

LOG LINE

After a brilliant but mentally unhinged pianist murders a guard in the asylum where he is confined, a desperate warden gambles on staging one final comeback concert. Unwittingly entangling a delusional piano tuner, a newborn in danger, and a web of obsession and revenge that will culminate in a reality-shattering musical climax.



Ava
&
the Piano Tuner

Written & Directed
by
Emanuele Secci

COMING SOON



SYNOPSIS

In a world where music and madness intertwine, "Ava & The Piano Tuner" takes us on a thrilling and cost-efficient ride through obsession, love, and revenge.

This genre-bending tale centers around Michael Benedict, a brilliant concert pianist. He's a genius of the utmost caliber, but with a frightful downside: His brilliance, and the physical and psychological abuse he suffered as a child at the hand of his drunken father along with the loss of his mother, has driven him to the brink of insanity! Confined to the Saint Agnes Institute - an asylum dedicated solely to his care - Michael's fate takes an even darker turn when he murders a guard. And he does it cold-heartedly, brutally, or so it seems, setting off a chain of events that will engulf the lives of everyone around him. And change them, forever.

Like Jonathan Spear, the warden of the asylum, who's obsessed with a feverish quest: he needs Michael's return to the stage, just one time, for a final, life-altering performance. The pianist has just committed a murder, though. A heinous deed that completely upends Jonathan's plan... alongside the warden's very career and personal life. Jonathan finds himself smack-dab in a vortex of unfortunate and comedic mishaps, which he tries to overcome with his stress-management skills... or complete lack thereof!

Yet Jonathan still has one chance at fulfillment: let go of his ego and learn what's really important in life.

And then there's Ava - the mysterious newborn at the heart of this story. She is in a situation of grave danger. Her guardian, Albert, truly cares for her, but he's an elderly piano tuner who can barely look after himself. A catatonic-schizophrenic man who has to grapple with his own fantastical delusions, all while becoming entangled with Michael, with an institutionalized woman searching for her lost child, and with aggressive civil servants hellbent on taking Ava away from him.

It is in a musical climax that the truth is revealed. Irreversibly so. A concert where Michael brings all the characters together to witness his most epic performance yet. One so powerful that each character finds their last opportunity for the cathartic release they desperately need.

What is fact? What is a figment of our imagination? "Ava & The Piano Tuner" is an allegory of life itself, challenging our perceptions of reality, sanity and madness, and leaving us to wonder...

What is the true cost of genius?

INSPIRATION

The inspiration for this film comes directly from the writer's own life.

A concert pianist himself, he grew up in an environment defined by discipline, sacrifice, and relentless pressure. He began studying music at the age of five and started piano at nine, giving his first recital that same year.

Emanuele Secci vividly remembers the fear he felt walking into his lessons at the conservatory in Europe. There were days when he would cry before opening the classroom door, forcing himself to regain composure and hide the immense pressure of having to be the best, every single day. As he went on to win several piano competitions across Europe, his teenage years slowly disappeared into countless hours of practice. While his peers were playing after school and discovering the freedom of adolescence, he was confined to repetition and perfection – practice, practice, practice.

The intensity of his training often felt overwhelming, even abusive, as it came at the cost of a normal childhood and teenage life. Now, as an adult, Emanuele Secci comprehends both sides of that experience. He acknowledges the extraordinary value of the rigorous musical education he received and the discipline it instilled in him. That foundation has shaped not only his career as a pianist, but also his work as an actor and director.

The story emerges from this duality; the beauty and the cost of excellence, the triumph and the sacrifice behind artistic achievement.



CHARACTERS

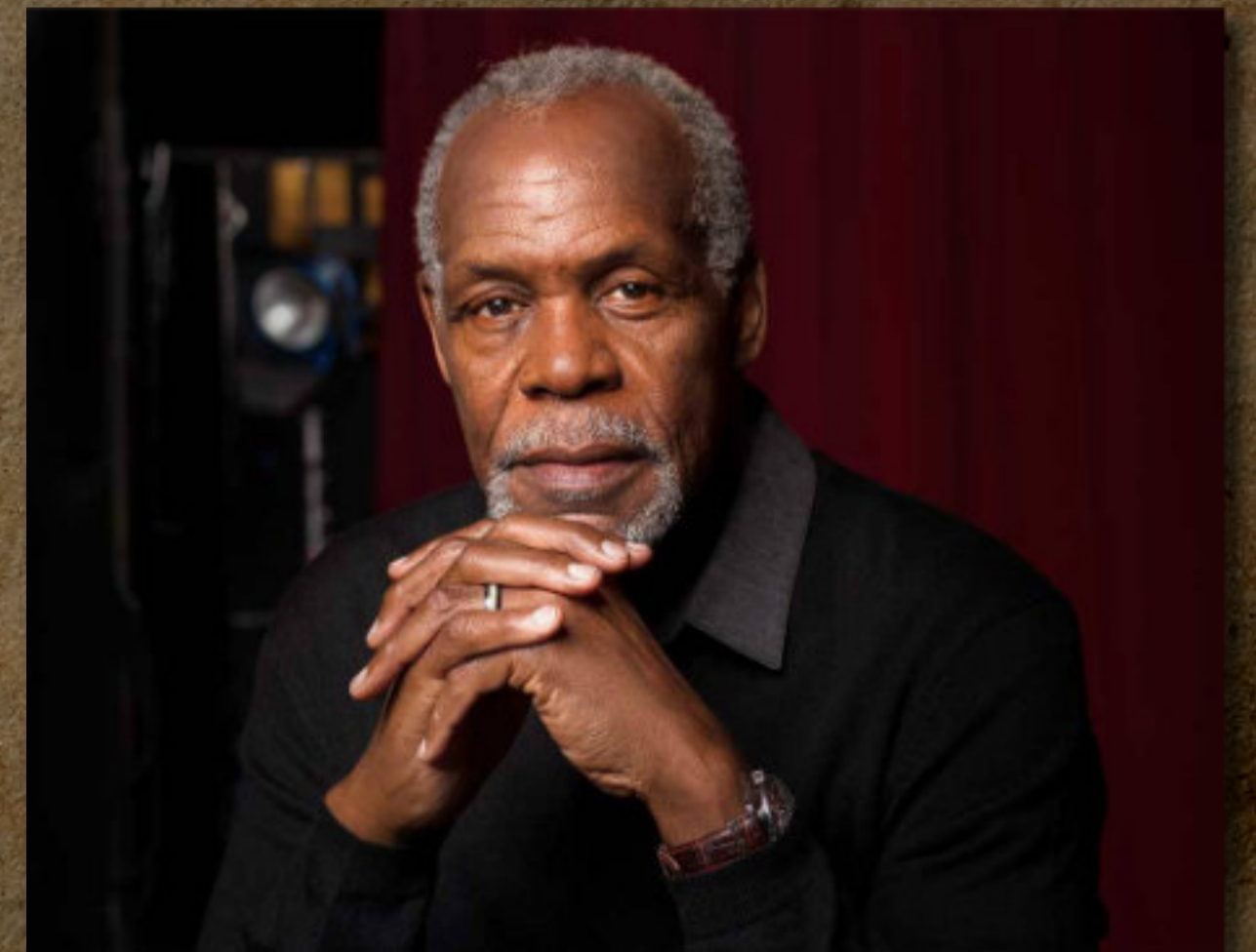
MICHAEL



Michael (the pianist), in his 50s, is an extraordinarily gifted pianist. Music is not simply his passion; it is his sole reason for existing. He demands absolute perfection from himself and from anyone who dares to enter his world. Consumed by obsession and convinced that true art requires sacrifice, he will eliminate, without hesitation, anything or anyone that threatens his pursuit of musical purity.

ALBERT

Albert (the piano tuner), in his 80's, is a quiet, gentle presence. He moves through the world with a distant calm. His condition leaves him largely withdrawn and unresponsive, often lost in long stretches of silence. He rarely speaks, and when he does, his words feel fragile-like fragments drifting up from somewhere far away.





AVA

Ava (14 years old):

Ava has grown into someone striking and self-possessed. Intelligent beyond her years, perceptive, and emotionally controlled, she possesses a quiet power that draws others in.

Her beauty is undeniable, but it is her intensity that truly sets her apart.

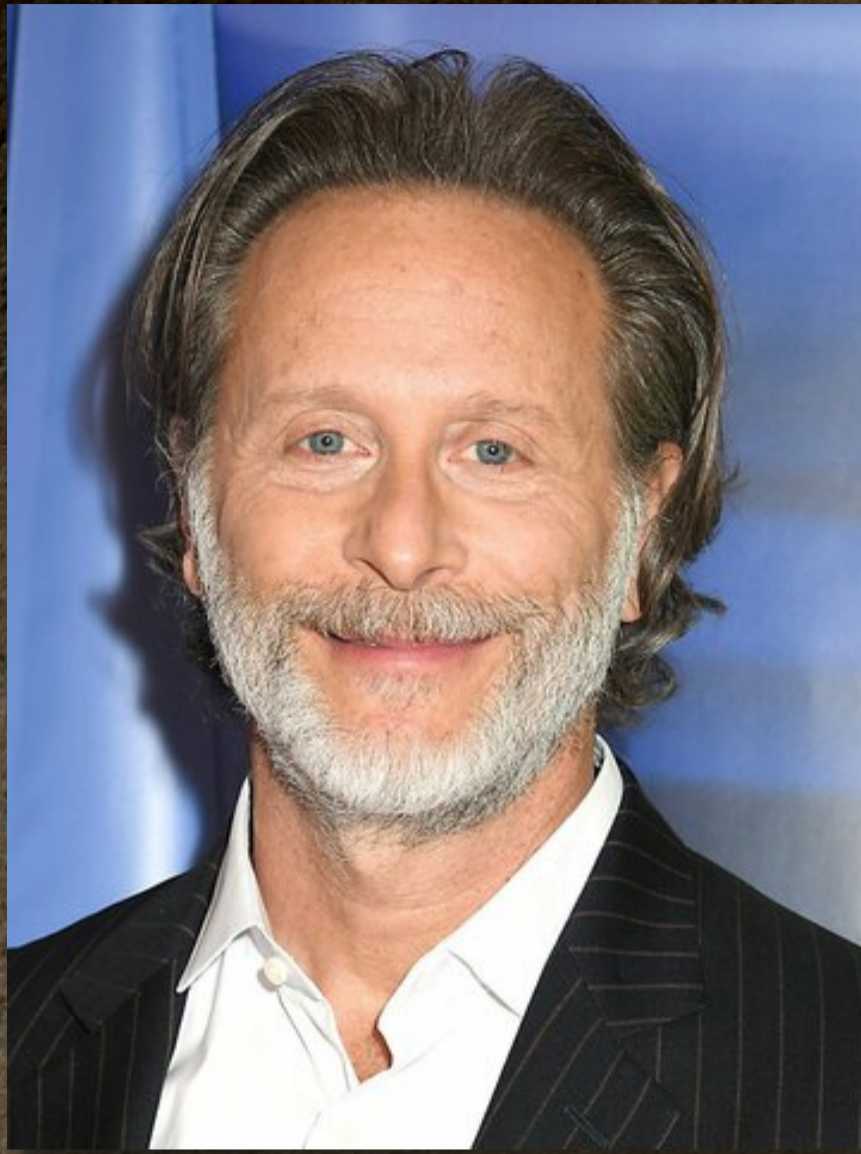
Ava (as a baby):

An eerily quiet child, Ava almost never cries. Her stillness is unsettling rather than peaceful, as if she is always watching, absorbing more than an infant should. Even in silence, she carries a quiet, inexplicable presence.



JONATHAN

Jonathan Spears, 40s-60s, is the warden of the asylum; a highly educated, measured, and outwardly principled man. He believes society must be cleansed of selfishness and moral decay, and he views his role as both administrator and moral guardian. Captivated by Michael's extraordinary talent, Jonathan separates the artist from the crimes. Where others see only a murderer, he perceives transcendence. To him, the pianist's gift borders on the divine proof that greatness can emerge from even the darkest soul. Convinced that such brilliance belongs to the world, Jonathan is determined to see Michael perform publicly, no matter the ethical cost.



Dr. LEE

Dr. Lee, in her 40s, is both Michael's wife and his attending psychiatrist; a brilliant, composed, and deeply perceptive clinician. As the physician responsible for monitoring Michael's mental state at the asylum, she walks a perilous line between professional duty and personal loyalty, determined to understand the fractured mind of the man she married without losing herself in the process.





DR. HASKELL

A career professional who takes pride in appearances. Polished and meticulously courteous, she leans into formality a bit too heavily, as if rehearsing the role of the “perfect doctor.” Her politeness can feel performative—pleasant on the surface, but rarely revealing what she truly thinks. She values order, reputation, and maintaining control, sometimes at the expense of authenticity.

NURSE GILL

Confident and striking, and quite voluptuous – she’s accustomed to turning heads the moment she enters a room. Though others often reduce her to her looks, she’s far sharper than they expect. She carries herself with a casual boldness—like someone who could be chewing gum and running the floor at the same time. Beneath the poised exterior is a highly competent, perceptive professional who knows exactly what she’s doing and doesn’t need validation to prove it.





THOMAS WITHAKER

A polished and successful television journalist at the height of his career. Sharp, articulate, and instinctively curious. Thomas feels the pull of something deeper—an untold story, a greater purpose, something that matters beyond headlines and ratings.

JINBO

Sharp and efficient. High-energy and direct, she moves fast and expects everyone else to keep up. Fearless in a debate and never shy about speaking her mind, Jinbo is a driven go-getter who thrives under pressure and doesn't back down easily.





LYNN

ATTACHED - CHI-HUA LEE-SECCI

Jonathan's wife, in her 30's - 40's. Elegant. Noble. Disappointed in her relationship with Jonathan. She loves him, but he is always working and trying to save the world instead of focusing on his family (her).

DIRECTOR SMITH

He is a man in his 60's - 70's. He serves as the director of the county's mental health department. A wealthy and influential man whose judgment is clouded by his own narcissism. Arrogant and presumptuous, he carries himself with an air of unquestioned superiority.





PAULA MAY

ATTACHED - TANYA MEMME

A famous television host and former beauty queen—once crowned Miss Universe—who has successfully reinvented herself as the face of a popular children's show. Strikingly beautiful and impeccably polished, Paula radiates confidence that borders on vanity. She is self-absorbed, fiercely protective of her fame, and rarely interested in anything that doesn't revolve around her image. Yet behind the bright smiles and cheerful on-screen persona lies a lingering question: is Paula truly real, or only a figure in Albert's imagination?

THE HIPPIE

A German, Swiss, or Austrian drifter who lingers around the hospital parking lot. A longtime drug user, he moves through life quietly and without demands. Gentle, peaceful, and deeply kind, he asks for little from the world—only the simple acknowledgment that he, too, is a human being worthy of being seen.



BUDGET

SAG-AFTRA

(LBA)

\$1.5 MILLION

- New York Film Production Tax Incentive -

AVA & THE PIANO TUNER



Where brilliance meets madness, no one leaves unchanged.

CONTACT

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