

TOO MANY

PRESS KIT

ETHNICS



IN —
BETWEEN
PICTURES

SPECS

Sydney, Australia

Duration 8 mins 40 seconds

Completed October 2022

Shooting Format Arri Alexa 4K

Screening Format DCP 2K

Sound Dolby 5.1 Surround

Aspect Ratio 1.85

Language English

Production Company In-Between Pictures

Production Finance Screen Australia

LOGLINE

The epic quest of three best friends surviving trials of racism, love and friendship in the long line to get into an exclusive nightclub.

SYNOPSIS

A breezy night out for best friends Ferdinand, Zayne and Charlie soon turns to horror as they find out they are not on the VIP list for an exclusive nightclub but instead are told to join the long line of punters waiting to get in.

Their endurance and tolerance are both tested as they face pressures to downplay their ethnicities, abstain from pre-drinking to curb the dreaded 'Asian flush' and avoid association with the unruly 'Habibs' who, in their opinion, give ethnics a bad name.

As they get closer and closer to the front, the three boys start to buckle under the pressure of constantly changing themselves to meet the nightclubs' expectations and finally the true test is revealed - one of friendship - as they realise being themselves, and together, is enough to have a have a good time.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

'Too Many Ethnic' follows three best friends and the ordeals they face in the long line to get into an exclusive nightclub in Sydney. Centering on the queer and POC experience, the whole film takes place in the queue, mirroring my own experiences being a freewheeling twenty-something in Australia. I quickly noticed that my 'white' friends would just breeze into the club, but being brown and queer meant any time I considered partying, I had to plan the whole ordeal - was I wearing appropriate clothing? Did my haircut make me look too ethnic? Socks or no socks!? I soon learned these excess considerations were shared by my other ethnic friends, and the experience of night clubbing became very conspiratorial - we would share secrets (a lenient bouncer), schedule our partying for less exclusive nights and play the game of racism maths (3 ethnic guys equals doom, but add 2 white girls and you're in!).

I find these in-between spaces like the club line intriguing, with the high burden of unseen pressure on minorities forcing an invisible barrier to entry - and so we play the game of changing ourselves to fit in. As an Asian, I would limit pre-drinking because if my face flushed, it would be game over, even though it was a normal body reaction. I would stand with my shoulders square to look more manly. I would dress the part to be more acceptable, but at what cost? I've lost friends in club lines -

those fallen soldiers who refused to play by their rules, but I persevered, wanting only to get in.

The film plays out as a long odyssey that tracks these hidden considerations minorities hold, with the central theme of progression infused in every production element - clothing degrades, the night gets darker, characters become more anxious. Though illuminating, the film is comedic, as I believe comedy can always cut deeper truths than drama ever could, and for the audience, when things can feel too real, the best way to cope is to laugh along. And the script is unrelenting - there's almost no pauses and characters constantly overlap and cut each other off, as when you're in the high pressure environment of wanting to be accepted, every small detail feels like a threat. The only lifeline for these characters is their friendship, and the short film leans heavily into the intimacy between the three 'boy-friends', who rally behind each other when they need to, but also are quick to call each other out, honouring my own friendships I've shared with other QPOC. These traits are tracked through the lighting - starting with the golden sun, we enter coloured lighting states to show the tainted promise of fun, but end with the characters basked in white light, showing off their natural skin tones to highlight their self-acceptance in being themselves. But of course that last zinger needs to be done (it's in the title itself!)... reality hits at the end and like all magical odysseys, the boys learn it's the journey itself that teaches them their lessons.

Vonne Patiag, Writer + Director




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WRITER / DIRECTOR

Vonne Patiag

Vonne is a multiple AACTA, AWGIE, Logie and SPA Award nominated Director, Writer, Producer and Actor based in Western Sydney.

As a director Vonne has worked on several short films including 'Window' (Best Film (Olympus Filmmaker Challenge) - St Kilda Film Festival) and 'Tomgirl' (Palm Springs Shortsfest, Outfest), which premiered on SBS onDemand as part of the 40th Anniversary Celebration of Mardi Gras, Australia. He created, show-ran and directed comedy online series 'Halal Gurls' (ABC Australia) which won the Prix du Public award at Marseille Webfest 2020 and nominated for the AACTA, AWGIE and SPA Award for Best Online Series. He also was the Director's Attachment on 'Operation Buffalo' (ABC Australia), shadowing Peter Duncan ('Rake') on the production. For stage, he wrote and directed 'Obviously!' which opened to a sold out season at the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre with Q Theatre. He has directed various music videos including 'No Sleep' for DZ Deathrays, starring Arj Barker, which was voted Top 50 Music Videos by Rage in 2012.

He was recently a participant in the prestigious TIFF Filmmaker Lab 2021 in support of the feature adaptation of 'Tomgirl', and

was a delegate in Talent USA 2022 (Screen Australia).

As a producer he was profiled as a Ones to Watch (Screen Producers of Australia), mentored by Michael McMahon. In 2020 he associate produced and co-wrote mini-series 'The Unusual Suspects' alongside Oscar-nominated Producer Angie Fielder and Polly Staniford at Aquarius Films for SBS Australia, gathering nominations for the AACTA and Logie for Best Mini-Series. He also associate produced and co-wrote feature film anthology 'Here Out West' with Co-Curious and Emerald Productions, which was the opening night film at Sydney Film Festival 2021, and was nominated for the AWGIE Award for Best Original Screenplay (Feature Film). He recently wrote on TV series 'Significant Others' created by Tommy Murphy for Fremantle Australia, which premiered on ABC Australia in October 2022.

He also works as a curator and arts producer, and made his speaking debut on the Sydney Opera House Stage, joining a panel discussing modern masculinity as part of All About Women in 2019. He was awarded the Spirit of the West award by Made In The West Film Festival for his contribution to the Western Sydney filmmaking industry.



CAST

Vonne Patiag as Ferdinand

As an actor, Vonne is a proud alumni of the Victorian College of Arts, Australia. He has appeared in several short films including 'Window' (St Kilda Film Festival) and TV Series 'The Unusual Suspects' (Aquarius Films) and 'After The Verdict' (Subtext Pictures). On stage, Vonne starred in 'Obviously!', a queer sitcom performed as a full-length play, opening to a sold-out season at the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre. His latest play 'the life cycle of blanco', a one-man show about racism, had a sold-out season through Brand X in November 2020 and will make its mainstage debut with National Theatre of Parramatta in 2023.

Andrew Attieh as Zayne

Andrew's first break in television was as Bedad Kamiran, in ABC's 'Pulse' (2017). Soon after, training under Les Chantery, he appeared in international award winning short films 'Amir' (2019) & 'The Sacred' (2021) and a Channel 10's 'The Secrets She Keeps' (2020). He is set to appear as Waali Mansour in the Paramount+ TV series 'The Last King of the Cross' starring Tim Roth and Lincoln Younes. Andrew's debut theatre performance showcased his self devised Lebanese physical comedy performance at Darlinghurst Theatre Company.

Jasper Lee-Lindsay as Charlie

Since studying acting at the Academy of Film, Theatre & Television, Jasper has appeared on screen in 'Legend of The Five' (Benjamin Jon Creative Media) and 'Percentages' (Diversity Arts Australia). He has also performed on stage in productions such as 'Follow Me Home' (ATYP) and 'Moon Rabbit Rising' (Little Eggs Collective/25A). Jasper makes his mainstage debut in Belvoir St Theatre's production of 'Blessed Union' in early 2023, alongside Danielle Cormack.

PRODUCER

Maren Smith

Maren is a Producer of Film, Television and Radio from the Central Coast of NSW, Australia. Her work includes 'One Less God' (dir. Lliam Worthington) which won the Grand Jury Prize and Industry Choice Awards at the Los Angeles' Dance With Films 2017, and was awarded Best Film at Byron Bay Film Festival 2017. The film would go on to be theatrically released in the UK, USA, India, Japan, Korea and Australia.

Her short films 'Hook Up' (dir. Laura Nagy), 'Window' (dir. Vonne Patiag), 'Qupid' (dir. Jessica Flood) and 'Tomgirl' (dir. Vonne Patiag) have screened across Australia and internationally at festivals. Her TV work includes animated comedy series 'Alphabet Street' for Disney Junior AUNZ.

PRODUCTION CO.

In-Between Pictures

In-Between Pictures is an Australian production company developing and producing film + tv projects for a local and global audience.

Established in 2017 by Vonne Patiag and Maren Smith, we believe in passing the microphone to those who haven't had the chance to speak - those who fall into the 'in-between' - in order to redefine the 'Australian story.'

We craft pictures that can influence and change our relationship to the world. We love ambitious artist-led stories and performance-driven drama with a social conscious.

We strive to build a community around each project, creating teams mixing experience and authenticity. We pride ourselves on crossing racial, gender and socio-economic lines.

Our previous work includes 'Halal Gurls' (Prix du Public - Marseille Webfest, nominated for AACTA for Best Web Series and AWGIE for Best Screenplay - Online) and 'Tomgirl'.



PULL

CREDITS

Ferdinand Vonne Patiag

Zayne Andrew Attieh

Charlie Jasper Lee-Lindsay

Habibs George Elcheikh, Abe Elias Sousan

Bouncer CJ Bloomfield

Asian Flush Girl Tara Lian

Writer + Director Vonne Patiag

Producers Maren Smith, Vonne Patiag

Director of Photography Dimitri Zaunders

Production Designer Isabella Andronos

Editor Lucas Conway

Associate Producer Jessie Singh

Casting Director Allison Meadows, Mullinars

Composer Marcus Whale

Sound Designer Weronika Razna

Colourist Justin Ngy Tran

Costume Designer Tess Ameline Burg

Animation Director Lucas Conway

Illustrator Romy Lester

Animator Tom Spiers

1st Assistant Director Amy Freeman

Script Supervisor John Duong

Hair and Makeup Burton Yuen

Production Assistant Bella Torv

Sound Recordist Luke Stacey

1st Assistant Camera Trudi Goltum

2nd Assistant Camera Autumn Loveday

Grip Liam Patrick

Gaffer Tomas Keyes

Best Boy Alex Wilson

Standby Props Divya Abe, Holly Jane Cohle

Stills Dario Hardaker

Unit by Matt Withaar, The Production Unit

Catering by Robert Jang, Eat & Shoot Through

Safety Officer Gordon Waddell

COVID Marshall David Carmody

Screen Australia Justin Donoghue, Kelly Vincent

Legals Verge Whitford

Equipment and Unit Support by Paper Moose

Lenses from Camera Hire

Development Support by Information + Cultural Exchange

Production Company In-Between Pictures



For downloadable press photos and captions, [please click here.](#)

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