

# thisishardtoread productions Sets Cast and Director for Feature Film Connection Pending..., Filming in Tennessee

*Cast includes Chris Guerra, Kelsey Cooke, Casey Cott, Scott Reeves, Kellan Lutz, Melissa Ordway, Justin Gaston, Laura Osnes, Jason Marsden, James Kyson and more*

NASHVILLE, TN, UNITED STATES, December 22, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- thisishardtoread productions has announced the official attachments for its upcoming feature film Connection Pending..., a 1990s-set romantic comedy starring Chris Guerra and Kelsey Cooke, with Eric Petersen (Kevin Can F\*\*\* Himself, School of Rock) signing on to make his Feature Directorial Debut. The film begins production in Tennessee in January 2026 in association with Mane Co.

"Eric brings an incredible comedic voice and collaborative spirit that matches this film perfectly," said producers Chris Guerra and Kelsey Cooke. "We're excited to bring a story like this to life in Tennessee with a cast that truly elevates the project."

Set in the 1990s, Connection Pending... follows a shy Tennessee computer programmer (Guerra) and a free-spirited internet café worker (Cooke) who embark on an impulsive cross-country road trip to meet a mysterious AOL crush — only for misunderstandings, nostalgia, and an unexpected lie to turn their journey into something deeper, funnier, and unexpectedly romantic.

Additional cast joining the ensemble includes Casey Cott (Riverdale), Scott Reeves (Nashville, General Hospital), Kellan Lutz (Twilight franchise, FBI: Most Wanted), Melissa Ordway (The Young and the Restless), Justin Gaston (The Young and the Restless, God's Country Song), Laura Osnes (One Royal Holiday, Raise a Glass to Love), Jason Marsden (Full House, Step by Step, Hocus Pocus, A Goofy Movie), James Kyson (Yes Day, BMF), Justin Gaston (The Young and the Restless, God's Country Song), Nakia Burrise (Danger Force, House Party), along with popular digital creators Andi Tillman (@andimarietillman) and Landon Bryant (@landontalks). Additional



Chris Guerra

featured cameos are expected to be announced closer to production.

Connection Pending will shoot on the ARRI Alexa platform with a full Tennessee-based crew, emphasizing grounded performances, 1990s-era visuals, and an indie-comedy tone reminiscent of classics like *You've Got Mail* and *While You Were Sleeping*.

The film is written and produced by Kelsey Cooke and Chris Guerra, with Dustin Laemmlen (Mane Co.) serving as Cinematographer/Director of Photography. The project is produced by thisishardtoread productions in association with Mane Co.

"I am very excited to making my film directing debut with Kelsey and Chris's script," says Petersen. "To take a trip back to the 90s where we all were looking for connection, balancing the early digital age, is exciting. The story of two broken people looking for love in the style of those classic 90s rom coms is gonna be a blast to make."



Kelsey Cooke

#### About thisishardtoread productions

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*Eric Petersen*

Thisishardtoread productions is a Nashville-based film and television production company founded by Chris Guerra and Kelsey Cooke, specializing in elevated comedy, grounded storytelling, and character-driven work. thisishardtoread productions is driven by a vision to bring great comedy in film back—stories with depth, honesty, and real heart—while creating a home for bold independent filmmakers.

#### About Mane Co.

Mane Co. is a full-service film production company founded by Dustin and Michelle Laemmlen, dedicated to creating visually striking, story-driven work across features, commercials, and branded entertainment. Known for their cinematic approach, collaborative spirit, and high production value, Mane Co. brings directors, agencies, and studios' visions to life through a seamless development-to-delivery workflow.

Brian Mayes  
Nashville Publicity Group  
+1 615-771-2040  
[email us here](#)



Eric Petersen

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