



# **GRAMMABLE**

GIVE THEM WHAT THEY WANT

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY  
NAIYAH AMBROS





# Logline

**Grammable** is a dark comedy about Faye, a self-obsessed, struggling Instagram influencer whose posts are losing traction. Faye must come up with a post to save her career but first she has to get her roommate, a Black woman who keeps badgering her to share an article, to shut the hell up.

Grammable uses satirical humor and elements of thriller to tell a story about authenticity, cooptation, and the dark side of social media. This film was shot via virtual production during the pandemic.

**Written + Directed**

Naiyah Ambros

**Director of Photography**

David Willner

**Music Composed**

Monika Mia

**Produced + Edited**

Stephanie Jones

**Sound Design + Sound Recording**

Naiyah Ambros

**Graphic Design + Projections**

John Filmanowicz

**Cast**

**Haley Schwartz** as Faye

**Naiyah Ambros** as Jaelynn

**and Callie Jean-Lewis** as Margaret

**Student Produced at the  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**



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## CREATIVE TEAM

### **Naiyah Ambros**, Writer + Director

Naiyah Ambros is a Los Angeles-based filmmaker, writer, and producer from Ewing, New Jersey. She currently attends the MFA Film Production program at USC's School of Cinematic Arts where she is a recipient of the prestigious George Lucas Family Foundation Scholarship. She has directed short films which have screened across the country, and her project **Agua de tu Mamá** [formerly **La Receta**] was a second round finalist in the first ever Netflix sponsored LALIFF Inclusion Fellowship and is currently a semi-finalist for ScreenCraft's 2022 Film Fund. Most recently, she directed the short film The Question which raised \$10K through Seed&Spark and was completed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Naiyah received degrees in Modern Culture & Media and Political Science from Brown University in 2017. Before enrolling at USC, Naiyah was a Scripted Development Coordinator for Vice Studios where she helped develop projects for Hulu, Showtime, and Amazon.

### **David Willner**, Director of Photography

David earned his undergraduate in Psychology at CSUN while making short videos with his brother and friends. He is currently working towards his MFA in Film Production at USC. Outside the world of film, he enjoys traveling, food, cooking, languages, reading, writing and being around good company.

### **Stephanie Jones**, Producer + Editor

Stephanie Jones is a passionate storyteller hailing from Tulsa, OK. She is drawn to comedic stories and truly loves telling stories that are often overlooked. She started her career in marketing and is now transitioning to filmmaking, to create content about subjects that are dear to her heart. She continues to develop her knowledge and skills through reading, higher education, workshops, and YouTube tutorials. She is currently attaining a Master of Fine Arts in Film and TV Production at the University of Southern California.

### **John Filmanowicz**, Graphic Design

John is a Videographer, Designer, and Multimedia Artist. John produces on-air and social media for Nickelodeon On-Air-Promos and is the in-house Art Director/Visual Media Producer at Short Stack, a collaborative music space in Brooklyn. He is also the founder & creative director of Absolutely Unreal Productions.

### **Monika Mia**, Composer

Monika is a composer specializing in writing for media - film, videogames, commercials and more. In 2016, Monika won the Grand Prix of Moscow Composer House in Composition and Arrangement. That year she went to study composition in Trinity Laban Conservatoire (London). During her time in London, she also developed a keen interest in experimental electronic and dance music, studying Advanced Sound Design and Music Production with Point Blank Music School. One of the last short films I worked on, RIO, screened at the Oscar-qualifying Palm Springs International Shortfest and Nashville Film Festival and winning Best International Film in Sechsuechte, Tel Aviv and Orvieto Film Festivals.

## GRAMMABLE - DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

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**Grammable** was inspired by the events of 2020 which saw a grassroots uprising arise in response to the continued systematic brutality and violence doled out by the police forces across the nation along with the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor. What transpired that summer demonstrated the power of people-led organizing and protest.

Much of the uprising's power was derived from social media: all across the internet, protests were shared and publicized, information on how to safely participate was made widely available, and suddenly everyone — even those who have never participated in direct action before — found that they were capable of disseminating ideas, facts, and beliefs to large audiences. However, not all of what we saw on social media was good; early on in the protests, a now infamous trend was ignited which saw people posting black squares to their Instagrams in order to stand with Black Lives Matter. While the majority of those who posted may have been well intentioned, the trend was quickly called out for corrupting the original intent of a Blackout day (which had less to do with posting than stopping work specifically in the music industry) and for clogging hashtags and pages with black squares, which did not contribute meaningfully to discussions, rather than posts which did. That day saw nearly everyone posting the squares — from your old White friend from high-school friend to corporate entities like Goldman Sachs — and it became quickly clear that posting the square was really just the bare minimum anyone could do to prove that they 'of course' supported Black Lives. Yet, so many of those who posted never attended the protests or let their attention fade after a few days.

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**A post does not make one an activist.** Still, the relatively easy and fast means of hopping onto a movement's bandwagon attracted persons of all beliefs and levels of commitment. To put it simply: the uprisings were co-opted, which brings us back to **Grammable**.

Faye is the byproduct of our phone- and social-media obsessed culture, an influencer whose very well-being is staked on how beautiful, cool, and interesting she can seem to thousands of faceless accounts. Throughout Grammable, Faye is pushed to be "authentic" but what can authenticity mean to someone who performs her own life on a daily basis? How can Faye risk vulnerability when her very role is to reliably offer up a version of herself that others want her to be — a Faye that is perfect, stylish, trendy, and White. Yet Faye also stands at a precarious moment in history; for the first time, she finds herself behind the trends and **the trend is social justice**. Though it takes her a while to reach this conclusion, Faye's decision to co-opt Black Liberation language and posturing is inevitable. It is the same conclusion that Pepsi came to when they directed Kendall Jenner to hand their soda to a riot cop, or that the Senate and House Democrats came to when they took a knee in kente cloth. What these moments fail to address, and what Grammable hopes to ask is what happens to those who do care about Black Lives when their ideals are stolen for corporate, personal, and political benefit? Does anyone still hear or care about the real message of these movements? Is there any room left for Black voices when their words are stolen so carelessly, or are they simply erased?





# Technical Specs

USA | English

**Running time**.....6 min  
**Genre**.....Thriller/Dark Comedy  
**Year**.....2021  
**Aspect Ratio**.....16:9  
**Screening Format**.....DCP / ProRes / H.264

## Contact

**Director + Writer**

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