



# — MUTT

 **73** Internationale  
Filmfestspiele  
Berlin  
Generation

 **WINNER**  
U.S. DRAMATIC SPECIAL JURY AWARD  
ACTING  
**sundance**  
film festival 2023

A Film by Vuk Lungulov-Klotz

**PRESSKIT**



87 MIN

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USA

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2023

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ENGLISH, SPANISH

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**SCREENINGS IN BERLIN**

FRI. 17th, 2:30 PM @ Parliament Studio (Market)

SAT. 18th, 6:00 PM @ CUBIX 8 (P&I)

SUN. 19th, 3:00 PM @ dffb-Kino (Market)

MON. 20th, 8:00 PM @ URANIA  
(International Premiere)

TUE. 21st, 3:30 PM @ FAF (Public)

WED. 22nd, 12:45 PM @ CUBIX 8 (Public)

THU. 23rd, 3:30 PM @ ZOO 1 (Public)

SUN. 26th, 8:00 PM @ URANIA (Public)

# MUTT

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# — SYNOPSIS

Feña, a young trans guy bustling through life in New York City, is faced with an increasingly challenging day. Over 24 hours, his foreign father, his straight ex-boyfriend, and his 13-year old half-sister are thrust back into his life.

Having lost touch since transitioning, Feña must navigate the new dynamics of these old relationships while tackling the day-to-day challenges that come with living a life inbetween.

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# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

*Mutt* is about “in-betweenness.” It’s a film about being caught between two worlds, whether that’s race, gender, nationality or sexuality. But it is also a story about the space that exists between two people and how we care for each other while constantly struggling to marry our past and present selves into a unified whole. Too often we push ourselves out of situations because we fear the worst and imagine the expectations others have for us, forgetting to simply ask. *Mutt* reminds us to ask, and ultimately, reminds us that we are less alone than we think.

Growing up, I didn’t know any trans people. When I came out, I was effectively the first trans person I’d ever met. Though I’d like for my transness to be the least interesting part about me, I feel a deep need to help shape the cultural trans identity by adding my voice and telling stories through my specific lens.

I’m a Chilean-Serbian mutt. Growing up, I lived between Chile and the USA, understanding and belonging to both cultures. And after coming out as a transgender man, I felt I was able to empathize with both genders. I consider myself intimately acquainted with in-betweenness, but I rarely see characters, let alone films, that authentically reflect my experience.

I’m tired of clichés within trans representations, of trans people having to explain themselves on screen, being two-dimensional, or just side characters. I’m tired of clarifying that trans stories aren’t just about being trans but about so much more.

I know the physical and mental transformations involved in gender transition can seem extremely foreign to outsiders. But the truth is, being caught between two worlds is as fundamental to the human experience as any. By exploring three intimate relationships in our protagonist’s life, the film raises questions about gender, love, and the in-between space that often defines a trans life (and, indeed, all our lives to some extent). And by presenting our lead in brutally honest terms, the idea of his “trans-ness” finds itself upstaged by his sheer humanity. This ability to meet people where they are, at a human level, cuts directly to the heart of the piece and, we hope, will cut equally deep into the heart of our audience.

*Vuk Lungulov-Klotz*



# — BIOGRAPHY VUK LUNGULOV- KLOTZ

*Director*

Vuk Lungulov-Klotz (writer/director) has a culturally diverse upbringing. Born in New York City to Chilean and Serbian immigrants, he was raised between Chile, the US, and Serbia. With his feature film script, MUTT, he is an alum of the Sundance Institute Labs, the Inside Out Financing Forum, and was a top five finalist for the Tribeca / AT&T Untold Stories Grant. Vuk is also an alum of the Ryan Murphy HALF Initiative Program, where he completed a mentorship under director Janet Mock on the FX series POSE. His feature film debut, Mutt, premiered at 2023 Sundance Film festival and is having its international premiere at 2023 Berlinale Film festival. As a transgender storyteller, Vuk hopes to expand queer narratives. His work focuses on intimate moments we often miss if we're not looking close enough.



# — FILMOGRAPHY VUK LUNGULOV- KLOTZ

2022	River Fork - 10 min - short film
2019	Welcome Back, Lenny - 9 min - short film
2016	Still Liam - 13 min - short film

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# ABOUT THE CAST



## LÍO MEHIEL (THEY/THEM) 'FEÑA' (HE/HIM)

Lío Mehiel is a Puerto Rican and Greek artist, actor, and filmmaker.

Their work spans film, television, multi-media installation, theater, and events. They are fascinated by the inherent contradiction of the trans experience — one deeply rooted in the body while also transcending beyond the body.

Lío began their career as a professional salsa dancer and child actor on Broadway. They can now be seen on shows like *WeCrashed* (Apple+) and *Tales of the City* (Netflix). They are making their feature film debut in the lead role of Mutt by writer/director Vuk LK, which will make its world premiere at Sundance Film Festival 2023 and its international premiere at Berlinale 2023.

As a filmmaker, Lío produced *Chaperone*, a queer short film which premiered at Sundance 2022. They wrote, directed, produced, and starred in *Disforia*, a short film which premiered at Outfest Film Festival in 2018. They are now stuck inside of a psychomagic act with this story as they write the feature script version and confront their own medical transition.

As an installation artist, their immersive piece *Arcade Americana* was included in the list of 10 Best Immersive Shows in NYC by TimeOut and GOTHAMIST.

Lío is currently the producer and creative director of *Angels*, a developing collection of stone sculptures of transgender humans. The works were first featured as part of a pop-up installation at Outfest LA in 2022, and will be debuted in full at SIZED Gallery LA in 2023.

Lío is a co-founder of Voyeur Productions with Russell Kahn and Dulcinee DeGuere. They attended Northwestern University, and are an alumni of the Emerge NYC residency program for artists and activists.

## COLE DOMAN (HE/HIM) | 'JOHN'

Cole Doman is a trained stage and film actor living in Brooklyn, NY. During his time in Chicago, he studied at the School at Steppenwolf under Amy Morton, Tarell Alvin McCraney, Michael Patrick Thornton, and more. Chris Jones of the Chicago Tribune named Cole among the “Hot New Faces of Chicago Theater” in 2016. He made his film debut as the titular role in the critically acclaimed *Henry Gamble’s Birthday Party* directed by Stephen Cone. He has profiles with IndieWire, Brooklyn Magazine, OUT, Milk. xyz, and was featured as one of “Best Breakout Performances of 2016” by The Film Stage. He can also be seen in Alan Ball’s *Uncle Frank* (Sundance 2020, Amazon Studios) as young Frank Bledsoe played by Paul Bettany. On television he has appeared in “Let the Right One In”, “Gossip Girl”, “Modern Family”, “Law & Order: SVU”, “Chicago PD”, “Equal”, and “Shameless”. He developed & stars in the short film *Starfuckers* (MUBI) directed by Antonio Marziale which was presented in competition at Sundance Film Festival, Berlinale, and Telluride Film Festival. He stars in Vuk Lungulov-Klotz’s debut feature *Mutt*, executive produced by Silas Howard, which will be presented in competition at Sundance Film Festival 2023. Other forthcoming films include: Matt Fifer’s sophomore feature *Treatment* for AMC’s Shudder; Zia Anger’s debut feature *My First Film* for MUBI. Most recently, he starred in the world premiere of *Your Own Personal Exegesis* by Julia May Jonas at Lincoln Center Theatre, directed by Annie Tippe, for which his performance was lauded by The New York Times and even cartooned by The New Yorker.

## MIMI RYDER (SHE/HER) | 'ZOE'

MiMi Ryder is an NYC based actress, who rose to fame after being cast in the Broadway productions of Matilda The Musical, in the title role of “Matilda,” and Disney’s Frozen, as “Young Elsa.” She will soon be seen starring in Vuk Lungulov-Klotz’s MUTT, set to premiere at the 2023 Sundance Film Festival.

## ALEJANDRO GOIC (HE/HIM) | 'PABLO'

Alejandro Goic is a recognized Chilean actor and theatre director, with a career spanning more than 30 years on the Ibero-American stage. His personality and versatility make him a unique actor.

In his film acting career, he has been directed by the most renowned directors of his country, including; Pablo Larraín (El Club, 2015), Sebastián Lelio (Una mujer fantástica, 2017 and Gloria, 2013), Sebastián Silva (La Nana, 2009), Fernando Guzonni (Carne de perro, 2012; Jesús, 2016, and Blanquita, 2022, film representative of Chile in the 2023 Oscars, by the Chilean Film Academy) and Manuela Martelli (1976, 2022), among many others.

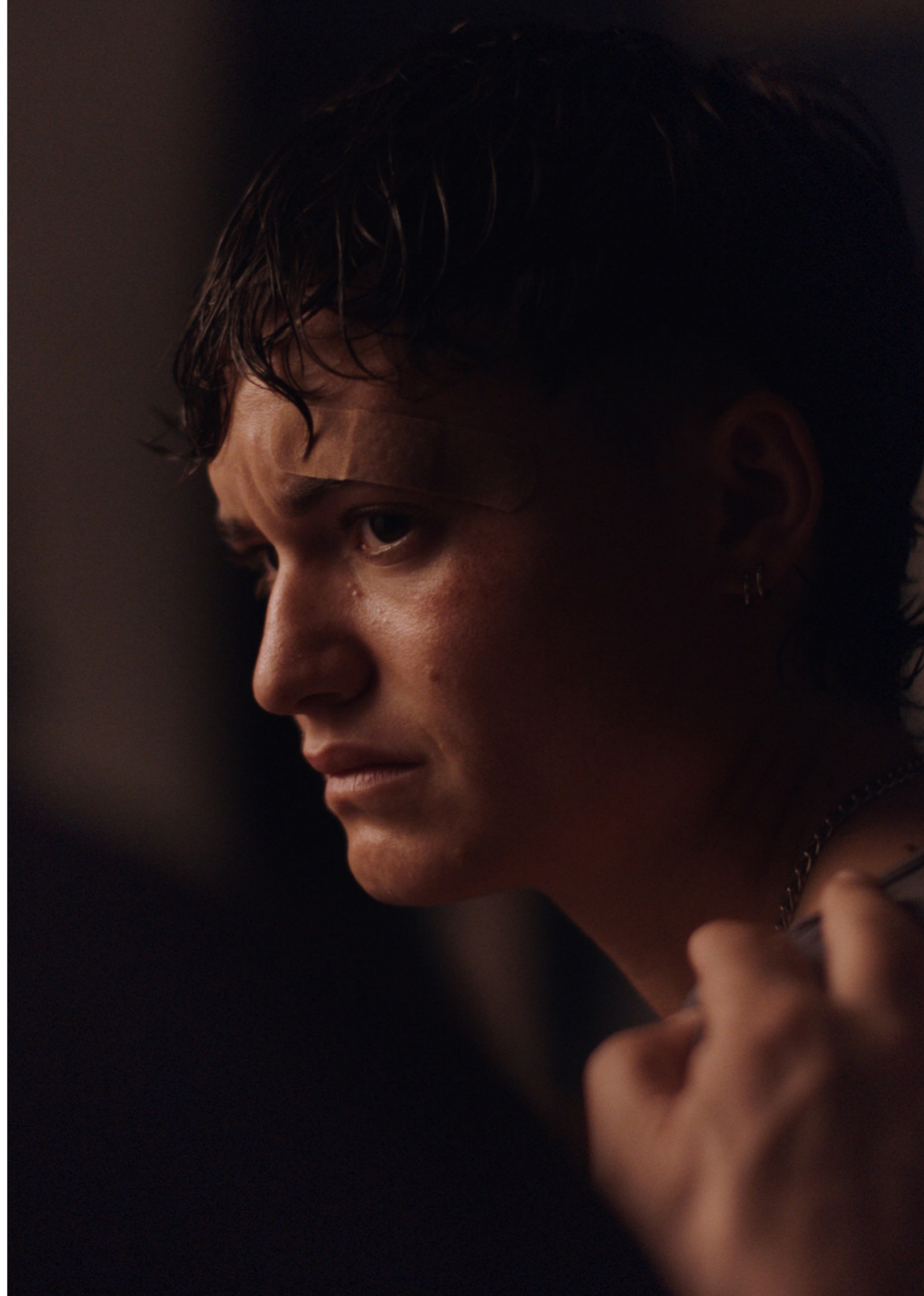
He has also participated in international productions such as “Los 33 de Atacama” (Spain, 2010), “Die Briefe meiner Mutter” (Germany, 2014), “De la noche a la mañana” (Argentina, 2020), and currently Mutt (USA, 2022), which will have its worldwide premiere at the Sundance Festival in 2023.

On television, Goic has participated in national and international productions, such as the fiction series “Prófugos” (2011, HBO), the telenovela “Secretos en el Jardín” (2013, Canal 13), where his performances and script were praised by the public and specialized critics. He also participated in the biographical series

“Martín, el hombre y la leyenda” (2018), and the fiction series “La Jauría” (2020-2022, Amazon) coproduced by Fábula, Fremantle, and Kapow for Amazon Prime.

The acting versatility of Alejandro Goic is evidenced by the interpretation of different profiles that he has put on stage; The figure of a former torturer and lonely man who seeks to rebuild his life (Carne de perro), A priest who is hiding, concealing his past (El Club), A journalist who manages to shake the population by investigating the political circles of his country (Bala loca), and a gay scribe in a story of Chile in the 17th century (La Doña), among many others.

For these roles and more, Alejandro Goic has been awarded and recognized throughout his career. In 2011, he received the Altazor Award for Best Television Actor for his role in the series “Volver a mí” and Best Film Actor for “Carne de perro”. He also received the APES Award for Best Supporting Performance for “Secretos en el jardín”, an award given by the Association of Journalists and Film Writers of Chile. Lastly, He has been awarded twice with the Caleuche Awards: in 2017 as Best Leading Actor in Series for “Bala loca” and in 2018 as Best Leading Actor in Film for “Jesús”, awards that recognize the work of film and television professionals in Chile. Additionally, he received different international awards for his role in “El Club”, being awarded twice as Best Actor at the Mar de Plata Film Festival and the Ceará Film Festival.



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# BIOGRAPHY PRODUCERS

## ALEXANDER STEGMAIER (HE/HIM)

Alexander Stegmaier (producer) is a manager and producer working in film and TV with a focus on underrepresented voices. He previously worked in development at Walt Disney Animation Studios where he helped build unique worlds and characters, expanding some of the company's biggest franchises including Frozen, Moana, and Zootopia. Since then, Alexander has developed projects with companies such as Matt Damon and Ben Affleck's Pearl Street Films, Chris Columbus' 26th Street, and Miranda Bailey's Cold Iron Pictures. His clients have sold projects to ABC, 20th Television, Warner Bros, and eOne, among others. Prior to Disney, Alexander was an award-winning art editor and producer at National Geographic magazine where he covered a range of human-interest stories that reached millions of viewers a month.

## STEPHEN SCOTT SCARPULLA (HE/HIM)

Stephen Scott Scarpulla (producer) began his career as a Broadway actor, before eventually becoming a development exec and filmmaker. After graduating from NYU, where he won multiple awards for his work, Stephen co-founded Other|Side Pictures, a full service production house in NYC. He has produced and directed multiple award-winning projects, including the feature A New High, which profiled

homeless mountain climbers in Washington and was distributed by The Orchard. Stephen is currently in development on a number of film and tv projects with partners such as Matt Damon and Ben Affleck's Pearl Street Films and Miranda Bailey's Cold Iron Pictures.

## JENNIFER KUCZAJ (SHE/HER)

Jennifer Kuczaj (producer) began her career at Jersey Films, participating in the creation of iconic works like PULP FICTION, GATTACA, and ERIN BROCKOVICH. Currently in Austin, Texas, Jennifer is an independent film producer having produced SXSW Audience Award winner, TRANSPECOS, Emmy-nominated border documentary PORVENIR, art house narrative FUGITIVE DREAMS and her most recent film MUTT, a finalist at Tribeca's 2022 Untold Stories Program which premiered in U.S. Dramatic Competition at Sundance 2023 and is set to have its international premiere at Berlinale 2023.

## JOEL MICHAELY (HE/HIM)

Joel Michaely is an actor and producer known for starring in the teen comedies "Can't Hardly Wait", Academy Award Winner Roger Avary's "The Rules of Attraction" and Sundance 2000 LGBTQ cult classic "But I'm A Cheerleader".

He Executive Produced and co-starred in

the Sundance Dramatic competition film "Wild Indian" (2021) that starred Michael Greyeyes, Chaske Spencer and Jesse Eisenberg and was nominated for 3 Spirit Awards.

Joel Executive Produced the Sundance Dramatic Competition film "Farewell Amor" 2020 that won a Spirit Award and National Board of Review Top 10 independent films and produced "I Am Michael" the controversial LGBTQ drama starring James Franco and Zachary Quinto at Sundance 2015. The first film he produced was a Sundance film lab project released by Sony Classics called "The Quiet" that starred Edie Falco and Elisha Cuthbert.

Other notable Sundance performances from Joel were in "Logorama" (Academy Award Winner for best animated short), "Celeste and Jesse Forever", and "Interior Leather Bar"

Upcoming Joel is recurring on the new Netflix series "Obliterated" from the creators of "Cobra Kai".

This past year, Joel Executive Produced and was in Paul Schrader's "The Card Counter" starring Oscar Isaac and Tiffany Haddish.

Joel recently co-starred in the Venice Film Festival hit "Run Hide Fight", as the main villain in "Vanquish" opposite Ruby Rose and Morgan Freeman, "Lansky" with Harvey Keitel, as "Edward Dickinson" opposite Molly Shannon's "Emily Dickinson" in "Wild Nights With Emily". Upcoming flicks that he produced and costar in include "Saint Clare" opposite Bella Thorne and "The Comeback Trail" with Robert Deniro, Tommy Lee Jones and Morgan Freeman.





# — CREW

<b>Written &amp; Directed By</b>	Vuk Lungulov-Klotz
<b>Starring</b>	Lío Mehiel
	Cole Doman
	Alejandro Goic
	Jasai Chase Owens
	Jari Jones
	and MiMi Ryder
<b>Produced By</b>	Alexander Stegmaier
	Stephen Scott Scarpulla
	Vuk Lungulov-Klotz
	Jennifer Kuczaj
	Joel Michaely
<b>Executive Producers</b>	Silas Howard
	Sarah Herrman
	Hannah D. Kettering
	Susie Hile
	Andrew Carlberg
	Lucky 13 Productions
	Spark Features
<b>Director of Photography</b>	Matthew Pothier
<b>Production Designer</b>	Alanna Murray
<b>Editor</b>	Adam Dicterow
<b>Costume Designer</b>	Elena Lark
<b>Sound Design by</b>	Ash Knowlton

# — CREW

<b>Score by</b>	James William Blades & Taul Katz
<b>Domestic Sales</b>	CAA Media Finance
<b>International Sales</b>	Best Friend Forever

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