

BEOMING SOPHIA

A LOOKBOOK MAGAZINE

FOR WHOM DO WE PERFORM?

Exploring the performance of gender, the politics of desire, and the longing to be seen.

MEDITATING ON WOMANHOOD, QUEERNESS, AND
THE COST OF RECOGNITION.

AVA DAVIS
WRITTEN BY

LOGLINE

A Black trans actress spirals between fantasy and reality after a failed hookup, forcing her to confront womanhood, performance, and a fractured maternal bond.



A photograph of Ava Davis, a Black woman with long, wavy blonde hair, smiling broadly. She is wearing a white tank top and dark blue jeans. She is holding a clear aluminum can of TRANS Original Flavor Sparkling Water + Pi. The can has a pink and purple logo and text. The background is a dark, textured wall.

WHO I AM

I am Ava Davis — a Sundance Fellow, actress, writer, and filmmaker. Known also as the Duchess of Grant Park, I founded Studio Vosges in 2019 to champion queer and trans stories, especially those centering people of color

AVA DAVIS

.My first award-winning short, *The Duchess of Grant Park* (2019), which I wrote, executive produced, acted in, and distributed, screened internationally and was broadcast on WABE for two years. It taught me an early lesson: programs often prefer directors to helm their own work, a catch-22 I confronted head-on. I followed with *Queer Dystopian Short* (2024), co-directed with Iona Leighton, while also executive producing projects like *Late to the Party*, *Sweet Star Grief*, *Black Girls and Fairytales*, and the upcoming *Fishy*. Across all, my focus remains clear — telling queer and POC stories, particularly where those identities intersect.

My feature script *The Waltz* — about a Black trans woman who longs to learn the waltz and finds an unlikely partner — helped me join the inaugural Sundance Trans Possibilities Intensive. Like much of my work, it centers Black trans womanhood, exploring intimacy, desire, and self-definition.

Beyond filmmaking, I serve on the board of *Out on Film*, Atlanta's Oscar-qualifying LGBTQ+ film festival, where I lead industry engagement. I am also a board member and longtime newsreader for *This Way Out*, an international LGBTQ+ news program broadcast on over 200 stations worldwide.

At my core, I am a storyteller — an actress, writer, and filmmaker who happens to be Black and trans. My vision blends the intimate and the spectacular, always striving to expand whose stories are told, and how.

A silhouette of a person with short hair, seen from the side, looking out of a window at night. The window shows a dark sky with some distant lights. The person is in the foreground, and the window is in the background.

WHY I'M THE ONE TO TELL THIS STORY

Because I've lived it.

This film isn't about trans tragedy—it's about the quiet, radiant courage it takes to keep dreaming. I know Sophia's desire to be held without performance, to be seen without spectacle. I've wrestled with the same questions about womanhood, safety, fantasy, and survival.

Becoming Sophia is my love letter to the parts of us that aren't easily understood—but still deserve to be known.

INT. DREAM - THEATER STAGE -

THEMES

- Trans Desire & Dysphoria
- Mother-Daughter Reconciliation
- Performance of Gender
- Fantasy as Coping, Fantasy as Trap
- The Quiet Power of Being Seen
- Black Southern Womanhood (Reimagined)

DREAMLIKE



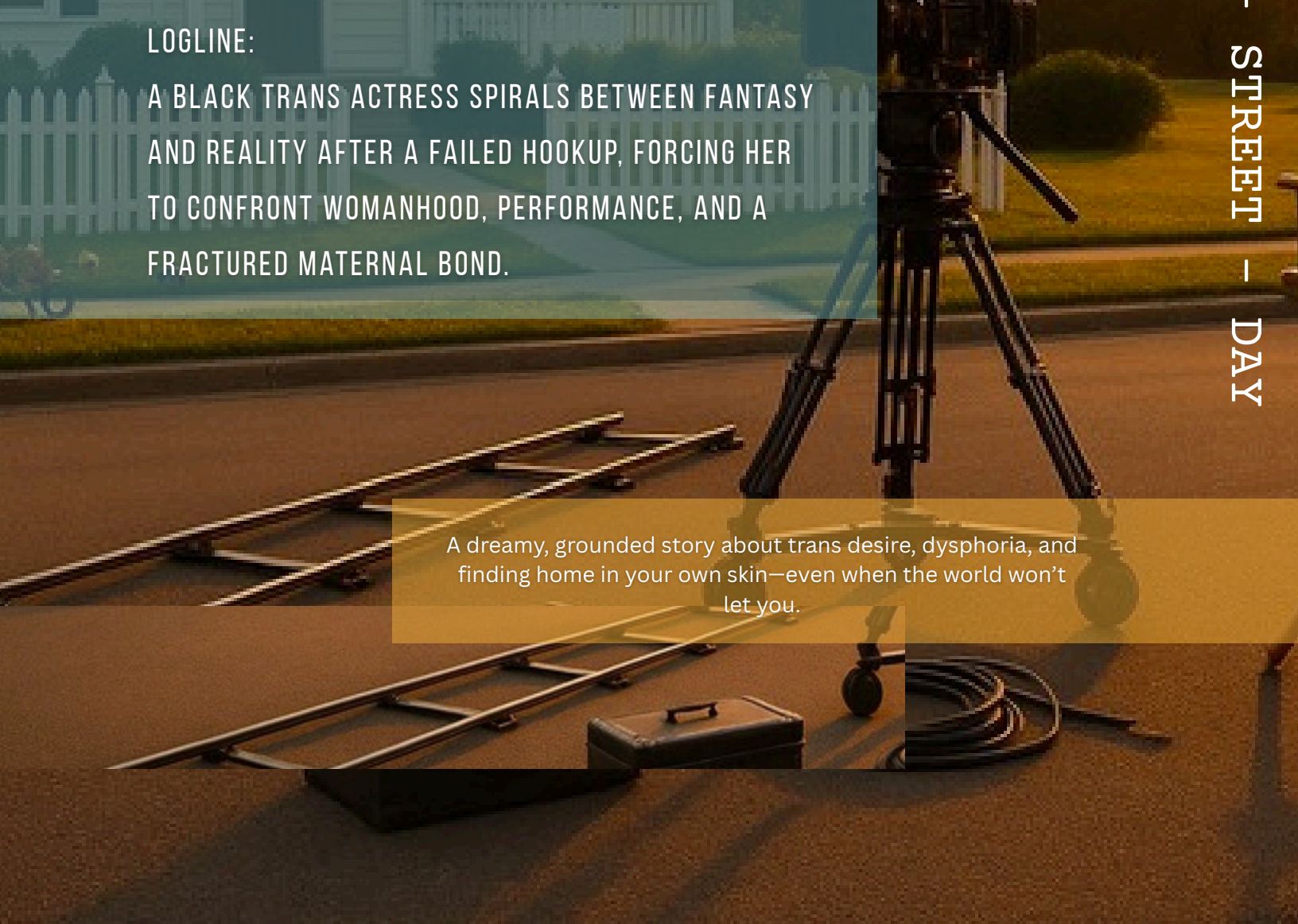


EXT. SUBURBIA - STREET - DAY

LOGLINE:

A BLACK TRANS ACTRESS SPIRALS BETWEEN FANTASY AND REALITY AFTER A FAILED HOOKUP, FORCING HER TO CONFRONT WOMANHOOD, PERFORMANCE, AND A FRACTURED MATERNAL BOND.

A dreamy, grounded story about trans desire, dysphoria, and finding home in your own skin—even when the world won't let you.



SYNOPSIS

Becoming Sophia is a poetic, surrealist character study of Sophia, a Black trans woman in her thirties, navigating desire, dysphoria, and the longing for her mother's love. Moving between performance and reality, memory and dream, the film reveals a journey both intimate and mythic.

Sophia is a working actress in Atlanta, hustling for roles while contending with the fractured expectations of trans womanhood. She lives between two selves: the performer who dazzles and the daughter who aches for recognition. Fantasy offers escape yet becomes its own trap, expressed through heightened tableaux—cabaret stages, fractured mirrors, dreamlike encounters—that blur inner life with external reality.

Her mother, Lynn, a proud Southern Christian woman, loves her daughter yet struggles to reconcile past and present. Their relationship, heavy with grief and silence, moves in small, halting gestures: a glance that almost lingers, a prayer that is both rejection and care. Lynn embodies the slow, painful work of trying to change.

Raphael, a cis man, complicates Sophia's longing for validation. What begins as a transactional encounter unfolds into tenderness, forcing her to confront the cost of cisnet approval. Satine, a radiant cabaret performer, models joy and resilience, while her mother Maxine represents the maternal embrace Sophia has long craved. Together, they reveal chosen kinship as lineage and survival.

The film's surrealist style externalizes Sophia's inner dissonance—fantasies that collapse into nightmare, illusions that fracture into portals of truth. Its heartbeat remains the mother-daughter bond: imperfect, fraught, yet alive with the possibility of recognition.

Ultimately, Becoming Sophia is about reclamation. Sophia steps beyond performance—before men, audiences, even her mother—to ask who she is when no one is watching. Not a symbol, but deeply human, Sophia's journey affirms survival, persistence, and the quiet power of becoming.



EXT. SUBURBIA - STREET - DAY

THE PLAYERS CHARACTERS

Sophia
At once ingénue, performer, and phantom, Sophia is the film's beating heart. She longs for authenticity but is always cast — by her mother, her lovers, the camera, even her own reflection. Sophia moves between glittering stages and silent rooms, navigating glamour, dysphoria, and the hunger to simply be.



Lynn (Sophia's Mother)

Matriarch, believer, critic. Lynn represents the weight of family, respectability politics, and the church's unyielding gaze. Her house is warm yet suffocating, a stage where Sophia first learned the choreography of womanhood. Their relationship frames the generational struggle between survival and selfhood.

Raphael

Charming, attentive, yet unknowingly complicit, Raphael embodies desire filtered through the male gaze. His tenderness invites Sophia closer, but his presence also reminds her of the unrelenting performance demanded in intimacy. He is both possibility and mirror — a reminder of how quickly affection can turn into audience.



INT. SOPHIA'S CONDO - NIGHT

Sophia is not a symbol—she is layered, flawed, and deeply human. Her story unfolds in the liminal spaces between performance and identity. Lynn, her mother, offers a quiet revolution: not through grand gestures, but in the long, hard work of trying. Raphael complicates the fantasy of cishet male validation, showing that tenderness doesn't always come wrapped in certainty. Satine and Maxine represent what could be: a roadmap to joy, to lineage, to survival.

These characters are real. Not perfect. Not tragic. Just trying. And that's what makes them cinematic.





Gracie (Sophia's French Bulldog)
Silent but loyal, Gracie is Sophia's only constant companion. In a condo filled with silence, her small presence underscores both comfort and isolation — a reminder that even sanctuary can echo with loneliness.

The Audience
Not a single character, but an ever-present force: news anchors, judges, faceless crowds, app glitches, opera-house shadows. They are society's chorus, watching and measuring Sophia at every turn. The audience is the true antagonist — the eternal gaze.

Sapphyre

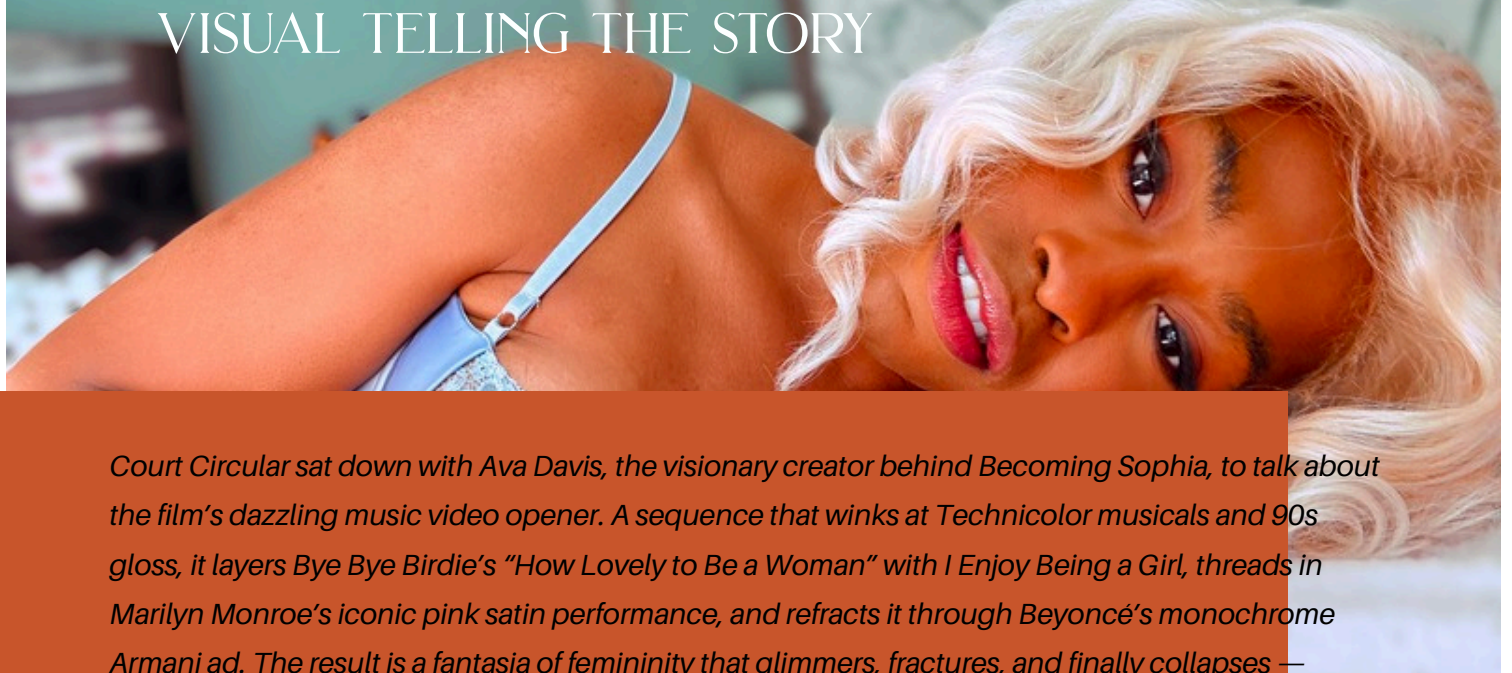
A vision of poise and resilience, Sapphyre radiates a confidence that Sophia envies yet fears she'll never embody. She moves through the world like a performance perfected, but cracks reveal her own longing for recognition beyond the stage. By the end, Sapphyre's journey resolves into something softer: not just strength, but acceptance — of herself, of her sisters, of the bond that outlasts spectacle.

Jasmyne

Fierce, witty, and unapologetically herself, Jasmyne brings both levity and bite to Sophia's world. She's the one who can puncture a moment with sharp humor or ground it with truth. Beneath her bravado lies a quiet ache, and in the film's closing moments, she finds a measure of release — a reminder that survival also carries the possibility of grace.



VISUAL TELLING THE STORY



*Court Circular sat down with Ava Davis, the visionary creator behind *Becoming Sophia*, to talk about the film's dazzling music video opener. A sequence that winks at Technicolor musicals and 90s gloss, it layers Bye Bye Birdie's "How Lovely to Be a Woman" with I Enjoy Being a Girl, threads in Marilyn Monroe's iconic pink satin performance, and refracts it through Beyoncé's monochrome Armani ad. The result is a fantasia of femininity that glimmers, fractures, and finally collapses — propelling Sophia from dream into dysphoria, and back onto the soundstage where reality and performance collide.*

Magazine: The film opens with a music video sequence — it's playful, glamorous, but also haunting. Where did the idea come from?

Ava Davis: I wanted to begin with the language of performance, because Sophia's life is framed through performance. The references are deliberate — Bye Bye Birdie's "How Lovely to Be a Woman," Flower Drum Song's "I Enjoy Being a Girl." Both are these almost giddy hymns to femininity, but when you look at them now, there's a darker edge: they're about performance, about being put on display.

Magazine: And you bring that into modernity.

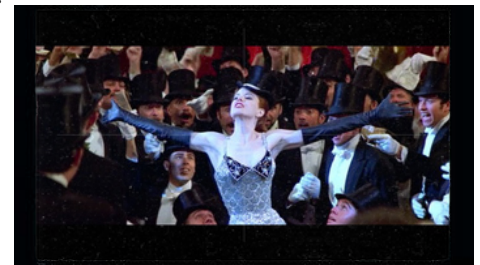
Ava Davis: Exactly. We blend those 1950s Technicolor fantasies with Marilyn Monroe's pink satin stage world, and then propel it forward. Beyoncé's Armani ad in monochrome — crisp, glamorous, untouchable —

Magazine: But then the fantasy fractures.

Ava Davis: That's the key. It's not just pastiche. Sophia's fantasy dissolves as she collides with her own dysphoria inside of it. It becomes uncomfortable, uncanny — like the performance is betraying her. That collapse propels us back to the soundstage, where she's not in a Technicolor dream, she's in a commercial. The whole sequence is about showing the machinery of femininity — the joy, the glamour, but also the pain of trying to inhabit an identity under constant direction.

Magazine: A fantasy that reveals itself as performance.

Ava Davis: Yes. It's Sophia's dream, but it's also her cage. And the audience is always watching.





1. FEMININE

our top picks for spring



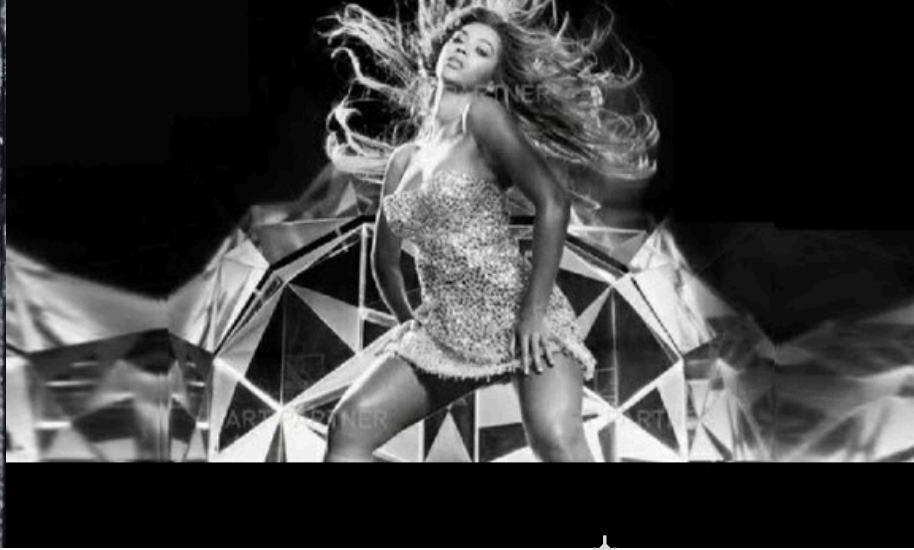
FLOWER DRUM SONG'S "I ENJOY BEING A GIRL."





L.
Diamonds
A Girl's Gilded Cage

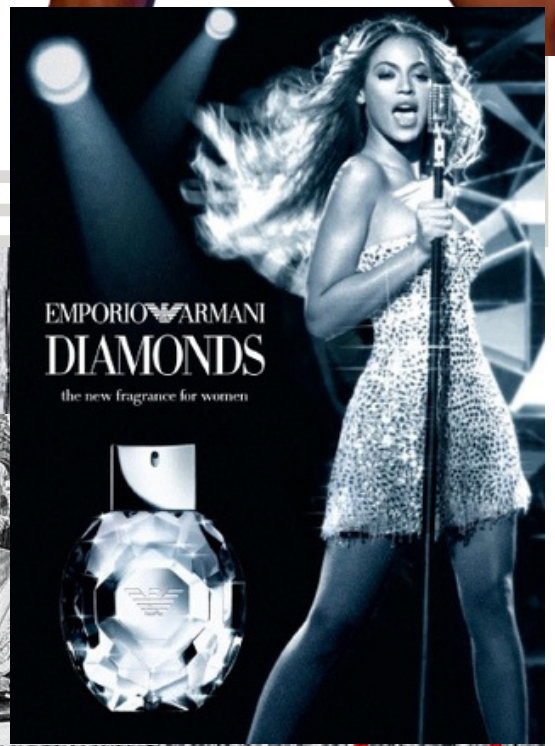




3. BIG BAND, BIGGER STAGE MONOCHROME SPECTACLE

The big band sequence channels the glossy excess of 90s music videos, drawing inspiration from Beyoncé’s “Diamonds Are a Girl’s Best Friend.” Our set is a monochrome dream — silver, black, and white — a glowing stage world where Sophia stands radiant at the center.

Shot in crisp 90s video style, the camera glides across sequins, brass instruments, and velvet shadows. Against the stark palette, Sophia’s skin becomes the true color, her presence cutting through the spectacle. It’s a celebration and a critique at once — glamour as armor, performance as power.



4. FROM STAGE TO SUBURBIA

THE GLAMOUR FALLS AWAY

After the monochrome spectacle, Sophia steps off the soundstage and into the world outside. Atlanta's skyline hovers in the distance as she walks a quiet suburban street, the grandeur of performance giving way to a vision of domesticity.

Filmed at golden hour and graded with nods to action movie and music video David LaChapelle signature saturation, this transition shifts the texture entirely: the sharp gloss of music video dissolves into the glowing artifice of the American dream. Sophia moves from spotlight to front porch — a passage between fantasy, performance, and the roles waiting at home.







FRAMING THE FRAGMENTED SELF: BECOMING SOPHIA AND THE ART OF DISTINCT VISUAL LANGUAGES

In *Becoming Sophia*, form is not just a vessel for story — it is the story. Director Ava Davis employs three distinct directing styles, each mapped to a facet of Sophia's identity, crafting a cinematic triptych that externalizes the heroine's fractured inner life.

The Performer: Music Video Style

The film opens in the heightened register of a music video, echoing Golden Age Hollywood musicals and pop spectacle. These sequences pulse with choreography, color, and bravado — a performance that dazzles as much as it conceals. Here, Sophia is “the performer,” surviving through spectacle, dazzling audiences even when no one is watching.

The Woman: Narrative on Film

By contrast, Sophia's lived reality — especially her relationship with Raphael — is captured on actual film stock. The warmth and texture of celluloid lend her story a tactile humanity, grounding her desire for love and recognition in the grain of the real. “The woman” emerges here: vulnerable, intimate, searching for a truth beyond the mask.

The Psyche: Surrealism on Digital

When the narrative fractures into dream sequences, mirrors, and archetypal confrontations, the medium shifts to digital. The elasticity of digital cinematography allows for layering, distortion, and manipulation — a playground for the subconscious. These are Sophia's internal ruptures made visible, moments where the psyche pushes back against the body.

Three Selves, One Film

Together, these directing styles form a cinematic language of contrast: performer, woman, psyche. The transitions between them embody Sophia's fragmentation — a life lived between masks, between desires, between the gaze of others and her own reflection. Yet they also gesture toward wholeness: the possibility that these fractured selves might coexist, even harmonize.



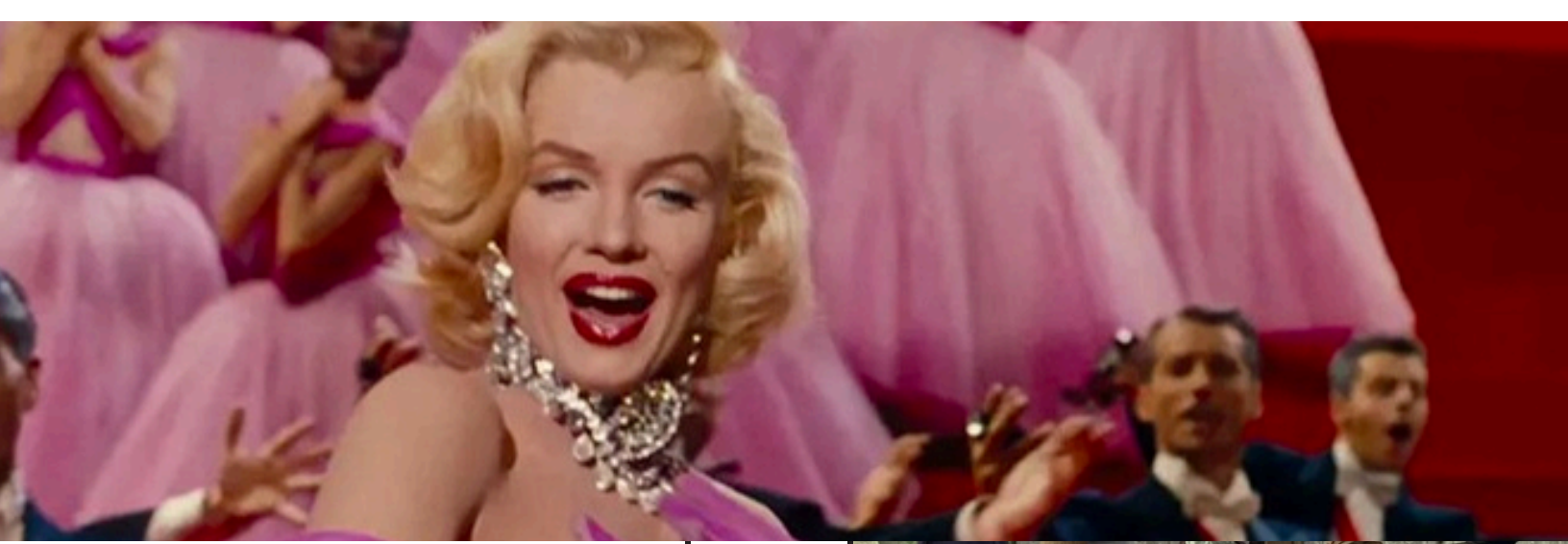
NARRATIVE ON FILM (SOPHIA + RAPHAEL)

The narrative portions, especially Sophia and Raphael's scenes, will be shot on film stock.

Film conveys warmth, texture, and humanity, grounding their intimacy in a tangible, lived-in quality.

Film emphasizes the grain of reality, giving the audience something they can almost touch. This honors Sophia's desire for love, recognition, and presence as something real.





Film critic Manny Farber on the 1943 Technicolor film *For Whom the Bell Tolls*:

“I am not sure how much the picture’s lack of effect is the result of its technicolor. I myself find it difficult to take seriously a movie made in technicolor: profundity seems out of key with the carnival spirit of the color, which is always gay and bright, mask-like, without substance. Nor am I sure how much of the film’s stiffness and unmaneuverability is the product of technicolor.”—
The New Republic, July 19, 1944.

TECHNICOLOR



For instance, in Martin Scorsese’s latest epic Western drama “Killers of the Flower Moon”, filmmakers use a variety of color LUTs, including Technicolor. Cinematographer Rodrigo Prieto (who also received his Oscar nomination for this film) explains that the story’s epilogue is set in the 30s. To stay true to this epoch, they decided to go for the most popular technology at that time and emulated it. They also tested three-strip Technicolor in an earlier shot when Mollie’s mother dies and meets her ancestors. The contrast to the autochrome movie world worked so powerfully they decided to keep it this way. It also made this moment in the story feel slightly artificial and special. - Cined.com



To bring Barbie Land to eye-popping life in a unique shade of pink, Gerwig and her team created a new way to implement a process that hasn’t been used since the ‘50s.



SURREALISM ON DIGITAL



The surreal sequences (mirrors, dreamscapes, archetypes) will be shot digitally.

Digital allows flexibility with effects, layering, distortion, and post-production experimentation, making the surreal shifts more fluid and uncanny.

The contrast in medium mirrors Sophia's lived experience vs. her inner world—the fracture between reality and dream.





le charme discret
de la bourgeoisie



ECHOES OF INFLUENCE

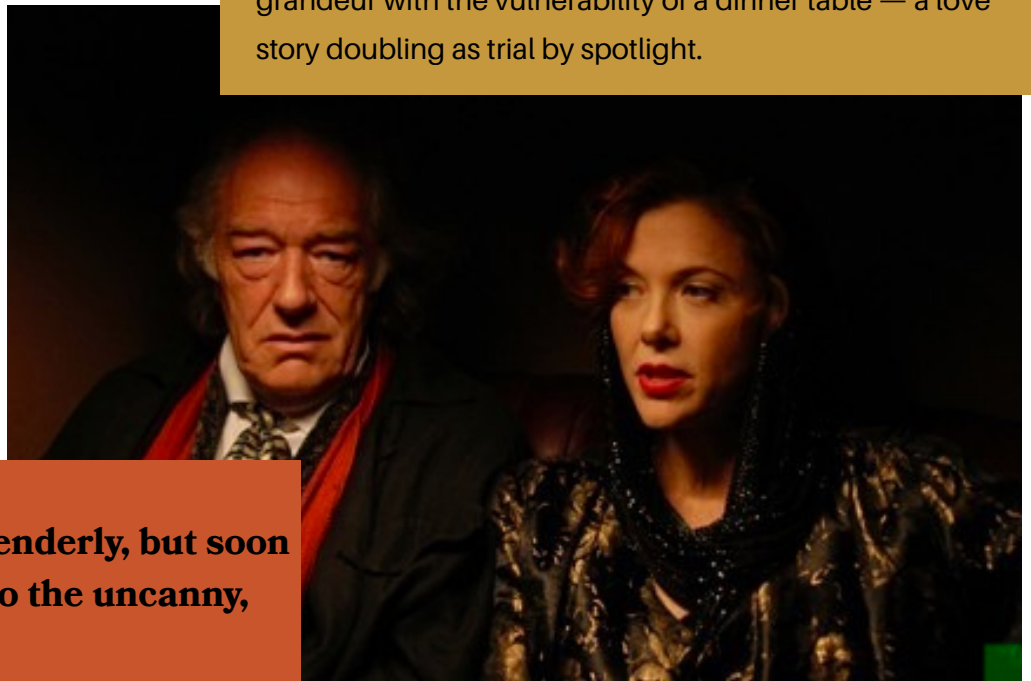
WHERE DINNER BECOMES THEATRE



The restaurant scene in *Becoming Sophia* is no quiet evening out. It begins tenderly, but soon slips into the uncanny, echoing Buñuel's *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*, where ritual civility collapses into absurdity.

Sophia is both guest and spectacle, her every gesture subject to unseen direction like Annette Bening in *Being Julia*. The chandeliers flare, the room bends, and suddenly dinner transforms into theatre — Raphael dissolving into shadow as Sophia faces a faceless crowd.

On Screen: Filmed with the grain and glow of celluloid, this sequence expands from golden intimacy into full opera-house spectacle. Shot in a historic Georgia venue such as the Macon Opera House, it collides velvet grandeur with the vulnerability of a dinner table — a love story doubling as trial by spotlight.



It begins tenderly, but soon slips into the uncanny,

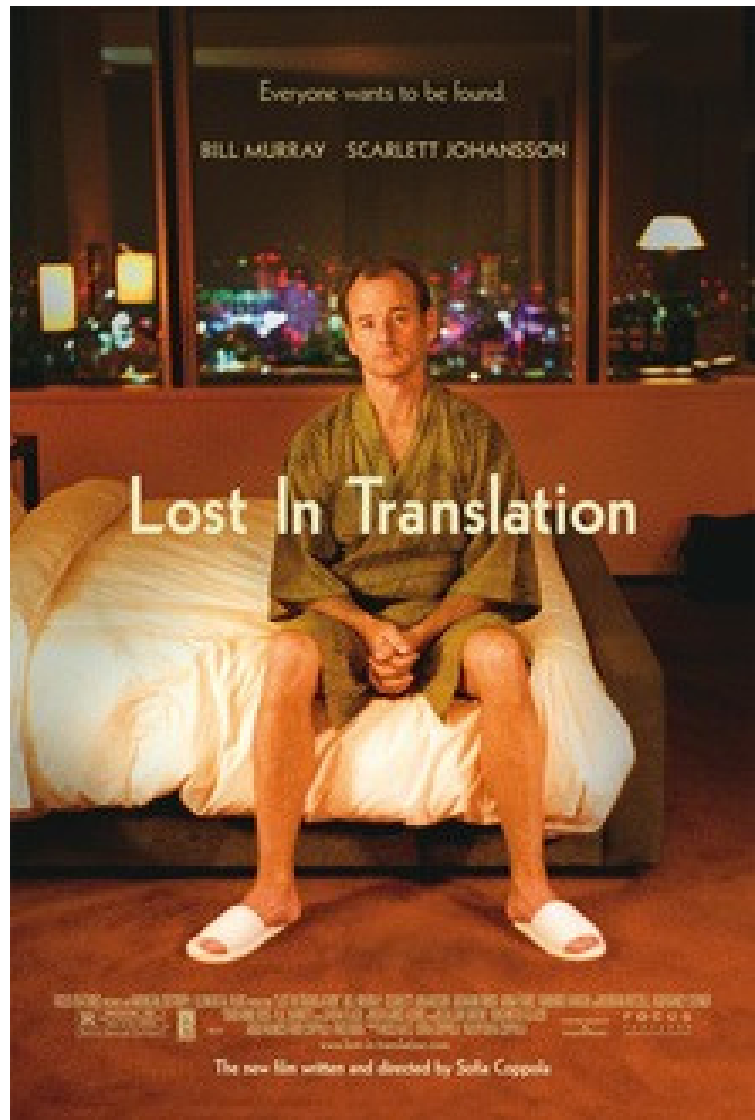
Drawing from Coppola's Lost in Translation

Becoming Sophia draws inspiration from Sofia Coppola's *Lost in Translation* — particularly its exploration of isolation within performance.

Where Coppola gave us a Hollywood star adrift in a foreign city, here we follow a Black trans woman, a struggling actress in Atlanta, filming commercials, chasing auditions, and carrying the weight of invisibility.

Like Bill Murray's character, Sophia finds herself caught between exhaustion and expectation, but her loneliness is compounded by transness and race: rooms where her body is doubted before she even speaks, scripts that turn her into tragedy before she can claim joy.

Yet, just as Coppola's film revealed fleeting intimacy as a balm against alienation, *Becoming Sophia* finds Sophia reaching for connection — with Raphael, with chosen family, with her mother who can almost see her. It is in those fragile, in-between moments that she discovers a different kind of translation: the act of becoming visible to herself.



INFLUENCES

Like István Szabó's *Being Julia*, *Becoming Sophia* lives in the shifting space between performance and real life. Where Julia navigates the theater stage and her private desires, Sophia juggles auditions, fantasy sequences, and her own yearning for recognition. Both films reveal the blurred line between what a woman presents to the world and the truth she holds within.

But Sophia's struggle is sharpened by her time and identity: a Black trans woman, confined not by Edwardian mores but by contemporary scripts that misgender her, and social structures that question her very existence. In public, she dazzles — performer, spectacle, survivor. In private, she aches for love and belonging that cannot be rehearsed or staged.

The contrast between real relationships and the fantasies we tell ourselves becomes the film's pulse. Like Julia, Sophia must ultimately decide what is performance, what is survival, and what, finally, is her truth.



ECHOES OF BEING JULIA



THE CHURCH, RESPECTABILITY, AND LEGACY

Dee Rees' *Pariah* gave us the aching portrait of a queer Black teenager at odds with her mother, caught between self-discovery and the weight of parental expectation. *Becoming Sophia* continues that lineage, but shifts the focus into adulthood.

Where *Pariah* closes with departure — a daughter leaving home to pursue her identity — *Becoming Sophia* asks what happens years later, when the distance remains. For Sophia, a Black trans woman, the allure of reconciliation with her mother never fades. Every conversation, every glance, carries the residue of childhood longing: the hope that one day she might be seen, named, embraced.

The film lives in that tension — between the adult woman Sophia has become and the child inside her still waiting. In exploring this, *Becoming Sophia* reveals how the hunger for a mother's love lingers long after adolescence, shaping identity as powerfully as desire or performance.

In *Pariah*, Dee Rees placed the Black church and the weight of respectability politics at the center of a family in crisis, exposing how faith could both fracture and define belonging. *Becoming Sophia* picks up this thread and carries it forward.

Sophia's mother, Lynn, embodies this tension: Southern, Christian, and proud, she clings to respectability even as it distances her from her daughter. The hymns, prayers, and rituals of the church become both a source of love and rejection — a place where Sophia is simultaneously remembered and erased.



Becoming Sophia lingers in that contradiction, asking what it means to pursue truth when the institutions that shaped you refuse to change. The film does not seek easy answers; instead, it reveals how the politics of faith continue to shape the lives of Black queer and trans people. If *Pariah* charted the rupture of adolescence, *Becoming Sophia* examines the adult longing for reconciliation, and the haunting persistence of faith in the lives we build.

INFLUENCES

charme discret de la bourgeoisie



Becoming Sophia stands in conversation with two distinct cinematic traditions — the surreal absurdism of Luis Buñuel and the richly saturated melodrama of Todd Haynes.

From Buñuel's *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*, the film inherits a fascination with time and reality as slippery terrains. Like Buñuel's endless dinner parties, Sophia's world fractures — a restaurant becomes a theatre, casual moments warp into stage performances. For Sophia, these surreal ruptures reflect the endless demand to perform gender, the way her very reality bends under expectation.

From Haynes' *Far from Heaven*, *Becoming Sophia* takes its lush color palette and emotional gravity. Haynes' film examined a woman confronting desire and identity within the confines of respectability, her pursuit of interracial love destabilizing the illusion of her "happy" marriage. In Sophia's journey, we find a parallel: a Black trans woman exploring intimacy with Raphael while negotiating the pull of her mother's expectations, faith, and the politics of being seen.

Together, these influences create a language of contrasts — surreal disorientation colliding with melodramatic richness. Public versus private, performance versus truth, illusion versus recognition: *Becoming Sophia* explores these dualities not as abstractions, but as the lived reality of a woman whose every step is shadowed by scrutiny.





Two Visions in Contrast: LaChapelle & Leibovitz

Becoming Sophia finds its visual language in the interplay between Annie Leibovitz and David LaChapelle — two masters whose aesthetics stand apart, yet together tell the whole of Sophia’s story.

From Leibovitz come the warming cool tones of her portraits — muted palettes that invite intimacy, groups that seem to breathe with quiet life. Her influence shapes the film’s narrative core: Sophia with Raphael, Sophia with her mother, Sophia with chosen family. These moments unfold with tenderness, restraint, and humanity.

From LaChapelle come the bold yet sterile, modern, and sharp warm tones of his hyper-saturated photographs and music videos. His sensibility fuels Sophia’s performative world: cabaret stages, fantasy spectacles, and music video sequences where she dazzles and survives through spectacle and artifice.

On their own, the styles are opposites — Leibovitz’s coolness versus LaChapelle’s sharp heat. But together, they create a complete portrait of Sophia: the balance between performance and intimacy, between dazzling the world and being seen at last.





860 Peachtree St NE, Atlanta, GA 30308



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SOPHIA'S CONDO

MODERN SOLITUDE.
TIMELESS DESIGN.

Step inside Sophia's condo: a sanctuary of glass, light, and clean lines. Floor-to-ceiling windows invite the city in, while sleek interiors keep it at a distance. This is home — a private world Sophia shares only with Gracie, her loyal French bulldog.



RENT NOW!



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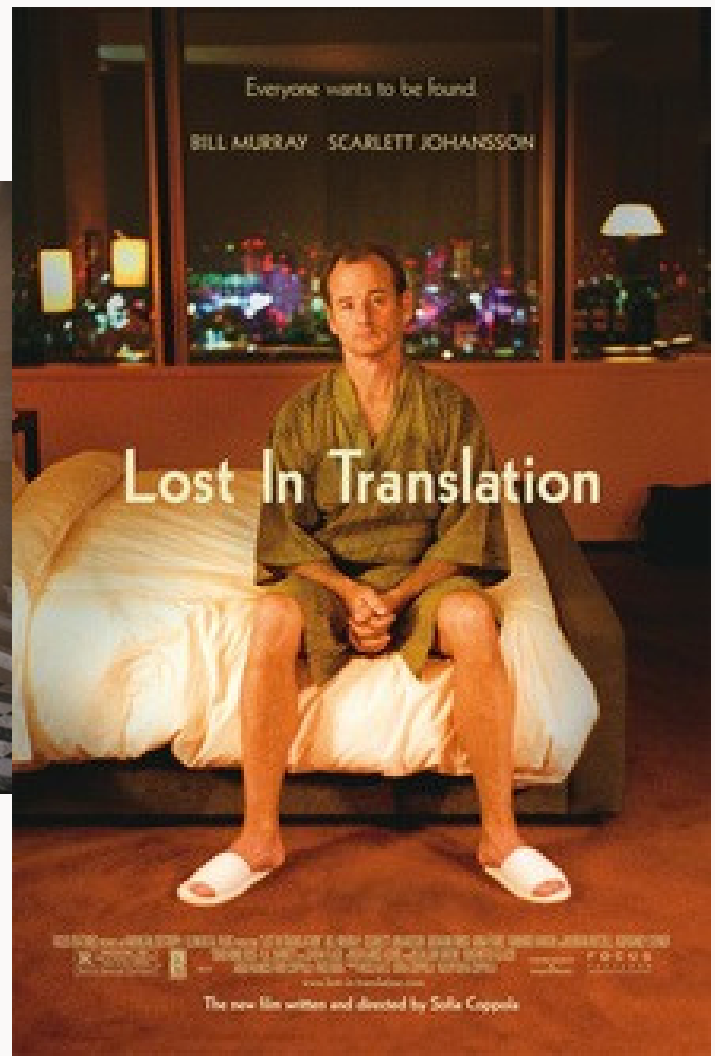
On Screen: The condo will be filmed with a digital cinema look — crisp, high-resolution detail that emphasizes both the openness of the space and its emotional chill.



Wide shots will underline Sophia's smallness within the architecture, while intimate close-ups capture her rituals of care and longing. The camera moves with restraint, letting light and shadow speak as much as dialogue.



Drawing reference from two of Sofia Coppola's works, Marie Antoinette and Lost In Translation, and the use of isolation in both films.



The Gospel According to Home



mama's house



Where Respectability Resides



daddy's church





The blueprint shop is where Sophia slips out of fantasy and into the rhythm of daily life. It's fluorescent lights, paper stacks, and the hum of machines — a grounded counterpoint to the glitter and spectacle of the film's surreal worlds.

Here, we see Sophia in her element: competent, precise, living the routines that tether her to reality.



From a production standpoint, this is one of our most economical locations. The shop is family-owned, meaning we can film without rental fees — giving the project a built-in advantage and budget flexibility. What could have been a logistical challenge becomes a narrative and financial anchor: a space of practicality, both for Sophia and for the film itself.



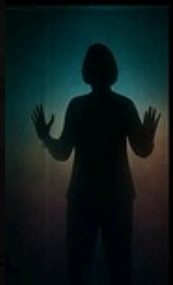
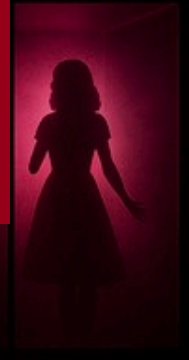
MODULAR DREAMS, CINEMATIC NIGHTMARES

In *Becoming Sophia*, fantasy becomes trap. Sophia drifts through surreal stages where archetypes of femininity and masculinity live inside glowing glass boxes — the Mother, the Career Woman, the Seductress, the Doll. Each performs endlessly, rehearsed and eternal, caught in choreography not of their choosing.

These dreamworlds unfold in constructed spaces: Technicolor dressing rooms, noir nightclubs, endless runways.

Filmed digitally on blackbox soundstages, their artifice is intentional — visible seams, scaffolding, wires. They shimmer with the glossy polish of mid-century musicals and 90s music videos, then fracture to reveal their fragility.

Here, mirrors ripple, masks grin too wide, and boxes fill with smoke and fire. Sophia confronts not just archetypes, but her own reflection: distorted, delayed, demanding. These sequences transform glamour into interrogation, showing how the roles we inherit — wife, mother, career woman, doll — can seduce and suffocate in equal measure





Every surreal sequence in *Becoming Sophia* — from the glitching mirrors to the archetypes in glass boxes — is designed as a constructed world. These moments unfold not in “real” locations but on blackbox soundstages, where scenery, lighting, and choreography can bend at will.

Filming in this way is both a creative choice and a practical one: the soundstage becomes a canvas for Technicolor fantasies and glossy 90s music-video excess, while also giving the production flexibility and modularity. As funding arrives, sequences can be staged independently, allowing the film to progress in chapters rather than being locked to one massive shoot.

The result is a visual language that feels deliberately theatrical — painted backdrops, visible seams, and dreamlike transitions — while ensuring the production can sustain itself realistically. These surreal worlds are built to shimmer, fracture, and return Sophia to the spotlight, but they’re also built to last.







AVA DAVIS IN FAKE FUR, SHADES
PHOTOGRAPHER: NICOLE KEMPER

COURT CIRCULAR



NICOLE KEMPER WITH FEATHER
PHOTOGRAPHER: NICOLE KEMPER

COURT CIRCULAR INTERVIEW: AVA DAVIS ON EDITING THE FRAGMENTED SELF IN BECOMING SOPHIA

Court Circular: Your pitch deck outlines distinct directing styles for each layer of Sophia's journey. How do you imagine editing tying into that vision?

Ava Davis: Editing will be everything. It's the heartbeat of the film, the rhythm that tells you how to feel. For *Becoming Sophia*, the cuts need to mirror Sophia's fragmentation — the performer, the woman, the psyche. Each will carry its own language.

CC: Let's start with the performer.

AD: The music video sequences will be cut fast, quick MTV-style edits. They'll be rhythmic, almost breathless. That pace mirrors Sophia's survival mechanism — dazzling spectacle, the rush of applause, never letting the audience sit still. She performs at that speed, and so will the cut.

CC: And then we move into the narrative portions.

AD: Exactly. With Raphael especially, I want the editing to slow down. Shots will unfold with patience, like in *Before Sunset* or *Moonlight*. Long takes will let silences breathe, letting us feel her vulnerability in real time. That's where we see "the woman" — grounded, intimate, reaching for love beyond the performance.

CC: And the surrealist passages?

AD: That's where the edit will shift. Some sequences will be sharp, fragmented — almost action or horror pacing when tension spikes. Others will linger, with slow dolly shots that stretch time and pull us into her subconscious. The editing will adapt to her psyche — unpredictable, tender one moment, terrifying the next.

CC: You're planning to collaborate with Nicole Kemper again.

AD: Yes! Nicole is a longtime collaborator who taught editing at the Georgia Film Academy and has cut several of my films with Studio Vosges. She has an incredible instinct for rhythm. I know she'll feel when a shot should hold a beat longer or cut away sooner. For a film about fragments seeking wholeness, that instinct will be everything.

CC: So editing becomes an extension of Sophia's emotional journey.

AD: Exactly. The rhythm of cuts, the patience of the lens, the chaos or calm of a sequence — it will all reflect her becoming. Editing won't just shape the film; it will translate her inner life into time itself.

“Editing won't just shape the film — it will translate Sophia's inner life into time itself.”





