

GREENWICH

ENTERTAINMENT

PRESENTS



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THE FILM

In the 1980s, Corey Pegues was embroiled in a life of crime as a member of New York City's infamous Supreme Team gang. After a near-death gang confrontation, Pegues flees the city, only to return years later as a rising star in the NYPD. When Pegues speaks publicly in support of police reform, he becomes a target within the department and details of his former life are thrust into the spotlight.

Synopsis

Beginning as a portrait of a young Black man trapped in a life of crime and mortal danger, *A Cops and Robbers Story* charts the unlikely journey of Corey Pegues (pronounced "Peg-geese") from drug-dealing gang member to celebrated police officer. Continuing her exploration of stranger-than-fiction stories, director Ilinca Calugareanu in her new film confronts the perennial question of who deserves — or, doesn't deserve — a second chance in life.

Corey's story begins in Jamaica, Queens, where he was born and raised. Like the other kids in the neighborhood, he played cops and robbers...but unlike them, he would grow up to become both. Part of a tight-knit group of friends known as "the five amigos," Corey was on the front lines of a booming drug trade that transformed the area in the 1980s. Becoming a successful drug dealer was one of the only money-



To Corey Pegues
With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "Barack Obama".

making opportunities available to him. At age 17, Corey finds himself embroiled in a turf war and in order to save face he stages a high-stakes retaliation that would surely land him in prison. Thankfully, fate intervenes and pre-empts Corey from making the biggest mistake of his young life.

A few years later, the bright, ambitious and charismatic Corey goes on to find a place for himself in the NYPD (New York City Police Department), where he would rise up through the ranks to become a decorated deputy inspector. Even though he managed to reinvent himself and thrive, Corey struggled with his dueling identities and what it meant transitioning from living on the wrong side of the law to becoming one of the highest-ranking African-Americans in the NYPD. As the first Black commander of one of the most violent precincts in New York City, Corey recognizes he is in a unique position to help effect change, build bridges within the community and fight police bias. During his illustrious 21-year career, he was never afraid to speak out and advocate for better police practices, even if it meant facing rebuke from his fellow officers. Fate would introduce still another dramatic twist when Corey's past affiliations are leaked to the press – revelations that would shock his city to its core.

Combining multiple elements of cinematic storytelling including home movies; archival photos; interviews with friends, family members, colleagues and members of the media; and dramatizations of Corey's teenage turning points, *A Cops and Robbers Story* is a layered examination of an indomitable man who, against all odds, became a living embodiment of the American dream.

RELEVANCE TODAY

A Cops and Robbers Story began as an unvarnished profile of Corey Pegues – an African-American man who understood better than most what it was like to live on both sides of the law. But one could say the film is also a timely and lucid reflection on a country that is the midst of a long-overdue reckoning on issues around racial and economic disparities, social justice and police reform.

Corey's lineage is that of generations of African-Americans who were born into a prejudicial system that would limit access to education and economic opportunity. For Corey's generation, this system rendered it six times more likely he would go to prison, and three times more likely he would be killed by the police. Can his story, his survival and thriving, be that rare and this prescient? It can and it is.

The history recalled here is one of damaging effects of the war on drugs — and of the drugs themselves, in that the rapid proliferation of crack in the 1980s turned Corey's

Queens, NY neighborhood from a middle- and working- class African-American haven into a ghost town. Exercising formidable intelligence and shouldering a lot of hard work, Corey beat the odds to not become another name on the agonizingly still-lengthening list of black human beings tortured and killed by the police. He then aimed higher by joining the NYPD and ascending through the ranks at a time when zero-tolerance policing was the decreed norm and an emphasis on “productivity” was transforming officers into hunters and citizens into prey. Corey’s experience in the streets and his direct knowledge of the communities he worked in added strength to his badge. As Corey assumed positions of power, his open-door policy and his efforts to build bridges with minority communities yielded positive results. Long before calls to defund the police hit the nightly news, Corey was never afraid to use his voice or position to push for change from within, even if it meant facing relentless recriminations from fellow police officers. He spoke out against everything from choke-holds to racism from within the NYPD.

Corey’s story, and his speaking his truth, goes to the core of our current moment. The questions raised are not new yet they couldn’t be more salient: How do we successfully implement meaningful police reform? How do we level the playing field to give disenfranchised communities of color access to education and long-term career opportunities? How do we build a fair and equitable justice system that protects all Americans? And, echoing Corey’s story, who should our police officers be?



Director Ilinca Calugareanu Q&A

Q: Where and how did you come across Corey's story and why did you decide to tell it?

It all began in 2016, my producer Mara Adina and I were doing research for another project and came across Corey's story in an article. I remember both of us reading it at the same time and we just stopped still. It was such a compelling story, we had to drop everything and pursue it immediately. I thought it was extraordinary how this person journeyed through things that we socially define as mutually exclusive but he proved that they're not. To me, Corey's life journey spoke about the fact that we are not just one thing. We are an ever changing tapestry of qualities, flaws and potential that are nourished or smothered by so many things that are external to us. Sometimes it's luck or fate, sometimes it's our context and background whether it's race, gender, class, economic background and there's always the systemic inequalities of our societies. Most of the time, like Corey's story illustrates, it's a very complicated dynamic of all these factors.

Q: What were your first discussions with Corey about the project and how did you establish trust?

I think my outsider status tipped the balance in Corey wanting to work with me because of the potential of a fresh pair of eyes that were looking at the controversies he had been involved in and at his story with a bit of distance. Not unbiased eyes, but differently biased so to speak.

On the other hand, my outsider status was on my mind from the very beginning. Beyond the passion, determination and curiosity that drive us as filmmakers as we embark on a project, I knew I had limitations that came from being an outsider. So I tried to work at understanding what my blind spots were and at finding ways to overcome my limitations so I can do justice to the story. That's why I worked with Corey so closely as well as with the other characters in the film.

Q: You made a short doc on Corey for the Guardian, why did you decide to expand on it?

From the very beginning I knew this was a feature because it's so complex and it cuts across so many issues but making a short is an important part of my process because it forces you to face the material. We can bite into the story and gather material and interviews, but it's great to have a moment where you start putting things together, you look at ways to compress the material and bring out the story's essential turning points and you start dealing with the material's limitations - that difference between the film in your head and the actual film hidden in your footage. It's also a way to see how people react. Is this a story people want to see and see more of?

Q: What was your thought process around using dramatization?

When I'm thinking about how I'm going to tell a story I try to think of all the tools we have available to us as storytellers. Some of the events in this film happened a long time ago but they were very important and had a big emotional charge so you want to find ways to immerse the audience in that time. Dramatization felt like a very good way to open up the story and immerse people in a time and place. We wanted people to think about Corey's youth on a deeper level and not reduce him to a young criminal. Dramatization felt like a way to speak about that part of his life and allow them to be there with him.

Q: How did Corey's son become involved and end up playing his father?

I wanted to talk to Corey Jr. because he was a big part of Corey's story. He was one of the reasons Corey started to think about getting out of drug dealing. We flew him to NY for an interview and when I met him I knew he had to play Corey. It wasn't just that he looks like his father but you just want to watch him, there's so much going on emotionally that he doesn't put into words. After only days of working together we all knew he was the perfect choice.

Q. How do you maintain objectivity when you are working so collaboratively with the subject?

I think objectivity doesn't exist in filmmaking. The best we can do is combine or triangulate subjectivities and hopefully reach something that is truthful and authentic. From the very beginning I tried to find ways to open up the filmmaking process - with the team that we put together but especially by collaborating with Corey and the other characters in the film. We developed the script for the dramatizations with Corey, Sean and his friends, we rehearsed together and created room for a lot of improvisation working with a lot of non-actors who shared elements of Corey's background. The whole purpose was to reach something truthful and authentic, that's the most important goal for me when telling a story.

Q: Do you think being a queer woman helped you tell this story?

You always see some element of yourself in a story you work on. I really resonated with Corey's struggle with duelling identities and his refusal to erase parts of himself that were important to him but controversial or even damning to other people, especially once he gets into the NYPD. Whether it was his style, the way he spoke or his friendships, things that weren't helpful in his career, he found a way to make them work with this new identity he was forging. In the filmmaking process, there are times where me looking clearly Gay is not helpful, so do you erase that and feel dishonest? That really resonated with me.

Q. Did this start as an issue-led project or a character-led story? Does Corey's story take on more relevance in light of BLM?

From the start, I was focused on Corey's story, that's what really hooked me in and my interest was always focused on his story and perspective, but you can't divorce Corey's story from the larger issues and context in which it exists. So, yes, we were hoping to release it this year because, even though it was incredibly relevant to what was going on before, it has become explicit and spoken about. His story shows that there are different ways to police that could potentially trigger better results.

Q: As a documentary filmmaker, do you think truth is sometimes stranger than fiction?

Definitely, that's why as a director I hardly ever want to do pure fiction. True stories have an extra emotional impact because you know they really happened, it's not just something we imagined. That's the power of documentary.

Corey Pegues Q&A

Q: Why did you choose Ilinca to tell your story? Did you have any concerns about a white woman who wasn't from the U.S. telling your story?

We Skyped and Ilinca knew my story cold. She's very personable, quiet and just believable. I'm a people person so she was really playing with the emotional strings of my heart by knowing my story cold. I had other offers at the same time but I was, "I like her, let's do it." Here's this woman coming from a whole different world, Romania, London and I don't even know what policing is over there. Well I'm sure it's quite different than what happens here in America so, she's actually coming with this whole fresh perspective, reading all of these things about me in the book and talking to me and her mind is turning. That's why I wanted her.

And the woman part? I definitely wasn't concerned with the woman part because... remember I'm a kid that was raised in a family of five sisters and a mother, so I already know what the capability of a woman is. I really believed in my heart, and I know now working with her all this time, that she was gonna try to get everything in, as much as possible, to give a complete view and picture of my story. That's why I chose her.

Q: A lot of cops see it as "us against them" with the community, how did you see it?

It's funny you say that, I'd loop it around and say it's never us against them. I would turn out my roll call and I would say to my cops "when you got out here make sure you respect my community." Cops would look at me as if I was freaking crazy, "you're out of your damn mind, you don't live here" and I would tell them that the police commissioner trusted me with these 250,000 residents so these are my residents and I gotta make sure that we protect, serve and preserve life, don't be disrespectful. But nobody else was doing that. *Nobody else*, so when you're the only person doing that you're the outsider, the crazy captain, but you know what?

My police community relationships were better than everybody else's and my crime was down every single year. Maybe nobody liked me but it wasn't about liking people, it was about bridging that gap, that's all it was about for me and they couldn't understand.

Q: Did you have to deal with personal and systemic racism as a police officer?

I definitely had to deal with racism as a police officer. You have to understand, policing is a White male dominated field. Only in the last three decades has it been more open to minorities. I came in under the first Black mayor in the city, Mayor David Dinkins, under "Safe Streets, Safe City". Rudy Giuliani gets the credit but Dinkins was the one who laid the foundations to bring in all of these minority cops. So, yeah, the people who didn't look like us were dominating the police force and they weren't really happy that we were coming in. But I always knew that I stood on the back of the 3 Ms, Malcom, Martin and Medgar, so if they didn't pave the way I wouldn't even be where I am today.

Systemic racism is what it is, policing started off with slave patrols so it has filtered down. I always tell the story of my partner, he had 40 years on the job, his father came in in the 50s and his grandfather in the 30s and he was getting stuff passed down, we're talking six or seven decades, and I would have to always remind him we were in the 90s now and we don't do shit like that no more. All this stuff getting passed down about how we treat perpetrators, it don't work like that, we don't do that no more, this is a new way and age of policing. I had to deal with that every day.

Q: Why do you care about policing despite your experiences of racism on the force?

I care about policing because I think it's a very honorable profession, it's the only job in America where citizens give you the right to take a life when deadly force is being used against you or someone else. People trust and believe in you. If it's done the right way with the right leadership, it can be a well-oiled machine where police and the community can work together to bring crime down and build relationships in that community. I have a daughter who's a cop, a nephew that's a detective and many friends who are still in policing all over the country. And I did 20 years, I have a wife, two cars and a picket fence, policing didn't do me too bad.

Q. Why was it important for you to speak up and did you think about the risk to your career?

Yeah, it crossed my mind when I was working because I was doing something very unusual, it's a culture, you can't speak out. I had a rocket ship on my back to go right to the top, they had me pegged to be a high-ranking chief. All of that's nice but if I can't look in the mirror this shit ain't no fun for me. I had to be me. When I saw something wrong I had to speak out on it. I grew up on welfare, my last salary was close to \$200,000, that's more than my mother and father ever made. How much money am I going to make before I give back? I did it my way, I was very successful and I never changed who I was. I used to have cornrows in my hair, I walk

with a diddy bop, I have tattoos and I love hip hop music. That's me. I'm not changing for nobody but I have a few degrees, I'm very smart in a suit and I knew that patrol guide and the law cold so they couldn't take that from me.

Q: Your friend killed a cop, did you feel conflicted about that?

Let's clear that up, we weren't good friends, we were more kids that played basketball together, but the other thing to it is that he's not even the only person that I grew up with that shot a cop. You don't pick and choose who your family is and where you live as a child, these people lived in the neighborhood. I'm not hiding the fact, yeah, I know someone who killed a cop, but I had absolutely nothing to do with it and I wasn't conflicted. Let me ask you a question, do you think there were no cops in the precinct that knew John Gotti? That grew up with Sammi the Bull? So don't give me the BS that Corey Pegues actually knew somebody who shot a cop, I'm not the first one, not the last one, I'm the only one who had the balls and bravery to tell his story. That's it in a nutshell.

Q: How did you get your friends to come along for the ride in filming the documentary?

We have always been a close-knit family, my friends have always been my friends, if you notice there weren't too many cop friends in the documentary. I was raised to be with the people who have your back at all times. These are the guys I have 40 years in with. We committed crimes together. I was there for them when a couple of them went to jail and got out, we got too much history. I met new people but they never became friends like my crew, those are my brothers. My story is their story. My story is every kid in America that's down on their luck, I just made it out and I'm here to let them know they can make it out too.

Q: How integral were your friends and family in helping you get off the street?

My friends and family were very integral to me getting off the streets but the most important aspect was when I had Corey Jr., who's starring as me in the film. Once I had him I wasn't even living for me anymore, I'm living for my baby. Remember, I went to church every week, I already had the moral compass to do right, but when you can't eat you're hungry like a lion in the jungle. If they're hungry they're going to hunt and my way of hunting was to either rob or sell drugs. I hung out with pimps and drug dealers, if I hung out with stock brokers I would've been on Wall Street.

Q: What are you most excited for audiences see?

I'm most excited for people to see that a misguided young kid did some things he's not proud of but those things shaped him into the man he is today. I pulled myself up from my bootstraps and made something out of myself, even with this crazy stuff around me. And never did I turn my back or turn a bad eye to the people who were still doing it. I still go to my same neighborhood, some people are in jail, some are home, some are strung out on drugs and I

still hug them, kiss them, say what's going on and they're proud of me. And I gave Ilinca so much footage, some of that stuff I haven't seen for years. It's going to be an eye opener for people. I'm very proud of the work.

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About Corey Pegues

A Queens New York native, COREY PEGUES is a retired NYPD executive as well as an author, motivational speaker, community leader, expert on police related topics and an expert witness testifying about the topics of drug possession, gangs and distribution. His career spans over two decades and speaks for itself.

Immediately after graduating high school in Queens, New York, he enlisted in the U.S. Army where he served almost four years as a Medical Specialist until the end of his enlistment in March 2001. After his honorable discharge from the Army, he enlisted in the New York State National Guard, where he spent the next 14 years of his military career.

Subsequent to his discharge from the Army, Corey entered the N.Y.C. Police Academy in January 1992. Upon graduation from the academy, he was assigned to the 114th Precinct, located in Astoria, Queens. After only five and a half years, Corey was promoted to the rank of Sergeant. Corey received several more promotions over the next few years, resulting in him being promoted to the executive rank of Captain in 2005. Eighteen months later, Corey received a discretionary promotion to the rank of Deputy Inspector from the Police Commissioner. During his career, Corey commanded some of the most violent precincts in the City of New York and was successful in reducing crime each year he was in command. After a stellar career, Corey retired in good standing in March 2013, completing 21 years of service.

After his retirement Corey decided to write a memoir of his life. In May 2016, his book, *Once A Cop – The Street, The Law, Two Worlds, One Man*, was published on Simon and Schuster imprint Atria Books. His book details his life growing up selling drugs as a teenager in Queens, NY to his meteoric rise in the NYPD. He also details his stint in the military and how a misguided young man picked himself up by his bootstraps and made the right choice to change his life.

Corey has made guest appearances on several television and syndicated radio talk shows to talk about his life story and to give his expert analysis and opinion in the field of law enforcement, including but not limited to The Oprah Winfrey Network Show, Fix My Life with Iyanla Vansant, The Daily Show with Trevor Noah, The Dr. Drew Show, The Reverend Al Sharpton Show, The Roland Martin Show, SWAY In The Morning, The Karen Hunter Show, MSNBC, CSPAN, CNN, Al Jazeera America, ARISE America, ARISE 360, RT Today, The Michael Baisden Show, WPIX Channel 11, NY 1, News 12 Long Island, NPR, The Combat Jack Show, 1010 Wins, Hot 97 Street Soldiers with Lisa Evers, Hot 97 Ebro In The Morning Show and BET.com.

He has also been featured as a guest on several high-profile cases that have transpired around the nation. In addition, Corey has been admitted in court as an expert witness in Montgomery County, MD.

Corey is a graduate of St. Josephs College with a B.S. in Organizational Management, and earned an M.P.S. in Criminal Justice Leadership from St. Johns University and a Post Graduate Certificate from the Police Management Institute at Columbia University, School of Business. He was also an adjunct professor for five years at Monroe Community College and, currently, the City University of New York, Medgar Evers College.

About the Filmmakers

ILINCA CALUGAREANU, Director/Editor, Vernon Films

has an instinct that guides her into discovering stranger than fiction stories and larger than life characters. Blending absurd and playful tones, her films are a breathtaking mix of fiction and documentary, that immerse audiences into worlds beyond imagination. Her debut documentary feature, "Chuck Norris vs Communism", premiered at Sundance 2015 and went on to play in cinemas and festivals around the world. Credits include VHS vs. Communism (2014, New York Times Op- Docs) and Erica: Man Made (2017, Guardian Documentaries). Currently in development with feature film "HEISENBUG" (supported by the SFFilms, CNC Romania & MEDIA) and in pre production with series "Celluloid Dreams". She is a Berlinale Talents Alumni (2017), 2018 Chicken&Egg Accelerator Lab Grantee, the 2018 Sundance Institute|National Geographic Fellow and 2019 Sundance Sound and Music Labs Directing Fellow.

MARAADINA, Producer, Vernon Films

Mara Adina is a creative producer and co-founder of Vernon Films where her primary focus is to push the boundaries of hybrid filmmaking and collaborate with creative voices that seek to devise new ways of arriving at story. She produced *Counterpart*, the first English-language film directed by two-time BAFTA winning Adrian Sitaru, which opened at Clermont Ferrand International Film Festival 2014. Mara produced Ilinca Calugareanu's debut feature film *Chuck Norris vs Communism*, which premiered in competition at Sundance 2015. She recently became a Sundance Creative Producing Fellow and recently produced Ilinca's second feature doc *A Cops and Robbers Story* (supported by the Sundance Institute, Chicken and Egg Pictures and WIFF), and is in development on *A Private Wild* (supported by Sundance Institute), *Heisenbug* (supported by SFFilms, CNC Romania, Media) and a slate of projects primarily helmed by female creatives.

JULIE PARKER BENELLO, Executive Producer, Secret Sauce Media

Julie is the Founder/Producer of Secret Sauce Media, her latest venture dedicated to producing, executive producing and investing in original and enduring film projects. Julie co-founded Chicken & Egg Pictures in 2005 with a shared belief that diverse women nonfiction storytellers have the power to catalyze change at home and around the globe. Julie is also a co-founder of Gamechanger Films, the first for-profit fund dedicated to financing narrative features by women directors. She produced Steven Bognar and Julia Reichert's Academy Award®, Emmy, Gotham and Independent Spirit winning feature documentary *American Factory*, streaming on Netflix in partnership with Higher Ground Productions and Participant Media. More recently Julie produced Bonni Cohen and Jon Shenk's Netflix Originals documentary – *Athlete A*, as well as long-time collaborator Judith Helfand's feature documentary, *Love & Stuff*, which premiered at the virtual cinema at Hot Docs. She was an Executive Producer of *United Skates* (Tribeca 2018, HBO) and *The Tale* for Gamechanger Films, (Sundance 2018, HBO). She was also an Executive Producer on the TV mini-series, *Fundamental. Gender. Justice. No Exceptions.*, about the rise of Fundamentalism and the effects on women's rights. Earlier in her career, she coproduced the HBO environmental documentary *Blue Vinyl*, and served as a production executive for the distribution company Non Fiction Films and as an archival researcher for the Discovery Channel series *Cronkite Remembers*. Julie serves on the Board of Directors of SFFILM and is a member of Producers Guild of America and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences Documentary Branch.

BRENDA ROBINSON, Executive Producer

Brenda Robinson is an entertainment attorney and partner in Gamechanger Films, an equity fund that finances feature films and television series by women and diverse storytellers. She is also active in the Sundance Institute as a member of the Women at Sundance Leadership Council and an advisor to The Redford Center.

As a dedicated philanthropist in the arts and entertainment community and advocate on behalf of creative artists, Brenda currently serves on the boards of The Representation Project and Chicken & Egg Pictures and is currently the President of the Board of the International Documentary Association (IDA). Brenda is a founding advisory board member of the USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative. She is a proud board member of Cinema/Chicago and the Chicago International Film Festival and currently serves as legal counsel to the festival, known as the longest running international competitive film festival in North America. On the music side, Brenda is a member of The Recording Academy and sits on the board of the Grammy Music Education Coalition.

Brenda was most recently an equity financier on the Academy Award-winning documentary *Icarus* as well as *Won't You Be My Neighbor* and *Step*. She is an executive producer on numerous projects including *United Skates* alongside executive producer John Legend; *The Great American Lie* by director Jennifer Siebel Newsom; *Jump Shot: The Kenny Sailors Story*, alongside executive producer Steph Curry, and *Marian Anderson: The Whole World In Her Hands* by Director Rita Coburn Whack for PBS' American Masters series.

JOHN BATTSEK, Executive Producer, Passion Pictures

John Battsek's Passion Pictures has produced countless memorable and award-winning documentary films. From the Academy Award® winning *One Day in September* in 1999, they have been involved in over thirty high-profile documentaries, including *Searching for Sugar Man* (Academy Award® winner, 2013), *The Imposter* (BAFTA winner, 2013), *Restrepo* (Academy Award® nominated, 2011), *Sergio* (Academy Award® shortlisted, 2010) and *The Tillman Story* (Academy Award® shortlisted, 2011). Throughout his career John has supported and championed new talent and has continuously been an integral part of producing documentary films of the highest caliber.

Abbas Nokhasteh, Executive Producer, Openvizor

Abbas Nokhasteh is a producer and founder of Openvizor arts organisation based in London, UK, Abbas has produced both documentary and fiction features which have premiered at Sundance, Rotterdam and Cannes, including 'Chuck Norris vs. Communism', 'Ballad of Exiles: Yilmaz Guney' and Alejandro Jodorowsky's 'Endless Poetry'. He is also co-founder/director at Paraa art and architecture practice in Dhaka, Bangladesh and a director at Studio 174 arts academy in Downtown Kingston, Jamaica.

PER K. KIRKEGAARD, Consulting Editor

Per K. Kirkegaard is one of the most established editors in the Danish film industry. He has edited numerous critically acclaimed documentaries and features. Among the feature films Per has edited are *Accused*, which was awarded with the European Film Academy Discovery Prix Fassbinder; *Armadillo*, for which he was awarded an Emmy® for Best Editing of a Long-format Documentary; *TPB AFK: The Pirate Bay Away From Keyboard*, which was recently selected for the Berlin Film Festival; *The Sound of a Revolution*, a Greenlandic documentary, premiered at 2014's CPH:DOX; and *Chuck Norris vs Communism*, selected for the 2015 Sundance Film Festival World Cinema Documentary Competition.

RUBEN DE GHESELLE, Composer

Ruben De Gheselle is an internationally renowned composer best known for his music in animated movies and documentaries. He has worked as a composer for non-profit institutions like Centre Pompidou and The National Heritage organization of Belgium, as well as commercial organizations like Playmobil, BWM and Night of the Proms. He also regularly composes concert pieces and his music has been heard in Belgium's national venues, such as deSingel, Flagey and Concertgebouw Brugge & de Bijloke. In 2012, while studying classical composition at the Royal Conservatory, he worked on his first animated film by Robbe Vervaeke, *Norman*, which would get the Cristal for Best Debut at the Annecy International Animation Film Festival in 2013. Ruben's music and soundtracks have received numerous awards, including Best Original Music (Annecy 2016), Best Music in a European Short (Anger

2015) and Emile Mathieu Award (Ghent 2014). In 2017 he was selected as a Berlinale talent and in 2019 a CD containing his composition “Wildlands” was labeled Choice of Klara. In 2020, the soundtrack of *Gaia* was nominated for Best Music in a Short Movie at the Aubagne Music & Cinema Festival and the short film *The Passerby* was nominated at Annecy International Animation Film Festival. Ruben is planning the release of his first solo album, *To Be Still*.



DIRECTED BY

Ilinca Calugareanu

PRODUCED BY

Mara Adina

EXECUTIVE PRODUCED BY

Brenda Robinson

Julie Parker Benello

Erika Olde

Nion McEvoy

Sam Roseme

Tanja Tawadjoh

John Battsek

Abbas Nokhasteh

Jonathan Stanners

DIRECTORS OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Bruce Francis Cole

Eliana Alvarez Martinez

Sean Kirby

ORIGINAL MUSIC BY

Ruben De Gheselle

SOUND DESIGNER

Jacques Pedersen

COSTUME DESIGNER

Alina Morar