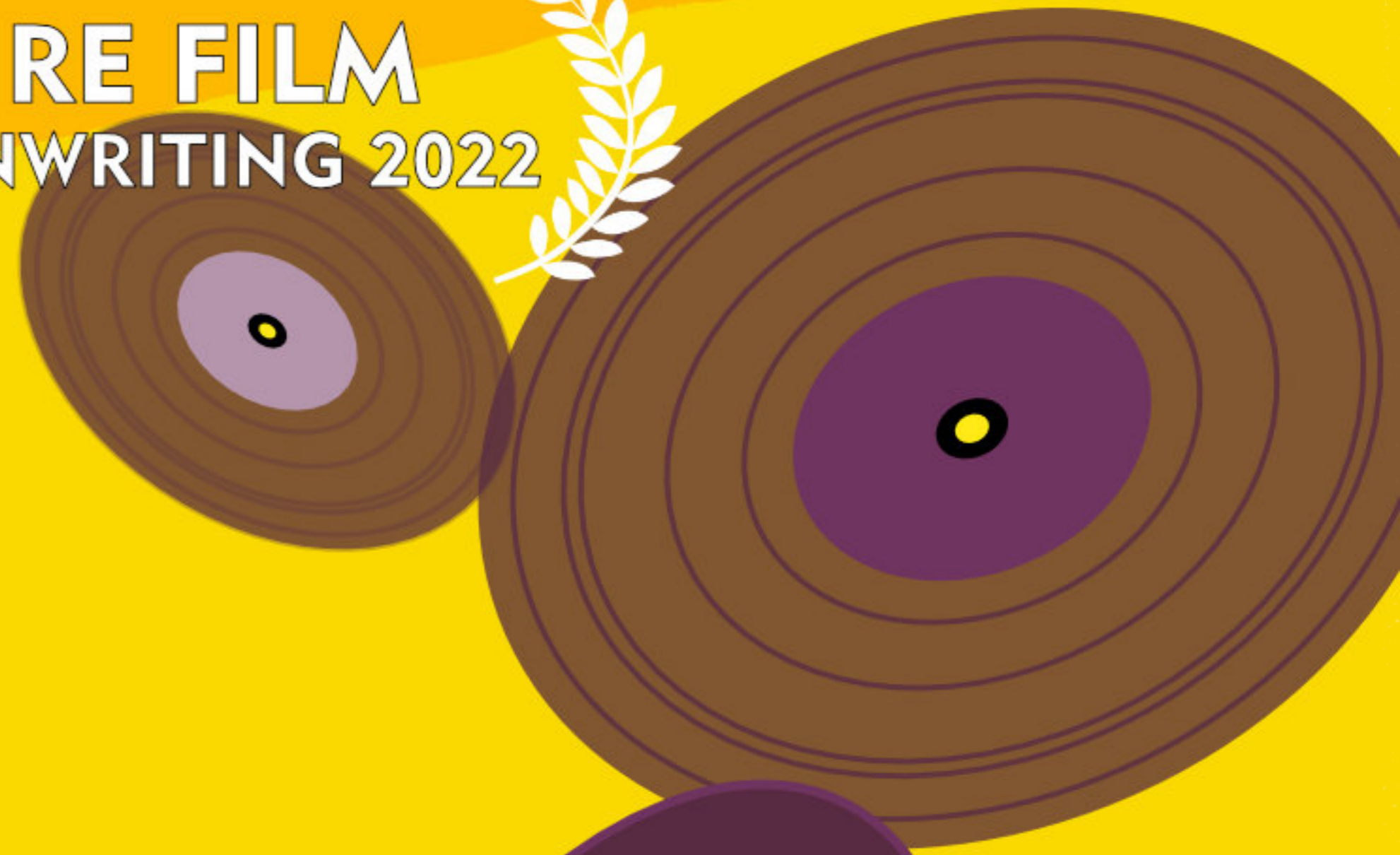


**GRAND PRIZE WINNER**  
SLAMDANCE SCREENWRITING 2022

**BEST FEATURE FILM**  
SLAMDANCE SCREENWRITING 2022

HELLO MY NAME IS  
**ALLIE**  
HOW CAN I HELP  
YOU TODAY?



# AMERICAN RETAIL

CONSUMERISM MAKES MONSTERS OF US ALL

# After barely surviving a twisted patron, a Black millennial woman comes to truly understand the horror that is retail work—there's only one thing as brutal as the screaming customers and as cold-blooded as corporate: **MURDER**

Allie is a smart and ambitious young woman trying to find her place in the American dream: by day she works at a big-box retail store to pay the bills and take care of Grandma June and by night she's pursuing her passion for music. She's not where she wants to be, but she's moving up; she's doing all the right things.

But this isn't a rags to riches story; overnight, Grandma's insulin price triples. Desperate to keep her head above water, Allie applies for an assistant manager position that promises better salary and health benefits. As Allie exhausts herself trying to impress corporate, she catches the eye of a creepy customer, Jake, who mistakes Allie's professional courtesy as flirting. When he feels rejected, Jake decides to take what he wants and Allie is forced to defend herself. In a brutal accident, Jake dies at Allie's hands but there are no witnesses.

As Allie tries to suppress this dark secret her eyes are opened to the absurd and relentless reality that is the retail world. Customer after customer treat her like shit and Allie realizes she's had enough. She lashes out against the entitled and demanding patrons, stoking a flame that also gives new life to her music. Meanwhile, Grandma June discovers that the cost of her insulin has increased and tries to ration the medication, but she falls gravely ill from the side effects.

Everything comes to a boiling point when Allie doesn't get a promotion, she misses a huge DJ gig because she has to work an extra shift, and then her Grandma dies in the hospital. All on the same night. Allie comes to understand the world for its cruelty and decides to respond in kind.

On Black Friday, she goes on a rampage, the inhumanity of consumerism fueling her bloodlust. Through violence, Allie tries to enact change, to force the corporate leaders to acknowledge the injustices of the system. She fails.

The machine stops for no one.

## Allie Johnson

African-American, 25 – Motivated, resourceful, conflicted

Allie starts out with a story that many can relate to: she's got her day job, and it sucks, but that's just to pay the bills. She knows that she isn't happy in retail, but she's got Grandma June depending on her, so she works hard even if she doesn't love it. Allie's real passion is her music and she's just waiting for her shot, for a real chance at a better life. But Allie's journey is comprehending that the American dream is really a nightmare.

For Allie, her conscious desire is to take care of her Grandma and to pursue her passion in music; she's trying to find her place within the capitalistic society. But as she experiences the cruelty of the system firsthand, she comes to terms with her unconscious desire: to be free of its shackles entirely. While Allie tries to pull herself up by her bootstraps, she comes to realize that there is no peace within the consumerist structure because its stock and trade is violence.

Every revolution has its bloody footnotes and by the end Allie has a higher calling: to stand up against the corporate system and force them to make things right. She may be the one wielding the axe, but she's not the villain; she's speaking in the only way the machine can understand.

As loud as violence is, profits are louder still. And Allie finds this out far too late.

## Amandla Stenberg

Bodies Bodies Bodies (2022)

The Hate you Give (2018)

Hunger Games (2012)



## Keke Palmer

NOPE (2022)

Alice (2022)

Hustlers (2019)

## Joy Sunday

Netflix's Wednesday (2022)

Dog (2022)

The Beta Test (2021)



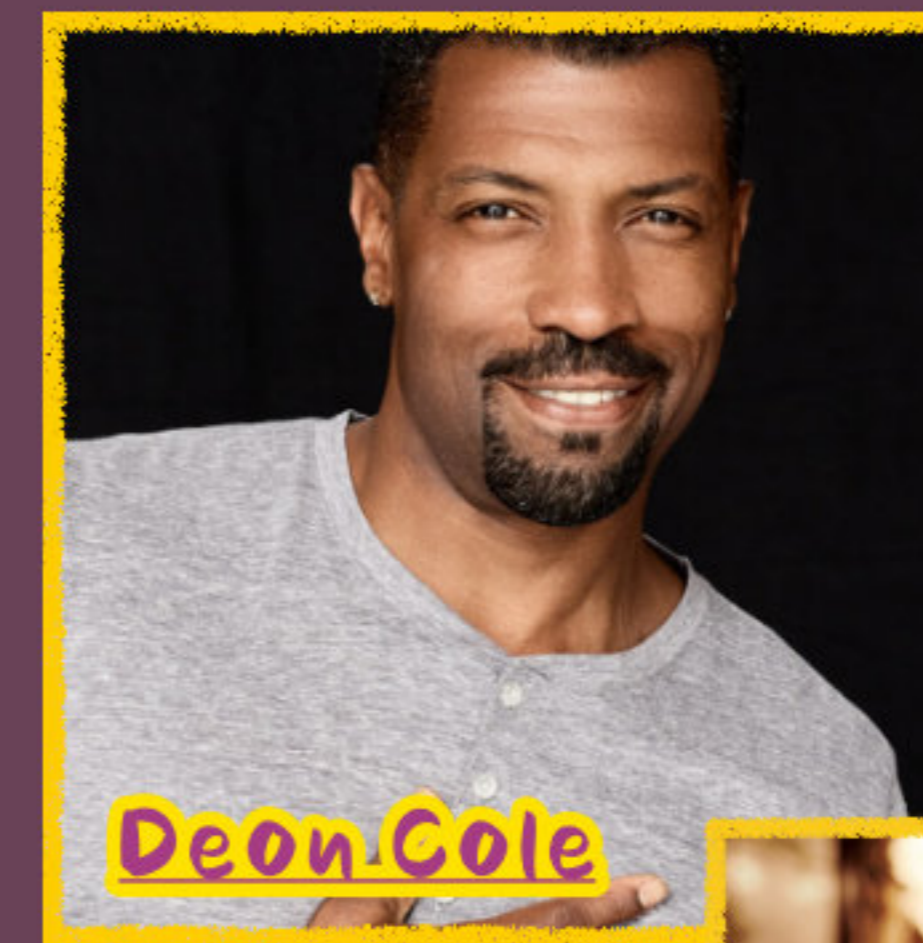
## Paul Robinson

African-American, 55 – Manager and True-believer

Paul is a company man, through and through. He's been a part of the Bullseye "family" for over twenty years and being a manager is more than just a job—it's a calling. He genuinely cares for his workers and has a particular fondness for Allie, encouraging her to apply for the assistant manager position.

For all of his good intentions, Paul is a willing corporate pawn. He might not agree with the exploitive policies, but he enforces them without question; he's complicit in the system's cruelty.

It's therefore not surprising when Allie takes Paul hostage in the final confrontation; it's unsettling when she threatens to murder him as she issues the ultimatum to corporate; and it's heart-breaking when he discovers that he's just as disposable as the rest of them. His good and faithful service meant nothing.



## Vicky

26 – Privileged and Ambitious

Vicky's not a bad person, she's that sassy work friend that you gossip with in the break room. She doesn't need this job, not in the same way Allie does at least. Vicky's trying to pay for her dream wedding and she's busting her ass to do so. It's her special day and she's not letting anything get in the way of that.

But... Vicky believes you have to look out for you and yours. Allie's her friend, but friendships don't pay for the dress of your dreams.

It's this cutthroat, get-ahead-at-any-cost attitude that condemns Vicky. She knows what the other workers have suffered and she's still willing to climb over them to get ahead. She embraces the system as a means to her own ends.



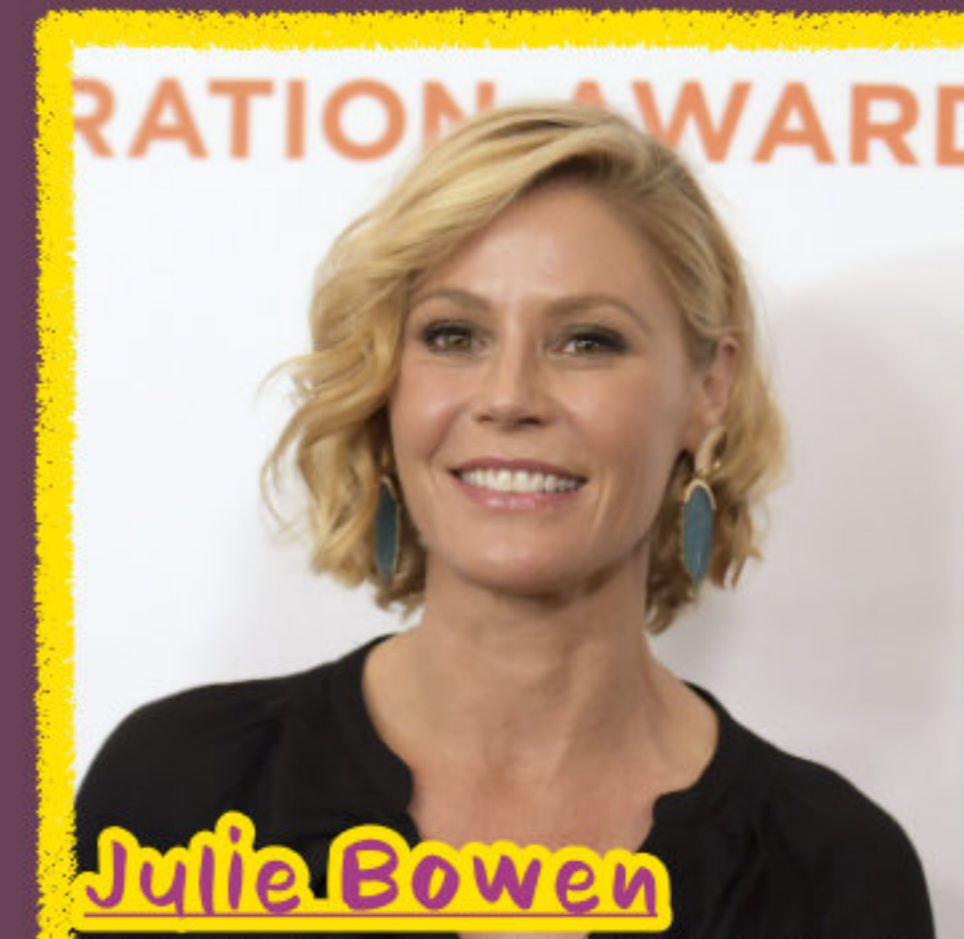
## Linda

39 – Manipulative and Shallow

Coming from a humble background, Linda is a woman who married into money. Desperate to fit in among the affluent, she adorns herself in expensive clothes, the latest gadgets, the hottest trends.

Linda actually even stands up for Allie—she remembers what it was like to work in retail. Linda's a reminder that not all "Karens" are bad; she's a friend. But Linda's friendship is hollow, a way of manipulating Allie into getting Linda what she wants

Linda's crime is that she knows better, she knows how hard the workers have it, but she loses sight of that. She forgets what it's like on the other side of the counter and that makes her all the more hateful.



# BULLSEYE



DO NOT  
ENTER

BATHROOM  
CLOSED  
FOR  
CLEANING

# POTENTIAL DIRECTORS

We believe it is very important for Allie's demographic to be represented in the creative team behind this story. This will ensure that her perspective is handled with care and accuracy that our team is currently not able to provide beyond general empathy.



Nia DaCosta - The stories DaCosta tells with grace and understanding would be a huge boon for American Retail. Her background with thriller and horror are a perfect fit for the social thriller we think American Retail can be.

Little Woods - 2018 (Tribeca Film Festival)

Candyman - 2021 (Monkeypaw Productions & Universal)

The Marvels - 2023 (Disney/Marvel)



Dee Rees - The stories Rees chooses to tell in her films align with the goals and themes of American Retail perfectly. Rees would bring years of experience and talent to the creative team.

Pariah - 2011 (Sundance Film Festival & Focus Features)

Bessie - 2015 (HBO TV)

Mudbound - 2017 (Sundance Film Festival & Netflix)



Janicza Bravo - Bravo's work has been widely celebrated in the independent and festival circuit for years. Her background as a stylist and wardrobe designer would be important for solidifying the strong visual potential for American Retail.

"Juneteenth" Atlanta - 2016 Episode (FX TV Series)

Lemon - 2017 (Sundance Film Festival & Magnolia Pictures)

Zola - 2020 (Sundance Film Festival & A24)

# Visual Inspiration



Palm Springs - 2020



Sorry to Bother You - 2018





Shaun of the Dead - 2004



Utopia - 2013-2014





# WRITER'S STATEMENT

My goal for American Retail was to create a horror where the monster is the cruel and uncaring machine: capitalism, rooted in that old adage, "the customer is always right." As the story progresses, Allie experiences firsthand how this mentality nourishes a toxic power dynamic between the customer, the retail worker, and the corporation. The corporation ensures the satisfaction of the customer's every demand—not matter how ridiculous—but places the burden on the underpaid and overworked employee to carry out this guarantee. The customer comes to view the employee almost as a slave and the worker learns to hate and resent the customer for their selfishness. And all the while, it is the corporation who profits from the conflict.

Now Allie has many of the same characteristics of a typical final-girl, there is also an important distinction: in the end, she's the one who sheds blood, though her victims are far from innocent. Linda, Vicky, and Paul are traitors, pawns and agents of the real monster: the consumerist society. The inhumanity of the system, its lack of empathy or mercy, and its complete disregard for human life is on par with the most wicked of monsters.

There is a humorous undertone to a lot of American Retail, but I want to make clear the heartlessness of a system that asks so much of people and pays them so little. Allie's violent rampage is her attempt to enact justice, but it is both ineffective and hollow. What does justice look like in American Retail? The horrific truth is that there is no justice for Allie or for those like her.

I don't think that it would take much to convince an audience that there is something terribly wrong with this country; we are inundated with this fact on a daily basis. American Retail shines a light on the monstrosity that is our capitalistic society: how workers are abused by customers and mistreated by employers, denied the wages necessary for a reasonable and dignified life, and expected to endure all of this with a smile and a can-do attitude. Many of the people working in these retail and service positions have no other option either. They are trapped in these jobs because the alternative is something unthinkable, like not being able to afford grandma's medication or failing to provide for their families.

Even those who are better off—the middle-class, the highly-educated, the white-collar professionals—there is no escaping capitalism's corruption: entitlement is a disease that rots from the inside out. And in truth, the machine makes almost no distinction between the worker at the register and the manager running the store; it's all fuel in the pursuit of profit.

The horror of American Retail is that consumerism makes monsters of us all.



Gabriel Malasig is an American-born Filipino kid from the San Francisco Bay Area. Having written creatively for a number of years, and just completed his Master's in Screenwriting. Currently an Air Force Officer, he's stationed in Oklahoma City, but definitely calls California home. Though a hobbit in stature and outlook most of the time, Gabriel is fiercely loyal to being kind and doing the right thing and that's reflected in his stories. (∩'-'∩)

# Producer's Statement

The story in American Retail is painfully current.

Throughout quarantine, TikTok skyrocketed in popularity globally and one of the more popular topics was the effectiveness of capitalism: how the system refused to provide support for people risking their lives as essential workers; how quickly evictions were resumed for thousands of Americans; and how despite all of this the 1% had record high profits. Working class Americans responded in droves. Discontent with how the U.S. was handling the crisis and the growing disparity between the rich and the poor drew millions of people's attention.

The Social thriller has been rising in popularity ever since GET OUT hit theaters in 2017, and we would like to take part in the perpetual conversation that Thriller/Horror films engender. There is something inherently terrifying about watching your community be sucked dry of it's humanity by the capitalistic endeavor.

Every day I'm seeing more stories about increases in the prices of housing, healthcare, and even food. These are basic needs and they should be obtainable without giving all of yourself, mind, body, and soul to work. But in order to fix the problem, we have to be willing to admit there is one.

For the first time in my life, it seems like we are close to doing just that. AMERICAN RETAIL is a story that I think will resonate with a lot of people: A recent study revealed that nearly 60% of the US population has worked in retail at some point in their lives—they know exactly how it feels to be Allie, to be trapped without opportunity. My hope is that AMERICAN RETAIL will start a conversation to help those who need it most.



Rachel Malasig has worked in the production department on studio and independent feature films with budgets ranging from \$100,000 to 150 Million. Based out of Los Angeles, Rachel travels all over to work and live life with her husband and cat. She is always down to discuss philosophies about human nature or how fuzzy and adorable her cat is. She's happy either way.

When it comes to marketing and promotion. I would love to get some prominent TikToker's involved in getting buzz going. There are a number of rappers famous on TikTok who could produce original music to emphasize Allie's emotional journey. I think these creators could provide soul and authenticity to the project and this would be an incredible way of aligning our creative process with the themes of the film.

@Goodmorningbadnews - 1.9 Million followers

@Underthedesknews - 2.7 Million followers

@Jordan\_The\_Stallion6 - 5.9 Million followers

@Yeahitsak - 2.7 Million Followers

