



elle

AFI CONSERVATORY PRESENTS "ELLE" STARRING SARAH SAWYER RON DADON
WRITTEN BY JOSEFA DE VELASCO DIRECTED BY CHRIS TENZIS PRODUCED BY EVAN WELCH EDITED BY GUIDO RAIMONDO
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS GABRIELLE CORDERO PRODUCED BY ASHER JELINSKY NICOLE VANDEN BROECK CAST BY NICOLE VANDEN BROECK

The story

logline

In the midst of her sexual awakening, 16-year-old Elle finds herself in love with her best friend who is about to move away.

synopsis (short)

Set during the 90s in Southern California, 16-year-old introverted Elle is in love with her best friend who is about to move out of town. On their last day together, she must find a way to express her feelings.

synopsis (long)

Set during the late 90s in Southern California, 16-year-old introverted Elle discovers herself in love with her best friend Sam, who is moving away the next day. As Sam tries to figure out if she should break up with her boyfriend, Elle is conflicted between expressing or suppressing her feelings and jeopardizing their friendship.

about

elle is a thesis film created by a group of filmmakers as part of their Master of Fine Arts degree from the American Film Institute Conservatory. The piece is a coming-of-age story and character-driven drama that explores themes such as self-discovery, unrequited love and the ambivalence and intimacy that exists within female friendships.

director's statement

I have always believed in the power of cinema to comfort us, to tell us that we are not alone, that others have felt what we've felt, that we share our struggles and our heartbreaks, that there is someone out there that understands. I am interested in stories that exist along boundary lines, challenging us to find the humanity in them. Small but sincere truths that involve characters dealing with misunderstandings, loss of innocence, the burgeoning adulthood and in this case, the joys and risks of the first love and the journey of awareness and self-discovery.

Longing for someone is an experience we all share as humans. Our own individual way to act on our emotions is what makes it unique, but yet the feeling still remains universal. There are so many ways to express love, but the single action of opening up and allowing ourselves to be vulnerable in front of the other is always a courageous act itself. To dare to reach out, to strip down emotionally despite uncertainty, to risk being rejected and being hurt to offer an honest feeling. I think this just makes love more meaningful, more real.

Looking back on my teenage years I realize how even though life was supposed to be simpler, it was actually full of extreme contrasts and deep emotions. It's a period of time where we become aware that sometimes what gives us joy can also be painful. That the process of growing up is both, beautiful and harsh at the same time.

Loving someone entails giving away part of yourself you lock up from the rest of the world and when this happens in a close friendship it takes the relationship to a whole new level of intimacy and complexity. I believe there is certain beauty in realizing how deeply we can feel for someone, how far are we willing to be to unfold these feelings and how, despite the pain that sometimes comes within, opening our hearts just brings us closer to ourselves and eventually, to others.

The filmmakers

NICOLE VANDEN BROECK

director

Originally from Mexico, Nicole graduated from the Universidad Iberoamericana with a BA in Communications and a Minor in Film. She also attended the Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona for the Audiovisual Communications program. Nicole is one of the co-founders of the independent production company 6pm Films based in Mexico City. She recently completed her MFA in Directing at the AFI Conservatory.



GABRIELLE CORDERO

producer

Earned her BAs from Sonoma State University with a double Major in Communications and Spanish. She studied Film Analysis while studying abroad at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid in Spain. Gabrielle worked in Silicon Valley as a Communications Analyst producing film and media-related content covering six cities within the Bay Area. She is a graduate of the AFI Conservatory's Masters Producing program.



GUIDO RAIMONDO

cinematographer

Born in Italy and worked most of his career in Paris where he completed his BFA at the International Film School of Paris EICAR. He won the Best Cinematography Award at the Cinematheque Française for the short film MAD LOVE and the European Cinematography Award for the short film LIKE WOLVES AND LAMBS. He received his Masters degree in Cinematography from the AFI Conservatory.



EVAN WELCH

production designer

Graduate from Emory University with a BA in Film Studies. He has recently worked in scenic element production for independent modern dance productions. This all follows out of a rich background in historical site preservation and study in Massachusetts. Evan is a recent graduate of the MFA Production Design program at the American Film Institute Conservatory.



CHRIS TENZIS

editor

Earned a BA in Theatre Arts and studied Film at The British Film Institute and The London International Film School. His short film A MAN AND HIS PANTS won the Audience Award at the Northwest Film & Video Festival and played at SXSW and Sundance. Tenzis worked in post-production at Will Vinton Studios as an editor for the animated series THE PJs and GARY & MIKE. He is a graduate of the MFA Editing program at the AFI Conservatory.



The Talent

SARAH SAWYER

elle

Sarah Sawyer is an actress, writer and producer originally from Connecticut. She is a recent graduate of Loyola Marymount University's Theatre program. Her training includes the Stella Adler Studio, The London Dramatic Academy, as well as The BGB Studio. She has starred in over twenty short films and was nominated as Best Young Actress for THE BROKEN SOUL by the Top Shorts Film Festival. She is represented theatrically by Mavrick Artists Agency and managed by Framework Entertainment.



RON DADON

sam

Ron Dadon is a Los Angeles based musician, photographer, and now actress making her film debut in ELLE. Ron, initially unsure of what the experience might bring, found that she greatly enjoyed working as an actress and is now pursuing it professionally. Recently signed commercially with the Lemon Lime agency, Ron is seeking out theatrical representation.

TUCKER GENAL

tyler

Tucker David Genal is an American actor located in Los Angeles with a background in sports, making the crossover to acting from American football. He is best known for his role as Brandon in FLOAT and appearance in nation wide commercials. His Co-star credits include ATYPICAL on Netflix.



ETHAN SMART

mason

Ethan Smart is a young actor based out of Los Angeles, CA. This summer, Ethan wrapped production on his first lead role in a feature film, due for release in early 2020. In LA, he has trained with The Pack Theater, Andrew Wood and the Kimberly Jentzen acting studio. Ethan is currently seeking theatrical representation.

behind the scenes



cinematographer
Guido Raimondo

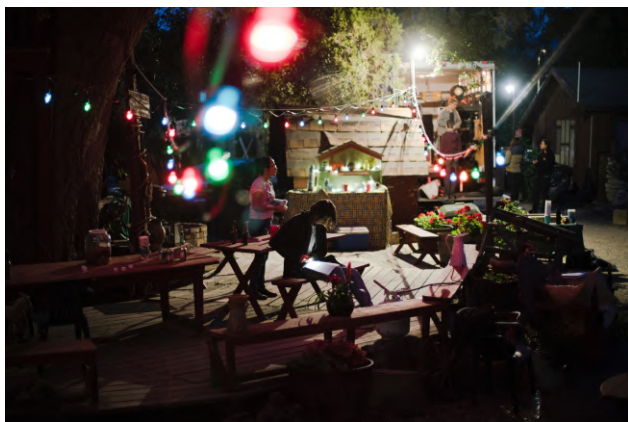


director
Nicole Vanden Broeck



prop master
Johnlyn Colcol

actor
Ethan Smart



actors
Sarah Sawyer,
Ron Dadon,
Tucker Genal



actors
Noah Arrue,
Bon Bon Centeno,
Anna Rose





actors

Ron Dadon

Eric Larson



actors

Sarah Sawyer

Ron Dadon



production designer

Evan Welch

steadicam operator

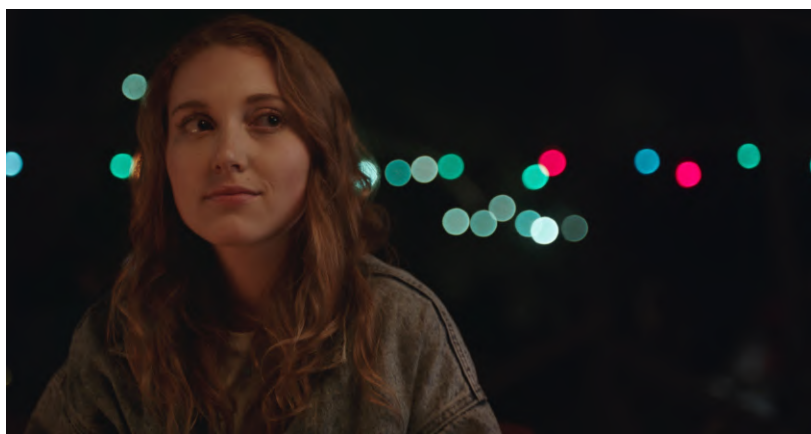
Nich Musco

cinematographer

Guido Raimondo

stills







credits

american film institute *presents*

elle

directed by

Nicole Vanden Broeck

written by

Asher Jelinsky

Nicole Vanden Broeck

produced by

Gabrielle Cordero

cinematography by

Guido Raimondo

production design by

Evan Welch

edited by

Chris Tenzis

cast

<i>elle</i>	Sarah Sawyer
<i>sam</i>	Ron Dadon
<i>paul</i>	Eric Larson
<i>tyler</i>	Tucker Genal
<i>mason</i>	Ethan Smart
<i>jared</i>	Noah Arrue
<i>zach</i>	Bon Bon Centeno
<i>becca</i>	Laurel Toupal
<i>julie</i>	Anna Rose

<i>friends</i>	Johnlyn Colcol
	Evan Miller
	Coco-Margaux Rodale

<i>stunt coordinators</i>	Phil Tyler
	Tyler Albrecht

<i>partygoers</i>	Elizabeth Ashley
	Jamie Connors
	Jesse Contente
	Jordan Marie DeArmond
	Jabrien Erby
	Alexander Frias
	Alejandra Gonzales
	Katy Key
	Arial Messerli
	Peier “Tracy” Shen
	Rhiannon Tircuit

crew

unit production manager
first assistant directors

Elizabeth Glass
Cara Lawson
Drew Boylan

second assistant directors

Natalie Camou

casting

Erika Sabel Flores

camera operator
first assistant camera
second assistant camera
DITs

Guido Raimondo
Joel E. Schaeffer
Christo Mercado
Sander Lebau
Emma Juncosa

steadicam operators

Greg Arch
Nich Musco

b camera operators

Leo Purman
Andrea Gonzáles

b camera assistant camera

Sander Lebau

still photographer

Mathieu Seguin

script supervisor
production coordinators

Zack Larez
Alexander Frias
Fernando Barajas

accountant

Elizabeth Glass

gaffer
best boy
electricians

Melisse Riahi
Sam Pemberton
TJ Signaigo
Tim Watson
Kishan Patel

key grip
best boy grip
grips

Antoine Combelles
Erique Duboise
Egor Zdoroviyak
Evan Parquette
Leo Escobar

second assistant director
assistant director

Peier “Tracy” Shen
Farzhad Kiyafar

production sound mixer
boom operator

Trey Lacroix
Keith Morrow

<i>art director</i>	Leanda Harley
<i>set decorator</i>	Wynne Reneu
<i>property master</i>	Johnlyn Colcol
<i>set dressers</i>	Claire Dechatech Perry Fallahi Anna Calubayan Joseph Villcob Amelia Nguyen
<i>costume designers</i>	Coco-Margaux Rodale Alejandra Madrigal-Aviña
<i>costumer</i>	Janise Garcia
<i>hair & make-up stylist</i>	Christina Yu
<i>post sound services</i>	Melody Gun Group
<i>sound supervisor & studio manager</i>	Hamed Hokamzadeh
<i>supervising sound editor & sound designer</i>	Thomas Ouziel
<i>sound editors</i>	Sean Oakley Sean Evans
<i>mixed at</i>	Anarchy Post
<i>colorist</i>	Andrea Chlebak
<i>special effects coordinator</i>	Simon White
<i>VFX artists</i>	James Betteridge Andrew Lupan Rick Steele
<i>drivers</i>	Marc Tarczali Guillermo Vidales
<i>extras casting</i>	Alexander Frias
<i>key set PA</i>	Evan Miller
<i>production assistants</i>	Jamie Connors Michael Kings Sarah Kennedy
<i>catering</i>	B&G Catering Aribella's Catering
<i>craft service</i>	Elizabeth Glass
<i>first aid / set medic</i>	Grady Hallain

additional photography

unit production managers

Jervis Li
Fernando Barajas
Justin Daering
Peier “Tracy” Shen

first assistant director
second assistant director

camera operator
first assistants camera

Leo Purman
Beth Michalski
András Roder
Laura Caruso
Anuar Aly

second assistant camera
electrician

sound operator & mixer

Michael Crumley

set dresser
makeup & hair stylist

Anthony Ojeda
Alex Pahl Skinner

catering

IT Catering

original score by Josefa de Velasco

“Fake Deep”
written by Ron Dadon
performed by Ron Dadon
courtesy of Ron Dadon

“Show Me”
written by I.M. Yoni
performed by I.M. Yoni
courtesy of I.M. Yoni

“Through the Night”
written by Brenden Eder
performed by Bridgette Moody, Oddnesse and Brenden Eder
courtesy of Brenden Eder

The filmmakers wish to thank

executive producer

Dominique Vanden Broeck

associate producers

Donata Cinzia Bellani

Alexandra Cordero

Wendy Gudalewicz

Maria Rabago

Carlo Raimondo

Arlando Smith

sponsors

Anabel Arreola-Trigonis

Angela Fregoso

Claudia Moreno

Bárbara Rodríguez

Natalie Camou

Betty Frias

Huong Nguyen

Dorothy Schreiber

Alberto Gallegos-Cordero

Leonardo Guinea

Rosa Nieto

Lalie and Manoel Sequeira

James Cordero

Roberto Kameta

Jeremy Nishihara

In Shim

Lorena Czech

Teck Siang Lim

Mario Quezada

Renee Smith

Alejandra D'Hyver

Santiago Limón

Martha Rabago

Hui Stevens

Miri del Real

Sylvia Mazon

Monica Rabago

Elvie Teodoro

Pablo Escalante

Carina Irene Mazon

Veronica Rabago

Teri Uyeda

Jerónimo Fernández

Susana Mendoza

Pedro Rangel

donors

Irene Arredondo

Erin Gemar

Michel Martinez

Alejandra Rosas

Aníbal Barco

Carlos Isaac González

Rocio Morin

Paola Saad

Brianna Carrerira

Andrea Gonzáles Mereles

Jessica Muñoz

Diana Salazar

Elsa Cervera

Deborah Iturralde

Luisa Novo

Marijose Sapina

Ilana Coleman

Maureen Karpan

Alex Oka

Mariana Saucedo

Alejandra Cusi

Rhea Kwan

Dani Rabago

Peier "Tracy" Shen

Aaron De La Cruz

Maria Fernanda Llanes

Sylvia Ray

Kyung Sok Kim

Anna Donahue

Rudy López

Carlos Rebollo

Fernanda Toron

Roberto Escamilla

Rebecca Lucas

Rex Reyes II

Frederico Troisi

Leonel Escobar

David Márquez

Miranda Ridler

Anat Yoder

special thanks

Rene and Sylvia Cordero

Patrick and Bonnie Hart

Dominique and Rosie Vanden Broeck

Paulina Lanz

Israel León

Roberto Hernández

HouseSpecial

Amanda Mijangos

Marwan Mokbel

Paloma Monsiváis

edited on Avid Media Composer.
camera accessories courtesy of Keslow Camera.

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CULTURA  **FONCA**
SECRETARÍA DE CULTURA

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the requirements for the Master of Fine Arts degree or certificate of completion.

Gabrielle Rabago Cordero, *afi producing fellow*
Guido Raimondo, *afi cinematography fellow*
Chris Tenzis, *afi editing fellow*
Nicole Vanden Broeck Macias, *afi directing fellow*
Evan Welch, *afi production design fellow*

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american film institute



Festivals and awards



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