

WRITTEN BY AND STARRING ASHLEY GIANNI

*No Rules*

DIRECTED BY CATRIONA RUBENIS - STEVENS

# Logline

In the glittery '90s, a rambunctious Jersey Drag Queen and her best Judy go to extreme lengths to realize their dream of opening their own artistic sanctuary!

*"To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar" meets "My Cousin Vinny"*



ON  
WASHINGTON

and  
rights

NOVEMBER

Everybody's  
gay Kimmy,  
it's the '90s.

Manhattan

Trade



I am out  
therefore  
I am

ALL  
NEE  
IS LO

WHERE PRIDE  
STONEWALL  
JUNE 30  
THE STONEWALL INN...  
REVOLTER...  
REFUSED...  
OF THE...  
OBJECT...  
PROTESTERS AND POLICE...  
DAYS—NOW KNOWN AS THE STONEWALL...  
—WASH CROWDS...  
THIS WEEKEND...  
NEW YORK...  
NEW YORK...  
NEW YORK...

**Top 5% of All Discoverable Scripts on Coverfly**

**"VISA DECLINED IS OFFICIALLY THE BEST DRAG NAME EVER! FUN, HEART-WARMING, SPARKLY. BRIMMING WITH LOVE, VERVE, AND HUMOR. EXTRAORDINARILY TIMELY GIVEN THE ATTACKS ON DRAG AS AN ART FORM AND LGBTQ+ KIDS"**

"THERE IS A LARGE CAST OF CHARACTERS, A LOT OF WHICH ARE WELL-DEVELOPED AND BRING SOMETHING UNIQUE TO THE STORY.. BUT I'LL FOCUS ON VISA DECLINED AND ANGELA, WHO ARE, WITHOUT A DOUBT, THE MOST ENGAGING ELEMENT OF THE STORY. THEIR DYNAMIC IS SWEET AND FUN, AND WHILE THE IDEA OF GETTING MONEY TO OPEN A PARTICULAR PLACE ISN'T SOMETHING NEW, WE CAN'T LOOK AWAY OR DO ANYTHING ELSE THAN ROOT FOR THEM AS THEY ARE DELIGHTFUL, AND THEY FEEL LIKE GREAT REPRESENTATIONS OF THEIR COMMUNITY"

**SLAMDANCE**

**THE GOLDEN SCRIPT COMPETITION**



# Summary

In 1992 New Jersey, at the boom of drag culture and amidst the raging AIDS epidemic, drag queen Visa Declined and best friend Angela Caruso find themselves at a standstill in their creative endeavors while desperately trying to build a community to call their own. Their dream of one day owning their own bar where they can produce their own shows and host community events is becoming less of a reality as they approach their mid-thirties and feel societal pressure to "grow up" and "get a real job". Nonetheless, Visa's an optimist, Angela is stubborn, and neither of them are fulfilled by the idea of a traditional and ordinary life. But how can two struggling artists scrape together the money for a down payment? They get creative, of course!

Set in the infamous Garden State and brought to life with nostalgic 1990s club music, *No Rules*, written by and starring New Jersey native Ashley Gianni, is a film that celebrates friendship, queerness, and the power of femininity, all while empowering the viewer to pursue a fulfilled life even if it means breaking the rules!

Vito's

SERVER	TABLE	GUESTS	CHECK NUMBER
	7	2	984796

Long island ice tea \$3-

Youngling \$1.50

2 Shots \$1-

quit this dump and get  
a real fuckin job!  
-W

Thank You TOTAL 5.50

## CREATOR STATEMENT

# No Rules

I've really leaned into the idea of 'No Rules'. It is Camp—it is Theatre—it is Drag! But it's Film, it's accessible, it's Welcoming! It invites the audience to engage and participate. No Rules encourages a "cult classic midnight showing" viewing experience that creates community! The script should serve as a blueprint left open for interpretation and choice, and encourage every department to break rules in every sense of the creative process and execution! No Rules is a celebration!

I believe deeply in the transformational power of storytelling; it is why I am an artist and filmmaker. When you can connect to someone on an emotional level, you can change their heart and mind. It is my hope that No Rules, which celebrates the power of femininity, can inspire more acceptance for and the celebration of feminine presentation and values. I hope that No Rules can provide healing to anyone suffering, for anyone battling the heteronormative, and for anyone struggling to find their community. This film aims to encourage viewers to embrace their own definitions of themselves, break the rules, and live out the dreams that set their soul on fire! A little To Wong Foo and a little My Cousin Vinny, No Rules is my ode to my childhood growing up in the suburbs of New Jersey, and my love letter to all of the Drag Queens who have helped shape my identity.



HATE HATE

# Ashley Gianni



**Writer, Producer, Angela.** Ashley Gianni is an Italian Jew from New Jersey - aka a Pizza Bagel! She is an award-winning actress, comedian, and creator with experience in film, television, and theatre. Ashley holds a BFA in Theatre Performance from Chapman University. Most recently, Ashley starred in the award-winning short film *Gone Tomorrow*, directed by TC Grey. Additionally, you can catch Ashley as Karen Cane in *Community Theater Christmas* currently streaming on Amazon. Some of Ashley's most notable on-screen credits include DJ Pooh's *Grow House*, Jeff Probst's *Kiss Me*, and Steve Anderson's *The White Orchid*.

Ashley has produced; web content, sketch comedy, live improv and stand up shows, as well as short and feature length films including festival-selected film, *Moving Millie* (starring as Millie). Ashley runs Gianni Marketing specializing in brand development and marketing for entertainment professionals.

Ashley is a proud SAG-AFTRA member and is represented by Momentum Talent and Literary Agency. [www.ashleygianni.com](http://www.ashleygianni.com)

# Catriona Rubenis-Stevens

DIRECTOR

Catriona Rubenis-Stevens is a multi-award winning director and producer and was part of the team that went to the 93rd Academy Awards with the best live action short film nominee; *Feeling Through*.

Directing credits include over a dozen short films that have screened at Slamdance, Hollyshorts Film Festival, Sci-Fi London and Heartland, music videos for Broadway Cares, LUX and On The Quays, multiple web/digital series including *Brainpop*, *Speak American*, *Maestro's Magical Music Box* and *The Scoop*, and spots for Cartier and Money Map Press. Catriona was recently commissioned by Speak.a Technology in Hangzhou China to write, direct and produce over 50 videos for an English language learning app specifically aimed at preschoolers in China to aid them in their study of English.

Outside of her own filmmaking career, Catriona serves as a mentor at Reel Works, and later this year she is opening her own mentorship program in New Jersey offering professional shadowing opportunities to pre-college youth. [www.catrionarubenis-stevens.com](http://www.catrionarubenis-stevens.com)



Laura Scarano is an award-winning film producer originally from rural New Jersey. Her mission has always been to elevate artists, building them a platform to impact others and present their work to the world. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Art History from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY, and remained in the borough for over a decade. Although she will always be a proud New Yorker at heart, she now produces films predominately from Los Angeles, CA.

Laura's credits total a dozen short films. Her debut feature film "Riley", premiered in 2023 at the Calgary International Film Festival, and she is in post-production on two other features. Additional festivals include: HollyShorts Film Festival, Urbanworld Film Festival, Montclair Film Festival, and more. Over the past 10 years, she has worked in the fundraising space within annual giving and major gifts at institutions including Columbia University School of the Arts and American Film Institute.

When not collaborating with filmmakers, you will find her and her partner at the mercy of their Labrador Retrievers, Rothko and Eggleston.

[www.laurascarano.com](http://www.laurascarano.com)

LAURA SCARANO



PRODUCER



Danielle Beckmann  
Co-Producer & Val

Danielle Beckmann is a bicoastal actress, producer, writer, and filmmaker with a penchant for creating community in the film industry. In 2019, Beckmann produced and starred in the award-winning narrative short film LIZA ANONYMOUS, which made its world premiere debut at the 2021 Tribeca Film Festival. The short received critical acclaim and she is now reprising her role as Liza in the feature version. In 2022, Beckmann produced and starred in the dark comedy short TIKI BAR FUNERAL HOME that premiered at Dances With Films, and likewise produced and starred in the dark comedy short EX-HUSBAND where she plays opposite SNL vet Bobby Moynihan. Beckmann also portrays the character of Sam in the award-winning horror comedy SAM & KIKI which is on the festival circuit now. She most recently produced the short film CURTAIN CALL, where she was proud to assemble a crew where over 50% were female-identifying. Beckmann is slated for her directorial debut with the short comedy DR. SAM starring Lucie Arnaz, as well as her own horror comedy DÍA DE LA MARIA.

You can catch her hosting panels at WonderCon and San Diego Comic-Con promoting her table-top show NOVEL CHRONICLES (a crowning achievement of her nerd life.)

She is the proud co-founder of her production company Brooklyn Quarter and currently resides in Los Angeles with her husband and beloved house plants.





# Visual References



Visual References

Bitch!

Wolves and Smiles

Italian SAUS

HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS WITHOUT REALLY TRYING  
A BILLIONAIRE

By actress Patricia Bass and actor John Kluge in 1981...	Director Carolyn Weston and lyricist Henry Bernis, though hit's just worth
0,000,000	\$400,000,000

seven determined Cinderellas who found true love—and true loot

How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying



NOTICE

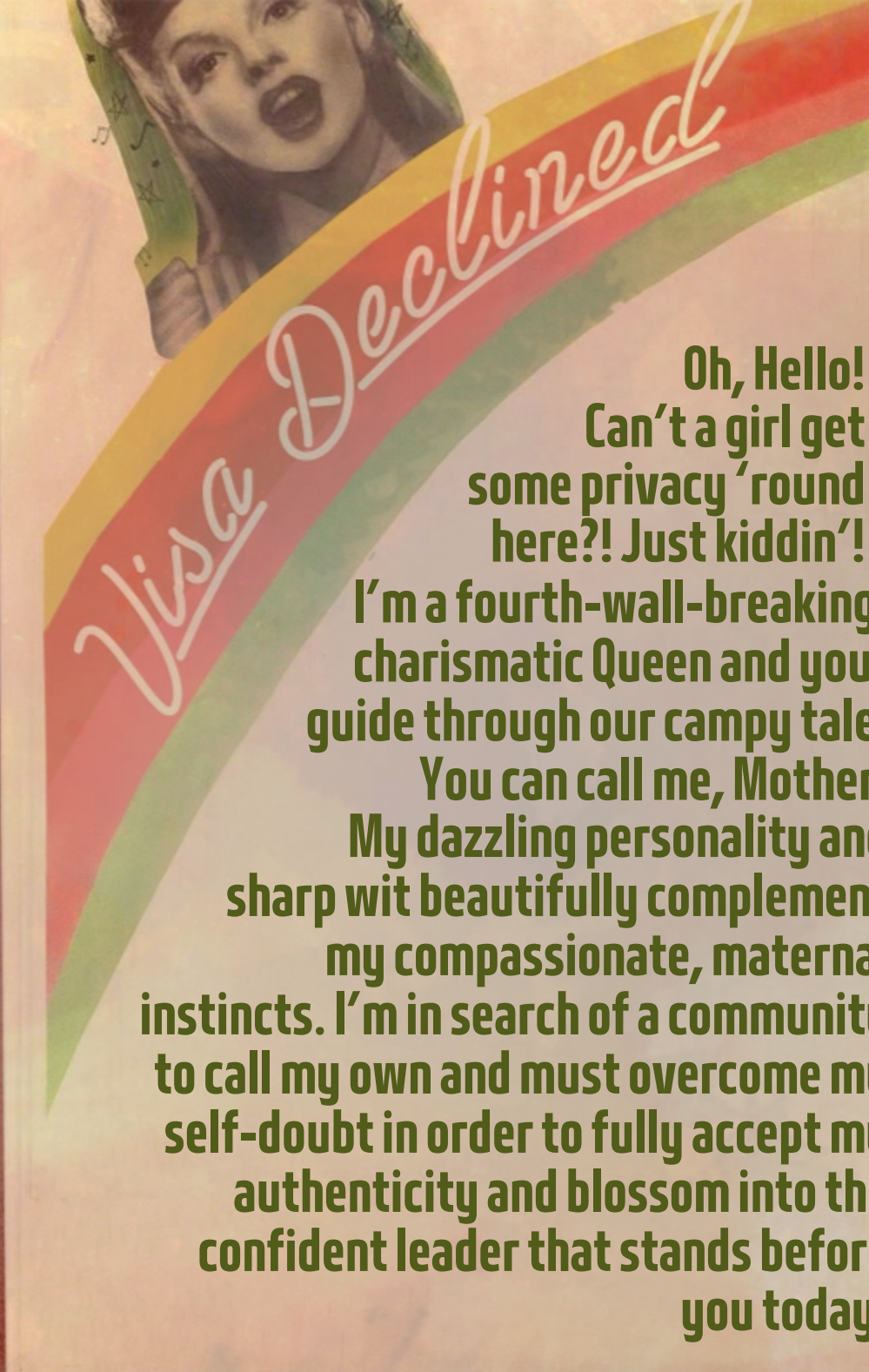


companions  
TURTIS  
COMMON

# Angela Marie Caruso

Angela, a down-and-out cocktail waitress with an artist's soul, has never played by the rules! She is a stubborn woman who masks her pain and fear of abandonment with a forceful personality and a bottle of Vodka! Angela needs to overcome her stubborn, self-destructive ways in order to save her relationship with Visa and ultimately, secure the money for their bar!

Inspired By  
Marisa Tomei in My Cousin Vinny  
Melanie Griffith in Working Girl  
Drea de Matteo in The Sopranos



Oh, Hello!  
Can't a girl get  
some privacy 'round  
here?! Just kiddin'!

I'm a fourth-wall-breaking,  
charismatic Queen and your  
guide through our campy tale.  
You can call me, Mother!  
My dazzling personality and  
sharp wit beautifully complement  
my compassionate, maternal  
instincts. I'm in search of a community  
to call my own and must overcome my  
self-doubt in order to fully accept my  
authenticity and blossom into the  
confident leader that stands before  
you today!



# RICKI

(Erica) Ricki Stone (40/50s) is the savvy, forward-thinking new general manager of the Local Bank. Ricki was transferred to save this branch, but unbeknownst to her, the bank is past the point of no return! When the bank eventually sells, Ricki learns that she was hired to take the blame. Will Ricki decide to take one last action as GM, and invest in Visa and Angela's bar?

## Vito Delluci Jr.

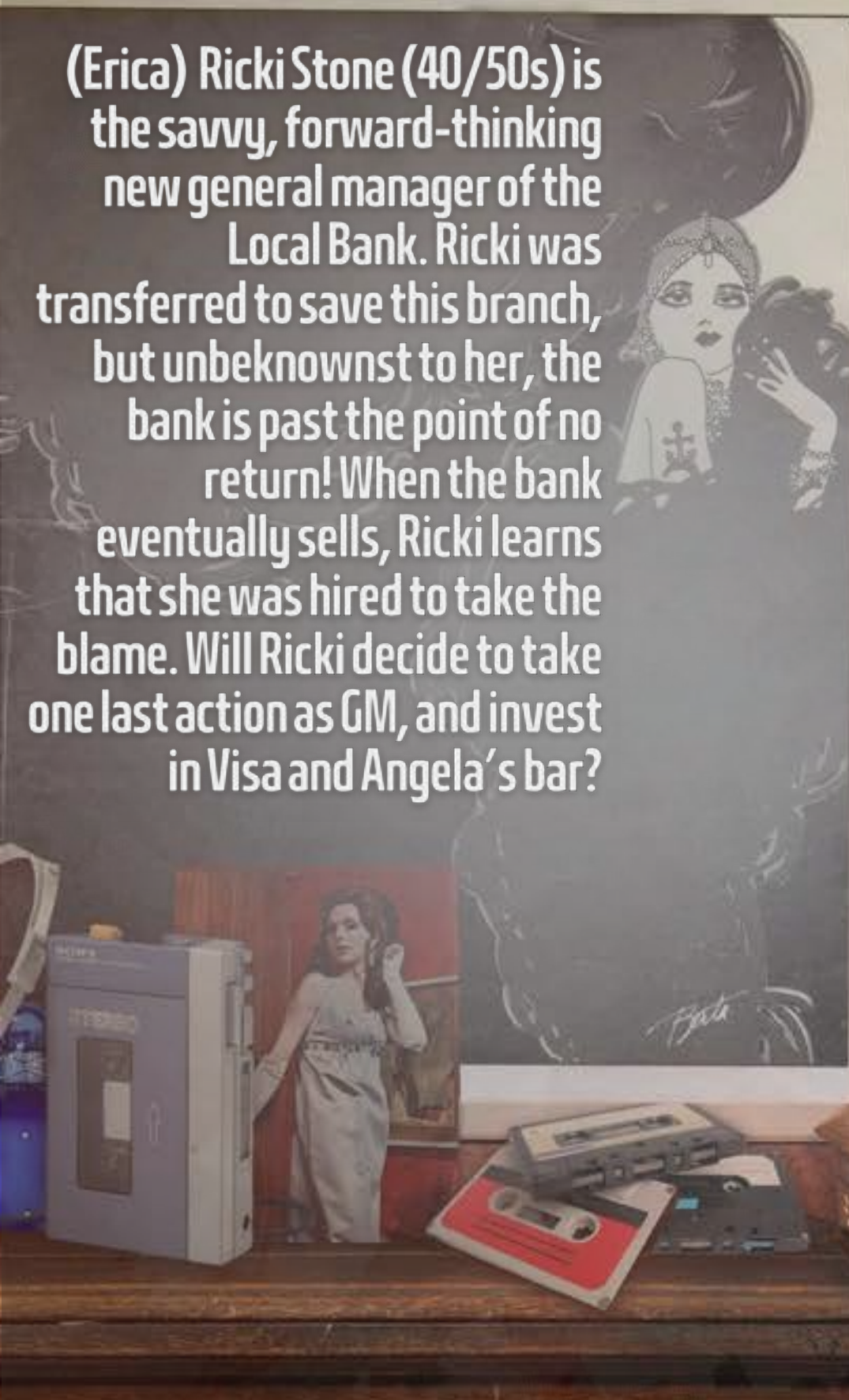
Vito Delluci Jr. (50s) is the son of Vito 'Four Finger' Dellucci. He inherited his father's bar, big ego, and bad attitude! Vito is a gaudy man who is desperate to be revered like a mob boss but can't back up his bravado. Vito often makes promises he cannot keep and has found himself bleeding money to keep up with his backend deals.

## Russo

(Paulie) Russo (30s) a childhood friend of Visa & Angela. Russo is that kind of blue-collar, working-class Jersey townie that never leaves home. He is a big teddy bear but rough around the edges and has been not-so-secretly in love with Angela since grade school. A true "ride or die", Russo is the kind of friend you can call at three in the morning and he'll bail you out of jail or help bury the body!

## Lucky Caruso

(50s) Angela's Grandfather and sole caretaker. He's a middle-school dropout, but a student of life and the definition of "street smart"! He values family and welcomes a young and unsure Visa into his home with open arms! After being diagnosed with lung cancer, it becomes Lucky's number one priority to make sure he sets Angela and Visa up for a life of success. The wisdom and empowerment that Lucky leaves behind help Angela and Visa overcome the obstacles that stand between them and their happiness.



# SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

## DANI SPIRITO

(20s Non-Binary) a deaf, charming, and lovable fuck-up, and the Bar-Back at Vitos. On one hand, Dani's a mess and often misses shifts, shows up late, and gets Visa and Angela in trouble with their boss, Vito. But on the other, Dani is one of Visa's biggest fans and supporters! It's clear that Dani still has some maturing to do—and a bad cocaine habit to kick - but their big heart makes it hard to stay mad at them for long!

THE PYRAMID  
New York City

TICKETS  
\$8.00



(30s) a childhood friend of Visa and Angela. Val is Ricki's seemingly ditzy executive assistant and Weinberg's "on again, off again" fling since High School. She is offbeat, innocently vain and has learned how to use her charming, bubble gum-popping personality to get ahead in life. Behind the big hair and long nails, is a smart, resourceful woman who just needs someone to believe in her!

## VALENTINA MOSCHELLA

## DAVID WEINBERG



(30s) a "townie" and "wannabe Wall Street" type working as a junior loan advisor at the Local Bank. Weinberg's desperate attempts for status and approval make him a worthless friend, and his delusions of grandeur prevent him from seeing past his inflated sense of self.



MARIANNE WILLIAMSON: Maker of miracles

MARCH 9, 1992 \$1.99

# People

weekly

HAPPY DAYS' SENTIMENTAL REUNION

# WHY NOW?

## Because we "Can't Say Gay"!

...because Drag Queens are being banned, vilified, and criminalized, because our transgender youth can't play sports or access gender-affirming care, and because women have lost access to critical healthcare and the rights to their own bodies!

As the rights of LGBTQIA+, Drag, Trans, and Female U.S. citizens continue to be dismantled and threatened every day, it is vital that we tell our stories—to enlighten, uplift, and empower our communities. To remind our peers that we belong. To uphold the values of our communities, and to amplify the necessary voices of underrepresented people.

# TO CREATE CHANGE!!



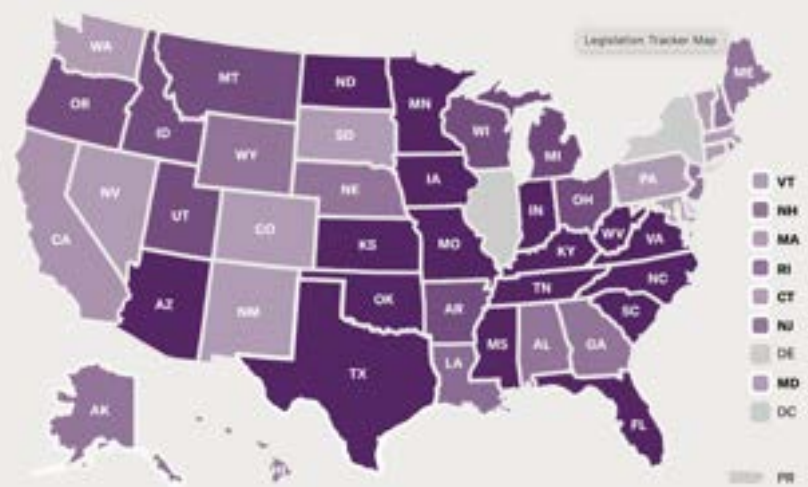
# RISING ANTI-LGBTQIA+ AND ANTI-DRAG LEGISLATION

According to the ACLU, the annual number of anti-LGBTQIA+ bills have nearly doubled in less than a year with 238 bills introduced in the first three months of 2022 to a total of 501 anti-LGBTQIA+ bills as of September 2023. Anti-LGBTQIA+ legislation has skyrocketed over the past several years, from 41 in 2018, with most bills targeting the drag and trans community.

2023 LEGISLATIVE SESSION  
The ACLU is tracking **501** anti-LGBTQ bills in the U.S.

Choose a state on the map to show the different bills targeting LGBTQ rights and take action. While not all of these bills will become law, they will cause harm for LGBTQ people.

View past legislative sessions.



As of March 5, 2023, according to Time Magazine, Tennessee became the first state to ban Drag Shows for minors with similar bills introduced in 11 additional states. As of March 22, 2023, according to the HRC, 10 states have outlawed or limited gender-affirming health care for minors with similar bills introduced in 21 additional states.

NEW

# Style

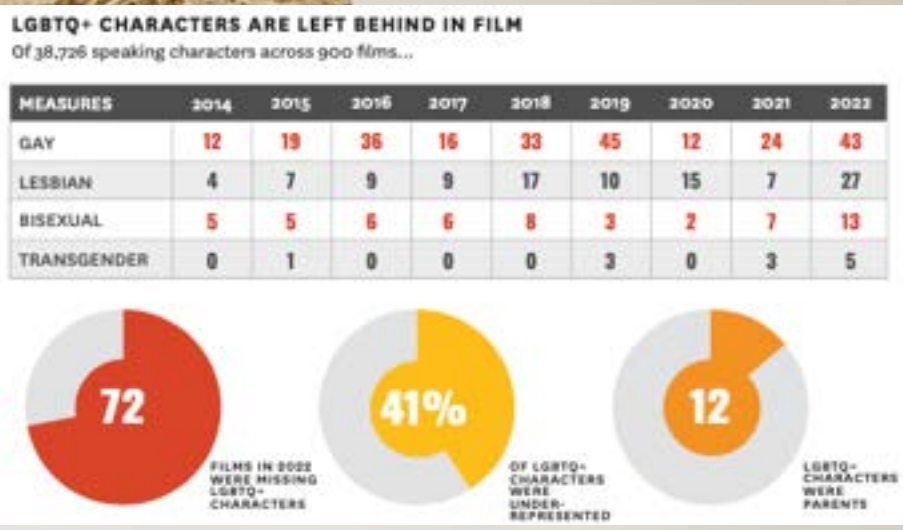
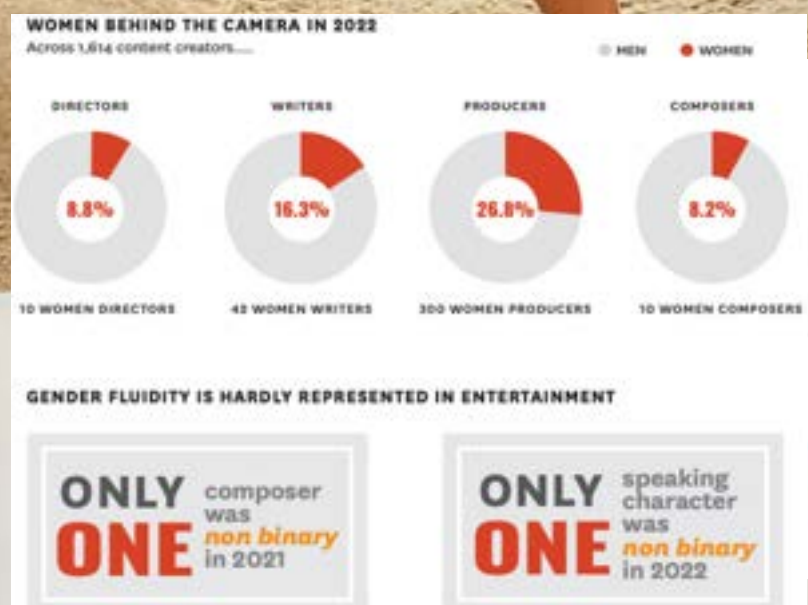




# Lack of Funding and Representation

Women and LGBTQIA+ filmmakers struggle daily to find opportunities, fair wages, and financial investment in entertainment. In their 2022 study, Women In Film LA found that "...on average, men-owned production companies receive over SEVEN-TIMES the amount of funding that women-owned production companies receive."

According to the August 2023 Annenberg Inclusion Initiative USC Inequality report—the largest, most rigorous, and comprehensive analysis of identity in popular movies focusing on representation on camera and behind across the 100 top-grossing fictional films from 2007 to 2022—concludes that "film continues to minimize and marginalize the stories of the LGBTQ+ community—and change is needed...the image of the LGBTQ community in popular film is one that—when not defaulting to invisibility—continues to advance a portrait of White, male, adult characters. The spectrum of voices affiliated with the LGBTQ community continues to be left out of top films". The study shows that, "in 2022, 72 of the 100 top films did not feature even one LGBTQ+ speaking or named character on screen. 84 films were missing LGBTQ+ girls/women. Across the 100 top movies of 2022, only 1 speaking character was coded as gender non-binary. More than 40% of the LGBTQ+ characters (41.4%) appeared in speaking roles that were inconsequential to the story."



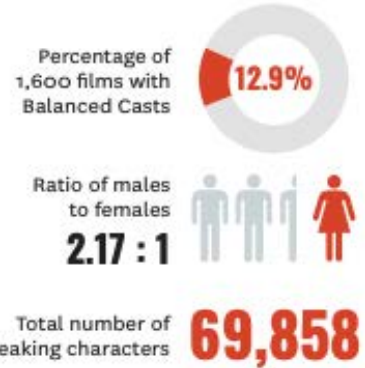
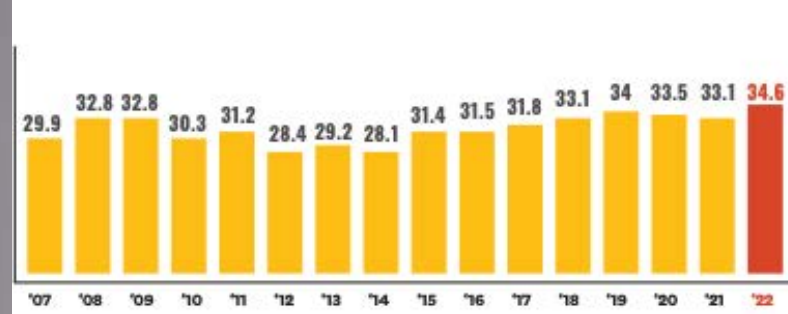
Additionally, the report found "the percentage of girls and women on screen has not changed since 2008 (32.8%). Clearly, the activism and industry advocacy has failed." It goes on to uncover that "in 2022, a meager 16.3% (of screenwriters) were women (while) 83.7% were men". The report reveals that " ...fewer than 10% of directors were women in 2022" and urges the need for more women behind camera to ensure that the access and opportunity afforded to women in the industry continues to increase in order to create essential, meaningful long-term change.

## INEQUALITY IN 1,600 POPULAR FILMS

ANNENBERG INCLUSION INITIATIVE  
USC ANNENBERG  
@Inclusionists

### NO PROGRESS FOR GIRLS & WOMEN ON SCREEN

Prevalence of girls and women as speaking characters across 1,600 films, in percentages



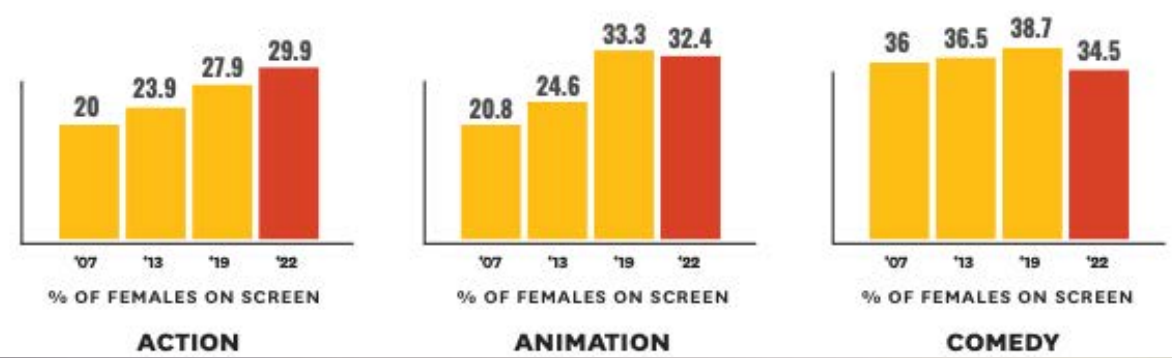
### PROGRESS TOWARD PARITY FOR GIRLS & WOMEN AS LEADS

Of the 100 top films in 2022...



- And of those 44 films...
- 19 had a female lead/co lead from an underrepresented racial/ethnic group
  - 5 had a female lead/co lead 45 years of age or older

### GENRE GAPS PERSIST FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN



# Elton John 1992 World Tour

- Atlanta
- Boston
- Charlotte
- Chicago
- Cincinnati
- Cleveland
- Dallas
- Denver
- Detroit
- Hartford
- Houston
- Indianapolis
- Los Angeles
- Montreal
- Nashville
- New York
- Oakland
- Philadelphia
- Phoenix
- Pittsburgh
- Raleigh
- St. Louis
- San Francisco
- Syracuse
- Washington, D.C.

Presented by



# WHY THIS FILM WILL SUCCEED

**Audiences are craving female and queer stories told by female and queer filmmakers more than ever!! The recent successes of films like the Box-Office breaking "Barbie" movie (\$1.3 billion profit) and Oscar-winning independent film "Everything Everywhere All At Once" (\$98 million profit) prove that audiences are starving for original work that delivers empowering messages and embraces nostalgia through engaging and upbeat storytelling. "No Rules", which creates a midnight showing, cult classic moving-going atmosphere, takes the experience audiences are after to the next level by turning theaters into much-needed safe spaces for our Queer community.**

## TELLING MEANINGFUL LGBTQ STORIES IS NOT JUST THE RIGHT THING TO DO, IT'S ALSO JUST SMART BUSINESS!

The 2020 GLAAD Studio Responsibility Index highlights the spending power of the LGBTQIA+ audience explaining that "Nielsen found LGBTQ audiences are more likely to see a new theatrical release more than once compared to straight audiences, and continue to stay engaged consumers, with higher levels of purchasing a digital copy, subscription service, and spreading the word online".

Audiences' continued admiration for quintessential Drag films like "To Wong Foo" and "The Birdcage," in addition to "movie to musical" Drag films like "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" (longest-running theatrical release in film history), "Priscilla, Queen of the Desert," "Hedwig and the Angry Inch," and "Kinky Boots," prove that there is life beyond a theatrical release for Queer films.

#SEEITBEIT

**FILMS WITH FEMALE LEADS MAKE 38.1% MORE.**

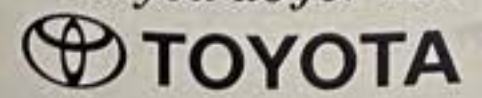
**FILMS WITH RACIALLY DIVERSE CO-LEADS MAKE 60.5% MORE.**

SUPPORT RESEARCH ON GENDER IN MEDIA

According to a CAA analysis, female-led films outperform male-led films at all budget levels! The Geena Davis Institute has found that being able to identify with the characters on screen drives moviegoers' attendance, thus it's no surprise that "women are an economic force in the marketplace; 51% of the US Population, 52% of Moviegoers, 51% of Movie Tickets Purchased" according to the 2019 ReFrame Executive Summary. Additionally, "in 2018, films with casts that were 21-30% minority enjoyed the highest median global box office receipts. In 2019, this honor went to films with casts that were 41-50% minority," according to a UCLA study shared by Women and Hollywood.



*"I love what you do for me."*





# \*\* Industry Comps

**EVERYTHING  
EVERYWHERE  
ALL AT ONCE**

2022

Camp Indie  
Female Queer  
Comedy



**BUDGET: \$14.3 MILLION**  
**BOX OFFICE: \$111.5 MILLION**

**BOTTOMS**  
2023

Female Indie  
Comedy Queer

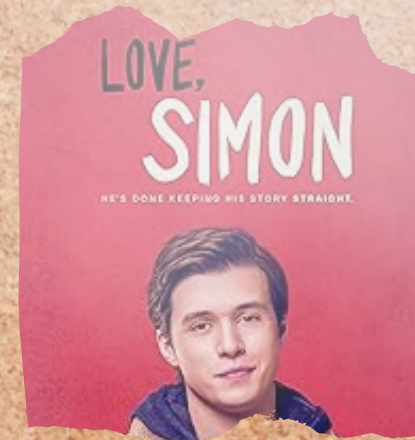


**BUDGET: \$11.3 MILLION**  
**92% Tomatometer**  
**Rotten Tomatoes**

**LOVE,  
SIMÓN**

2018

Queer Indie  
Comedy  
Friendship



**BUDGET: \$10 MILLION**  
**BOX OFFICE: \$67 MILLION**

**FIRE  
ISLAND**

2022

Queer Indie  
Comedy  
Friendship



**BUDGET: \$10 MILLION**  
**94% Tomatometer**  
**Rotten Tomatoes**

**BOOKSMART**  
2019

Female Indie  
Comedy Queer  
Friendship



**BUDGET: \$6 MILLION**  
**BOX OFFICE: \$25 MILLION**

**EVERYBODY'S  
TALKING  
ABOUT JAMIE**  
2021

Drag Queer  
Comedy  
Musical



**BUDGET: \$10 MILLION**  
**82% Tomatometer**  
**Rotten Tomatoes**

\*\*The above comparisons are for illustrative purposes only and are in no way meant to be an estimate or guarantee of financial performance.

PLAY

# Our Audience

***No Rules* celebrates feminine expression and queer values through comedy, camp, and compassion taking inspiration from classic, popular drag films like *To Wong Foo* and *The Birdcage*. With that, our target audience for the film is LGBTQIA+ and female identifying viewers.**

***No Rules* will connect with audiences that enjoyed the recent box office success *Barbie* and Oscar-winning indie film *Everything Everywhere All At Once*, as well as the 2023 Sundance hit *Theater Camp*, 2023 SXSW success *Bottoms*, 2022 hit queer film *Fire Island*, and female-led indie-hit *Booksmart*. Audiences that tune into networks like *Bravo* and/or watch shows like *Pose* (1.2M Viewers), *RuPaul's Drag Race* (772k Viewers), and *Queer Eye* (3.5M Viewers) are our film's main demographic.**

**On a border scale, the world of the film and its familiar characters reaches audiences who enjoy classic Italian-American films like *My Cousin Vinny* and *Goodfellas* or shows like *The Sopranos* and/or who are New Jersey natives.**

SLP 0:00:00

# Reaching Our Audience

To reach our target audience organically, we aim to attach talent in leading roles that come with LGBTQIA+ and/or female-identifying fan bases. The creative team is dedicated to casting actors that share the same lived experiences as our characters, especially in the role of Drag Queen Visa Declined.

Beyond Festivals

**Our strategy is to premiere at one of many elite festivals with robust markets to secure distribution including, but not limited to Sundance, SXSW, or Tribeca.**

*Additionally, we will submit to festivals at which our team has been showcased and/or have won awards at including, but not limited to, Tribeca, Slamdance, Heartland, New Filmmakers LA, SoHo International Film, and the Big Apple Film Festival. Lastly, we will submit to festivals that showcase the specific themes of the film including LGBTQIA+/Queer, Female, and New Jersey specific festivals.*

**Major festivals are consistently interested in showcasing diverse and underrepresented voices. With the success of 2023 festival favorites like *Theater Camp & Bottoms*, the festival market is designed for independent films like *No Rules*.**

**After its festival run and distribution, it is our mission to expand our outreach deeper into the LGBTQIA+ community - focusing primarily on youth outreach by organizing screenings with educational talk-backs and/or fundraising events with LGBTQIA+ non-profits and venues across the country.**

# LOCATIONS



Newark  
Kearny

## E-ZPass

*No Rules* is uniquely qualified for a production tax rebate program offered through New Jersey's Film Tax Incentive. With our close personal relationship to the New Jersey Film Office and our principal photography set entirely in New Jersey, *No Rules* will qualify for a tax rebate of anywhere between 30-37% on all certified New Jersey spending. Additionally, production will benefit from a 2-4% Diversity Tax Credit.

By participating in this program, we will be able to ensure that investors start to see a return on their equity within the first 2 years (approx.) We will be in the same listings as the recent box office successes such as: *Joker*, *The Greatest Beer Run Ever*, and *Smile*. As the program is still fairly new, the team at the *NJ Motion Picture & Television Commission* are eager to support independent productions. They do not request a minimum spend unlike some tax credit programs in other states.

ANTI-RACIST AC  
• Endorsed by AIDS ACTION NOW •

... CARD

SILENCE=DEATH



Encourage  
LESBIANISM

FOR A GOOD TIME CALL

Ashley Gianni - Pizza Bagel Pictures  
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www.ashleygianni.com

www.norulesfilm.com  
info@norulesfilm.com

THE COLLABORATIVE  
thefilmcollaborative.org

POST  
NO

IT'S THE END OF  
THE ROLL AS WE KNOW  
IT!

