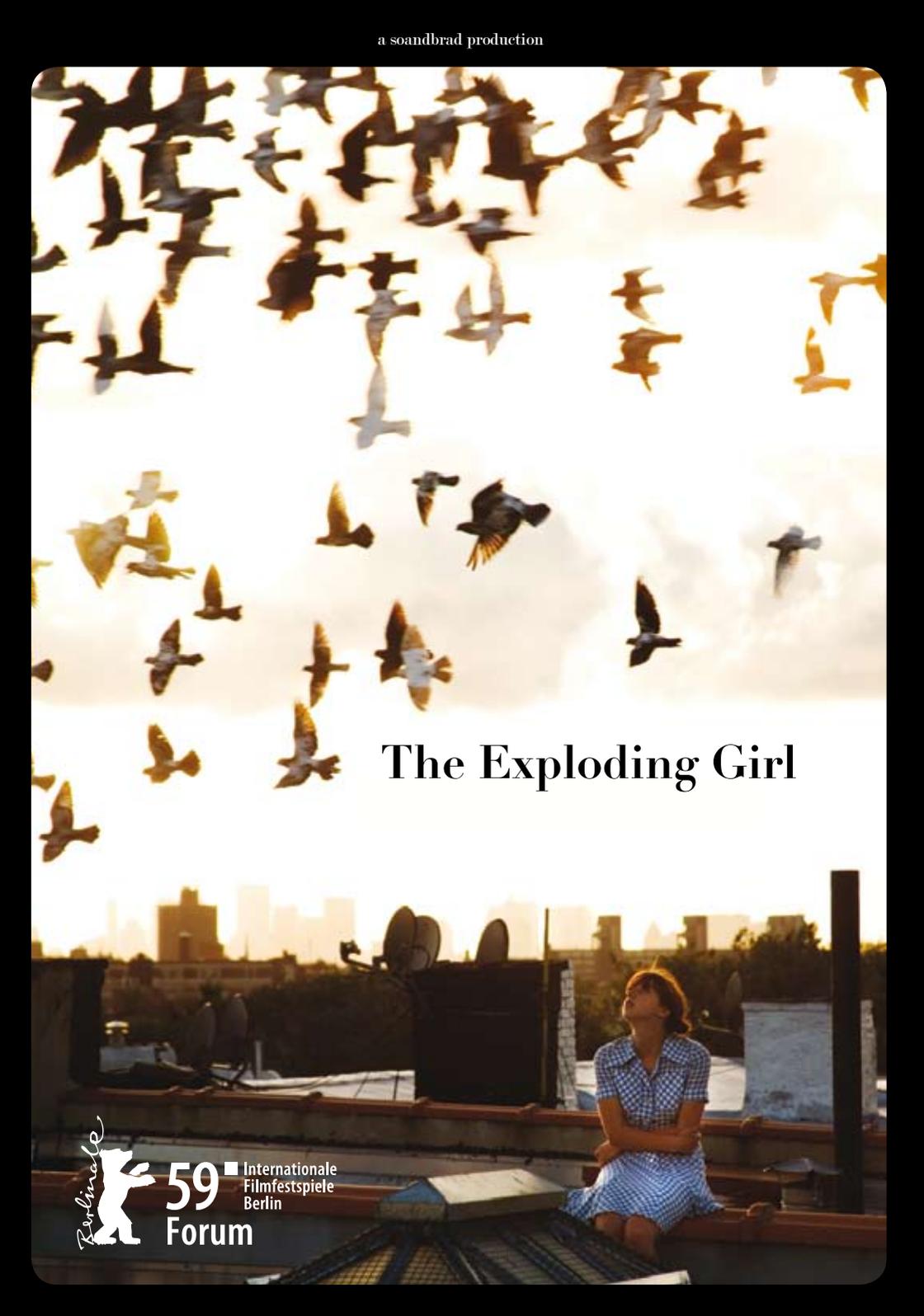


a soandbrad production



The Exploding Girl



59th
Forum

Internationale
Filmfestspiele
Berlin

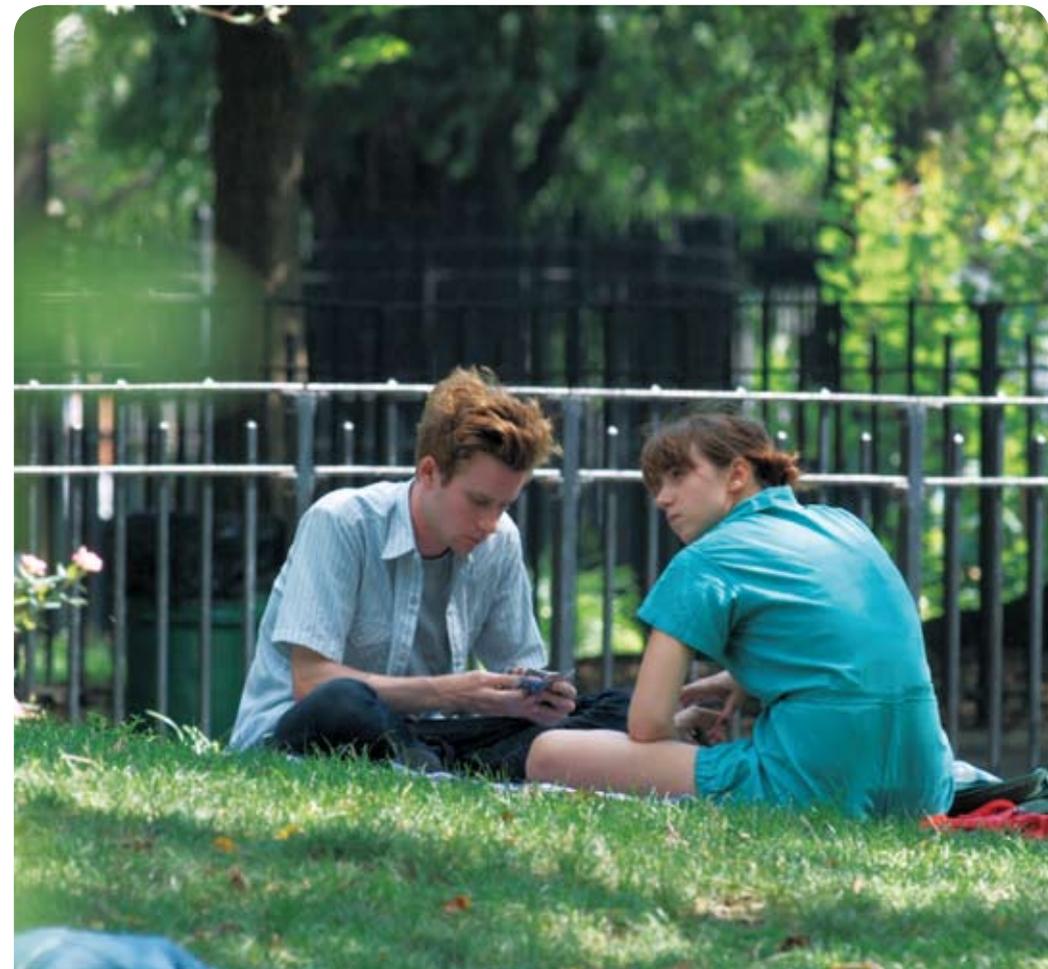
Crew _____ A soandbrad production
WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY _____ Bradley Rust Gray
PRODUCED BY _____ So Yong Kim,
_____ Karin Chien,
_____ Ben Howe,
_____ Bradley Rust Gray
EXECUTIVE PRODUCED BY _____ Jason Diamond & Josh Diamond,
_____ Billfield Cheng, Jay Van Hoy & Lars Knudsen
CINEMATOGRAPHY BY _____ Eric Lin
EDITING BY _____ So Yong Kim & Bradley Rust Gray
PRODUCTION SOUND BY _____ Michael Sterkin

Cast _____ **IVY** _____ Zoe Kazan
_____ **AL** _____ Mark Rendall
_____ **GREG** _____ Franklin Pipp
_____ **MOM** _____ Maryann Urbano

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79 minutes | Color | USA | Red 4K digital | 5.1 surround

www.soandbrad.com



Synopsis Twenty-year old Ivy heads home for college spring-break to New York with a fresh romance in her heart. When her best friend Al can't find a place to stay, she asks her mother to take him in. Spending time in the city together strengthens their friendship, while Ivy's boyfriend grows more distant. Although troubled, Ivy keeps her emotions in check, until her feelings become something she can't control.





Interview with the director

The film centers on the character of Ivy, a girl in her teens. Why did you want to tell her particular story and how do you relate to her?

I was inspired to tell Ivy's story because of her calm and selfless nature. Her character originated on a down day. As a way of protecting myself from looking at things negatively, I started to imagine someone who would motivate me to become a better person. Ivy

can't do everything she wants because of a medical condition, but she never complains. When Ivy's character finally emerged, I was humbled by her resilience and I was eager to share her story.

Zoe Kazan (Ivy) and Mark Rendall (Al) have remarkable chemistry in the film: how did you cast them?

I met Zoe when she auditioned for another film I was working on. She brought in a hand-made sketchbook created by the character and this left a lasting impression on me. The day I first imagined Ivy's character, I thought of Zoe. We met again and agreed to work together, even though there was no story or script. For the next couple of months we went on several walks. Zoe told me stories from her life and came up with Ivy's name and I compiled a couple hundred pages of notes and research.

I was 60-pages into the original script when I felt something was wrong. I then remembered a guy I had met through another actress. I had only met Mark once, but I had heard many fond stories of him. I based Al on my

impressions of Mark and imagined the film should be about their friendship. This new draft only took four days to write, because it was so easy to imagine Zoe and Mark together.

Mark brought a lot of his own personal character to the story. He built a robot for fun which we incorporated into the story. He also left the recording of a song he wrote on a mini-tape recorder which Zoe found in his suitcase while we were filming a scene.

I knew the two of them would be very special together, but they hadn't met. We had Mark come down for an audition, but we mainly just played cards for the weekend.

The streets (and rooftops) of New York play an important role: what was the shooting like? How did you capture the light and atmosphere of the city in the summer?

While writing the film I wanted it to feel like we would be watching the characters from very far away. Most of the exteriors were filmed with a 300mm lens which meant the camera was set up about half-a-city-block away from action. In this way, the actors could walk down the street without having other pedestrians realize they were in the film. Using a small crew and a new digital 4k camera (RED) we were able to capture moments in real locations with

a documentary approach. We filmed subway shots by hiding the camera in a bag which Eric Lin, the DP, held on his lap.

Eric and I had scouted and photographed every location at approximately the time of day we wanted to shoot. We tried to match the moods of the film accordingly with locations which were either very crowded or sparse.

You have been working a lot with the same crew – you've produced your wife's films for instance: is there something in common in the themes and way of working between all these films?

Thus far, so and I have made four films in four different countries: Iceland, Canada, Korea, and the USA. We've worked with crew sizes ranging from three people to fourteen. I think the approach we take to all of our films is very similar. We focus on moments of the everyday lives of each of our characters. This means we try to shoot on location and we hope for surprises and accidents. We also structure our films so that the order of events and the way the story is told is how we imagine the main character might remember these moments in their life.

The title for "The Exploding Girl" actually comes from the B-side to the 12-inch single for The Cure's "In Between Days". So, my intention from the beginning of the project - even before the script - was to think of this film as a B-side to So's first film. The character's emotions reversed, but the feelings are similar.

Loneliness healed by love is the common theme for all of our films. Our characters have a fragility which becomes mended through a relationship with someone who's always been close at hand, but never seen in the right way.



Bios



Zoe Kazan (*Ivy*)

Zoe is the granddaughter of director Elia Kazan, (**ON THE WATERFRONT**) and daughter of screenwriters Nicholas Kazan and Robin Swicord. She graduated from Yale and has become a successful stage actress in NYC. She is starring in several upcoming films including Sam Mendes' **REVOLUTIONARY ROAD** with Leonardo Di Caprio and Kate Winslet, Rebecca Miller's **THE PRIVATE LIVES OF PIPPA LEE** starring Keanu Reeves and Winona Ryder, and Richard Linklater's **ME AND ORSON WELLES** with Ben Chaplin and Claire Danes. She is also performed on Broadway in Chekhov's *The Seagull*.

Mark Rendall (*Al*)

Rendall is an award winning young actor who has been on stage and screen since the age of ten. He has appeared in Don McKellar's **CHILDSTAR**, opposite Jennifer Jason Leigh and Eric Stoltz, **SPIRIT BEAR** with Ed Begley Jr. and Graham Greene, NBC's mini-series **REVELATIONS** opposite Bill Pullman and Natascha MacElhone, as well as François Girard's **SILK**. Rendall recently appeared in **MY ONE AND ONLY** with Renée Zellweger and Kevin Bacon and is starring in David Bezmozgis's **VICTORIA DAY**.



Bradley Rust Gray (*Director*)

Bradley Rust Gray also produced So Yong Kim's **IN BETWEEN DAYS**.

Gray's first narrative feature, **SALT**, was filmed in Iceland and won the Caligari Film Prize for Innovative Filmmaking in Berlin in 2003. It was selected for over 20 international film festivals and won three more international awards. The film was released on Sundance Channel in the US. Gray's short film **HITCH** won an award at Sundance in 2000 and was selected as one of the "Best Films of the Year" in Film Comment

Magazine. He recently completed production on his second feature, **THE EXPLODING GIRL**, starring Zoe Kazan and Mark Rendall.

Gray is a Fulbright scholar who has received graduate degrees from both USC and the British Film Institute in London. His undergraduate work focused on architecture, sculpture, and experimental filmmaking, with a degree from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

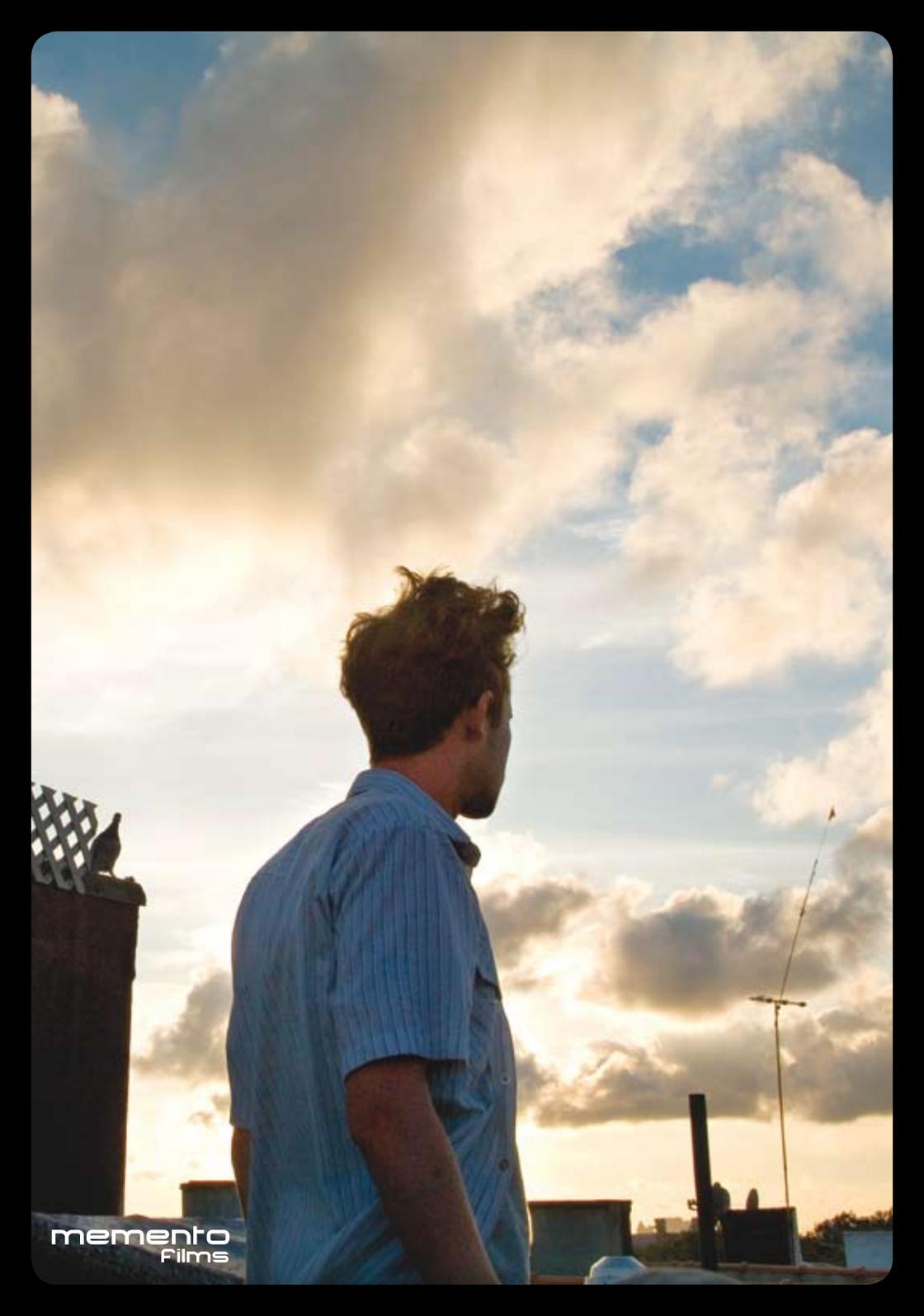


Karin Chien (*Producer*)

Karin Chien is an independent film producer based in New York City. Her films have won over 50 film festival awards, premiered at Sundance, been nominated for an Independent Spirit Award, and secured international distribution. Ms. Chien recently launched Generate Films, a new initiative to distribute independent Chinese films to the U.S. Ms. Chien is also curating the Chinatown Film Project, an inaugural exhibition for the Museum of Chinese in America (MOCA), featuring New York City's top filmmakers.

Ben Howe (*Producer*)

Ben Howe is an independent producer based in New York City. In addition to Bradley Rust Gray's **THE EXPLODING GIRL**, previous production credits include So Yong Kim's **TREELESS MOUNTAIN** (Toronto IFF 2008, Pusan IFF 2008, Berlin 2009) and Matt Wolf's **WILD COMBINATION: A PORTRAIT OF ARTHUR RUSSELL** (Berlin 2008). Ben also recently co-produced Cruz Angeles' **DON'T LET ME DROWN** (Sundance 2009), and produced David Barker's **DAYLIGHT**, currently in post-production.



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