Super Diva!

PRESS KIT

A film by Andrew Kortina

14mins, USA, 2022
Language: English
Genre: Drama
Filmed In: Oakland, CA

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Logline

When the ghost bike is stolen from her mom's memorial, a ten year old legal enthusiast must save her father from losing faith in the founding principles of The Neighborhood Watch.

Synopsis

Father / daughter TED (40) and ABBY (10) run a local chapter of The Neighborhood Watch in West Oakland. Their over-the-top enthusiasm for "The Watch" -- their high tech consumer surveillance gear like dropcams, bake sale fundraisers, and a calisthenics routine inspired by the one performed by Abby's hero RBG in her eponymous doc -- is largely a mechanism for coping with the recent death of Abby's mom (LAUREN), who was recently killed while bicycling in a hit and run accident.

On the morning of an important bake sale fundraiser, Ted and Abby "check the tapes" recorded by a neighborhood dropcam, and to their horror they discover the "ghost bike" has been stolen from Lauren's memorial. Ted goes door to door handing out missing-bike fliers, but comes back empty handed and dejected.

Ready to move on, Abby pleads to go for a bike ride. It is understandably, a difficult ask of her dad, but he overcomes his grief and capitulates. On the ride, they find the ghost bike at a chop shop. In a heated debate, Ted argues they must take back the bike to honor Lauren's memory, but Abby holds that such vigilantism is not justified by the law. Ted goes to pieces, and Abby must figure out how to reconcile her loyalty to her father with her own sense of justice.

Director's Statement

As a kid, the history of the United States I learned in school and in the media was one of progress, things getting better. But the older I get, the more I realize things did not get better for a lot of people. And today it seems they're only getting worse -- more mass shootings and police brutality, governments struggling to navigate a pandemic, impending climate disaster -- we have constant reminders that the institutions we've built to keep us safe are far from perfect.

So, when I see people taking action -- activism and protests, debates about stricter gun laws or defunding the police, escalating private surveillance, vigilantism, etc -- even when I might disagree with the approach, I try to remember that all of these are likely motivated by fear and a lack of confidence that failing institutions will protect loved ones.

The panic of suddenly feeling "no one is gonna save me" reminds me of moments as a kid when I caught a glimpse of humanity in an adult -- when I saw a flicker of fear or despair in their eyes, and they appeared not just as figures of authority but as flawed and struggling creatures.

These moments can be terrifying, but also empowering -- you have the opportunity to rise to the occasion, to perhaps help the person who until then you saw as your protector. In *Super Diva!* I wanted to explore such moments through the light and humorous frame of a father / daughter (Ted / Abby) with over-the-top enthusiasm for their "Neighborhood Watch."

High-tech consumer surveillance gadgets and routine provide distraction and a sense of security for Ted. A fanaticism for the law and her hero RBG do the same for Abby.

But when neither technology, nor vigilante authority of The Watch, nor appeals to the law of the land can provide mooring against the chaos of their world, father and daughter must return to the love and compassion that motivate their quest for order.

The Cast

Ted - Walter Belenky

Born in Detroit, Michigan, Walter Belenky is an award winning actor and visual artist. He was a member of the Broadway cast of *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* that won the Tony Award as well as the Drama League, Outer Critics Circle, and Drama Desk awards. He has an MFA from the University of California, San Diego.

Abby - Hannah Aniela

Hannah Aniela is an American child actress born in San Francisco, CA. She is best known for her roles in the award winning film *Yours to Bury* (2021) and the Lifetime TV movie *Obsessed with the Babysitter* (2021). Hannah will put her whole heart and soul into every character she portrays. Her daring, naturalistic performances often leave viewers wondering, "Who is that kid?"

The Crew

Writer, Director, Editor - Andrew Kortina

With BAs in moral / political philosophy and creative writing but no ideas for treatises or stories, Andrew Kortina worked for over ten years in software engineering. In 2021, he began devoting his time to screenwriting, directing, and editing. *Super Diva!* is his first short film. He has a feature film (*Tech Support*) and a documentary (*Telling Mattresses Stories*) in development.

DP - Mark Sandhoff

A Northern California native, Mark Sandhoff cut his production teeth shooting documentaries before moving into the visually expressive music video and short narrative worlds. As a commercial DP he has lensed projects for a diverse range of clients, from BMW to Pepsi. An avid outdoorsman, when not on set he can be found sailing the SF Bay or exploring the Sierra Nevada backcountry.

Credits

Ted	WALTER BELENKY
Abby	HANNAH ANIELA
Paul	ADRIAN ROBERTS
Ellie	BAILY HOPKINS
Neighbor 1	DANIEL DAVIES
Neighbor 2	KIMBERLY PERETTE
Neighbor 3	NAMRATA PATEL
Bike Thief	ANDREW KORTINA
Writer, Director, Editor	ANDREW KORTINA
DP	MARK SANDHOFF
AC, Grip, Gaffer	ANDRES CRUZ
Sound Mixer	SAGE BILDERBACK
Boom Operator	CHRIS CAMACHO
Producer	SCOTT MASON
PA	DAVE MCGINN
PA	ROB CHEUNG
Script Supervisor	LEIGH LUCAS
Casting	BAILY HOPKINS
HMU	CLAIRE O'TOOLE
Covid Compliance Officer	SHIHO YOSHIDA
Set Teacher	JAMIE KELLER
Set Teacher	LUA HADAR
Bakesale Chef	KENT WRIGHT
Security	TIMOTHY OVERALL
Security	MARK MCCONNELL
Colorist	MARIKA LITZ
Post Production Sound	TIMOTHY DAY
Composer	JUSTIN GELLER
Legal	ANUJ GUPTA
Location Thanks	LAUREN QUACH, ANTHONY BOOKER, ALEX MAGEE, PETER O'HENLEY, ASSAN JETHMEL SEAN & PEG DABEL, NIKIA DURGIN, MANDELA GROCERY CO-OP
Public Murals	MATHEW FLORIANI
Art Department	LEIGH LUCAS, CLAIRE O'TOOLE, MANDY SILVERMAN, SEAN DABEL, NAMRATA PATEL
Xtra Special Thanks	HARRISON JAMES, LISE RAVEN, JEN SHARP, SYDNEY RIBOT, PABLO SORIANO, SCOTT WICKMAN, CRAIG CANNON, KATE KENNEDY, WENDY LIU
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