



81
FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL
DU CINÉMA DE VENISE
LA BIENNE DE VENISE 2024
WINNAAR
BESTE ACTRICE

NICOLE KIDMAN

Babygirl

SCENARIO EN REGIE
HALINA REIJN

A24

cinéart

PERSMAP



SCENARIO EN REGIE
HALINA REIJN

Erotische thriller - 2024 - VS - 115 minuten
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Distributie

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Synopsis

BABYGIRL is een erotische thriller over de succesvolle CEO Romy (Nicole Kidman), die haar carrière en familie op het spel zet als ze een affaire begint met een jonge stagiair (Harris Dickinson). De film is geschreven en geregisseerd door Halina Reijn voor het toonaangevende Amerikaanse productiebedrijf A24.

Romy (Nicole Kidman) is zakelijk succesvol, heeft een liefhebbende man (Antonio Banderas) en is een goede moeder. Haar zorgvuldig gestructureerde bestaan raakt uit balans als ze de brutale stagiair Samuel (Harris Dickinson) ontmoet. Terwijl ze de macht langzaam uit handen geeft, ontdekt Romy steeds meer over zichzelf en haar eigen intieme verlangens. Maar hoeveel controle is ze bereid op te geven?

Halina Reijn wilde een film maken over zelfliefde en hoe je van alle lagen van jezelf kunt houden, "inclusief de donkere kanten." BABYGIRL ging in wereldpremière op het Filmfestival van Venetië, waar Nicole Kidman werd bekroond met de prijs voor Beste Actrice.





Director: Halina Reijn

Biography

Halina Reijn is a visionary filmmaker, producer, actress, and author known for her ability to craft subversive and provocative narratives that challenge conventions and push boundaries.

Reijn's latest feature is the erotic thriller *BABYGIRL*, which she wrote, directed and produced with 2AM for A24. Nicole Kidman, Harris Dickinson and Antonio Banderas star in the film which is making its world premiere at the 2024 Venice Film Festival before being released later this year. Previously, she directed A24's *BODIES BODIES BODIES* starring Pete Davidson, Maria Bakalova, Amandla Stenberg, and Rachel Sennott.

The film had its world premiere at SXSW and earned Reijn a Film Independent Spirit Award nomination for Best Director. Reijn's critically acclaimed directorial debut, *INSTINCT*, premiered at the Locarno Film Festival in 2019, followed by bows at TIFF, BFI London, and Les Arcs. Produced under Reijn's Man Up banner, the film received a European Film Award nomination for Best Debut Film and was The Netherlands' submission to the Academy Awards for Best International Feature.

As an actress, Reijn most recently starred in, created and produced the television series *Red Light*, earning her the award for Best Actress at the Dutch Film Festival and the series a Dutch film award for Best TV Show. She also starred in the Oscar-nominated film *ZUS & ZO*, Paul Verhoeven's *BLACK BOOK*, which premiered at the 2006 Venice Film Festival, and in *VALKYRIE*, opposite Tom Cruise. On stage, Reijn has been recognized for standout performances in leading roles in *Hedda Gabler*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *The Human Voice*, winning several awards for her performances.



Production notes

About the Film

A friend once told filmmaker Halina Reijn about a woman who, across her entire 25-year marriage, had never experienced an orgasm with her husband. She was both awed by and in some ways unsurprised by that possibility.

In *BABYGIRL*, Romy, played by Nicole Kidman, is a product of this internalization. As a polished CEO and a mother and wife living in New York City, she lives in a world of careful control, tight scheduling, and an all-too-keen awareness of how she's perceived at the heights of a male-dominated field. In her own longterm marriage, she has also never truly found pleasure with her sweet, caring, and artistically driven husband, Jacob (Antonio Banderas).

In its deliciously playful provocations, *BABYGIRL* explores the tender, the wickedly funny, and the unexpectedly romantic places that a certain kind of repression can lead to, and where someone will go to find release.

As Romy attempts to hold together her gilded persona, she is quickly undone after she meets Samuel (Harris Dickinson), an intern who appears to her almost as an angel come to rescue and torment her from within her cage of suppressed desire. Immediately he clocks her, seeing in her a desire to finally lose control, and he begins to prod beyond the surfaces she has so carefully constructed.

So begins an unconventional love affair between the high-powered female CEO and her young, audaciously puckish male intern. It's a cat and mouse set-up, one in which the axis of power is constantly, thrillingly shifting, and which at first glance resembles the heyday of sexual thrillers in the '90s.

If Reijn was confronted with the contradiction of sexuality impressed upon women in society — to be constantly sexualized and yet to never exercise agency — she found vindication and solace, if a conflicted form of it, in the movies' depiction of women getting what they want. "Those movies, when I saw them, they were like, 'Oh, actually, it's not so crazy, all these things that are going on in my head!'" she says. "These movies are super dear to me, but of course they are almost all directed by men, all written by men."

The genre is a male-dominated lineage, from Adrian Lyne's *9½ WEEKS* to Paul Verhoeven's *BASIC INSTINCT* and Michael Haneke's *THE PIANO TEACHER*. "I really decided in the beginning, I want to make a sexual film, just as sexual as all these films that I've always admired so much, but now I'm going to do it completely through female eyes. What does that mean and what does that look like?"

In Reijn's hands, the genre's deliberate goading of sexual mores becomes something deeply human and biting fun, an erotic thriller for an age where everything is permitted, but the American puritanical moral impulses still run deep. And ultimately, at the core of the forbidden fruit is a seductive, tender act of self-acceptance for its protagonist. "My question was about self-love. Mainly, how do I love all parts of myself?" Reijn says. This line of thinking was inspired by Verhoeven, who directed Reijn, an actress before she became an acclaimed filmmaker, in a major supporting role in *BLACK BOOK*. "Paul Verhoeven always told me I could only make a movie if I had a specific question. For this story I wondered: Are we animals or are we civilized? Can we make peace with the animal inside of us? Is it possible for the different parts of ourselves to co-exist and, in turn, for us to love our whole selves without shame?"

These ideas and Reijn's approach — to take the edgy, titillating mold of sexual thrillers and witness it through a distinctly contemporary female gaze — was an utterly new experience for Kidman, who speaks about her time shooting the film as a fever dream of sorts.

"I've made many sexual films, but this is different," Kidman says. "Doing this subject matter in the hands of the woman that wrote the script, that's directing it and is a really great actress herself — we became one in a weird way, which I'd never had with a director before. When you're working with a woman on this subject matter, you can share everything with each other."

In Kidman's tour de force turn is a fractured and unusually relatable portrait of a woman conflicted by her own desires, a performance of a certain kind of powerful, tightly-wound, uppercrust New Yorker going back to her characters in *EYES WIDE SHUT* and *BIRTH*. Romy struggles to balance the unwieldy dualities of her desire and her civilized exterior — the accomplished executive and matriarch, and the woman who, underneath

it all, wants to give in, let loose, and release herself.

In other words, Reijn's film not only earnestly contends with — and teasingly complicates — our ideas around sexuality, gender, and desire, but also our contemporary discourse around those very things. As Romy and Samuel haltingly explore sexual fantasies, laying out then relishing in bending the rules and boundaries of their dalliance, the film confronts our culture's great thorny shadow — power and sex — only to gleefully flip it all on its back, upside down, and right side up again.

“That whole relationship between the two of them is just going: Who's the cat? Who's the mouse? Who's using who? And you could also ask that about Romy and Jacob — who's using who?” Reijn says, referencing Romy's theater director husband. “Would he live in a house like that with his salary from the theater? I don't think so. They're all using each other because they're all humans.”

The film becomes what Reijn calls a playground, an entertaining, sexy, and often dangerous-feeling experience in which we can consider the complexity of desire in a safe environment. “It's not a documentary,” Reijn says. “It's all fake. We're all buying a ticket, we're all going to experience this together. We can talk afterwards. I was very sure that it was needed, especially moving to America, where sexual morals seem very suppressed. I wanted to explore that, but in a very human, warm way.”

That is perhaps most apparent in the film's depiction of Romy and Samuel's whirlwind affair, in which the forbidden fruit might very well be the source of their mutual attraction. “This movie is absolutely a love story and absolutely full of passion and romance for me,” Reijn says of Romy and Samuel's relationship. “I want the whole audience to fall in love with her, and I want the whole audience to fall in love with him and to be seduced by their love. To want them to be together even though you know it's not the 'right' thing to want.”

The Cat and the Mouse

According to Reijn, there would be no film if, as she almost does in an early scene, Romy simply told her husband what she really wanted.

But, Kidman notes, “she's not capable of being completely authentic with her husband or herself because she's so frightened of revealing her innermost thoughts and desires and feelings and secrets, and what she considers shameful.”

To confront and verbalize what she wants would be to shatter her idea of the image she wants to project, in a world where female sexual desire is considered taboo, even perverse.

“Her life is completely controlled,” Reijn says. “She wants to be a perfect mother, almost like Mary Poppins. And then at the same time, she's a CEO of a company that does automation, which is a metaphor for her mind — that she wants to be controlling,

everything's organized.”

It's all a reaction to a childhood that, the film vaguely alludes to throughout, was spent in a cult and defined by chaotic freedom. “Being a child of the sexual revolution, she now decided, I'm going to be very structured,” Reijn says. “I'm going to live this very organized life. I can do it all. I'm perfect. And anything that is shameful or weird in me, I will do an ice bath, I will do therapy, Botox, and 600 other treatments.”

As a result, the nature of her fantasies — and the reason she is repelled by them — is in a kind of unleashing and a submission that provides respite from the tightly choreographed, gleaming exterior she exhaustively maintains.

“If you ask, what is her desire, I think it has to do with losing control, to submit herself to the other and experience a little moment of not having control,” Reijn says. “That is her kink. There's nothing wrong with that, that's absolutely fine. But not very long ago, that was considered a disease. It was considered pathological to want that. And especially as a feminist, of course, that's completely confusing.”

More specifically, that desire is coaxed out by Samuel, who can't help but repeatedly cross boundaries and disarm her despite, or because of, the power imbalance between them.

“He sees a vulnerability in her immediately that nobody else might see in that way, and she sees in him a strength,” Reijn says. “He has a huge contradiction within him, which is absolute masculinity, but also this very sensitive, attuned flower that he also is.”

Reijn sees in Samuel someone who is, like many young men, grappling with and attempting to configure the contours of their masculinity in a changing world. “This new feminist wave has a lot to do with consent and how can you treat women and how do they want to be treated — he's kind of struggling with that a little bit, but he's also really dealing with it, in my eyes, in a very beautiful way,” Reijn says. “He's trying out all these different roles with her. He's trying out: who would I be if I would be more masculine? But he also asks her, do you think I'm a bad person?”

“There's an attentiveness with Samuel that perhaps Romy longs for,” Dickinson says. It's a particular cocktail of sensitivity and assertion that allows Samuel to needle through to the Romy that she wants to keep buried. He's so attuned to breaking down her walls that one might wonder if Samuel — who first appears to her almost as if out of a dream on the streets of New York — is a projection created out of the inner reaches of Romy's desires. “If we go really deep, I would say he is a fantasy,” Reijn says. “He's an angel who she created, or he's a therapist, who does an exorcism with her.”

“They're both damaged and both healing with each other, but in a very different way,” Kidman says. “And society would go, that's not how you heal. But for me, the film is very provocative, yet it's not unkind. I don't think it's judgmental.”

Even as their affair is forbidden, it also provides a sanctuary of sorts in which their

connection is true and beautiful, a hurricane of passion and real romance. It makes for, in a film structured and driven by lust and unspoken urges, scenes that can go from uncomfortable and funny (and from uncomfortably funny to actually funny), to passionate and sexy, to heartbreaking and cathartically tender, all in the span of a few thrilling, tightly staged minutes.

“Whatever we think about their relationship, within their safe room where they meet each other, they are very honest and they’re incredibly themselves in a raw, moving way,” Reijn says. “There’s a beauty in it despite the fact that they’re doing something that is forbidden. Within that, they are completely themselves and he has the capability to be incredibly warm and empathetic towards her and also towards his own needs and wants.”

Of course, the danger of their liaison is that the rest of the world might not see it their way. A CEO and married woman should not be having an affair with her young intern — this they seem to know and acknowledge constantly. Yet, their hyper-awareness of this fact, in a time when our cultural lens on sexuality and power is more magnified than ever, becomes the very thing that fuels their passion and the tilting axis on which their game rests.

“It’s all meta,” Reijn says. “The characters are aware, of course, of what they’re doing — they’re actually discussing it: ‘You have to say no, but you have to say yes.’ They’re kind of playing a game with words about power and sexuality. Samuel is using the hierarchy between them as a sexual tension. So even when they fight, even when they blackmail each other, it’s still a sexual game.”

In this sense, the film is often a mischievous comedy of manners and as much a skewering of sexual politics as it is an interrogation of them. Still, even as the cat and the mouse constantly shift roles, “in the end, she is of course the one in power,” Reijn says of Romy. “She is the one who shouldn’t cross that boundary.”



Romy is forced to face this fact via her own employee, Esme, a young woman who initially sees in Romy, and the image she projects of an influential, 'perfect' female executive, the promise of a better world. "This is about a woman in power who goes into the wrong path," Reijn says. "Power corrupts, basically. There's just not a lot of women in power, but power corrupts."

The film's cheeky deconstruction of the girlboss applies in a way to Esme herself, even as she confronts Romy about her unethical behavior. "She's blackmailing Romy, and she's very moralistic," Reijn notes. "She's like, 'You're going to be a good human. You're going to be a CEO that I want to look up to.' She doesn't want to destroy her because she is a feminist. She wants to change Romy. But she, of course, is gaining power through that as well."

As Romy is confronted — by Samuel, by Esme, and even by her own teenage daughter — with jarring ideas around sexuality and morality, the film becomes what Reijn (who previously made what is arguably the first true Gen Z comedy classic in *Bodies Bodies Bodies*) refers to as a comedy about the culture clash between generations. The ultimate punchline, she notes, is that we're all the same in the end. "The conclusion to me as a filmmaker is: we're all corrupt and we're all angels. We're all devils, and we're all angels. We have it in all of us."

Casting

Every time Halina Reijn would go on stage, the one person she'd be thinking about in the moments before would be Nicole Kidman. Shaking from terror in the wings, Reijn, who made her name as a seasoned theater star herself before she became an acclaimed filmmaker, would attempt to channel Kidman.

"Because, of course, what everybody agrees on is that her career from the start had this theme of fearlessness," Reijn says. "That, to a lot of young women and older women, is incredibly inspiring. Whether you're an actress or not an actress, you're just watching her and thinking, how did she dare to do that?"

Naturally, her performance as Romy is no different. But, across a career that spans an eclectic range of daring turns, this film was, Kidman says, unlike anything she's ever done.

"I can't tell you the details of it because I was so in the performance, I staggered out of it at the end going, what just happened? It feels a bit like a dream. I think back on it, and I'm like, I was in the middle of winter in New York, I was down dancing in a rave, just taking my clothes off. What was I doing?" Kidman says, referencing a scene in which Romy and Samuel connect in the sweaty thrum of a nightclub. In another scene, she recalls being so in character that "I hailed a cab on the street. The cab was not meant to be in there."

I got in it and I was in character saying to this guy, drive here. And the crew guys had

to stop the taxi and go get me out of the cab.”

After Kidman had connected deeply with Reijn’s debut feature *Instinct*, the pair had met and began talking about a potential future project together. When Reijn began writing the script for *BABYGIRL*, Kidman “was definitely in my mind,” Reijn notes. “I did think she would be one of the very few people who would bring the courage to a character like this. It’s not necessarily from the start a very likable character. She has a lot of layers. You have to be able to play all those different roles.”

That is, the roles that Romy presents as, and the ones she wants to tamp down. The complexity of her role, and the nakedness underneath when she is stripped of her masks, presented Kidman with what she describes as a bracingly new challenge.

“I’m always trying to find more inside me,” Kidman says of her approach to her career. “I just need someone to come along and say, I’m going to help bring that out of you.” She found it in Reijn from the start. “We talked for about an hour after I read the script, and we were just completely intertwined from that point on. It really has been the most unusual relationship to me.”

“She is so incredibly smart, and the chemistry between her and me was a dream,” Reijn says. “It was almost telepathic communication.” It was a kind of cosmic artistic alignment that was particularly crucial on a film that involved so much vulnerability. Kidman says frankly, “I wouldn’t have made it if it wasn’t with Halina.”

“I’ve worked with so many directors, I haven’t worked with a woman on this subject matter,” she adds. “When you’re talking to a woman director and she’s like, ‘O.K., let’s work on this orgasm together’ — I’m saying that bluntly, but you’re not going to say that with a guy. She was always so loving towards all of us, to Antonio, to Harris, to me, to Sophie, all of us. It was just a very warm environment to work in.”

The same, she notes, can be said for her male counterparts in Dickinson and Banderas, “who were like, yes, we will come and be there with you and be your partners in this storytelling, but we’re not the center of the story. I love them for being there with all their openness. They were so generous to us.”

In Dickinson, Reijn, who had been immediately drawn to the actor after seeing him in *BEACH RATS* and *TRIANGLE OF SADNESS*, found a fluid embodiment of Samuel’s shifting, often competing dualities of confident masculinity and a tender, boyish sense of empathy.

“It looks almost like it’s improvised, but it’s not,” Reijn says. “It’s so hard to do because he can look in one shot like a 12-year-old little boy, and then in the next, he’s a man, a totally confident 45-year-old guy.”

When Reijn paired Dickinson up with Kidman over an initial Zoom call, she could immediately sense their ability to slot into the see-sawing power games of their characters.

“They were very vulnerable, sweet, but also having fun,” Reijn recalls. “I really just looked at them and listened to them and took a step back. There’s an insane amount of respect, but also playfulness between them. I could immediately see they would be each other’s equal.”

Dickinson, though, admits that he was intimidated by Kidman. “I’d be lying if I said I wasn’t,” he says. “She’s obviously a force of nature as a performer, as a person. Incredibly impressive and professional, but also really dictates the energy on set.”

The two, Reijn notes, “made a point that they didn’t want to get to know each other too well” before production began, perhaps helping to inspire the somewhat antagonistic distance between their characters in the film, particularly early on.

On set, though, Dickinson says, “we very quickly got comfortable with each other. That was necessary for the dynamic that we have as characters. I think Samuel isn’t afraid of her and isn’t intimidated by her, so I had to really just be comfortable in her presence. But she made that very easy. She’s very calm, very cool.”

Kidman, though, speaks of the space of vulnerability that she entered with Dickinson and Banderas with a kind of reverence, a realm of performance that was inhabited rather than discussed. The experience of where they went, it seems, stays mostly between them.

“That’s kind of like sacred territory, and I promised Harris, and I promised Antonio, that place of artistic sacredness, we hold it in that bubble — that’s where it exists,” Kidman says. “If that translates into the performances, fantastic. That’s where it stays, and that’s how it stays. But it doesn’t get dissected intellectually because it’s all too magical.”

While Dickinson tapped into the young, playfully goading other man, Banderas played Jacob, a theater director and the dutiful, cuckolded husband, a role that, on paper, might seem diametrically opposed to the character he typically cuts: the dominant, dangerous men in his acclaimed films with Pedro Almodóvar, *TIE ME UP! TIE ME DOWN!* and *THE SKIN I LIVE IN*. Reijn wanted somebody who was not “shy or obviously intellectual” but rather someone who was particularly masculine, even as “it was not an obvious role for masculine men to play the husband of this very strong and powerful character.”

“It was very important to me that it is not his problem — it is her journey, it is her problem,” Reijn notes. “It’s not his masculinity. It’s not that he’s not able to be a dominant man in bed. I wanted him to be a very interesting, amazing man. I wanted their marriage to be good in essence.”

Banderas, in some ways the archetype for a kind of suave and sensitive masculinity, seemed perfect. “I thought he would never do it,” Reijn says. “I was so nervous to meet him and speak to him, but he immediately said yes.”

The actor gravitated immediately to the script, finding it “very courageous about desires

that we all human beings have and not all of us have the courage to express that have to do with sexuality and a way to understand our own traumas.”

Playing the man pushed aside, Banderas, an icon of the screen, was particularly generous and helped set the tone on set in surrendering himself to the production.

“He was the hardest worker, open to any direction, incredibly playful and sweet, and made everybody feel safe,” Reijn says. “He made Nicole feel super seen and safe in the sex scenes that they had. He brought a vulnerability and a strength that I’m totally grateful for.”

Banderas, though, directs the praise onto Reijn and Kidman, the two women he credits for shepherding the film. “These two women are a dream — powerhouses,” he says. In particular, the film allowed him to finally work with Kidman, who he calls “one of the best actresses ever.” “Working with her is spectacular because she’s not only very good, she believes everything that she does,” Banderas says. “Everything that she does is true. But at the same time the attitude on the set is kind. She’s loving and she respects everybody. One of the highlights of my career is the possibility that life gave me just to play with her in a movie.”

Beyond the film’s central love triangle was a vital piece in Romy’s assistant, Esme, played by Sophie Wilde, a role that was crucial to Reijn in completing a larger portrait of shifting power and gender dynamics.

“Harris and Antonio are both aspects of masculinity. These are two aspects of femininity and two generations,” Reijn says of Romy and Esme’s relationship. “So I needed someone who was also capable of standing there with Nicole because you have to bring some power and some confidence.”

Across the film, Romy serves as a generous mentor to Esme and an empowering role model as a female leader, but as Romy’s affair bleeds beyond closed doors, Esme’s disillusionment also becomes an opportunity. “There’s an interesting shift of power as Esme starts to come more into her power over the course of the film, and Romy kind of relinquishes that power to her by the end of it,” Wilde says.

Reijn fell in love with Wilde after seeing her in the horror film *TALK TO ME*, and found a certain self-possession and innate understanding of the material within the script after they had met. “I saw this movie, and I lose it,” Reijn recalls of first seeing Wilde’s performance. “This actress is just a discovery. She has a range that is unheard of.”

Most importantly, she had a nonjudgmental sense of the complex ideas around power and identity politics that are at play within Esme and Romy’s relationship.

“She loved that about the character — that she’s doing good things and saying true things, but she’s also just grabbing the power,” Reijn says of Wilde’s interpretation of Esme. “She’s incredibly smart and also has the same meta perspective that I need for all of my films. I felt a huge connection with her. I think she’s going to be a huge star.”

The Cast

Nicole Kidman

Academy Award, Golden Globe, SAG, and Emmy Award winner Nicole Kidman first came to the attention of American audiences with her critically acclaimed performance in Phillip Noyce's 1989 Australian psychological thriller *DEAD CALM*. Kidman has since become an internationally recognized, award-winning actress and producer known for her range and versatility.

In 2003, Kidman won an Academy Award for her portrayal of Virginia Woolf in Stephen Daldry's *THE HOURS*, for which she also won a Golden Globe and a BAFTA Award. She has also been honored with Academy Award nominations for her performances in Baz Luhrmann's *MOULIN ROUGE!*, John Cameron Mitchell's *RABBIT HOLE*, Garth Davis' *LION*, and Aaron Sorkin's *BEING THE RICARDOS*.

Her other feature credits include *TO DIE FOR*, *PRACTICAL MAGIC*, *EYES WIDE SHUT*, *THE OTHERS*, *DOGVILLE*, *BIRTH*, *THE PAPERBOY*, *KILLING OF A SACRED DEER*, *THE BEGUILED*, *DESTROYER*, *BOY ERASED*, *AQUAMAN*, *THE NORTHMAN* and *A FAMILY AFFAIR*. In 2021, Kidman earned a Golden Globe, and Academy Award, SAG, and Critics Choice Award nominations for her portrayal of Lucille Ball in Aaron Sorkin's *BEING THE RICARDOS*. Kidman will next be seen in Halina Reijn's *BABYGIRL* which will have its world premiere at the Venice International Film Festival.

In television, Kidman earned Emmy, SAG and Golden Globe nominations for her 2012 performance in HBO's *HEMINGWAY AND GELLHORN* alongside Clive Owen. In 2017, Kidman returned to the small screen with the limited series *BIG LITTLE LIES*, co-executive produced by Blossom Films. Kidman received Emmy, Golden Globe, Critics Choice and SAG awards for her performance. The second season of the series premiered in June 2019 and the producing team is currently in development on a third season. Kidman's other credits in television as both an actor and executive producer include *THE UNDOING*, *NINE PERFECT STRANGERS*, *ROAR*, *SPECIAL OPS: LIONESSE* and *EXPATS*. Next, Kidman will be seen in *THE PERFECT COUPLE*, which she executive produces and stars in opposite Liev Schreiber and Dakota Fanning for Netflix.

In January of 2006, Kidman was awarded Australia's highest honor, the Companion in the Order of Australia. She was also named, and continues to serve, as Goodwill Ambassador for UN Women. In 2017, the Cannes Film Festival honored Kidman with a special award for her body of work and longstanding history with the festival. She is one of only eight people to ever receive this honor in the 70-year history of the festival. In 2024, Kidman became the 49th recipient of the American Film Institute's Lifetime Achievement Award, their highest honor for a career in film and the first Australian to receive this honor.



Harris Dickinson

BAFTA-nominated British actor Harris Dickinson burst onto the scene in Eliza Hittman's 2017 Sundance hit *BEACH RATS*. He was nominated for 'Best Male Lead' at the Independent Spirit Awards, and 'Break-through Actor' at The Gotham Awards for his first screen role as 'Frankie'. In 2022, Harris was selected as one of the five EE BAFTA Rising Star Nominees. In 2022, Harris led Ruben Östlund's Palme d'Or winning, Academy Award and BAFTA-nominated satirical comedy film *TRIANGLE OF SADNESS*, alongside Woody Harrelson and Charlbi Dean.

In 2023, Harris starred in Sean Durkin's *THE IRON CLAW* for A24 opposite Zac Efron and Jeremy Allen White and in the FX limited series *A MURDER AT THE END OF THE WORLD* from The OA creators Brit Marling and Zal Batmanglij, alongside Emma Corrin and Clive Owen. He also starred in the British independent feature film *SCRAPPER*, which won the World Cinema Dramatic Grand Jury Prize at the 2023 Sundance Film Festival. Harris will next be seen in the upcoming A24 Halina Reijn film *BABYGIRL* opposite Nicole Kidman and in Steve McQueen's Apple Original Film *BLITZ*.

Other film credits include: *WHERE THE CRAWDADS SING* opposite Daisy Edgar-Jones, *SEE HOW THEY RUN* starring alongside Sam Rockwell and Saoirse Ronan, Matthew Vaughn's *THE KING'S MAN*, Joanna Hogg's *THE SOUVENIR: PART II*, among others.

Harris pursued acting and filmmaking from a young age, training in theatre with Raw Academy and participating in the LAMDA examination program. At the age of 16, he won council funding to write and direct his first short film. His short 2003 premiered at The BFI London Film Festival in 2021. Harris recently wrapped principal photography on *GENERA*, a feature film he wrote and is directing.

Sophie Wilde

AACTA winner and BAFTA Film nominee, Sophie Wilde, most recently appeared on our screens as the lead in *Talk To Me* for A24. Labelled the 'scariest horror movie of 2023', the project quickly became A24's highest grossing film of the year. Sophie won the AACTA for 'Best Female Lead' for her performance, in a category that included Cate Blanchett and Sarah Snook, and was nominated for BAFTA's EE Rising Star Award. She will next appear in A24's *BABYGIRL*, alongside Nicole Kidman and Harris Dickinson and Sony Pictures' *Watch Dogs* opposite Tom Blyth.

In addition, Sophie recently led in *Everything Now* for Netflix. Written by Ripley Parker, Sophie took on the role of Mia, opposite Stephen Fry. The series was celebrated by critics, with Sophie's performance in particular receiving praise. She also featured in Netflix's *Boy Swallows Universe*, opposite Phoebe Tonkin. This summer, Sophie was awarded the prestigious Chopard Trophy at Cannes Film Festival, alongside Mike Faist. Further onscreen credits include *You Don't Know Me* (BBC), *Tom Jones* (ITVX), *The Portable Door* (Sky) and *Eden* (Stan). A 2019 graduate of NIDA, Sophie made her stage debut at The Sydney Opera House, as Ophelia in Bell Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

Antonio Banderas

Since his introduction to American cinema, Antonio Banderas continues to be one of the leading international actors of his generation. He has received critical praise for his performances in film, television and theater, as well as behind the scenes as a director. In 2005, he was honored with a Star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. In 2020, Banderas received Academy Award and Golden Globe nominations for Best Actor for his compelling portrayal of 'Salvador Mallo' in Pedro Almodovar's autobiographical drama *PAIN & GLORY*. He also won Best Actor at the 2019 Cannes Film Festival and Best Actor at The New York Film Critics Circle Awards, as well as the Spanish Academy Goya award for Best Actor for this incredible performance.

In 2019, Banderas launched Teatro del Soho Caixabank Theater with the Spanish language production of the classic musical *A CHORUS LINE*, in which he directed and starred in. In 2021, he directed, produced, wrote and co-hosted the 35th Goya Awards in a live-streamed ceremony from his theater, and in 2022, he directed and starred in the Spanish language production of *COMPANY*. He is next set to begin working on the direction of the musical *GYPSY* which will open in Malaga in October 2024.

Recently, he voiced the sequel to the animated film *Puss in Boots*, *PUSS IN BOOTS: THE LAST WISH*, which garnered an Oscar nomination for Best Animated Feature. Banderas will next be seen in two highly anticipated films this year; *PADDINGTON IN PERU*, where he stars opposite Olivia Colman and Emily Mortimer, slated for release in the UK on November 8th and in the US on January 17th, and in A24's *BABYGIRL*, opposite Nicole Kidman.

His most recent films include the 5th installment of the Indiana Jones franchise, *INDIANA*

JONES AND THE DIAL OF DESTINY, starring Harrison Ford and Phoebe Waller-Bridge; the Spanish comedy/drama OFFICIAL COMPETITION, opposite Penelope Cruz and Oscar Martinez; and the action adventure film UNCHARTED starring Tom Holland and Mark Wahlberg. Other films include Steven Soderbergh's THE LAUNDROMAT, opposite Meryl Streep and Gary Oldman; THE VOYAGE OF DOCTOR DOOLITTLE alongside Robert Downey Jr.; and THE HITMAN'S WIFE'S BODYGUARD, alongside Ryan Reynolds, Salma Hayek and Samuel L. Jackson.

In 2018, he starred in National Geographic's limited series GENIUS: PICASSO, in which he received Emmy, Golden Globe, Critics Choice and SAG Award nominations for Lead Actor in a Limited Series. In 1982, Banderas was cast by writer/director Pedro Almodovar in LABYRINTH OF PASSION. It was the first of eight films he would do with Almodovar, the others being MATADOR, LAW OF DESIRE, WOMEN ON THE VERGE OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN and TIE ME UP! TIE ME DOWN!. The international success of these films introduced to him to Hollywood. He later starred in THE SKIN I LIVE IN and I'M SO EXCITED, both written and directed by Almodovar.

Banderas has worked with some of Hollywood's best directors and leading actors in films including: Alan Parker's EVITA opposite Madonna, for which he received his first Best Actor Golden Globe nomination; Robert Rodriguez's DESPERADO, opposite Salma Hayek, and its sequel ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO, opposite Johnny Depp; ORIGINAL SIN opposite Angelina Jolie; Martin Campbell's THE MASK OF ZORRO opposite Catherine Zeta-Jones, for which he received his second Best Actor Golden Globe nomination, and its sequel THE LEGEND OF ZORRO; Brian de Palma's FEMME FATALE; Neil Jordan's INTERVIEW WITH A VAMPIRE with Tom Cruise and Brad Pitt; Bille August's HOUSE OF THE SPIRITS with Meryl Streep and Glenn Close; and Jonathan Demme's PHILADELPHIA, opposite Tom Hanks and Denzel Washington.

He was nominated for his third Best Actor Golden Globe for his performance as the infamous "Pancho Villa" in HBO's AND STARRING PANCHO VILLA as Himself.

In 2003, Banderas earned a Tony nomination for Best Actor in a Musical for his Broadway debut in the Roundabout Theater Company production of NINE, a musical inspired by Fellini's 8 ½ . He also received a Best Actor Drama Desk Award, Outer Critics Circle Award, Drama League Award and Theatre World Award. NINE, directed by David Leveaux, also starred Chita Rivera.

He made his directorial debut with CRAZY IN ALABAMA starring Melanie Griffith. His second directorial feature was the Spanish film EL CAMINO DE LOS INGLESES (titled SUMMER RAIN in the U.S.), a coming of age story that follows the first loves, lusts and obsessions of friends on vacation at the end of the 1970s.

Other film credits include: LIFE ITSELF, BEYOND THE EDGE, THE MUSIC OF SILENCE, SECURITY, BLACK BUTTERFLY, THE 33, AUTOMATA, KNIGHTS OF CUPS, THE EXPENDABLES 3, SPONGEBOB: SPONGE OUT OF WATER, MACHETE KILLS, JUSTIN AND THE KNIGHTS OF VALOUR, RUBY SPARKS, HAYWIRE, BLACK GOLD, DAY OF THE FALCON, PUSS IN BOOTS, YOU WILL MEET A TALL DARK STRANGER, THE BIG

BANG, THE OTHER MAN, SHREK 2 AND SHREK THE THIRD, SHREK FOREVER AFTER TAKE THE LEAD, SPY KIDS TRILOGY, MIAMI RHAPSODY, FOUR ROOMS, ASSASSINS, NEVER TALK TO STRANGERS, TWO MUCH, THE 13TH WARRIOR, PLAY IT TO THE BONE and BALLISTIC: ECKS VS. SEVER.

Born in Malaga, Spain, Banderas attended the School of Dramatic Arts in his hometown, and upon graduation he began his acting career working in a small theater company based there. He later moved to Madrid and became an ensemble member of the prestigious National Theater of Spain.



The Crew

David Hinojosa - producer

David Hinojosa is the Academy® Award-nominated producer of PAST LIVES which garnered numerous accolades, including 'Best Feature' at both the Gotham Awards and Independent Spirit Awards. Hinojosa received a BAFTA Award, Golden Globe Award, PGA Award nomination and an Academy Award nomination on behalf of his work on the film. He most recently produced Halina Reijn's BABYGIRL, starring Nicole Kidman, and Brady Corbet's THE BRUTALIST, both of which have been accepted to Venice Film Festival, as well as reuniting with Celine Song on her sophomore film, MATERIALISTS.

David Hinojosa is a Founding Partner and the Head of Production at 2AM, a production and management company invested in auteur-driven filmmakers launched in strategic partnership with A24. While at 2AM, he has produced Halina Reijn's BODIES BODIES BODIES. Prior to this role, David spent over a decade at the iconic award-winning production company Killer Films. While at Killer Films, he worked across titles such as the Academy Award-winning STILL ALICE and Todd Haynes' CAROL which premiered in competition at the Cannes Film Festival and received six Academy Award nominations.

Hinojosa's other producing credits include Janicza Bravo's ZOLA, Todd Solondz' WIENER DOG, Josephine Decker's SHIRLEY, Brady Corbet's VOX LUX, Miguel Arteta's BEATRIZ AT DINNER and Paul Schrader's FIRST REFORMED. His work has premiered and screened at major film festivals, including Berlin, Cannes, Toronto, Venice, and Sundance, where he has received numerous honors including the Sundance Grand Jury Prize.

He is the Co-Vice Chair of the Producers Guild of America East, Chair of the Independent Producer's Task Force, a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and lectures at New York University's prestigious Tisch School of the Arts Graduate Film Program.

Julia Oh - producer

Julia Oh is a film and television producer at 2AM, the production and management company founded by Christine D'Souza Gelb, David Hinojosa and Kevin Rowe. Oh joins 2AM from Film4 in London where she previously served as a Senior Commissioning Executive. Oh's producing and executive producing credits include: BABYGIRL, THE FRONT ROOM, EILEEN, EARWIG, ENCOUNTER, THE ELECTRICAL LIFE OF LOUIS WAIN, MOTHERING SUNDAY, LIMBO, ROCKS, AMERICAN HONEY, and NASTY BABY.

She has received honors including the Cannes Film Festival Grand Jury Prize and the BIFA for Best British Film, among others.

Jasper Wolf - Director of Photography

Jasper Wolf is a Dutch Cinematographer best known for his work on films such as: MONOS, INSTINCT, PARADISE DRIFTERS, CODE BLUE and most recently, DEAD AND BEAUTIFUL, BODIES BODIES BODIES and GOLDA.

Jasper's cinematography has been described as sensitive and emotionally charged, adaptive to the director's vision and instrumental for the film's visual identity. His latest film, BABYGIRL, produced by A24, is his third collaboration with director/writer Halina Reijn, premiering in Venice this August.

Jasper is based in Amsterdam

Stephen Carter - Production Designer

Stephen H. Carter is an award-winning film and television Production Designer.

Mr Carter received a degree in Drama from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, studying acting, directing and design for the theater. His screen production design credits include four seasons of SUCCESSION for HBO, for which he received an Art Directors Guild award, three Emmy nominations, and numerous other awards and nominations.

He also designed the feature film SPOTLIGHT which won best picture in 2016 and Art directed BIRDMAN (best picture 2015) for which he also received an Art Directors Guild award. Other Feature films of note include BABYGIRL, CAN YOU EVER FORGIVE ME?, STRONGER, and KILL YOUR DARLINGS. Additionally, Mr. Carter designed studios for NBC's coverage of the Olympic Games with Bob Costa from 2005 to 2012, in Torino, Beijing, Vancouver and London.

He lives in New York City with his wife Kelly Miller and two daughters, Plummy and Lil.

Matthew Hannam - Editor

Matthew Hannam is a Canadian film and television editor. He is a two-time Canadian Screen Award winner for editing, winning the award for Best Film Editing at the 2nd Canadian Screen Awards in 2014 for his work on the film Enemy and the award for Best Editing in a Comedy Series for his work on the series SENSITIVE SKIN. He was nominated for Best Editing at the Film Independent Spirit Awards in 2017 for SWISS ARMY MAN.

Other notable credits include Noah Baumbach's WHITE NOISE, IT COMES AT NIGHT, WILDLIFE, VOX LUX, THE NEST, Sean Durkin's THE IRON CLAW, and the upcoming movie BABYGIRL, an A24 erotic thriller written, directed, and co-produced by Halina Reijn, starring Nicole Kidman, Harris Dickinson, Sophie Wilde, Antonio Banderas, and Jean Reno.

Kurt and Bart - Costume Design

A chance meeting at art school in 1983 formed the basis of the Costume Design team Kurt and Bart. Further educated in the notorious nightclub school of 1980's New York, they embarked on a career path that would take them through many stations in the world of film, image and design.

Initially working at Broadcast Arts in New York as freelance artists, their strong design sense and distinct visual vocabulary allowed them to move seamlessly across different mediums. They designed costumes for award winning high concept commercials as well as designing and directing the live action integrated animated opening sequence for the eponymous Arsenio Hall Show. Directing music videos followed, as did being part of the Emmy Winning Costume Design team for Mother Goose's Rock Rhyme for the Disney Channel. They also garnered a an AICP Award for costume design for a 1989 commercial for Canon cameras.

As stylists, they collaborated with some of the most prolific image makers including Steven Klein, Patrick Demarchelier, Herb Ritts, Mathew Rolston, Mark Seliger and Mary Ellen Mark. The roster of celebrities is also vast and varied. From work with icons like David Bowie, Ozzy Osbourne, Marilyn Manson and Courtney Love to the riotous propulsion of Britney Spears from teen idol to full blown pop phenomena. Their unique and shared sensibility has left many indelible moments on the cultural landscape.

Kurt and Bart's unflinching vision and passion for storytelling made film a natural next step. Designing for feature films both big and small, their first being Cannes sensation SHORTBUS from acclaimed writer/director John Cameron Mitchell. Scott Cooper's gritty OUT OF THE FURNACE with Christian Bale followed as well as Stephanie Daley with Tilda Swinton and Korean auteur Park Chan-wook's STOKER which garnered them nominations from London Critics Circle Film Award for Technical Achievement of the Year as well as International Online Cinema award for Best Costume Design. Their work on Jean-Marc Vallee's Academy Award winning DALLAS BUYERS CLUB earned them a Costume Design Guild Nomination for Excellence in Period Film.

They were nominated for CDG Awards two years in a row for Excellence in Fantasy Film for the last two installments of the Hunger Games franchise, MOCKINGJAY helmed by director Francis Lawrence. Kurt and Bart have continued their world building aesthetic with the David Leitch helmed blockbuster DEADPOOL 2 and FOUNDATION for Apple from showrunner David Goyer and Josh Friedman. Upcoming is Halina Reijn's BABYGIRL starring Nicole Kidman and THE CROW from Rupert Sanders. They have just finished principal photography on THE WOMAN IN THE YARD for Blumhouse, directed by Jaume Collet-Serra and starring Danielle Deadwyler.

Kurt and Bart are members of Costume Design Guild as well as Local 829.

Cristobal Tapia de Veer - Music

Cristo is a 3-time EMMY and BAFTA winning composer and multi-instrumentalist, whose classical music training and ingenious sense of composition opened a new dimension to cinematic music and brought him iconic status. He is widely known for his works on critically acclaimed cult series like C4's UTOPIA, BLACK MIRROR, THE WHITE LOTUS or 2022's #1 box-office surprise hit SMILE (Paramount).

Meghan Currier - Music Supervisor

Meghan Currier is a music supervisor for film, television and advertising. For the past decade, she has worked on some of the industry's most creative and magnetic films and television shows including PAST LIVES, HIT MAN, BODIES BODIES BODIES, IF YOU WERE THE LAST, HBO's HOW TO WITH JOHN WILSON and HIGH MAINTENANCE, WAVES, TIGER KING, SWAN SONG, and BOYHOOD. Ms. Currier was a part of the GRAMMY Award winning team that produced the BOARDWALK EMPIRE soundtrack, the 2019 AICP Winner for Best Licensed Music/Arrangement for her work with Global Girls Alliance and The Obama Foundation, and a 2020 Guild of Music Supervisors Winner for the feature film Waves.

Avy Kaufman - Casting

Avy Kaufman is an award-winning film and television casting director whose career spans genres and continents across the globe. She has collaborated with directors Ang Lee, Steven Spielberg, Ridley Scott, Robert Redford, Wong Kar-Wai, Jodie Foster, Joe Wright, and Luca Guadagnino - among others. Recent credits include: BOB MARLEY: ONE LOVE, TÁR, RUSTIN, NYAD, and RIPLEY. Upcoming films include: BABYGIRL, DEATH OF A UNICORNE, THE ORDER, and RUMOURS.

Avy is the recipient of multiple emmy awards for her work on the series SUCCESSION and DAMAGES. Other awards include the Robert Altman award for SUSPIRIA at the Independent Spirit Awards in 2018, Casting Director of the Year at the Hollywood Film Festival in 2005, and numerous Artios awards from the Casting Society of America. She is featured in Helena Lumme's book "Great Women of Film" and was recently honored with a place on Variety's New York Women's Impact List for Excellence in the Field of Film and Television Casting.

Avy resides in New York City and is the proud mother of two sons.

Cast

Romy	NICOLE KIDMAN
Samuel	HARRIS DICKINSON
Jacob	ANTONIO BANDERAS
Esme	SOPHIE WILDE
Isabel	ESTHER MCGREGOR
Nora	VAUGHAN REILLY
Mr. Missel	VICTOR SLEZAK
Hazel	LESLIE SILVA
Hedda/Scarlett	GAITE JANSEN
Brack/Stephen	ROBERT FARRIOR
Tom	BARTLEY BOOZ
Robert	ANOOP DESAI
Hannah	MARY ANN LAMB
Mary	GABRIELLE POLICANO
Interns	GABRIELA TORRES
	IZABEL MARR
	MAX O'HERLIHY
Ari	MICHAEL KIRCHMANN
Raver	MAREAU HALL
Therapist	DOLLY WELLS
Ophelia	TESS MCMILLAN
Girl	SKYLAR MATTHEWS
Mrs. Hollbrook	MOLLY JOY PRICE
Josh	MAXWELL WHITTINGTON-COOPER
Mother	MARYANN URBANO

Crew

Directed by	HALINA REIJN
Written by	HALINA REIJN
Produced by	DAVID HINOJOSA JULIA OH HALINA REIJN
Executive Producers	Zach Nutman Erika Hampson Christine D'Souza-Gelb
Director of Photography	Jasper Wolf
Production Designer	Stephen Carter
Editing by	Matthew Hannam
Costume Design by	Kurt and Bart
Music by	Cristobal Tapia de Veer
Music Supervisor	Meghan Currier
Casting by	Avy Kaufman

cinéart

