

Sydney & Kim



written & directed by **HAZEL KATZ**

SYDNEY & KIM

SYNOPSIS

SYDNEY & KIM is a film about the demise of a close friendship, exploring how sickness and debility transform what we hold most dear.



After 25-year old Sydney is released from the hospital following a major facial surgery, her best friend Kim cares for her at a motel during her recovery. As Kim's flirtation with the motel manager escalates, Sydney's resentment begins to boil over. Through intimate moments in their motel room, Sydney and Kim navigate the implicit expectations of their friendship.

SYDNEY & KIM

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

SYDNEY & KIM is a feature length narrative film about a close friendship that ends (in a world where it never stood a chance to begin with).

What starts as a dynamic full of hope and possibility, reveals itself to be a messier and more contradictory portrayal. Sydney & Kim remain unable to name the complicated realities of projection and isolation. Instead, the best friends meander haphazardly, underneath the Hollywood fantasy of unscathed trans sisterhood and everlasting cis-female-friendship.

Through the nuanced exploration of this specific dynamic, I look to find implicit ways to grapple with bigger questions around reluctant care-work, unruly becoming, commodified representation and the precarity of unconditional love amidst constant instability. I also hope the film will serve as an invitation, precisely through its admission of failure, to resist the neoliberal demand to be desirable, exceptional, beautiful or even kind, as a prerequisite to forms of deservability.

SYDNEY & KIM

VISUAL STYLE



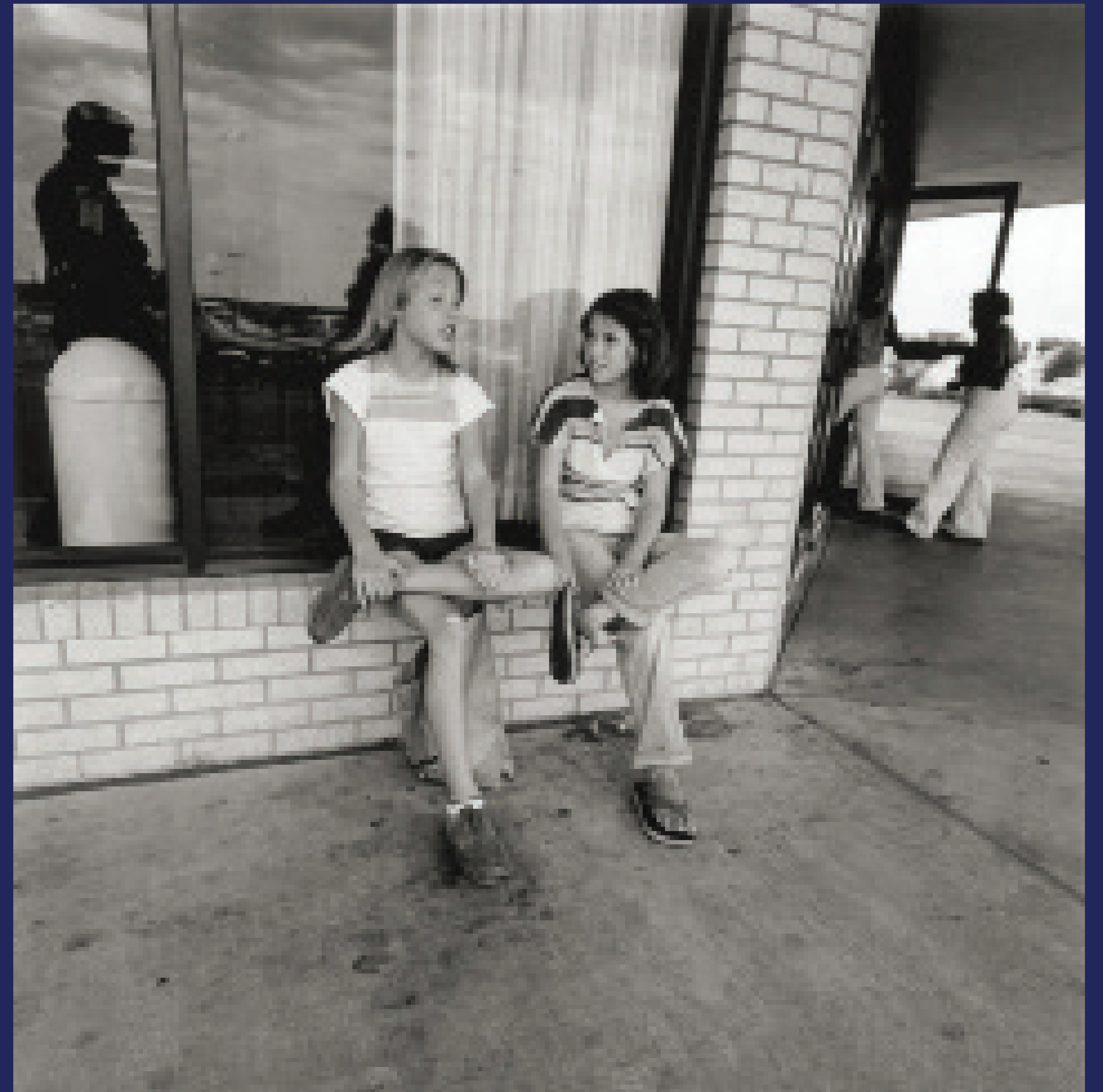
Richard Linklater - TAPE [2001]



Kathleen Collins - LOSING GROUND [1982]



Robert Adams - "Colorado Springs" [1974]



Robert Adams - "Our Lives & Our Children" [1982]



Sean Baker - THE FLORIDA PROJECT [2017]



Pedro Costa - IN VANDA'S ROOM [2000]



Cauleen Smith - DRYLONGSO [1998]



Carol Weaks Cassidy & Ruth Leitman - WILDWOOD, NJ [1994]



Arthur J. Bressan Jr - BUDDIES [1985]

SYDNEY & KIM

VISUAL STYLE



Stephen Shore - "Los Angeles, CA, Feb 4 1969" [1969]



Arthur J. Bressan Jr. - BUDDIES [1985]

SYDNEY & KIM is influenced by domestic dramas, coming-of-age films, chick flicks, and cinema verite documentaries. The film embraces the theatricality of a dialogue centered script and imagines the motel room as a stage.

The one-location setting becomes a metaphor for the claustrophobia of Sydney and Kim's relationship. Handheld camerawork emphasizes the internal worlds of the characters, alternating between boredom, sickness, and inebriation. Intimate verite scenes are interspersed with stylized wide shots of the desert landscape around the motel. This montage technique will emphasize how the main characters are 'alone, together.' Equally motivated by Mumblecore filmmaking of the 1990s and the New Topographics landscape photography movement of the 1970s, SYDNEY & KIM theorizes 21st century white emotionality as a neo-manifest destiny.

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STONE



Whit Stillman - METROPOLITAN[1990]

Inspired by the performativity in 90s films like Cauleen Smith's DRYLONGSO [1998], Whit Stillman's METROPOLITAN [1990], and Richard Linklater's TAPE [2001], the narrative arc is driven by dialogic events. As each character's flaws and strengths are revealed, the audience is left to wonder who's the hero and who's the villain. Ultimately, the friendship itself becomes the main character, as its toxic logic motivates Sydney and Kim's actions. SYDNEY & KIM analyzes the challenges of queer and trans chosen family, where liberatory mantras of interdependence collapse into revenge fantasies.

SYDNEY & KIM

CREW BIOS



Hazel Katz - director & writer

Hazel Katz is a Los Angeles-based filmmaker. Her work canonizes the often unintelligible but abundant small acts of care done by those disregarded by the state, while resisting neoliberal modes of visibility that sell exceptionalism as a solution to systemic scarcity. Hazel's 2017 short film, BUBBY & THEM, won top international film at WNDX festival, and her 2019 feature documentary FLORIDA WATER is now distributed by Collective Eye Films. Hazel's work has been supported by MOMA PS1, Tate Modern, and festivals internationally. Hazel has completed residencies at UnionDocs, Abrons Art Center, and Acre, and is currently pursuing an MFA in Visual Art at UC San Diego.



Arlene Mejorado - director of photography

Arlene Mejorado is a first-generation artist from Los Angeles, California working with analog and digital photography, video, and installations. In her practice she experiments with documentary forms, depicting truths that aren't visibly represented or legible but are experienced viscerally. Mejorado has been awarded the Magnum Foundation Photography and Social Justice fellowship, and the DocX fellowship. Her photography has been published in Vogue, the Atlantic, and the Los Angeles Times. She holds a BA from UT Austin and is currently an MFA candidate in Visual Arts at UC San Diego.