

**STRAND
RELEASING**

presents

MINYAN

A FILM BY
ERIC STEEL

Starring Samuel H. Levine, Ron Rifkin

PRESS NOTES

*OFFICIAL SELECTION
Berlin International Film Festival*

Country of Origin: USA
Format: DCP/2.35/Color
Sound: 5.1 Surround
Running Time: 118 minutes
Genre: Drama
Not Rated
In English, Hebrew, Yiddish, Russian, and German with English Subtitles

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SHORT SYNOPSIS

A young Russian Jewish immigrant in Brighton Beach, caught up in the tight constraints of his community, develops a close friendship with his grandfather's new neighbors, two elderly closeted gay men who open his imagination to the possibilities of love and the realities of loss — and explores the East Village where he finds a world teeming with the energy of youth, desire and risk. Set in the late 1980s, as AIDS hammered New York City, *Minyan* is a powerful story of rebellion and self-discovery, sexual and spiritual awakening — and survival.

LONG SYNOPSIS

David (Samuel H. Levine) is a teenager at a strict yeshiva in Brighton Beach at the height of the 1980s. While helping his grandfather (Ron Rifkin) settle into a retirement facility in the tight-knit Russian Jewish enclave he calls home, he meets Itzik and Herschel, two elderly closeted gay men who open him up to the possibility of connection, community — and love. Finding his way to the East Village, David finds solace in like-minded souls, and quietly blossoms. When Itzik dies and the neighbors want to throw Herschel out, David must stand up to defend his discoveries about himself and where he belongs. From writer-director Eric Steel (*The Bridge*) comes a story of strength in numbers, as one young man wakes up to the realities of a new life — where youth, desire and risk collide with the indelible specters of the past.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

There is a particular way that strangers move through strange lands. Immigrants, Jews, homosexuals — in order to survive, they have learned to be keen observers, listeners more than talkers, always on the lookout for danger and openings. They carry history under the skin, and make do with less to fulfill a promise in the future. This is the DNA and the ethos for *Minyan* — and very much the way I have moved through my own life. Trying to figure out who I was required navigating grief and sexual exploration. Every single one of my first circle of gay friends was dead before the 1990s began — every one but me. I was never sure really what was shadow and what was light. I was comforted by and fascinated with the stories my grandparents told, their secretive crying and mysterious Yiddish whispers ... and I found answers, poetry, a kind of home in books. I am attracted to the edges of things, moments held in mesmerizing balance, the surface tension — here between fear and freedom, between seen and closeted, between newness and inexperience of youth and the gravity of old age. I am inspired by a line from James Baldwin that I had copied into an old notebook when I was in high school — and that now plays a central part in *Minyan*: "Go back to where you started, or as far back as you can, examine all of it, travel your road again and tell the truth about it. Sing or shout or testify or keep it to yourself; but know whence you came."

A CONVERSATION WITH WRITER-DIRECTOR ERIC STEEL

How did your career path as a Hollywood executive and documentarian lead to *Minyan*?

When I was in college I worked as a production assistant, then moved to L.A. and got a job at Disney working for Jeffrey Katzenberg and Michael Eisner during the mid-'80s, which was a graduate school education in making movies. By this time I had already come out to my parents, and I knew I wasn't going to make *Out of Africa*. I also didn't think it would be possible to tell a gay story based on my own experience. So I set out to become a great executive producer.

And then you found your way into independent film in New York City...

A few years after working for Disney a drunk driver killed my sister so I came back to my native New York City. I got a job at Cinecom, the only art-house distributor at the time — There was a movie poster for *Maurice* on the wall in the office so I felt good about working there. But the company folded, so I went to work in publishing for a while, as an editor of non-fiction, including a lot of memoirs. One day Scott Rudin called, wanting the rights to a book I was editing. He knew me from Disney and suggested I come to work for him, turning books into movies. We made *Angela's Ashes*, *Bringing Out the Dead* — suddenly I had my name on a movie Martin Scorsese directed...

But you were still drawn to making your own movies...

In 2000, I left the development job with Rudin, knowing I wanted a bigger voice in filmmaking. I didn't want to sit behind a desk, so I went to San Francisco and made this documentary about the Golden Gate Bridge. I taught myself how to use the camera, rudimentary editing, the basic business things, like renting cameras, putting packages together, insurance, employment agreements, getting agents and sales people — doing everything, making what became *The Bridge*. As I was doing it, I knew suddenly this was where I wanted to be.

Where were you at in your life and what did you feel when you first encountered the David Bezmozgis short story on which *Minyan* is based?

I happened upon it in a bookstore during the making of *The Bridge* in 2004, it was a sense-memory kind of thing reading it — I could remember my grandparents' building in the Bronx, where people were whispering in Yiddish, and I could smell the onions cooking, the pickles, the chopped chicken liver...

So you knew right away it had cinematic potential...

I didn't think of it in terms of a feature initially — it was more like encountering a tone poem, and I was just learning filmmaking so I wasn't thinking big. I envisioned making a short film of the 10-page story, so I called Bezmozgis's agents and they said no. But it was something I couldn't shake! I kept returning to it, even as I started making my second documentary, *Kiss the Water*, a few years later.

How did those documentaries prepare you for making *Minyan*?

When I made *The Bridge*, I thought I was making a movie about suicidal people — people who weren't me, but other people, far away. It was clear to me by the end of that project how impossible it was to know what people were feeling on the inside versus how they come across on the outside — and that in many ways all of us share a certain set of feelings: despair, loss, impossibility. I came to see elements of myself on screen in a way, as if I could see inside myself, and it got me closer to being a filmmaker.

How did you persuade David Bezmozgis to let you adapt his short story, and what did you do to change it?

When I finally persuaded him to give me the option he had one caveat or condition, which was to make the movie my story, not his story. This was the best blessing or challenge anyone ever gave me. I did the documentarian's work — studying Russian Jews and immigrants, what their

lives were like, but eventually I also connected the shell and timing of David's short story, part of a collection of stories related to the author's own life as a Russian Jewish immigrant in Toronto during the 1980s to what was going on in my own life as a young gay man in NYC in the 1980s, trying to figure out who I was and what I could be as AIDS took such a terrifying and decimating hold on the community.

Describe the short story "Minyan" in your own words.

The short story is about a young man whose grandfather is struggling to find a place to live, and the only reason he gets an apartment in this building is because he's a pious Jew and will show up to make a minyan for prayers. Coincidentally, his neighbors are two closeted gay men, and one of them dies. A question emerges of will they throw the surviving partner out or not, because his name isn't on the lease. It's a story about the tests of freedom, or the tests of empathy, in the free world. And I think you can still, very clearly see the ideas and themes Bezmozgis was writing about in a very personal way refracted through a second lens of my experience.

How did your own experiences coming of age in New York come to influence your adaptation?

Minyan became a movie when I was willing to connect my own coming of age experience to David's. It's basically my first years coming out in New York City in the 1980s, fused with David's experience in the Russian Jewish community of Toronto when he was young. The protagonist of the short story is not gay, but there were pieces of DNA from Bezmozgis's writing that I felt were foundational to who David was: the immigrant who doesn't fit into his community, and who doesn't have access to language. The elements pertaining to the yeshiva school David attends in the movie appear as a set of observations in parts of other stories from the same collection. But the notion of David coming into his own as a person was something I wove together from my own life and experience. I grew up in New York City on the Upper East Side, and while I was never going to be kicked out of my home for being gay, I still struggled, still felt uncomfortable and a part growing up. The notion of wanting to be able to live a physical life, and to experience sex when I was first coming out — David in the movie wants that, because lust and desire are things we are supposed to feel as young people.

Eventually the two stories fuse together in the film in a kind of elegant symmetry, suggesting dual holocausts...

During the writing process I kept discovering more and more ways my story and the themes of David's story overlapped. The main one is the looming sense of existential dread — the idea that just living your life authentically, being who you were might be the cause of your own death was a staggering heaviness to deal with — not knowing who was going to live or die — this is part and parcel of being a Jew, an immigrant, or a homosexual. I don't like to equate the Holocaust with anything — it's *sui genesis* in terms of the brutal, cruelty and terror and mass killing — still I saw the parallels to what AIDS did to the gay community, the wiping out of almost an entire population — and I feel like survivors share an emotional landscape with other survivors.

What did your own coming out story entail?

I came out in 1982, right before AIDS, and it was great, my parents were wonderful, you could go to Fire Island and be whomever you wanted without caution. But within a year, it all started to change. By 1988, my original group of friends, every single one of them, was dead except for me. I couldn't explain why I survived, there was no rhyme or reason to it — in the same way that

those who survived the Holocaust cannot easily explain why they made it out alive and others didn't. There was no map to follow or set of instructions that guaranteed survival. As soon as those things came together in my story, it generated a lot of energy.

The work of James Baldwin plays a big role in your story — presumably he was an influence on your formative years?

His work was a big part of my education; but I wasn't aware when I originally read *Go Tell It On The Mountain* that he was a gay expatriate. I knew that he was a black American — the fact that he was a stranger in a strange land who didn't ever know if he belonged in his own country, and even in his own community was something I came to know more clearly as I reread his work. And Baldwin's writing definitely prompted more questioning about how one belonged — in your country, in your community, in your family — even in your own skin. Those questions kept spinning around in my head while I was writing the screenplay.

David is also a ravenous book reader; was this also based on your own experience?

I was definitely a book person, you couldn't feed me enough literature and poetry, I just ate it up. It's where I learned a lot about being gay, but it's also just the magic of stories. There is a strong connection in *Minyan* to this idea of the Jews being the People of the Book — reading the Torah, saying the prayers, the story of King David, which is an incredible story itself. Part of the joy that David is discovering through books are the same joys I discovered in my own youth, it was like doing it all over again...

Describe your research process for weaving Judaism into this movie...

I grew up without religion in my life — in fact, my mother wanted to name me Christian. My grandparents belonged to that generation of Jews that were fearful on some level that it might not be in their best interest to be known as Jews and thus had to make choices about how they practiced. I had a spiritual hunger eventually, and went on to spend a lot of time digging into Judaism, spending time in Toronto with the Russian Jews up there, talking to rabbi across a wide section of faith, attending classes in synagogues, learning the rules of the Talmud... maybe not in the most organized way but all of it came to mean something to me.

When did you decide to change the setting of your story to Brighton Beach as opposed to Toronto, where the short story is set?

We originally set out to make a movie set in Toronto because there is such a strict geography to where the Jews live there — it's one distinct avenue. Brighton Beach now is very Russian, filled with oligarchs and mafiosos, but in the '80s it was more Yiddish, including immigrants from my grandparents' generation. When the Russians came over, they didn't speak English, and the Jews who had already settled there spoke Yiddish, so the only common language between them at one point was Yiddish. In the '80s Brighton Beach was also more heavily religious than it is now, something David would have wanted to get away from. It felt like Old Country Jews.

How did you come to cast Samuel Levine as David?

Susan Shopmaker is the casting director, and we've been friends for years. I had met with a lot of young actors, some of whom were fantastic, and we were narrowing it down when Susan suggested we go to London and see some plays, and meet actors. So we went, and saw *The Inheritance* when it was still at the New Vic. It had been running for a while, and was already a

sensation in London, but it hadn't moved to the West End. I watched Sam take the stage, and in the beginning you don't know exactly what he's got up his sleeve. Halfway through the two parts, I turned to Susan and said what have you done to me? She had totally set me up for this, knowing that Sam was perfect for the role of David. At that point, I knew there was nobody else.

What sold you on him?

He plays two different characters in the play, and they're very different, but they also know how to swim in the same water, so to speak. He does this masterful jumping back and forth between the two characters, and there was this incredible composure in such a young actor, pulling off the duality without being too theatrical. You believe he is one person one second and someone else a few scenes later, and back and forth. We had to wait until he completed the West End run before we could start shooting *Minyan* in early 2019.

How do you think *The Inheritance* prepared him for your movie?

I think it was a good thing he was in *The Inheritance*, playing a character that was trying to mine his own life, and also tell a story of the lives around him. It was also good that he worked with Stephen Daldry, who is a master director of actors. I'm sure I benefited and the film benefited from that kind of education. I knew he believed in *Minyan*, and believed we could tell the story together. He was only 23 when we filmed.

Sam also performs seamlessly alongside the older actors in the movie, including Ron Rifkin, playing his grandfather...

I had seen how well Sam played opposite Vanessa Redgrave on stage, so I knew he could do it. He smiled differently around the older actors — it just worked.

Ron and my husband and I went back to London to see *The Inheritance* when the play moved to the West End, and Ron got to spend time with Sam. They had great chemistry from the moment they met.

Your movie contains a scene of unprotected sex that adds a layer gravitas to the story, considering its time period — was this intentional?

It would be naive and false to claim that the only sex gay men had after the discovery of the virus was safe sex. I don't believe that the only people who survived AIDS were those who had oral sex exclusively, or protected sex. Gays and straights continued to have unprotected sex because passion and sexuality often overrule our better judgments. How we deal with uncertainty is an energy that all the characters in this movie feel in different ways. They all feel threatened. David is an immigrant from Brighton Beach who has little or no idea at first what's going on in the world just a few subway stops away. But once he knows, he can never really shake that fear off. The movie is in some way about those moments, trying to be who you are in the most authentic and vulnerable way, even if it ends up being a threat to your survival.

Describe the significance of your movie's title, and what it means to you as a filmmaker...

On one hand, a minyan refers to the simple rules of prayer — you need ten men to make a quorum to say certain prayers. As a pious Jew you say prayers alone from the moment you wake up and wash your hands, but those are private prayers. These big signpost prayers like the

Kaddish have to be told in a group, and with 10 people it takes on a different dimension — I believe that with the group, prayer is changed into belief. Suddenly there is this power you can't articulate, this power also happens to translate into making a movie. Writing a movie is a private act — in its own way, writing a screenplay is a prayer; I'm praying something can happen, it's only words on a page but it really only happens when I put together a minyan of players: actors, designers, the cinematographer, a team, a minyan. So this idea of minyan speaks to me every day, in the way that I work on my own when I'm writing but more than that when I need a team of people to bring my ideas to life.

CAST AND CREW BIOGRAPHIES

SAMUEL H. LEVINE | *David*

Samuel H. Levine (David) can currently be seen making his Broadway debut in Matthew Lopez's critically acclaimed two-part play, *The Inheritance*. Levine originated the roles of both Leo and Adam in London at the Young Vic Theatre and at the Noël Coward Theatre in The West End. The production won the Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Play, and the Critics' Circle Award and London Evening Standard Theatre Award for Best Play before transferring to Broadway.

He will next be seen starring in Eric Steel's *Minyan*, which will premiere at the 2020 Berlin International Film Festival as well as in Lila Neugebauer's upcoming A24 film, opposite Jennifer Lawrence.

Levine has starred in multiple independent films including *Alia's Birth*, *Yinz*, *The Transfiguration*, *Indignation*, *Best Day Ever*, and *Down Time*. He has also been seen on the small screen in popular television shows including *Instinct*, *Bull*, *Red Oaks*, and *Elementary*, as well as a recurring role in *The Big Dogs*.

Additional theater credits include off-Broadway performances *Kill Floor*, directed by Lila Neugebauer at LTC3, and *Alligator* at A.R.T.

Levine is a graduate of the renowned Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts and currently resides in Brooklyn.

RON RIFKIN | *Josef*

Ron Rifkin (Josef) is an Emmy nominated actor whose television roles include the hit series *Alias*, *Brothers and Sisters*, *New Amsterdam*, *Limitless*, and *ER*, among countless others. His film work encompasses a broad range of movies including the recent *A Star is Born*, *The Sum of All Fears*, *L.A. Confidential*, *JFK*, *The Negotiator*, *Manhattan Murder Mystery*, *Husbands and Wives*, and *The Substance of Fire*, in which he recreated his award winning stage performance. Rifkin received the Tony Award for his performance in the Broadway revival of *Cabaret*.

CHRISTOPHER McCANN | *Herschel*

Christopher McCann (Herschel)

As an Actor in Theater, he has worked with internationally acclaimed directors such as Lucian Pintilie, Richard Foreman, Joseph Chaikin, AnnBogart, Robert Woodruff, Bartlett Sher, Douglas Hughes, Garland Wright, Carl Weber, Ron Daniels, Mark Wing-Davy and Moises Kaufman. As an actor, infilm, directors he has worked with include Sidney Lumet, Michel Franco, JohnSlattery, Carlos Puga, Lance Edmands, Tim Disney, Antonio Campos, RobReiner, Phillip Noyce, Mary Harron, Michael Glawogger, and Tim B. Nelson. Intheater, he has appeared in the premiere productions of plays by such authors as Tony Kushner, Caryl Churchill, John Guare, Sam Shepard, Charles Mee, LenJenkin, Tim B. Nelson, Botho Strauss, George Walker, Ellen McLaughlin,Elizabeth Egloff, Mark Schultz, two Bertolt Brecht NY premieres, and for TheNew Group he appeared in a never before produced work of Tennessee Williams: *ONE ARM*.

His most recent New York appearance was as Gloucester, in Arin Arbus' acclaimed production of *King Lear* for Theater For a New Audience with Michael Pennington.

He has directed the plays of David Lindsay-Abaire, Caryl Churchill, JoseRivera, David Mamet, Quincy Long, Will Eno, Y. York, Sam Shepard and William Shakespeare.

Since the fall of 2007 he has been on the faculty of The Conservatory for Theater Arts at Purchase College in the Acting Program, which he now chairs.

CARSON MEYER | *Alicia*

Carson Meyer (Alicia) is an actress out of NYU. After graduating, she participated in the renowned Williamstown Theatre Festival in the Berkshires. Carson most recently stars in *Ms. White Light* opposite Judith Light and Roberta Colindrez. The film premiered at SXSW to very strong reviews. She can also be seen opposite Aaron Taylor-Johnson in Sam Taylor-Johnson's *A Million Little Pieces* for Makeready, opposite Noah Centineo in *SPF-18*, and in the Dolly Parton biopic *Coat of Many Colors* for NBC.

ERIC STEEL | *Director, Writer, Producer*

Minyan is **Eric Steel's** first feature film. Previously, he directed two critically acclaimed documentaries: *The Bridge* (2006), about the suicides at San Francisco's Golden Gate and *Kiss the Water* (2013), inspired by *The New York Times'* obituary of a woman he never met — a reclusive Scotswoman who spun bits of feathers and fairy tales into stunning, lethal fishing flies. He also developed and produced Nora Ephron's *Julie & Julia* (2009).

Eric Steel began his film career as an entry-level creative executive at Walt Disney Pictures in California in 1985 and then became Vice President of Production for Cinecom in New York City. For several years, he was Senior Vice President of Scott Rudin Productions, where he developed Martin Scorsese's *Bringing Out the Dead* and Alan Parker's *Angela's Ashes*.

He has written two articles for *The New York Times Magazine*. He was also a book editor at Simon & Schuster and HarperCollins, where he published a strong list of non-fiction, memoirs, and novels.

He is a graduate of Yale University, with a degree in History of Art. Eric Steel lives in New York City. He was born in 1964.

DANIEL PEARLE | *Writer*

Daniel Pearle (Writer) is an American playwright and screenwriter. His plays have been produced and developed at Lincoln Center, London's Old Vic, The Vineyard Theater, INTAR, and at regional theaters across the country. His play *A Kid Like Jake* premiered in a sold-out run at LCT3/Lincoln Center Theater (*New York Times* Critic's Pick). The play won the 2013 Laurents/Hatcher Foundation Award and the prestigious Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation's Theatre Visions Grant. Daniel's feature film adaptation of *A Kid Like Jake* is set to shoot this summer with Claire Danes, Jim Parsons and Octavia Spencer.

His other plays include *Freefall* (finalist for the 2017 O'Neill Playwrights Conference), *Remote Viewing* (semi-finalist, 2015 O'Neill Playwrights Conference), *The Prodigies* (semi-finalist, 2013 O'Neill Playwrights Conference), and *Plunder* (winner, 2008 Loeb Drama Center's Phyllis Anderson Prize). His short play *The Truth About Christmas* was a winner of the 2011 Samuel French Off-Off Broadway Short Play Festival and is published and licensed by Samuel French.

Daniel is an alum of Ars Nova's Play Group and a MacDowell Fellow. He was also the recipient of PFLAG's (Parents of Lesbians and Gays) Leadership in Entertainment Award in 2013. Residencies/conferences include: The MacDowell Colony, The Blue Mountain Center, New York State Summer Writers Retreat, and the UCLA's Writers Studio.

Daniel grew up in Studio City, California. He earned his BA from Harvard University and his MFA from The New School for Drama. He currently lives in Brooklyn.

DAVID BEZMOZGIS | *Writer*

David Bezmozgis (Writer) is an award-winning writer and filmmaker.

He is the author of the story collection, *Natasha and Other Stories* (2004), and the novels, *The Free World* (2011), and *The Betrayers* (2014). David's stories have been published in *The New Yorker*, *Harpers*, *Zoetrope All-Story*, and *The Walrus*, among others.

Natasha (in which "Minyan" appeared) was one of the New York Public Library's 25 Books to Remember for 2004, and an Amazon.com Top 10 Book for 2004. It was nominated for the Guardian First Book Award (UK), the LA Times First Book Award (US), the Governor General's Award (Canada) and won the Toronto Book Award and the Commonwealth Writer's Prize for First Book. *The Free World* was nominated for the Scotiabank/Giller Prize, The Governor-General's Award, the Trillium Prize and won the Amazon.ca First Novel Award. *The Betrayers* was also nominated for the Scotiabank/Giller Prize and won the National Jewish Book Award in Fiction.

David has appeared at *The New Yorker* Festival, The UCLA Armand Hammer Museum, and the Luminato Festival. His work has been broadcast on NPR, BBC, and the CBC, and his stories have been anthologized in *The Best American Short Stories 2005 & 2006*. In the summer of 2010, David was included in *The New Yorker's* 20 Under 40 issue, celebrating the twenty most promising fiction writers under the age of forty.

A graduate of the University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts, David's first feature film, *Victoria Day*, premiered in competition at the Sundance Film Festival in 2009, and received a Genie Award (Canada) nomination for Best Original Screenplay. His second feature, an adaptation of his story *Natasha*, was released in Canada and the US in 2016. David has been a Guggenheim Fellow, a MacDowell Fellow, a Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Fellow at the New York Public Library, and a Radcliffe Fellow.

Born in Riga, Latvia, David lives in Toronto.

AGX

AGX is a New York based production company founded by Ben Howe and Luca Borghese concentrating on feature narrative and documentary work. Recent projects include *Goldie* (dir. Sam de Jong) produced alongside Vice Films and premiering in the 2019 Berlinale and at the Tribeca Film Festival. *Diane* (dir. Kent Jones) premiered in competition at Tribeca and Locarno in 2018, taking three awards at Tribeca including the Founders' Award for Best Narrative Feature and was released by IFC Films in 2019. *Monsters and Men* (dir. Reinaldo Marcus Green) premiered at Sundance in 2018 in competition winning a Special Jury Award for Best First Feature and was released by Neon in October 2018. Currently in production is Eric Steel's *Minyan*. Upcoming Projects include Stephen Cone's *Nudes*, David Craig's *Karyn* and Tatia Pilieva's *Cathouse*.

Previous combined credits include Noah Pritzker's *Quitters* (SXSW 2015 Competition/eOne), Bob Pulcini and Shari Springer Berman's *Ten Thousand Saints* (Sundance 2015/Screen Media), Lou Howe's *Gabriel* (Tribeca FF2014 Competition/Oscilloscope Laboratories), Matt Wolf's *Teenage* (Tribeca 2013/Oscilloscope Laboratories), Mo Ogradnik's *Deep Powder* (Tribeca 2013), Patricia Benoit's *Stones in the Sun* (Tribeca 2012), Liza Johnson's *Return* (Cannes 2011/Focus World), Bradley Rust Gray's *The Exploding Girl* (Berlin 2009/Oscilloscope Laboratories), So Yong Kim's *Treeless Mountain* (Toronto 2008, Berlin 2009/Oscilloscope Laboratories), and Matt Wolf's *Wild Combination: A Portrait of Arthur Russell* (Berlin 2008/Plexifilm).

ANNE CAREY | Executive Producer

Anne Carey (Executive Producer) currently produces films as Archer Gray's President of Production. Most recently, the upcoming *Lost Girls* written by Michael Werwie and directed by Liz Garbus.

Notable credits include the Academy Award-nominated *Can You Ever Forgive Me?* By Marielle Heller, Academy Award-nominated *20th Century Women* by Mike Mills; *Mr. Holmes* by Bill Condon, and Independent Spirit Award-winner *The Diary of a Teenage Girl* by Marielle Heller.

Prior to joining Archer Gray, Carey was a partner at the NYC based This Is That and was Head of Development and a producer at the seminal independent film company, Good Machine. Additional credits include Tamara Jenkins's Academy Award nominated *The Savages*, Greg Mottola's *Adventureland*, Anton Corbijn's *The American*.

JOHNNY HOLLAND | *Line Producer*

Johnny Holland (Line Producer) is a New York based producer with over forty credits across features and television.

After starting his career in the production and accounting offices of projects including *The Big Sick*, *You Were Never Really Here* and *Southpaw*, he line produced *Goldie* for Vice Films, a film that screened in competition at Berlinale 2019 and had its US premiere at the 2019 Tribeca Film Festival. He also worked as a production manager on two Sundance 2019 contenders, *Luce* and *The Sunlit Night*.

LUCIO SEIXAS | *Production Designer*

Lucio Seixas (Production Designer) is a Production Designer based in New York City. He started his career as Set Dresser on films such as *Spanking the Monkey* and *Welcome to the Doll House*, as well as being credited as Art Director for *The Believer*, *Happy Accidents* and *The Guys*. His Production Designing credits include, *Mother of George*, *The Sleepwalker*, *Southside With You*, *Where is Kira?*, *The Day Should Come*, and Donald Glover Project *Guava Island*. Upcoming projects include, *Minyan* by Eric Steel at Berlin Film festival 2020, *Beauty* by Andrew Dosunmu, *Chemical Heart* by Richard Tanne.

ANNIE SIMON | *Costume Designer*

Annie Simon (Costume Designer) is a Brooklyn based costume designer. She has been designing costumes for over 20 years. Annie started designing in theater and dance. Then moved more into Film with a deep love for all. Some films Simon's designed are *Can You Keep A Secret* starring: Alexandra Daddario and Laverne Cox, dir: Elise Duran; *Anesthesia* Starring: Kristen Stewart, Glenn Close and Sam Waterson, dir: Tim Blake Nelson, *Crypto* Starring: Alexis Bledel and Kurt Russell. *Front Cover* Starring: Jake Choi, dir: Ray Yeung, and *Wildlike* Starring: Ella Purcell and Bruce Greenwood, dir: Frank Hall Green, to name a few. The film *Can You Keep A Secret* dir: Elise Duran was the number one movie on iTunes in 2019. Annie has won the Kennedy Center Certificate of Merit for Outstanding costume for her work on *Bartholomew Fair* in 2013. Her costume designs with Target Margin Theater Company have been mentioned in the *New York Times* and *The New Yorker*. In 2016 she designed Spoleto Festivals Opera *Porgy and Bess* for their opening new building. This past year Annie designed costumes for a new TV series that will be released in August 2020. Annie received her MFA from NYU. Represented by WPA, more work can be found at www.asimondesign.com.

RAY HUBLEY | *Editor*

Ray Hubley (Editor) is a lifelong New Yorker with more than three decades of credits in narrative features and award-winning documentary films. Over the years he has worked with such eminent directors as Sidney Lumet, Brian De Palma, Tim Robbins, John Turturro and Musa Syeed.

In addition to prize-winning indie features like Sam Levinson's *Another Happy Day* (Sundance 2012) and Turturro's critically acclaimed *Romance & Cigarettes* (2005), Hubley has also worked

in non-fiction film, cutting *Billy Strayhorn: Lush Life* (2008) — an Emmy & Peabody Award winner — as well as the theatrically released sleeper *Who is Norman Lloyd?* (2007).

More recently, he edited Ari Issler & Ben Snyder's debut feature *11:55* (2016) and consulted on Josh Weinstein's indie breakout *Menashe* (2017), an A24 release.

Minyan is Hubley's first collaboration with director Eric Steele.

The son of distinguished animators John and Faith Hubley, Ray teaches at NYU-Tisch and lives with his wife, Deborah Peretz, also an editor, in Morningside Heights.

CAST

David	Samuel H. Levine
Josef	Ron Rifkin
Herschel	Christopher McCann
Zalman	Richard Topol
Itzik	Mark Mogolis

CREW

Directed by	Eric Steel
Written by	Eric Steel
	Daniel Pearle
Based on the short story by	David Bezmogis
Casting by	Susan Shopmaker
CSA Music by	David Krakauer
	Kathleen Tagg
Costume Designer	Annie Simon
Editor	Ray Hubley
Production Designer	Lucio Seixas
Director of Photography	Ole Bratt Birkeland, BSC
Executive Producers	Anne Carey
	Johnny Belkin-Holland
Produced by	Luca Borghese
	Ben Howe
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An **EASY THERE TIGER** and **AgX** Production
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