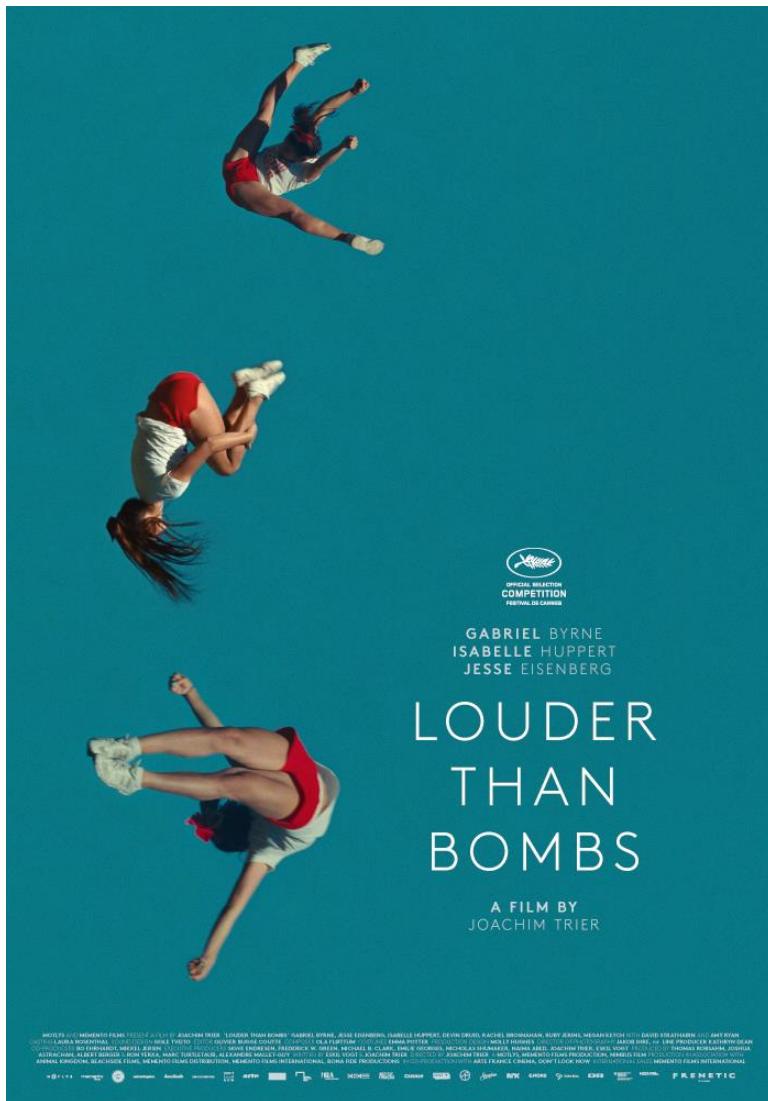


# louder than bombs



Ein Film von joachim trier

GABRIEL BYRNE ISABELLE HUPPERT JESSE EISENBERG

Press server: <http://www.frenetic.ch/fr/espace-pro/details//++/id/1028>

Kinostart: 14. Januar 2016

Dauer: 103 min

Pressebetreuung

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## **synopsis**

Eine bevorstehende Ausstellung zu Ehren der frühzeitig verstorbenen Fotografin Isabelle Reed zwingt den ältesten Sohn Jonah nach Hause zu kommen und Zeit mit seinem Vater Gene und dem verschlossenen jüngeren Bruder Conrad zu verbringen. Alle Versuche, zu den beiden wiedervereinten Söhnen durchzudringen, scheitern zunächst. Erst durch die Konfrontation mit ihrer Vergangenheit, finden die drei einen Weg, sich als Familie wiederzufinden.

## **comments from director joachim trier**

### **TELL US THE STORY BEHIND THE TITLE. WHAT IS IT IN REFERENCE TO? IS LOUDER THAN BOMBS A WAR STORY?**

I think we were looking for a title that mirrored the balance between the small and tender pains of family life set up against the great ambitions and experiences of a mother who is working abroad as a war photographer. The incomparability of pain is something which I find intriguing. Of course, it is the title of the band The Smiths' first American album, a compilation of their songs as they were approaching America for the first time. But the film is about neither war nor The Smiths. I also discovered that The Smiths borrowed the title from the American poet Elizabeth Smart, and her book By Grand Central Station I Sat Down and Wept. And I loved that those words had a specifically American provenance as I worked on this film set in the U.S.

### **WHAT IS THE ORIGIN OF THE PROJECT?**

After my first film Reprise, I got a lot of attention in the US. I started reading many scripts in English, and I had several offers. I met a lot of interesting people in the American film industry, but I couldn't find a project that I felt could express what I was concerned with and interested in exploring cinematically. I had a lot of ideas together with screenwriter Eskil Vogt, so it felt more natural to start from scratch than to take on these other scripts. You have to remember that I come from a country with a language that only 5 million people speak, so when I first wanted to make movies it was a natural thing for me to go to film school in London, where I made 3 award winning short films in English. Eskil and I always wanted to make films for an international audience, and it was a rewarding experience to have both Reprise and Oslo, August 31 st received so well in many different countries. It was especially rewarding to discover the paradox that it was the cultural specificity that made the films interesting and universal. Learning from that, we did a lot of extensive research on these American settings and characters before venturing into Louder Than Bombs. I honestly believe that more than being defined by your spoken language, as a filmmaker you stylistically create a story in your own cinematic language. Another thing about working in English was the possibility to work with incredible international actors, something that I have wanted to do for a long time. As a film fan from an early age, I grew up watching international films. As a young man it would be a natural occurrence to go to the Cinematheque in Oslo and in the same evening watch a

film by Louis Malle from France, Ozu from Japan, or Sidney Lumet from the U.S. Cinema to me has always been about transcending local language barriers.

#### **HOW FAMILIAR WERE YOU WITH WORKING IN THE US? TELL US YOUR IMPRESSIONS ABOUT THIS AMERICAN EXPERIENCE.**

Of course, shooting in New York, the team was much much bigger than I have ever experienced in Norway. But as a director, your responsibility is always to create a work environment around the camera that fits your story and your actors, so procedurally I went about it as any other previous production. I was able to have real rehearsal time with the actors and tried to achieve the same type of collaborative trust that I've been fortunate enough to have on my prior films – it's of course essential regardless of where you work. And as the shooting proceeded, I looked over at my close collaborator, cinematographer Jakob Ihre, and said: "This is just what we usually do, isn't it? It's not so different?" It's the same challenge as always, trying to take risks, be in the moment, and create a safe working environment, where actors are allowed to explore rather than have to hit the nail on the head every time.

#### **THIS IS ALSO THE FIRST TIME YOU WORK WITH SUCH A LARGE ENSEMBLE CAST AND ONE OF A VERY PRESTIGIOUS AND EXPERIENCED LEVEL... WAS THIS INTIMIDATING AT ALL?**

Well, making any film can at certain stages feel intimidating. I think all the actors were very generous, so I never felt intimidated. They took their characters seriously, and all contributed to the film in their own personal way, which is all you can hope for.

#### **ON GENE PLAYED BY GABRIEL BYRNE.**

Gene is a portrait of a modern father character. By modern, I mean that he has, at least compared to the classical patriarch, taken on more emotional responsibility at home. He's become a teacher and given up his career as an actor to be closer to his kids. Gene is trying to keep his family together, but he is struggling to connect with his 15 year old son Conrad, who is engulfed in computer games and an online life, which is difficult to understand for his father. In many ways, this creates some comedic elements as well, like in one scene when Gene tries to create an avatar and venture into an online game to meet his son, with unforeseen consequences. There is something warm and tender about Gene. His strength lies in his ability to see others, but he is grappling to figure out he wants for himself, to figure out what he wants to do with his own life. Gabriel Byrne's blend of intelligence and warmth was very important to achieve Gene as a character. We spoke about how we were tired of the clichéd portrayals we have seen in so many stories, of the authoritarian father that sons have to prove themselves to. Gene is in many ways unusual in his emotional responsibilities, and Gabriel adds a lot of truth and humour to the character. I think he is the type of actor who responds well to the theme of the film's story. He really manages to have a bigger perspective on the film.

### **ON JONAH, PLAYED BY JESSE EISENBERG.**

Jonah is a bit of an over-achiever, who feels that he was closer to his mom than anyone else. In many ways, his story is about delayed grief, and how the facade of a young ambitious academic who has just become a father himself crumbles when re-evaluating the image of his mother. Jesse Eisenberg is a precise and incredibly funny actor, and I am grateful that he is exploring a new type of character, perhaps showing a more vulnerable side of himself in the role of Jonah. Jesse in real life is a very smart and creative guy, who is also a great theatre writer, which many people are not aware of. It was inspiring to discuss dramaturgy with him as well as his character.

### **ON CONRAD, PLAYED BY DEVIN DRUID.**

Conrad is a shy 15 year old kid, who at the outset of the story seems to have been struck the hardest by the loss of his mother, but as the story progresses, he is in many ways the most surprising of all the characters. I wanted to talk about how a person's social behaviour often does not represent their inner life, and I tried to find cinematic ways to explore that through this character: showing his emotional life and his romantic side, both in approaching girls and in his strong need to express himself in unexpected ways. Finding someone to play Conrad was perhaps the biggest challenge I foresaw when preparing Louder Than Bombs. Finding Devin Druid was one of the film's biggest victories. He is just a really great actor, there is not much more to say about it. I am very proud to have had a chance to work with him before everyone soon will discover this great talent.

### **ABOUT PHOTOGRAPHER ISABELLE REED, PLAYED BY ISABELLE HUPPERT.**

I wanted to talk about family and the cost of ambition, the incredible and admirable work of a conflict journalist set up against an infinite need to be present in ones family life, a conflict I believe many people can relate to. Isabelle Reed is inspired by several prominent war photographers I have either met or studied, but it is not a story about that profession per se. The story is about parent-child relationships, and the struggles of a family.

I have been a fan of Isabelle Huppert for a long time, and I first met her a few years ago at the Stockholm film festival. I stayed in touch with her, and I was thrilled when she accepted to play the mother in our family. Even though she is not the character that is on-screen the most, her presence is always looming in the story as it proceeds. I cannot imagine any other actor playing this enigmatic and intriguing mother.

### **TELL US ABOUT THE PHOTOS THAT REPRESENT ISABELLE REED.**

I did a lot of research on war photography, even though the film is not about just that. In Oslo, August 31 st , the character had a background as a drug addict, but the story is about other parts of his life as they play out. Even though the addiction element was just a backdrop, I wanted to research it and portray it accurately. In the same way, in Louder Than Bombs, I wanted all the details of her life as a war photographer to be presented in an accurate way. We had a lot of support from great photo agencies, such as Magnum and VII.

We have used a few different photographers to create Isabelle's photographic work in the film, amongst them there are many pictures from the French photographer Alexandra Boulat, who is one of those in the field that I admire very much. There is enormous humanity apparent in her pictures, combined with a photographic sensitivity that sets them apart.

**THE FILM SEEKS TO REVOLVE EMOTIONALLY AROUND THE INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE MEMORIES OF ISABELLE. TELL US ABOUT THIS DYNAMIC AND ALSO YOUR ON-GOING FASCINATION WITH FOCUSING ON MEMORY IN YOUR WORK.**

I find our memories and our idea of self and identity based on these memories fascinating and puzzling. In the film, I try to show the specific process of remembering. I wanted to avoid the type of grief drama where we are there when the mother dies and everyone is sitting around the room crying. Our story happens three years after the mother has passed away, and tracks the domino effect of her tragic death and the implication it has on the three men as they try to move forward in their individual lives. It is interesting how family life forces you to look at yourself and re-evaluate yourself constantly. Why do siblings experience parents so differently? How can you find a shared language, while sometimes needing to break away? There is both despair and hope in memories. During grief, people often describe a feeling of a static, unchanging sense of memory. As I try to show in the film, the constant re-evaluation of who we are gives us the ability to liberate ourselves from these locked ideas. There is a scene where Conrad, the younger brother, remembers a childhood memory of hide-and-seek with his mother. While he thinks about this for the first time in years, he realises the mother's perspective of the same scene, and how she must have also wanted to play this game, since she obviously would have known where he was hiding all along. Within our personal sense of our own history, there is always a liberating possibility for other perspectives. Therefore I see the sometimes melancholic Louder Than Bombs as ultimately optimistic.

**MUCH OF THE FILM IS TOLD IN NON-LINEAR FASHION. TELL US ABOUT THIS ARTISTIC CHOICE.**

These days, a lot of character dramas have emigrated to the tv screens. I am still a strong believer in the unique space of cinema. It is a great place to contemplate human stories. A close-up on a cinema screen is unique. It is an intimate human encounter that you cannot have in any other art form. When do you see a face that large in life? I try to create stories with multiple perspectives, hopefully to gain some sort of insight into these characters' lives. It is not unusual in a novel to move between time layers and to go inside different characters' heads within one story. It puzzles me that this is considered such a unusual thing in cinema. The bigger the machine around you gets as a filmmaker, the more it is important to remember that it is fun to experiment with storytelling. Keep the big machine close to your skin. It is only through your personal perspective as a storyteller that you can get close to the audience. It has nothing to do with budget or how many big trailers you are able to have on set.

## **main cast**

### **GABRIEL BYRNE (AS GENE REED)**

Gabriel Byrne has starred in more than 60 feature films including Miller's Crossing, The Usual Suspects, Excalibur, Into The West, Little Women, Dead Man, The End Of Violence, The Man In The Iron Mask, Vanity Fair, Jindabyne, and Wah-Wah. On Broadway, Gabriel received a Tony nomination for his performance in Eugene O'Neill's Moon For The Misbegotten and he won the Outer Critics Circle Award for his performance in A Touch Of The Poet. Gabriel starred as "Dr. Paul Weston" in HBO's In Treatment, for which he received the Golden Globe Award and was nominated twice for the Emmy.

### **JESSE EISENBERG (AS JONAH REED)**

Jesse Eisenberg is a playwright and actor; he can currently be seen on-stage in his new play "The Spoils" for The New Group. Previously Eisenberg wrote and starred alongside Vanessa Redgrave in his play, "The Revisionist" and in 2011 he wrote and starred in the play "Asuncion" at the Cherry Lane Theatre (Drama League Nomination). Films include The Double, Night Moves, The Social Network (Academy Award nomination), Now You See Me, Zombieland, Adventureland, The Squid and the Whale and Roger Dodger. Upcoming films include The End of the Tour, American Ultra, Louder Than Bombs and Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice in the role of Lex Luthor. He is a frequent contributor to The New Yorker Magazine and the author of the forthcoming collection "Bream Gives Me Hiccups," from Grove Press.

### **DEVIN DRUID (AS CONRAD REED)**

Devin Druid, a Virginia native, is an up and coming young talent with work that shows a depth seldom seen at his age. He developed a love for performing after receiving a standing ovation at his school talent show, which brought him the opportunity to serve as the front-man for an all-teen rock band. He stumbled into an acting career while accompanying his younger brother to auditions. Since then, Devin has performed in a number of films playing: a bully, an urban skater, a witness to a murder, troubled teen, and a cold-blooded killer. The emotional depth and complexity of the character Milo in Disgrace allowed Devin to take his craft to the next level. He received critical praise as a guest-star on the FX series Louie as Young Louie, acting opposite Jeremy Renner and F. Murray Abraham. Devin was featured as Christopher, the son of Frances McDormand and Richard Jenkins, in the HBO mini-series Olive Kitteridge. Devin brings authenticity to his work and has the ability to give nuanced, emotional performances. In his spare time he enjoys video games, anime, graphic design, and spoiling his cat, Nayla.

## **ISABELLE HUPPERT (AS ISABELLE REED)**

Isabelle Huppert studied Russian at the French National Institute of Oriental Languages while taking Drama classes in Paris, having for teachers Jean-Laurent Cochet and Antoine Vitez at the Ecole de la rue Blanche and at the National Academy of Dramatic Arts. Her first appearances were immediately noticed, in Bertrand Blier's *Les Valseuses*, Liliane de Kermadec's *Aloise* or in *The Judge and the Assassin* by Bertrand Tavernier. She won a British Academy Award for Most Promising Newcomer for her role in *The Lacemaker*. Her affinity with Claude Chabrol allowed her to tackle all kinds of film genres: comedy in *The Swindle*, drama in *Story of Women*, film noir in *Merci pour le chocolat*, classical literary adaptation in *Madame Bovary*, and even political fiction in *Comedy of Power*. She has received several times Best Actress awards for her performances in Claude Chabrol's films: in Cannes for *Violette Nozière*, in Venice for *Story of Women*, in Moscow for *Madame Bovary*, and again in Venice as well as at the Césars (French Oscars) for *La Cérémonie*. Isabelle Huppert worked with renowned French film directors such as Jean-Luc Godard, André Téchiné, Maurice Pialat, Patrice Chéreau, Michael Haneke, Raoul Ruiz, Benoit Jacquot, Claire Denis, Christian Vincent, Laurence Ferreira Barbosa, Olivier Assayas, François Ozon, Anne Fontaine, Eva Ionesco, Joachim Lafosse, Serge Bozon or Catherine Breillat. She also worked with the great international directors like Michael Cimino, Joseph Losey, Otto Preminger, the Taviani's brothers, Marco Ferreri, Hal Hartley, David O' Russell, Werner Schroeter or Andrzej Wajda. She was recently seen in films by Rithy Panh, Brillante Mendoza and Hong Sang Soo. Venice awarded her for both her role in Patrice Chéreau's *Gabrielle* and her overall career with a Special Jury Golden Lion. In Cannes she received twice the Best Actress Award (the second time for Michael Haneke's *The Piano Teacher*), and was also appointed a Jury member, a Master of Ceremony and the President of the Jury for the 62nd edition of the prestigious festival. Beyond cinema, Isabelle Huppert leads an international career in the theatre. She has acted under the direction of Bob Wilson (*Virginia Woolf's Orlando*, Heiner Müller's *Quartett*), Peter Zadek (*William Shakespeare's Measure for Measure*), and Claude Régy, (*Sarah Kane's 4.48 Psychosis*, *Claudel's Joan of Arc at the Stake*), to name a few. She has also performed in Euripides' *Medea* directed by Jacques Lassalle and presented at the Avignon Festival, in Henrik Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler* directed by Eric Lacascade, in Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* directed by Krzysztof Warlikowski, Jean Genet's *The Maids* directed by Benedict Andrews, which was shown at the Sydney Theater Company and at the Lincoln Center Festival in New York City Center. This year she will be in Marivaux's *Les Faussettes* directed by Luc Bondy. Several films in which Isabelle Huppert stars will be released in the coming months. Three of them have been selected at the 2015 Cannes Film Festival – Joachim Trier's *Louder than Bombs* and Guillaume Nicloux's *Valley of Love* in the Official Competition and Samuel Benchetrit's *Asphalte* in *Séance Spéciale*. Isabelle Huppert was made Officer in the National Order of the Legion of Honour, Officer in the National Order of Merit and Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters in France.

## **AMY RYAN (AS HANNAH BRENNAN)**

Amy Ryan has completed five highly anticipated films in the past year: *Monster Trucks* for Paramount, a live-action/CGI hybrid, directed by Chris Wedge in which she co-stars with Barry

Pepper and Rob Lowe (May 29, 2015 release); Goosebumps for Sony (August 7, 2015) co-starring with Jack Black, to be directed by Rob Letterman and produced by Neal Moritz; Louder Than Bombs for director Joachim Trier in which she co-stars with Jesse Eisenberg, Gabriel Byrne and Isabelle Huppert; and Don Verdean for director Jared Hess, in which she stars with Sam Rockwell, Will Forte and Danny McBride which premiered at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival; and Steven Spielberg's Untitled Cold War Thriller for Dreamworks in which stars opposite Tom Hanks (October 16, 2015 release). In March 2015, she began shooting The Infiltrator in London for director Brad Furman, starring opposite Bryan Cranston. Ryan was just in theaters in the Oscar® —winning Birdman for director Alejandro González Iñárritu and Fox Searchlight, co-starring with Michael Keaton, Ed Norton, Emma Stone, Naomi Watts and Zach Galifianakis. The cast received the SAG Award for Outstanding Performance by a Cast in A Motion Picture. Prior to Birdman, Ryan was last seen on screen in writer/director Drake Doremus' Breathe In produced by Indian Paintbrush and Jonathan Schwartz, in which she starred with Guy Pearce and Felicity Jones. Other recent credits include Clear History directed by Greg Mottola for HBO in which she co-starred with Larry David and Jon Hamm and Devil's Knot directed by Atom Egoyan, co-starring with Colin Firth. For her acclaimed performance in Miramax's Gone Baby Gone, she was recognized with Academy Award, Golden Globe and SAG Award nominations for Best Supporting Actress. Additionally, she won numerous Best Supporting Actress awards including those from the National Board of Review, the Broadcast Film Critics Association, the New York Film Critics Circle and the L.A. Film Critics. Her other film credits include Win Win, Green Zone, Jack Goes Boating, Changeling, Before the Devil Knows You're Dead, Capote, Dan in Real Life, War of the Worlds, Keane, You Can Count On Me and The Missing Person. Ryan made her Broadway debut in Wendy Wasserstein's "The Sisters Rosensweig." For her work in the 2000 production of "Uncle Vanya," she was nominated for a Tony Award for Best Featured Actress in a Play. In 2005, she appeared as Stella in "A Streetcar Named Desire," earning her second Tony nomination. She also starred in Neil LaBute's "The Distance From Here" in London's West End. In 2013 she starred in Lisa D'Amour's critically acclaimed play "Detroit," directed by Anne Kauffman at Playwrights Horizons. Amy's television work includes her memorable portrayals as Holly Flax on The Office, Adele on In Treatment and Officer Beatrice 'Beadie' Russell on The Wire.

#### **DAVID STRATHAIRN (AS RICHARD WEISSMAN)**

David Strathairn won the Volpi Cup at the Venice Film Festival and earned nominations from the Academy, Golden Globe, Screen Actors Guild, BAFTA and Independent Spirit Awards for his compelling portrait of legendary CBS news broadcaster Edward R. Murrow in George Clooney's Oscar-nominated drama Good Night, and Good Luck. He won an Emmy for Best Supporting Actor in the HBO project, Temple Grandin in 2011 and was nominated in 2012 for his portrayal of John Dos Passos in HBO's Hemingway and Gellhorn. His 2005 Independent Spirit nomination was the fourth in a stellar career that dates back to his 1980 motion picture debut in John Sayles's first film, The Return of the Secaucus Seven. Strathairn subsequently collaborated with Sayles on seven titles, winning the IFP honor for his supporting performance in City of Hope, while collecting two additional nominations for Passion Fish and Limbo. Strathairn continued a busy screen career with co-starring roles in several critically acclaimed films, including Tim Robbins's directorial debut, Bob Roberts; Penny Marshall's A League of Their Own; Losing Isaiah; Sydney Pollack's The Firm; Sneakers; Taylor Hackford's

adaptation of the Stephen King novel Dolores Claiborne; and Jodie Foster's Home for the Holidays; as well as two projects with Curtis Hansen: The River Wild and the Oscar-winning L.A. Confidential, in which Strathairn shared a Screen Actors Guild Award nomination with the all-star ensemble cast. His additional movie credits include Memphis Belle, A Map of the World, Simon Birch, Lost in Yonkers, Missing in America, Michael Hoffman's adaptation of A Midsummer Night's Dream, Philip Kaufman's Twisted, The Bourne Ultimatum directed by Paul Greengrass, The Tempest starring opposite Helen Mirren and Steven Spielberg's Lincoln. David was most recently seen in "The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel" directed by John Madden.

#### **RACHEL BROSNAHAN (AS ERIN)**

Rachel has begun work on Season 2 of WGN-America's hit 1940's drama Manhattan. Other film and TV credits include the Netflix hit show House of Cards as call girl Rachel Posner, HBO's critically acclaimed miniseries Olive Kitteridge, recurring roles on NBC's The Blacklist and ABC's Black Box, Beautiful Creatures and the CBS miniseries The Dovekeepers & films Louder than Bombs (opposite Jesse Eisenberg) and Disney's The Finest Hours. She is a graduate of NYU's Tisch School of the Arts where she studied at The Lee Strasberg Theatre & Film Institute.

#### **RUBY JERINS (AS MELANIE)**

In addition to playing Grace on Nurse Jackie since 2009, Ruby Jerins Just completed filming Joachim Trier's highly anticipated feature Louder than Bombs, starring opposite Jesse Eisenberg, Gabriel Byrne and Isabelle Huppert. Ruby previously starred in Summit features', Remember Me playing opposite Robert Pattinson as well as opposite Leonardo DiCaprio in the Martin Scorsese feature, Shutter Island. The daughter of artist Edgar Jerins and actress Alana Jerins, and sister of child actress Sterling Jerins, Ruby made her début in the film The Wedding in 2001, alongside Jaid Barrymore and Stephen C. Bradbury, Playing the flower girl. Jerins has also guest-starred or recurred in television series such as Kidnapped, Law & Order, The Guiding Light, As The World Turns, Six Degrees and SNL. Jerins is currently attending the illustrious La Guardia High School in NYC where she continues to hone her craft.

#### **MEGAN KETCH (AS AMY)**

Upon graduating from New York University's Tisch School of The Arts, Megan Ketch landed the female lead in the ABC drama pilot Gotham. Since then she has appeared in numerous television shows including Blue Bloods, The Good Wife, Under The Dome, and Reckless. Her first feature debut was in The Big Wedding opposite Robert De Niro, Diane Keaton, and Amanda Seyfried. Most recently she finished Joachim Trier's Louder Than Bombs opposite Jesse Eisenberg and Amy Ryan.



## cast

Gene Gabriel  
Isabelle Isabelle  
Jonah Jesse  
Conrad Devin  
Hannah Amy  
Richard David  
Erin Rachel  
Melanie Ruby  
Amy Megan

BYRNE  
HUPPERT  
EISENBERG  
DRUID  
RYAN  
STRATHAIRN  
BROSNAHAN  
JERINS  
KETCH

## main crew

directed by  
written by  
director of photography  
production designer  
editor  
costume designer  
casting  
composer  
sound design  
produced by

Joachim TRIER  
Eskil VOGT & Joachim TRIER  
Jakob IHRE, FSF  
Molly HUGHES  
Olivier BUGGE COUTTÉ  
Emma POTTER  
Laura ROSENTHAL  
Ola FL ØTTUM  
Gisle TVEITO  
Thomas ROBSAHM & Joshua ASTRACHAN

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distribution switzerland

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Alexandre MALLET-GUY  
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