

A person's hands are shown using black chopsticks to carefully place a small, light-colored object into the opening of a green ceramic jar. The jar sits on a white surface covered with a layer of grey ash. The background is dark, creating a dramatic contrast with the white surface and the green jar.

ASHES

灰色の雪

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灰色の雪

Format:

Live-Action Drama Short Film

Log Line:

After the death of her mother, Natalia rebuilds her relationship with her father Maurice.

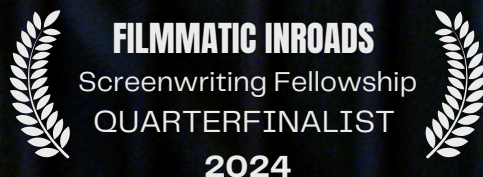
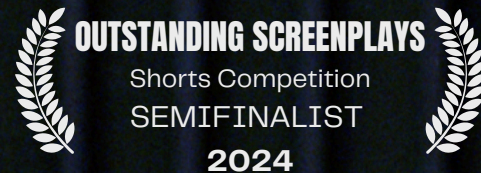
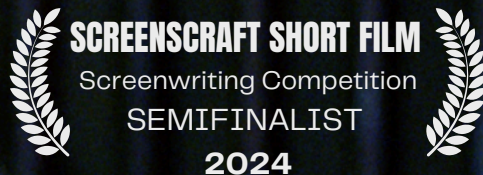


A woman with short dark hair, wearing a grey long-sleeved shirt and a light grey cable-knit hoodie, stands in a dimly lit room. She is looking off to the side with a neutral expression. The room is cluttered with various items, including a lamp with a white pleated shade, a painting of a landscape in a gold frame, and a blue patterned cloth hanging on a chair. The overall tone is somber and reflective.

TONE

Sentimental. Honest. A meditation on love and loss, grief and healing. Ashes is a cinematic tone poem that every parent-child relationship can relate to. It is deeply mournful with a sense of humor because life is just funny that way.

AWARDS & ACCOLADES



COVERFLY RANKING:

Top 5% of all 152,759 Projects; Top 6% of all 41,071 Drama Projects
Top 3% of 25,421 Short Projects; Top 4% of 8,360 Short Drama Projects

SYNOPSIS

A hand holding chopsticks is positioned over a small, dark blue ceramic urn. The urn sits on a surface covered with a layer of light-colored ash or sand. The background is dark, creating a somber and contemplative atmosphere.

Emerging from a storm of incredible loss, Natalia attends her mother's funeral. She weathers mourner after mourner alone while her emotionally avoidant father, Maurice, hides behind the shadow of his wife's passing. Without her mother to bridge the gap, Natalia and Maurice are left to piece together their relationship after years of hurt, resentment, and misunderstanding. Natalia is an adult, Maurice is getting older, and their relationship must follow new rules based on their new roles.

We blink and our children become capable adults. Meanwhile, our parents are as vulnerable as we once were... An inevitability reminding us that nothing in life is permanent. A meditation on love and loss, grief and healing, *Ashes* is an ode to parents and children.



CHARACTERS

NATALIA: Mid to late 20s. Natalia is serious and responsible. Recently parted from her partner Penny after a late-pregnancy miscarriage, Natalia appears resilient, and often stoic – seemingly taking her mother's death in strides. She has a difficult time connecting with her father. She resents his detachment from her life. She wants her father to want to get to know her, his support and warmth. She needs to know that he loves her, but she has difficulty finding the words to ask him. She is her father's daughter after all.

MAURICE: Late 60s early 70s. Maurice is a private and proud man incapable of asking for help. He's become bitter over the years and the death of his wife was the straw that broke the camel's back. He does not see anything wrong with his relationship with Natalia. Getting to know her is irrelevant. She is his daughter. What more is there to discuss? Emotionally barren Maurice does not have the tools to tell his daughter he loves her, but memories of her childhood warm his heart. His baby girl is all grown up, and he must learn to build a new bond with the adult she's become.

A person is seen from behind, sitting in a white hammock. They are looking out a large window at a dark garden with string lights and trees. Inside the room, a lamp with a wooden base and a beige shade is visible on the left, and a white wall with a light switch is in the background. The overall mood is contemplative and quiet.

WORDS FROM THE WRITER

"Growing up my father was my best friend, he was everything to me, but as I got older it became rare for us to have a conversation that didn't end in a fight. We were stuck in a cycle. We'd argue, I'd storm out, we spoke less. Finally, I asked myself, 'how did we get here?'. It broke my heart because all I wanted was my best friend back.

So I started thinking: What if my mom wasn't around to bridge the gap? How could my father and I rebuild our relationship? As the years pass by, eventually our roles would reverse...what would that look like?

Nothing is permanent. And whether you like it or not, whether you are ready for it or not, your relationship with your parents will evolve. And you have a choice. You can keep feeding the resentment and frustration until it's too late or heal with it while you still have the time to do so."

~ Nicole Ohara

REVIEWS

“The script is really powerful in its details and things that we’re simply observing rather than having them being told or done... Even the small details in their behavior speak volumes.”

~ Screencrafts Screenwriting Competition

“Ashes is a compelling short that really runs in high gear as far as the drama goes. This is a nice, quick story about coping with the loss of a beloved family figure. The writer...creates a story that has genuine depth.”

~ Shore Scripts

“The script holds some marvelous, visual, “wow factor” beats...These moments feel real, raw, and original...Grief is a powerful emotion and one that unites all of humanity“

~ Creative Screenwriting Screenplay Competition



OUR TEAM

NICOLE OHARA (she/her) - NATALIA/WRITER/PRODUCER

Nicole is a Hapa* actor, writer, and producer. She is a graduate of the Stella Adler Art of Acting Studio MFA Program and her recent credits include: Small and Mighty on Disney+, Snowdrop on Disney+, Elaina Simms- Mortuus Est.: Legacy on Spotify, Elise Rudy- Found Family (Paris Film Festival Best LGBTQ), Producer - Gummy Worm (Best Comedy Nominee, Encore Producers' Award Winner). She is on a mission to build a body of work that takes people on a journey of self-discovery and awareness. We all hurt, we all love, we all laugh, we all cry. By exploring the humanity in all of us, she hopes to create art that brings us one step closer to healing.

*Hapa is a word used to describe mixed-race people – primarily, though not exclusively, those who are half white and half Asian.



JESSICA BARR (she/her) - DIRECTOR

is a multi-hyphenate filmmaker raised in Portland, Oregon; Her work often explores loss and discoveries made from grief. She's known for stirring and cerebral stories grounded in naturalism. "SOPHIE JONES", a feature that Barr wrote, produced and starred in premiered at the 2020 Deauville Film Festival. The film screened at numerous other festivals before being acquired by Oscilloscope Laboratories with a 100% rating on Rotten Tomatoes. Barr is the recipient of the Future of Film is Female Grant, the Oregon Made Grant, and the Regional Arts and Cultural Grant in Portland. Her short film "TIGHT" recently had its world premiere at SXSW and was listed as a top 10 best film to see by Harper's Bazaar.

OUR TEAM

VITTORIA CAMPANER (she/her) - DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

is a Los Angeles-based Italian cinematographer who has worked internationally in Italy, France, Norway, China, Taiwan, Trinidad and Tobago and the United States. Her work has been showcased in 100+ international film festivals, museums, and theaters, including SXSW, MountainFilm Festival Telluride, and Palm Springs International ShortFest, and has been featured in The New Yorker, Deadline, IndieWire and more. In 2020 she was selected as a Cinematography Fellow for the ASC vision program and Film Independent's Project Involve. Beyond cinematography, she writes and directs her own films. Her short "DYE RED" won the award for Best Experimental Narrative Short at the 51st Nashville Film Festival and has screened in 30+ international festivals. Most recently, she participated in the Playlab residency in Peru, during which she directed a film shot in the Amazon forest under the mentorship of renowned Thai filmmaker Apichatpong Weerasethakul, which is currently in post-production.



DAYO ADE (he/him) - EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

is an Actor, Producer and Writer. Dayo was born in Lagos Nigeria, raised in Toronto Ontario Canada and now resides in Los Angeles California. Dayo is one of the original cast members of "Degrassi High" who paved the way for future alumni such as Aubrey Graham's (a.k.a. Drake) who also graduated from Degrassi. Dayo is currently recurring on Chuck Lorre's WB sitcom "Bob Heart Abishola". He's just wrapped the final season of "Workin' Moms" and won 3 Best Actor Awards in a Leading role for his performance in "Cinema of Sleep" 2022. Other shows on his CV range from "Lost", "The Rookie" "Animal Kingdom", "Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D", "October Faction", "StartUp", "Criminal Minds Beyond Borders", "Castle", "C.S.I NY", "N.C.I.S" and "N.C.I.S Los Angeles" just to name a few. Dayo believes in giving back so he teaches at the Art of acting studios in Los Angeles to guide newer actors in the begins of their journey.

OUR TEAM

CODY FLORES-JAUREGUI (he/him) - PRODUCER

is a producer, writer, and director who has lived in every hemisphere of California. From San Jose to Redding and Sacramento. He has worked on a vast array of projects as producer such as M-A-N-N-E-Q-U-I-N (2021) and My Friend the Ghost (2018). He has also written and directed The Box, a film that plays with the philosophical idea of quantum entanglement. Cody is currently based in Los Angeles, where he works in post production and continues to write and produce or can be found at any trading card game event.



MIGUEL PÉREZ (he/him) - MAURICE

Miguel was born and raised in San Jose CA. He joined the Marines at 17. Honorably discharged in 1979, Miguel moved to New York City to begin his acting career. Graduation from the National Shakespeare Conservatory was followed by engagements with regional companies including the Asolo State Theatre, South Florida Shakespeare Company, American Repertory Theatre, Berkeley Repertory, Hartford Stage and others. In New York he appeared with the Classic Stage Company, The New York Shakespeare Festival and in dozens of productions on and off Broadway. Miguel has appeared in many feature films including BLOW, UNBROKEN:Path To Redemption, OCEANS 11 and MILLION DOLLAR BABY. On TV he has guest starred on “SEINFELD”, “MADAM SECRETARY”, “ER”, “THE RESIDENT”, “DESIGNATED SURVIVOR”, “FEAR THE WALKING DEAD” and many others. He lives in Downtown LA with his wife, artist Kaye Freeman, and continues working in Theatre, Film and Television across the United States.

OUR TEAM

KATIE LECLERC (she/her) - PENNY

Katie Leclerc's starred in the ABC Family hit series “Switched at Birth” as Daphne, receiving a Peabody Award and several other nominations for her performance as Daphne Vasquez. Leclerc had a recurring role on “The Big Bang Theory” and has appeared in such high-profile series as “Veronica Mars,” “Community,” and “NCIS,” to name a few. In addition to her work in television, Leclerc has starred in over a dozen feature films for companies such as Sony, Hallmark and AMC+. Leclerc has also been producing feature films and highly visible podcasts. In the feature film world, she has worked as a producer on 4 films for Lifetime. Leclerc currently produces eight podcasts for idobi Radio and Bleav Podcast Network. She also produces a daily radio show, “The Brett Davern Show,” which recently celebrated its 1000th episode. Leclerc is incredibly passionate about community and philanthropy. She recently taught ASL on Michelle Obama’s Netflix series “Waffles + Mochi”.



ANJA RACIC (she/her) - MOURNER

Anja is a Serbian actor and producer. She is a recent graduate of Stella Adler Art of Acting Studio and a big lover of Shakespeare & independent film. Recent Credits: The Tempest at the Shakespeare Center of LA/After Hours Theatre Company; The Tempest at the Antaeus Theater Company. Anja was recognized for a “Breakout Featured Performance of 2023-2024” by LA’s prolific reviewer, Steven Stanley. Keep your eyes peeled for Anja's feature film debut, RED SNELLING FOR MAYOR directed by Shelbi Addison Glover coming next summer. Honored to be a part of Ashes & bring this story to life alongside wonderful artists.

OUR TEAM

KAYE FREEMAN (she/her) - PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Katie Leclerc's starred in the ABC Family hit series “Switched at Birth” as Daphne, receiving a Peabody Award and several other nominations for her performance as Daphne Vasquez. Leclerc had a recurring role on “The Big Bang Theory” and has appeared in such high-profile series as “Veronica Mars,” “Community,” and “NCIS,” to name a few. In addition to her work in television, Leclerc has starred in over a dozen feature films for companies such as Sony, Hallmark and AMC+. Leclerc has also been producing feature films and highly visible podcasts. In the feature film world, she has worked as a producer on 4 films for Lifetime. Leclerc currently produces eight podcasts for idobi Radio and Bleav Podcast Network. She also produces a daily radio show, “The Brett Davern Show,” which recently celebrated its 1000th episode. Leclerc is incredibly passionate about community and philanthropy. She recently taught ASL on Michelle Obama’s Netflix series “Waffles + Mochi”.



MIGUEL AMODIO (he/him) - EDITOR

Miguel is an award-winning motion picture editor with nearly 20 years of experience shaping compelling stories across film, television, and digital media. Raised in San Francisco, California, Miguel has honed his craft on a variety of projects, including feature films, short films, documentaries, and commercials. His work has earned him numerous accolades, including a CLIO Award for the Mission: Impossible – Fallout 360 featurette. Miguel's keen storytelling instincts and technical expertise make him a sought-after collaborator in the industry, bringing narratives to life with precision and creativity.

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