

# Movie: ‘I had incredible support’

■ Continued from 1A

speaking with a People magazine reporter. “I’m so proud of him. He’s handsome. He looks great. He dressed well. He’s got that lovely smile and openness. It is the most important to communicate your excitement and optimism.”

With cameras pressed into their faces and questions flying fast and furious, Alexander and Goodman worked the line along with documentary filmmakers, international directors and some recognizable character actors from TV and film.

“I’m happy not to be doing this by myself, and having someone as awesome as Sasha standing next to me,” Goodman said with a big smile.

It was important for Alexander, who lives in Los Angeles, to fly to Dallas in support of “The Last Lullaby.”

“We had a wonderful time making the movie,” Alexander said. “I’m very proud and I want to do what I can to support Jeffrey.”

Though she gets a bit nervous about watching her onscreen work,



✓ LINK TO ALEXANDYR KENT’S LOUISIANA MOVIES BLOG.

the actress was game on a chilly night in Dallas.

“It’s exciting to see it with people,” Alexander said. “It’s exciting to see it in an auditorium.”

Goodman’s story at the film festival was as much about celebrating a finished movie as it was about perseverance.

“I really think it’s 90 percent of it,” Goodman said.

Sticking to the project for a decade was not always easy.

“There are so many opportunities to kind of go, ‘You know what? This film is not going to happen and I should go do something else.’ But I stuck with it and I had incredible support.”

Goodman joined a sold-out crowd at AMC Northpark 15 at 7:15 p.m., just as his movie was scheduled to begin.

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Jeffrey Goodman, director of “The Last Lullaby”

He was anxious but hopeful the audience and critics would give it a warm reception.

That seemed to be a good bet to festival publicist John Wildman, who said the first of three screenings was quick to sell out.

“It should be a great time. You have the entire town of Shreveport in there!”

Joining Goodman and Alexander were friends, relatives, editor Philip Harrison, a few actors and many of the 40 Shreveport supporters who financed “The Last Lullaby.”



Greg Pearson/File/The Times

Actress Sasha Alexander tries to keep warm on location during filming of “The Last Lullaby” in February 2007 in Shreveport.

## ‘Last Lullaby’ is haunting portrait of hit man

■ Movie gets four out of four stars.

By Alexandyr Kent  
akent@gannett.com

Sleep is hard to come by and chills are aplenty in “The Last Lullaby,” the feature-length debut for director Jeffrey Goodman.

The movie, shot in northwest Louisiana, debuted Friday at the AFI Dallas International Film Festival.

The movie stars Tom Sizemore as Price, a sleepless hit man who’s lured out of retirement to kill a high-dollar target. She looks like easy prey until Price discovers she, too, never sleeps, enjoys night swimming, loves guns and battles a restless conscience.

The crime drama not only snares killer and contract into a tight, unpredictable love story, it paints an unsettling portrait of a small-town America where gunshots echo into the deep, silent night without answer.

“The Last Lullaby” is based on a short story by Max Allan Collins (graphic novel of “Road to Perdition”). Adapted by Collins and co-screenwriter Peter Biegen, the story is mostly told through the big, heart-wrenching eyes of the lonely gunman.

In the opening frame, we spy Price on his back staring up at the bedroom ceiling fan. With a dead face and a distant stare, it’s reasonable to assume he’s struggling to silence his beating heart of darkness.

But the nod to “Apocalypse Now” is a playful ruse. Price doesn’t fear madness. On the contrary, he, like every sane retired man, fears becoming obsolete.

### If you go

**WHAT:** “The Last Lullaby” at the AFI Dallas International Film Festival.

**REMAINING SCREENINGS:**

10:15 p.m. Monday at AMC Northpark 15, 8687 N. Central Expressway, Dallas and 4:15 p.m. Friday: Magnolia Theatre, 3699 McKinney Ave., Dallas.

**COST:** \$8.50. For reservations, call (214) 720-0663.



✓ LINK TO THE LAST LULLABY.  
✓ LINK TO AFI DALLAS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL.  
✓ LINK TO ALEXANDYR KENT’S LOUISIANA MOVIES BLOG.

We soon see him sit up and slouch slowly to the living room for a pathetic game of solo chess. That’s tedious, so he drives his Jeep to the 24-hour mart to shop. There, he eavesdrops on two knuckleheaded thugs — one packing heat — who’ve kidnapped someone.

Responding indifferently to his call for action, Price follows their El Camino to a roadside shack, where inside a young woman is tied to a chair. Price knows their game — ransom — and exploits it for everything it’s worth. In coldly violent, swiftly paced action, Price surgically shoots them down one by one and rescues the girl for his own gain.

Unlike most popular crime movies, Goodman’s direction does not gratuitously probe the physical carnage wrought by gunplay.

There are no lingering close-ups of gun wounds, for the director does not want us to turn away. Instead, he immerses us in the peril without assaulting us. He sets the distressed hostage (Sprague Grayden) behind an oozing pool of blood. He paces the precision of Price’s marksmanship with abrupt, alarming cuts.

Guided by cinematographer Richard Rutkowski and editor Philip Harrison, “The Last Lullaby” presents a view of vigilante violence that is unsettling but never corrupting, dark but ever illuminating.

And that’s just the first 10 minutes.

Six months later, Price is found by Martin, the rich man who had to fork out \$200,000 to pay for the hostage’s release. Martin, played with slowly deflating bravado by Bill Smitrovich, wants to hire Price for a new job. Kill Sarah in 10 days, and earn \$1 million. The offer is irresistible.

Price takes it but soon learns Sarah is just as restless as he. He sneaks into her small town, parks at a coffee shop and spies on her through a window, where he witnesses her being stalked by an ex-boyfriend. At her home, he hides in the bushes and watches her while she takes uncomfortable phone calls and rises at night for a moonlit swim in the pool.

Sarah doesn’t look like a typical job, so Price waits and slowly builds a connection to this unlikely soul mate.

A convincing chemistry develops between Price and Sarah, played by Sasha Alexander. After Price decides to rescue Sarah from her threatening ex-boyfriend in a bar parking lot, their bond grows stronger. They meet for dates. They go night swimming. They cook a late dinner.

He learns she has been targeted because she’s the sole witness in an old murder case. He discovers killing her would be like killing his hope of breaking free from the empty hours and days that torment him between jobs.

In a career-resuscitating performance, Sizemore offers a taciturn portrait of a contract killer teetering between indifference and existential collapse. The role is enough to make an audience forget Sizemore’s recent fall from Hollywood grace and remember the A-list mystique he earned while working for Michael Mann, Ridley Scott and Martin Scorsese.

Alexander delivers her performance with deep, tired eyes and creates moments of awkward, infectious flirtation with her co-star. Consumed by ennui and struggling to find a human connection in a world where she essentially hides for a living, the role will remind movie lovers of the inward-looking New Hollywood heroines who have been absent from American cinema for far too long.

“The Last Lullaby” is a bold, brilliant and inventive first step for director Jeffrey Goodman. He has command of tone that many seasoned crime directors never demonstrate.

Moreover, Sizemore’s Price compares favorably to the heroes of David Cronenberg’s “A History of Violence” and Richard Shepard’s “The Matador.” These hit men struggle to find a place in an America that demands nothing of them but violence. That they find purpose in the struggle and surviving the nightmare is the wonder of it all.

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- MARCH 29**  
**MASONIC STATE CONVENTION**  
**When:** 8 a.m.-noon March 29.  
**Where:** Holiday Inn Financial Plaza, 5555 Financial Plaza, Shreveport.  
**Featuring:** The 62nd annual Pelican Council of Deliberation and the 36th State Grand Assembly Order of Golden Circle will be held in Shreveport. James O. Bampffield Consistory and James O. Bampffield Assembly No. 53. Evening events open to the public. Annual state awards banquet at 8 p.m. March 29.  
**Info:** (318) 402-6432, (318) 631-9818 or rosallind728@gmail.com.
- APRIL FOOLS’ FUN**  
**When:** 10 a.m. March 29.  
**Where:** Walter B. Jacobs Memorial Nature Park, 8012 Blanchard-Furrh Road, Shreveport.  
**Featuring:** Visit the nature park and play “What’s Wrong with This Picture?” Pick up a special field checklist and explore two of the park’s nature trails in search of unnatural objects. Win a prize when you find and record the secret item.  
**Admission:** free.  
**Info:** (318) 929-2806.
- 17TH MOPAR NATIONALS CAR SHOW**  
**When:** 11 a.m.-3 p.m. March 29.  
**Where:** First Baptist Church, 543 Oakley Drive, Shreveport.  
**Featuring:** more than 120 cars, food and music.  
**Admission:** free, spectators; \$30, car entry fee.  
**Info:** (318) 453-7027 or www.Mopar-Magic.org.
- CAPTAIN SHREVE BREAST CANCER AWARENESS DAY**  
**When:** noon March 29.  
**Where:** Captain Shreve High School, 6115 E. Kings Highway, Shreveport.  
**Featuring:** Captain Shreve High baseball team will sell pink baseball bats at its first district game in honor of loved ones, teachers and staff. The game is a double-header vs. Airline High School. All proceeds will be donated to the Shreveport-Bossier affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure.  
**Admission:** \$10.  
**Info:** (318) 458-5221 or www.captain-shrevebaseball.com.
- SHREVEPORT BOSSIER CHAPTER OF PKD FOUNDATION**  
**When:** 1:30-3 p.m. March 29.  
**Where:** PKD Foundation, 1560 Irving Place, Shreveport.  
**Featuring:** monthly support and educational meeting for patients and their families while educating the public about polycystic kidney disease.  
**Admission:** free.  
**Info:** (318) 222-7008 or Lawitch1936@aol.com.
- 2008 ORCHID SHOW**  
**When:** 10 a.m.-4 p.m. March 29.  
**Where:** Barnwell Memorial Garden & Art Center, 601 Clyde Fant Memorial Parkway, Shreveport.  
**Featuring:** orchids on display and orchid plants, supplies and books for sale. Orchids will be judged for ribbons and trophies by judges certified by the American Orchid Society.  
**Admission:** free.  
**Info:** (318) 865-3848.
- HAVEN HOUSE LEADERS’ MEETING**  
**When:** 10-11 a.m. March 29.  
**Where:** 1700 Buckner Square, Suite 240, Shreveport.  
**Featuring:** A time for Haven House leaders and friends to fellowship, network, share stories and ideas and celebrate together at the city-wide meeting hosted by Community Renewal International.  
**Admission:** free.  
**Info:** (318) 560-4271 or (318) 425-3222.

### CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS

✓ **CORRECTION:** A headline on page 2A of Friday’s Times should have said the college students assisting with building homes with The Fuller Center for Housing of Webster are from Ohio.

✓ **CORRECTION:** State Probation and Parole Agent Jeremy Ables helped the DeSoto Parish sheriff’s office identify Bobby Harris, the man accused in the death of South Mansfield Mayor Dessie Lee Patterson. Ables was incorrectly identified in Friday’s edition.

The Times tries to correct promptly any errors of fact or clarify any misleading information appearing in news stories. To report an error or need for clarification, please call 459-3233. All corrections and clarifications will be published on page 2A.

### LOTTERIES

For drawings held on Friday, March 28, 2008

TEXAS	LOUISIANA
<b>PICK 3/DAY:</b> 3-2-1	<b>PICK 3:</b> 3-9-6
<b>PICK 3/NIGHT:</b> 0-6-5	<b>PICK 4:</b> 1-6-8-4
<b>DAILY 4/DAY:</b> 3-1-3-6	<b>EASY 5:</b> NO DRAWING
<b>DAILY 4/NIGHT:</b> 4-8-3-3	<b>LOTTO:</b> NO DRAWING
<b>CASH 5:</b> 9-14-29-30-31	
<b>TWO STEP:</b> NO DRAWING	
<b>LOTTO:</b> NO DRAWING	
Every effort is made to provide accurate data; however, please see your retailer or state lottery office for official verification of results.	
	<b>MULTISTATE</b>
	<b>POWERBALL:</b> NO DRAWING
	<b>MEGA MILLIONS:</b> 7-26-27-40-43-10

## The Times

shreveporttimes.com

(USPS 495-500)

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### ABOUT THE TIMES

The Times is published daily at 222 Lake St., Shreveport, La., 71101. Offices are open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 30222, Shreveport, La. 71130-0222. Our main switchboard number is 459-3200. Our toll-free number is 1-800-551-8892.

Saturday, March 29, 2008  
**170th Year, Vol. 137, No. 123**  
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**Postmaster:** Send address changes to The Times Publishing Co., P.O. Box 30222, Shreveport, La. 71130-0222.

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