



A LITTLE STOWAWAY

A SHORT FILM BY
KSHEETIJ SAINI

PRESS KIT



LOGLINE

Following a painful loss, Elle grapples with letting go of her past amidst the sale of her childhood family business.

SYNOPSIS

Elle, a woman in her mid-20s, performs a ritual with a wooden box when her mother interrupts her. Her mother asks her to assist with preparations for the sale of their family's farm to a prospective buyer.

As she walks the grounds of their farm, Elle finds her paraplegic brother, Jacob. They engage in childish bickering and pranks between lapses of unsaid tension. In the midst of playing, Elle falls down and Jacob is gone. She snaps back to the reality where her brother has passed away. Now, with the sale of the family business where they spent so many days of their adolescence, so too has her childhood.

While showing the prospective buyer around the farm Elle's mother pulls Elle aside in private. Elle's mother brought the wooden box that Elle had. It belonged to Jacob which Elle could not get herself to open. Putting their differences aside they open it together and bond overlooking through the trinkets he saved.

Elle goes back to where she and Jacob tussled. Releasing herself from grief, Elle stares into the unknown, embracing the future.



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

A Little Stowaway was conceived amid the first European lockdown during the pandemic. Dissecting a sibling relationship - the ups & downs combined with isolation made up the core of the story.

The emotions were derived from introspecting my relationship with my sister. In particular, the time we were in a car accident while I was driving. This near-death experience was the fuel for the film.

A Little Stowaway shows the dynamics between siblings and the need for humans to always try and take steps forward no matter how small they are. It's a story I hope my sibling would see the off chance something happens to me and I hope that feeling is shared by siblings across the world.





APPROACH

Shot primarily in a closed-down medieval open-air museum in the outskirts of Prague, the location was a character of its own. Space played an integral part in the conception of the story.

A documentarian's handheld camera interweaved with an abstract editing style gives us a glimpse into Elle's state of mind and her journey. The film-like textured mise-en-scène is organically controlled by an observer peering into her world.

The characters were developed in such a way that it allowed exploration of different ideas while filming. Even though each scene was improvised to varying levels, they all conformed to an overarching structure and theme. Many times the Director used "torpedoing" techniques, that is, introducing unplanned moments during a take to catch the actors off-guard and reveal unexplored depths of the character.



KSHEETIJ SAINI

Writer, Director and Editor

Ksheetij Saini is an Indian born film director. His family moved around as his father was in the military. With change being the only constant, Ksheetij experienced a variety of Indian & international cultures throughout his life.



He switched from being a data scientist & entrepreneur to a freelance filmmaker to tell stories that mattered. His background gave him the technical & business foundation to start his career. His first one-minute short film, Hush, was hand-picked by the Croatian One Minute Film Festival.

After working independently and with production houses, he went to Prague Film School in 2019 to pursue writing and directing. His short film exercises were acclaimed by the faculty and were considered to be at the level of festival competition.

Between films, Ksheetij dabbles in a multitude of skills that he incorporates into his art. Currently, he is working on projects such as a music album, a book on "A Guide to Critical Thinking" and most importantly, a contained sci-fi social commentary feature.



NIKOLAJ OSKAR LINBLAD

Director of Photography

Nikolaj Oskar Lindblad is a Danish filmmaker who started his endeavours by shooting skateboard videos and drug-fueled escapades in the streets of Copenhagen where he was born and lives.

Little escapes his eye, even on a fictional set where he runs the camera whenever something stirs him, often without alerting the crew, furthering a lifelike animation to the pool of content.

Nikolaj has worked on shorts, and the like, in liberal amounts and has credits on a few Features, including 'Bakerman' and 'Blurred Vision'. Schools include 'Københavns Film & Fotoskole 2017' & 'Prague Film School 2019-2020' focusing on cinematography and direction. Nikolaj's effect is credited to his vicarious visions and malleable creativity.



CAST

MELINA ÅKERMAN KVIE

ELLE

Melina Åkerman Kvie is a Swedish born, English speaking actress. She grew up in Gotland, a limestone island located in the Baltic Sea, but spent her adult years studying and working with music in Stockholm as well as commuting work in Copenhagen and Berlin. Melina started out working as a performance artist, music producer, writer and singer as a teenager and has performed shows worldwide. She recently shifted her focus towards acting after graduating from the Acting For Film program at Prague Film School with the faculty award for Best Actor 2019/2020.



Melina took on roles in more than 30 films during her time in Prague and at the beginning of 2021 she was cast as a lead character in a Swedish mini-series called 'Sweet Talk' produced by 'Film På Gotland'. Melina has a background in theatre from an early age as well as experience behind the camera from working on set with 'Der Kommissar und das Meer' 2020. In addition, she has worked as a director/writer on music videos and freelance editor/filmmaker.



RUTGER LYSEN

JACOB

Rutger Lysen is a Dutch national, English speaking actor currently based in Europe. Having been born in Yokohama - Japan and living abroad most of his life, he credits his early love for accents, dialects and storytelling to his international upbringing. After graduating high school he chose to follow his gut and enrol in Prague Film School in 2018 for the Filmmaking course.

After graduating as a Director & Screenwriter in 2019 and having been asked to act in a number of his peer's films he again chose to follow his gut (surprise, surprise) and switched over to the 'Acting for Film' course for his second year, during which he landed a Supporting Role in an upcoming Netflix Feature Film titled "Blood Red Sky" (2021).

Rutger has amassed a total of 40+ film credits during his brief two years in Prague, working both behind and in front of the camera.



DAISY KOSMIDER

MOTHER

Daisy Kosmider is a Swedish international actress, based in Prague, Czech Republic. After taking various acting courses and workshops with a focus on method acting, she completed her studies with honours of Screen Acting at the Prague Film School. In 2019 she was 4x awarded "best actress" and "best supporting actress" for her roles in "Building a Swimming Pool" & "Chocolate". Her recent work includes the Swedish feature film, "Drömmar om Las Vegas" which will be released in 2021. She has also appeared in Scandinavian TV-series like Greyzone(2018) and The Bridge (2018), as well as the Danish TV-series Kriger(2019) and feature film Hacker (2019).





CREDITS

CAST

ELLE
Melina Åkerman Kvie

JACOB
Rutger Lysen

MOTHER
Daisy Kosmider

BUYER
Joseph Jacob

PRODUCTION

WRITER /
DIRECTOR /
EDITOR /
PRODUCER
Ksheetij Saini

DIRECTOR OF
PHOTOGRAPHY
Nikolaj Oskar Linblad

AC
Nikos Kodounas

GAFFER
Malcolm Brainerd

COLORIST
Nicole Goode

AD
Kimya

ART DIRECTOR
Victoria Paz

MUA
Sky O'hara

SOUND DESIGN
Ksheetij Saini

SOUND MIXER
Indraneel Nighojkar

BOOM-OP
Giulio Mealli

TECHNICAL

COUNTRY OF
PRODUCTION
Czech Republic

YEAR OF
COMPLETION
2021

FORMAT
Digital

RATIO
2.40:1

DURATION
13 min 33 sec

GENRE
Drama

INQUIRY

Ksheetij Saini
saini.ksheetij@gmail.com