

THE REST OF US

A Babe Nation film

Directed by Aisling Chin-Yee

The Rest of Us

Starring Heather Graham (*Boogie Nights*), Sophie Nélisse (*Mean Dreams*), Jodi Balfour (*The Crown*) and Abigail Pniowsky (*Arrival*)

A Babe Nation film | Directed by Aisling Chin-Yee | Written by Alanna Francis

Produced by Katie Bird Nolan, Lindsay Tapscott, Emma Fleury and Will Woods

Executive Produced by Patrice Theroux and Damon D'Oliveira

World Premiere

Toronto International Film Festival 2019 (In competition)

Running Time

80 min.

The Rest of Us is the feature directorial debut of the award-winning writer, producer and director Aisling Chin-Yee. Produced by Babe Nation Films, a boutique production company that champions female voices and stories, *The Rest of Us* follows Cami (Graham), a poised, divorced woman who threatens her already tenuous relationship with her headstrong teenage daughter, Aster (Nélisse), when she invites her ex-husband's second wife, Rachel (Balfour), and young daughter, Talulah (Pniowsky), to move in with them following his unexpected death. In an unusually full home overlooking their town, the four women must confront their own grief, truths, flaws and secrets while ultimately deciding if the past will dictate their future. *The Rest of Us* is a dramatic comedy about authentic, complex women and the messy conflicts between them. The script, written by first-time screenwriter Alanna Francis was a 2016 Academy Fellowship quarterfinalist.

Logline

Two mother-daughter duos must contend with their grief and complicated relationships with each other when the man who ties them together dies.

Short Synopsis

Cami Bowden really has her life together. She has finally picked up the pieces from her divorce with her ex-husband, Craig, 10 years earlier, and established a successful career as a children's book writer. She bought and renovated her dream home in a small town north of her former home city and is busy raising her daughter, Aster, a first-year university student. But when Craig dies suddenly of a heart attack, the perfect life Cami has created begins to unravel.

At Craig's funeral, Cami and Aster must spend time with Rachel, Craig's second, much younger wife, who he left Cami for, and Talulah, Craig's second child, who is pointedly avoiding engaging in the grieving process. Rachel, having spent much of her adult life as a stay-at-home wife, reveals to Cami that Craig has been hiding a multitude of debt and that their house will be repossessed—Rachel and Talulah will soon be left without a roof over their heads or a penny to their names while they hope for Craig's life insurance policy to pay out. Moved by Rachel's plight, Cami reluctantly offers to let the pair temporarily live in her pool house.

Together under one roof, the women Craig has left behind process their grief and anger over his death and search for meaning and direction in their lives. All the while, old secrets and shifting allegiances threaten to bring the tenuous balance of the household crashing down around them.

Director's Statement

The best stories are crafted as windows into ourselves, prompting us to question how we should be, or helping us to understand the decisions we've made. *The Rest of Us* is a family drama that asks us if we are who we claim to be and if our decisions and our past will forever define us.

The film features an unlikely family of women who forced to reckon with each other after the man who ties them together dies. It's told predominantly from the perspective of Cami, a woman who uses a Martha Stewart approach to perfection, poise and order to dampen her desire and camouflage her insecurity. When we meet Cami, she's developed a way to cope with being a single mother to her daughter, Aster, after her husband, Craig, left her for the younger Rachel ten years earlier. But will Cami's method of survival hold up when all her feelings and thoughts betray her? Rachel, the mother of Craig's second child, Talulah, is at sea after Craig's death; she's alone, broke and lost without her husband. With nowhere to turn after discovering that Craig left her bankrupt, Rachel and Talulah move into Cami and Aster's home (or, at least, the airstream parked in their front yard). It is here where *The Rest of Us* plays out, showing us a modern family, stuck together out of circumstance, bumping into each other's secrets and grief in often hilarious and touching ways.

I fell in love with *The Rest of Us* instantly, the script was so beautifully crafted by screenwriter Alanna Francis. Alanna is an empathetic and skilled writer who finds the truth in women's complicated relationships and their perceived or imposed expectations. Each woman manages her grief over Craig's death through different methods, vices and masks while navigating the complexities of their own and each other's worlds. What is woven together is a multi-faceted, messy universal experience. I see myself in each of these women's grief and humour. Cami has a wit, edge and banter with Aster, and their relationship, with its love, resentment, dependency and protection, is painfully relatable to that of any mother's and daughter's. Heather Graham brought humour and warmth to the role of Cami, an overbearing mother, ex-wife and illustrator with writer's block. She was a joy to collaborate with; always game to try something new, to pivot and play on set. The connection and charm she radiates was easy to find in the cutting room, especially when she played off the very funny and instinctively natural actor, Sophie Nélisse, who plays Cami's teenage daughter, Aster. Sophie's comedic timing, and captivating and subtle acting made my job as director a dream.

So much of the pain I've personally experienced I poured into Rachel, Craig's newer, younger wife, who Jodi Balfour so skillfully embodies. As Rachel grapples with her new reality, picking herself up from the loss of her husband, facing her surprise new financial strain and dealing with the terrifying notion of continuing through life alone, she vacillates between broken widow, angry young woman and reluctant-but-loving mother. Jodi can play anything with just a look, a movement in her shoulders. She's so in tune with her own physicality that, in the film, Rachel is often seen simply thinking or emoting without words or action, and her smallest moments are some of the most powerful in the film. Lastly, it's hard not to fall in love with Abigail Pniowsky's portrayal of Talulah, Rachel's precocious and bright nine-year-old daughter, and the begrudging Aster's step-sister, who wears her heart on her sleeve. If I could clone Abby several times over, I would.

Over the course of *The Rest of Us*, Cami, Aster, Rachel and Talulah each grow and relate to one another in new and true ways. The film is not about the death of a man, or about a scorned ex-wife or widow. It's about women facing life together, at their and its most messy, emotional and vulnerable, at a time when secrets we never wanted revealed are exposed. But it's also a film that finds the real-life humour in grief and coping.

My approach to Alanna's intimate, character-driven story was natural and personal, the style handheld and internal to mimic the way we feel and watch these women understand and survive the world. Their POVs guide our sense of how they feel about each other and about the ghost of the

complicated man that connects them. I hope that the film is an accurate portrayal of compassion, empathy and the absurdities of life.

— Aisling Chin-Yee

Writer's Statement

As children, many of us take family for granted. We understand the family to be a thing with permanence. We assume it has always been so and it always will be so. But in the wake of a divorce, an unexpected departure, a death, we are forced to acquaint ourselves with how tenuously constructed the circumstances of our lives really are. *The Rest of Us* confronts the pain of this impermanence, the trauma of a family that splinters, while probing the assumptions we make about infidelity, about loss and about one another.

The characters in the film spring from nowhere and everywhere. It's as though I've always known them and only had to find ways to let them speak. A woman in search of purpose and a daughter trying to be anyone other than her mother. A widow all at sea and a child carrying the weight of everything they've lost.

We meet them as a group of people deeply at odds, confronting an expanse they can't imagine bridging. Through Cami, Aster, Rachel, and Talulah I hoped to write a set of female characters who are flawed in ways we can recognize and relate to. I was looking for a means of allowing them to be uncomfortable with themselves and with one another. To feel righteous even when they were wrong. To mirror our worst instincts as well as our best impulses. I wanted to ask what would happen if we embraced the gulf between the images we work to project and the reality of who we really feel ourselves to be.

In writing this story I thought a lot about the idea of tenderness, specifically about how to be tender can mean many things. The word tender can signal warmth, gentleness, compassion. Or it can indicate a delicate, fragile quality. Tender can be raw like an exposed nerve ending, sore like a deep wound. Tender encompasses, at once, the myriad things that make us vulnerable.

To me, *The Rest of Us* is a small story with universal implications. It's a story about the ways we choose to relate to one another. A story that believes in a woman's power to define herself on her own behalf. I can't help but think of it also as a love letter to its four central characters. Characters I hold to be reflections, iterations, contours and outlines of the many women whose influence has helped shape the course of my life so far. *The Rest of Us* is, if nothing else, the most tender parts of me.

— Alanna Francis

About Babe Nation Films



Babe Nation Films is a Toronto-based boutique production company that champions female voices and stories. Producers Katie Bird Nolan and Lindsay Tapscott specialize in the hands-on creative development and production of character-driven narratives from a diverse slate of international filmmakers. Babe Nation's projects include Calvin Thomas and Yonah Lewis's feature *White Lie* (TIFF 2019), a contemporary adaptation of the famous Françoise Sagan novel *Bonjour Tristesse*, written by Durga Chew-Bose (*Too Much and Not the Mood*, FSG Originals), *Alice, Darling*, the second feature from Alanna Francis (*The Rest of Us*, TIFF 2019), *T'es Belle Maryse*, written and directed by Maxime Desmons (*What We Have*, 2015 Inside Out Film Festival's Best Canadian Feature), and the second season of Vanessa Matsui's digital series *Ghost BFF*, available on Whohaha and KindaTV. Katie is an alumna of the 2016 TIFF Producers Lab and 2018 TIFF Accelerator Lab, where she studied under veteran producer Cassian Elwes, and Lindsay is an alumna of the 2019 Rotterdam Producers Lab. In 2018, Babe Nation was named one of *Playback's* Top 5 to Watch. *The Rest of Us* is Babe Nation's debut feature.

CAST



Heather Graham "Cami"

Heather Graham caught the attention of filmmakers at an early age with her breakout role in Gus Van Sant's *Drugstore Cowboy*, for which she received an Independent Spirit Award nomination. Graham went on to score unforgettable roles in the 1997 classic *Boogie Nights*, for which she received the MTV Movie Award for Best Breakthrough Performance, 1999's *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me*, and 2009's *The Hangover*, opposite Bradley Cooper and Zach Galifianakis. Graham is executive producing *The Hypnotist's Love Story*, a drama series based on the bestselling book by *Big Little Lies* author Liane Moriarty. Previously, Graham starred in *Half Magic*, a film she wrote and directed. The raunchy, female-driven comedy follows three women who set out on a hilarious search for self-fulfillment while overcoming the roadblocks in their personal and professional lives. In April 2014, Graham joined the cast of Showtime's *Californication* for its seventh season, playing a woman from Hank's (David Duchovny) past whose arrival upends his life. In May 2013, Graham reprised her role as Jade in the hit comedy *The Hangover 3*. Throughout her career, Graham has worked with some of the industry's most respected actors and directors. Her performances include that of a doe-eyed girl in *Swingers* with Jon Favreau and Vince Vaughn; an ambitious young actress in Frank Oz's *Bowfinger* with Steve Martin and Eddie Murphy; and the tragic Mary Kelly in Albert and Allen Hughes' *From Hell*, opposite Johnny Depp. Other films include *The Guru* with Marisa Tomei; *Hope Springs* opposite Colin Firth; *Committed* with Luke Wilson; Ed Burns's ensemble *Sidewalks of New York*; James Toback's *Two Girls and a Guy* with Robert Downey Jr.; *Lost in Space* with Gary Oldman and William Hurt; and *Six Degrees of Separation*, starring Will Smith. Graham also executive produced and starred in the romantic comedy feature *Cake*, opposite Sandra Oh and Cheryl Hines. In 2004/2005, she received rave reviews for her guest-starring stint on NBC's critically acclaimed series *Scrubs*.



Sophie Nélisse "Aster"

Sophie Nélisse recently starred in the Netflix film *Close*, written and directed by Vicky Jewson, opposite Noomi Rapace. Earlier this year, she wrapped shooting the lead role in *47 Meters Down: Uncaged*, which is set to release in 2019. Sophie's other recent film credits include Nathan Morlando's *Mean Dreams*, opposite Josh Wiggins, Bill Paxton and Colm Feore, which premiered at the 2016 Cannes International Film Festival; Radu Mihaileanu's *The History of Love*, with Gemma Arterton and Derek Jacobi; Stephen Herek's *The Great Gilly Hopkins*, opposite Kathy Bates, Glenn Close, Octavia Spencer and Julia Stiles; Dominic James's *Wait Till Helen Comes*, with Maria Bello; and *Et Au Pire On Se Mariera*, filmed by Léa Pool, in Montreal. Sophie is best known for her lead role in Brian Percival's critically acclaimed feature *The Book Thief*, opposite Geoffrey Rush and Emily Watson, and Philippe Falardeau's *Monsieur Lazhar*, which was nominated for an Academy

Award for Best Foreign Language Film and earned Sophie a Genie Award for her performance in the film. Sophie has also appeared in Edward Zwick's *Pawn Sacrifice*, with Tobey Maguire and Liev Schreiber, and starred in Oscar-nominee Yan England's directorial debut, *1:54*.



Jodi Balfour “Rachel”

Born and raised in South Africa, Jodi Balfour spent her formative years working in Cape Town's theatre and television industry, performing in an array of ballets and musicals, working in local television and, later, graduating with honours in Theatre and Performance from the University of Cape Town. Since her move to the U.S., Jodi has earned critical praise for her leading roles in the drama series *Quarry*, directed and produced by Greg Yaitanes with HBO and Anonymous Content, and the BBC/Cinemax miniseries *Rellik*; and for her portrayal of Jackie Kennedy in Netflix's multiple-award-winning series *The Crown*. Arriving in the U.S. via Canada, Jodi played the lead role in the Canadian hit series *Bomb Girls*, which earned her a Canadian Screen Award for Best Actress in its 2014 film *Bomb Girls: Facing the Enemy*. Jodi appears in the Canadian feature films *The Husband*, directed by acclaimed Canadian director Bruce McDonald, and the indie darling *Eadweard*, directed by up-and-coming director Kyle Rideout. Jodi can currently be seen in the third season of HBO's *True Detective*, opposite Mahershala Ali and Stephen Dorff. Next up, she stars in the new Apple series *For All Mankind*, opposite Joel Kinnaman.



Abigail Pniowsky “Talulah”

Abigail Pniowsky, 11, was born in Winnipeg, Canada, and now lives in LA. She's been acting since she was 5 years old. Her projects include Denis Villeneuve's *Arrival*, opposite Amy Adams and Jeremy Renner; NBCUniversal's *Channel Zero*, with Paul Schneider; Sony Screen Gems' *He's Out There*, with Yvonne Strahovski; and ABC's *Ten Days in the Valley*, alongside Kyra Sedgwick and Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje.

CREATIVE TEAM



Aisling Chin-Yee *Director*

Aisling Chin-Yee is an award-winning producer, writer and director based in Montreal, Canada, and Los Angeles, California. *The Rest of Us* is her debut feature. In 2019, Aisling was named one of Canada's Rising Film Stars by *Now Magazine*, and as a producer for over a decade, Aisling has been lauded for her fresh and unapologetic vision in both feature films and documentaries. In 2013, Aisling produced the award-winning feature *Rhymes for Young Ghouls*, which was selected as a TIFF Top 10 Film and won Best Director at the Vancouver International Film Festival. She also produced the award-winning feature documentary *Last Woman Standing* that same year. 2014 marked her foray into writing and directing with the short film *Sound Asleep*, which premiered at the Lucerne International Film Festival, and in 2015, she directed the multi-award-winning documentary *Synesthesia*, which won Best Short Documentary at the International Crossroads Film Festival. She produced the gritty urban drama *The Saver* in 2016 and the political documentary *Inside These Walls*. In addition to a filmmaker, Aisling is an active change-maker for equality and diverse representation on and offscreen. In 2016, she co-founded the #AfterMeToo movement, which includes a fund, a roundtable series, and a report that shines a light on sexual misconduct in the entertainment industry. In 2018, she was selected as part of the inaugural cohort of professionals on the 50 Women Can Change the World in Media and Entertainment list in Hollywood. In 2019, Aisling will direct a documentary hybrid feature film about Billy Tipton, a piano-playing jazzman from the midwest who, after his death, in 1989, was revealed to be assigned female at birth. The film explores transgender male experiences today and historically. Her written and directed feature drama *The Day Between* is executive produced by Jean-Marc Vallée and will go to camera in 2020. Aisling is a Berlinale Talent, Rotterdam Producers Network and Tribeca Film Institute alumna, and was part of the prestigious Academy Women Directors' Program in 2017. She is a prominent voice for inclusion, pushing the status quo as both a creator and an advocate for women and diverse perspectives.



Alanna Francis *Writer*

Alanna Francis is a Toronto-based writer who hails originally from Montreal. She is the writer of the feature film, *The Rest of Us*. Her short fiction and essays have been published in SAD Magazine and Montecristo Magazine, respectively. She holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in Creative Writing from The University of British Columbia.



William Woods *Producer*

William Woods is a Toronto-based producer with a focus on feature films that have both commercial and philosophical merit. He began his career with the thriller *Mean Dreams* (Elevation, 2016), starring Sophie Nélisse, Josh Wiggins, Colm Feore and Bill Paxton, which premiered in the Directors Fortnight at the Cannes International Film Festival and had its North American premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival. William's upcoming projects include *Spinster* (2019), starring Chelsea Peretti; *Hammer* (2019), starring Will Patton and Mark O'Brien; and *Castle In The Ground* (2020), starring Neve Campbell, Alex Wolff, Imogen Poots, Keir Gilchrist and Tom Cullen. William graduated from York University with a Masters in Environmental Ethics. He's also completed the Canadian Film Centre's Producer's Lab, the Rotterdam Producers Lab and the Trans-Atlantic Partners Co-Production Incubator.



Emma Fleury *Producer*

Emma Fleury is a Toronto-based producer and writer with a passion for the creative development of female-driven content across multiple platforms. Emma has worked in development, distribution and production at some of the most respected content houses in Toronto. She recently made the move to content powerhouse Buck Productions, where she serves as Director of Development for their Scripted, Unscripted and Branded arms. Previously, Emma was Development Producer for RTR Media, one of the most sought-after unscripted production companies in the US market, and a founding member of Babe Nation Films. Emma's specialty is championing talent from all walks of life and fashioning unique concepts, work that has resulted in several network-produced television series for major US networks. In 2016, Emma was one of five producers to accept residency in the Cineplex Entertainment Producer's Lab at the Canadian Film Centre, where she spent eight months packaging and developing television and feature film properties.



Damon D'Oliveira *Executive Producer*

Under the banner of his production companies **Flimshow Inc.** and **Conquering Lion Pictures** (with partner Clement Virgo), Damon D'Oliveira's films have been distributed internationally and have been selected for festivals around the world. D'Oliveira's first feature, *RUDE*, had its world premiere in Official Selection, Un Certain Regard, at the 1995 Cannes Film Festival. Since then, Damon has produced some of Canada's most innovative feature films, including *Poor Boy's Game* (Berlinale, TIFF, Chicago 2007), *Lie With Me* (TIFF 2005, Berlinale 2006), *Love Come Down* (Berlinale, TIFF 2000), *H* (Locarno, TIFF 1990), and *Ce Qu'on A / What We Have* (Winner of Best Feature prizes at Rendez-vous du Cinema Quebecois 2015, Inside Out 2015 and Barcelona Film Festival 2015). Most recently, Damon was a producer on *The Grizzlies*, starring Ben Schnetzer and Will Sasso (TIFF 2018, Palm Springs 2019). As an Executive Producer, Damon has mentored *Honey Bee*, with Martha

Plimpton (winner at Whistler & Canadian Film Fests 2019), in addition to *The Rest of Us. RUDE*, in a newly remastered print, continues its life after 25 years, with a prestigious invitation to the 2019 Locarno Film Festival's Black Light Retrospective. Damon's recent miniseries adaptation of *The Book of Negroes*, the best-selling novel by Lawrence Hill (2008 Commonwealth Writer's Prize winner) had its world premiere as the Opening Night Selection at MIPCOM in October 2014. The series debuted to historic ratings on the Canadian Broadcasting Network (CBC) in January 2015, marking a 25-year high for a one-hour drama premiere. It premiered in February 2015 in the U.S. and drew landmark ratings for BET Networks. *The Book of Negroes* stars Oscar winners Cuba Gooding Jr. and Louis Gossett Jr., with Aunjanue Ellis (*The Help*), Ben Chaplin (*Remains of The Day*) and three-time Oscar nominee Jane Alexander. To date, the miniseries has won 12 Canadian Screen Awards and earned two nominations for U.S. Critic's Choice Television Awards, four NAACP Image Awards and was a finalist for the 2016 Peabody Award. Damon has also been the lead mentor for the Feature Film Producing Program at the Canadian Film Centre for five years. Damon is actively involved in the Canadian film community, sitting on the Board of Directors of Bell Media's Harold Greenberg Fund, a key financing partner for feature film in Canada. He is a past member of TIFF's International Advisory Committee and Damon is an active member of the Atelier de Cinema European (A.C.E.), the Canadian Media Producer's Association and the Academy of Canadian Cinema & TV.



Patrice Theroux *Executive Producer*

Patrice has produced over 35 films and television programs, including Terry Gilliam's *The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus*, Atom Egoyan's *The Captive*, David Cronenberg's *Map to the Stars*, Francois Girard's *Silk*, Richard Attenborough's *Closing the Ring*, the 2016 Cannes Directors' Fortnight selection *Mean Dreams*, directed by Nathan Morlando, and the recent documentaries *Sharkwater: Extinction*, directed by Rob Stewart, and Barry Avrich's *Prosecuting Evil*. Patrice is one of the industry's most respected film and television executives, having built major distribution and production organisations for more than 30 years, including Alliance Films, the publicly listed Movie Distribution Income Fund, where he was Chief Executive Officer, and Entertainment One, where he served as President of Film and Television from 2007 to 2014. Patrice is a member of the Producers Guild Association (PGA), the British Academy of Film and Television (BAFTA) and the Canadian Academy of Cinema and Television.

Daniel Grant *Director of Photography*

Raised in Halifax, Nova Scotia, award-winning cinematographer Daniel Grant developed an interest in image-making at a young age through still photography. Upon graduating from the film studies program at Ryerson University, he was awarded First Prize for Student Cinematography in Canada by the Canadian Society of Cinematographers (CSC). In the years since, Daniel has become a much sought-after cinematographer. His credits in both documentary and fiction projects have led him to work with some of Canada's most celebrated directors, including Bruce McDonald's *The*

Husband, Patricia Rozema's *Into The Forest*, starring Ellen Page, and Tony Elliott's Netflix Original *ARQ*, which debuted at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2016. The CSC has recognized Daniel with two awards and seven nominations for his work to date, including his most recent nomination for a 2019 Achievement Award in Cinematography for *Octavio is Dead!*. Daniel's other recent credits include the film adaptation of Stephen King's *In the Tall Grass* and Amy Jo Johnson's independent feature, *Tammy's Always Dying*, starring Felicity Huffman.

Thea Hollatz *Production Designer*

Thea Hollatz is an up-and-coming production designer who splits her time between the commercial and narrative worlds. Her credits include the feature film *Firecrackers*, from writer/director Jasmin Mozaffari, which premiered at the 2018 Toronto International Film Festival to rave reviews, and Renuka Jeyapalan's feature *Sex With The Perfect Stranger*.



Véronique Barbe *Editor*

Based in Montreal, with a background in film studies, Veronique works on both French and English productions. She co-edited the HBO series *Big Little Lies* (2016), *Sharp Objects* (2017-18) and *Big Little Lies 2* (2019). She's edited many short films in the past decade and also edits creative advertising projects. Her motivation to work as an editor comes from the strong belief that stories have the power to affect and change our perception of the world, people and situations through experience. As an editor, she is engaged in finding the best way to relate to a story.

CONTACT INFO

Babe Nation

Katie Nolan

Producer

+1 (647) 285-7916

katie@babestationfilms.com

Lindsay Tapscott

Producer

+1 (647) 979-1499

lindsay@babestationfilms.com