in *Dead Lover* (2025), premiering at the Sundance Film Festival. He has a lead role in *Honey Bunch* (2025), premiering at the Berlinale in the Special section. Ben’s feature-length directorial debut, *The Heirloom* (2024) premiered at International Film Festival Rotterdam. His short film *Her Friend Adam* (2016) premiered at the Sundance Film Festival, and was later named Best Comedy of the Year by Vimeo. Ben is a producer and star of *Tito* (2019) which premiered at SXSW, where it won the Adam Yauch Hörnblowér Award. Recent acting credits include *BlackBerry* (2023), *The All Golden* (2024), and Matt Johnson’s upcoming feature adaptation of *Nirvana the Band the Show*. Ben has been named one of Filmmaker Magazine’s Top 25 New Faces of Independent Film.



Leah Doz *“Creature” & Other Roles*

Leah Doz is an actor and creator known on television for her roles in the Canadian Screen Award-nominated series *New Eden* (Crave), *Strays* (CBC), and *Faith Heist* (Bounce). She is currently in post on her latest directorial effort, “*Strangers*” inspired by her upbringing with her single Jamaican mother in the predominantly white ‘Texas of Canada’ in the 90s. In *Dead Lover*, Leah plays Dead Sister/Creature, Priest, Gossip and Sailor.

Lowen Morrow *“Widower” & Other Roles*

Lowen Morrow is a trans-masculine theatre and filmmaker, physical comedian, and puppeteer based in Toronto. They are a core member of comedy company Sex T-Rex: winners of over two dozen awards for their original plays and films including Just for Laughs’ Best Comedy, Second City’s Outstanding Comedy, and Filmapalooza Paris’ Audience Choice Award. In *Dead Lover*, Lowen plays Widower, Nun, Gossip and Sailor.

CREW BIOS

Yona Strauss *Producer*

Yona Strauss began her career in independent production as an Associate Producer on features such as Brandon Cronenberg's *Infinity Pool*, starring Alexander Skarsgard and Mia Goth, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival and Berlin International Film Festival, before being released by NEON. She has produced acclaimed short films such as her second collaboration with Cronenberg, "Please Speak Continuously...", which premiered at Critics' Week at the Cannes Film Festival, and was released on The Criterion Channel, and Dusty Mancinelli and Madeline Sims Fewer's "Chubby", which premiered at the Telluride Film Festival. In 2021 she produced her debut feature, *Quickening*, directed by Haya Waseem, which premiered at TIFF and was hailed as a "hidden gem of the festival" by The Hollywood Reporter. Her sophomore feature, *Dead Lover*, is premiering at the Sundance Film Festival and she is currently participating as one of five Sundance Producing Lab Fellows with Glowicki's next feature, *The Glob*.

Lev Lewis *Editor*

Lev Lewis is a film editor, composer and director based in Toronto, Canada. His credits include *Dead Lover* (Grace Glowicki, 2025), *Honey Bunch* (Dusty Mancinelli & Madeleine Sims-Fewer, 2025), *Darkest Miriam* (Naomi Jaye, 2023), "Every Day's Like This" (Lev Lewis, 2020), *White Lie* (Yonah Lewis & Calvin Thomas, 2019) and *The Oxbow Cure* (Yonah Lewis & Calvin Thomas, 2013). His work has screened at festivals around the world, including Sundance, Berlin International Film Festival, Toronto International Film Festival, Tribeca, Slamdance, Clermont-Ferrand and BAFICI. He is also the co-founder of Lisa Pictures, a Toronto-based production company specializing in independent cinema.

Becca Brooks Morrin *Production Designer*

Becca Brooks Morrin is a production designer based in New York City and Baltimore. Her career spans feature films such as Sundance breakouts *Good One* and *Strawberry Mansion*, television shows like Netflix's recent documentary *American Conspiracy: The Octopus Murders*, and music videos for artists Angel Olsen, Sharon Van Etten, Moses Sumney, Bonnie Prince Billy and MGMT.

Rhayne Vermette *Director of Photography*

Rhayne Vermette was born in Notre Dame de Lourdes, Manitoba. Primarily self taught, her work emphasizes an interruption of image through collage, photography and analog filmmaking. Themes of place, time and rhythm are expressed through opulent layers of fiction, animation, reenactments and divine interruption. Her works and films have exhibited internationally and highlights presentations at The Berlinale, Toronto International Film Festival, The Walker Art Center, New York Film Festival, The Remai Modern, Jeonju International Film Festival, Valdivia International Film Festival, Platform Center for Photographic and Digital Arts, DocumentaMadrid, and Ociciwan Contemporary Art Collective. Her first feature narrative, *Ste. Anne*, which she directed, wrote, shot and starred in, exploded into the world in 2021. The film was critically acclaimed and recognized through varied awards and accolades, most notably TIFF's Amplify Voices Award for Best Canadian Feature Film.

U.S. Girls (Meg Remy) *Featuring Music By*

Originally from Chicago and currently residing in Toronto, Meg Remy is established as one of the most acclaimed songwriters and performers to emerge from Toronto's eclectic underground music scene. As the creative force behind the musical entity U.S. Girls, her celebrated discography spans 15 years. 2023's 'Bless This Mess' (4AD/Beggars) marks both a divergence from and deepening of Remy's songbook. Meg has toured extensively through Europe and North America, establishing a reputation for politically astute commentary and theatrical performances. Her music has garnered extensive features and articles in The New Yorker, New York Times, Rolling Stone, Pitchfork, among others. She has played major festivals around the world including Coachella, Primavera, Pitchfork, Gov. Ball, and the first ever MUBI Fest in Chicago in 2024. Meg Remy published her first book in 2021 "Begin by Telling", a second book is in the works. *Dead Lover* is her first foray into composing for film.

WORLD PREMIERE

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL SCREENINGS

MIDNIGHT PROGRAM

January 24, 2025	10:00 PM	The Ray Theatre, Park City
January 25, 2025	8:10 PM	Redstone Cinemas, Park City
January 26, 2025	3:00 PM	<i>P&I screening</i> - Holiday 3, Park City
January 26, 2025	10:00 PM	Broadway Centre Cinemas, Salt Lake City
January 30, 2025	8:30 PM	Egyptian Theatre, Park City
February 1, 2025	9:30 PM	Redstone Cinemas, Park City

EUROPEAN PREMIERE

INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ROTTERDAM SCREENINGS

HARBOUR PROGRAM

January 31, 2025	9:30 PM	Pathé 6
February 2, 2025	1:45 PM	LantarenVenster 6
February 6, 2025	1:15 PM	KINO 4