

Synopsis

Guy and Madeline have been dating for three months. He's an up-and-coming Boston jazz trumpeter, she an aimless introvert looking for work. The excitement of first love has faded, and shortly after the film opens Guy's wandering eye is caught by a more outgoing woman. Her name is Elena. She and Guy meet on a crowded subway car—a meeting that spells the end of Guy and Madeline's romance.

Guy dives into his new relationship while Madeline tries to rebuild her life. She changes apartments, searches for a new job, takes up an instrument, goes on dates... Nothing clicks—until she travels to New York on a whim and there meets a Frenchman named Paul. Meanwhile, Guy begins to wonder if he has made a mistake. Elena shows no interest in his music, and time and again the memories of Madeline come calling...

By the time Guy resolves to win her back, Madeline has moved on. He knocks on her door, but she's nowhere to be found. He scours the streets—and finally runs into her on a forgotten corner. The two former lovers are faced with a question. Should they let the past go, or rekindle a lost romance?

A full-fledged song-and-dance musical that combines old-fashioned MGM romanticism with a gritty, vérité style, GUY AND MADELINE ON A PARK BENCH stars Jason Palmer, recently named by DOWN BEAT MAGAZINE one of the top twenty-five "Trumpeters for the Future", and features all original music composed by Justin Hurwitz and recorded by the Bratislava Symphony Orchestra. The film was shot on black-and-white 16mm and also features Andre Hayward (member of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra and trombonist with the Dave Holland Big Band), Kelly Kaleta (cast member of IMAGINE TAP), and fifteen year-old saxophone prodigy Grace Kelly.

About the Production

This film began as a short for my senior thesis at Harvard's Visual and Environmental Studies Department, advised by Robb Moss (director of *THE SAME RIVER TWICE* and *SECRECY*). The summer before my senior year I watched and rewatched as many 30's, 40's, and 50's musicals as I could get my hands on, writing the film's script and lyrics while composer Justin Hurwitz wrote the music. I wound up temporarily leaving school to expand the film, and worked on it for three years, raising money along the way to keep the whole thing going. (I graduated in June 2008.) My prime collaborators in the process were fellow Harvard grads and friends from school: producer Jasmine McGlade, executive producer W.A.W. (Adam) Parker, and Justin. (Also critical to the production were producer Mihai Dinulescu and executive producers J. Mark Inman and Arleen McGlade.) The movie was financed initially by Harvard's first Artist Development Fellowship; once I had left school to turn the short into a feature, financing came from donations and odd jobs. We would shoot as money came in, filming in Boston and New York with minimal equipment. Crews were so small that we built a special rig to allow one person to do camera and sound at once if need be, and to give us a makeshift video feed: Adam hooked our HDV camera (which we were using for sound) to the top of our 16mm Aaton (for image), and the resulting apparatus was unwieldy but very useful (especially as crews were often comprised of only one or two people).

The biggest expenses for the film were the 16mm stock and the music. Though we had very little money, we knew we wanted a ninety-piece orchestra to record the film's score. Justin drew heavily from Michel Legrand and other great French New Wave film composers for inspiration, and we needed a sound that would be lush, sweeping, and performed with real instruments, instead of programmed. We decided on the Bratislava Symphony Orchestra, and raising the requisite funds proved a huge challenge. In fact, we hadn't yet scrounged together all the money necessary for the Bratislava recording session by the time Justin flew out there, and had to race to procure those remaining funds in time.

The film was cast entirely in Boston, partly through auditions, partly through my scouring of the city's tap-dance and jazz scenes. Finding Jason Palmer was a particular surprise. I had decided the lead in the film should be a drummer, and had gone to Wally's Jazz Café to see one such potential drummer play. That night I was immediately struck, however, by the trumpeter on-stage—Jason Palmer. I went up to him after the show and asked him if he'd be interested in playing the film's lead. Thankfully, he was. Neither Jason nor Desiree Garcia (who plays Madeline, was at the time finishing her dissertation on 30's musicals at Boston University, and now teaches film studies at Ursinus College in Philadelphia) had ever acted before. Though we had a script as a blueprint, we incorporated a lot of documentary footage into the film's narrative: whole scenes, like Madeline's initial date at a sushi restaurant or Guy's family coming to visit, were edited entirely from documentary footage, and many of the performances were filmed live. Because of the huge shooting ratio this kind of filming required, we originally considered shooting on video but in the end opted for film, as it better suited the story and the aesthetic we were aiming for.

To record and engineer much of the film's music, I worked with Maxwell Drummey, also a Harvard classmate. I met Maxwell my freshman year of college, when he and I started a band with three other musicians (Justin Hurwitz was one of them), called Chester French. Two years later, Justin and I quit the band to begin making GUY AND MADELINE together. A year after that, Chester French was signed by Pharrell Williams to Star Trak.

For the film's dance numbers, I got in touch with Julia Boynton, a tap-dancer who Maxwell had recorded for a LOVE THE FUTURE track. She hosted monthly tap jams in Boston, which I began frequenting, looking out for potential dancers and choreographers. It was there that I found Kelly Kaleta, who became the film's choreographer (and performs in 'Love in the Fall' and 'Boy in the Park'), Eli Gerstenlauer (sings and dances in 'Love in the Fall'), and Suzanne Bouffard, Carolyn Glicklich, Kelly Burke, and Chris Rowse ('Boy in the Park'). For 'Boy in the Park', I was lucky enough to be able to shoot in Jasper White's famous Summer Shack Restaurant in Boston – which Jasmine had originally suggested as a location.

Shooting was an off-and-on process, with many bumps in the road. The footage from the first 'Love in the Fall' shoot was accidentally destroyed by the lab, so we had to shoot the entire number again. In the end, we shot about 20 hours of material. Editing finished in the fall of 2008, immediately after which Jasmine and I, who had begun dating during production, got engaged.

GUY AND MADELINE, as a project, proved a way for me to combine my two biggest passions: music and film. I grew up in New Jersey and Paris, and, during high school, jazz drumming was my primary pursuit. I practiced six hours a day, played on street corners in New York, and performed with the Princeton High School Studio Band, conducted by the late Dr. Anthony J. Biancosino and named the top jazz program of its kind in the country by DOWN BEAT MAGAZINE. While a Studio Band drummer, I performed as part of the opening act of the 2000 JVC Jazz Festival in New York, won Best Soloist at the 2003 America's Best High School Jazz Competition, and Best Rhythm Section Soloist at the Dunellen Invitational Jazz Festival that same year. Music was my life. While at Harvard, I returned to filmmaking, an earlier passion, hoping to one day make a film about jazz. GUY AND MADELINE is that film. I even got to perform a bit: I played the drums for 'Boy in the Park', and play a brief solo on-screen, when I appear as Madeline's drum teacher. Even better—my father, a computer scientist at Princeton University, plays the role of Paul in the film and performs one of the movie's musical numbers.

Director Biography:

Damien Chazelle was born in 1985 and grew up in Paris and Princeton, NJ, where he devoted himself to jazz drumming, playing everything from Berlin jazz clubs to the Trenton Heritage Day Festival to New York street corners and subway stops. In 2003, he won Best Solo Drums at America's Best High School Jazz Competition and Outstanding Rhythm Section Soloist at the Dunellen Invitational Jazz Festival.

GUY AND MADELINE ON A PARK BENCH began as a short for Damien's senior thesis when he was an undergraduate at Harvard University. He temporarily left school to expand the film into his first feature and worked on it for three years, shooting off and on as money came in and graduating in June 2008.

Cast Bios:

Jason Palmer (Guy): Jason teaches at the New England Conservatory and has performed with Wynton Marsalis, Common, Ravi Coltrane, Greg Osby, Roy Hargrove, and Roy Haynes. He has been featured in DOWN BEAT MAGAZINE as one of the top twenty-five "Trumpeters for the Future" and last year released his debut album as leader, SONGBOOK, with Ayva Musica. He first made his name jamming at Boston's famed Wally's Jazz Café, and has since then played such venues as the Blue Note, the Village Vanguard, Fat Cat, Kennedy Center, and THE TONIGHT SHOW, and such festivals as Newport, Tanglewood, and Rotterdam.

Desiree Garcia (Madeline): Desiree studied race, ethnicity, and classical Hollywood at Boston University, where she obtained her Ph.D. while shooting GUY AND MADELINE ON A PARK BENCH. She is currently an Assistant Professor of Film Studies at Ursinus College.

Sandha Khin (Elena): Sandha grew up in Portsmouth, NH, received her BA in Theater Arts at Brandeis University, and is currently completing an MA in Classical Acting at the Central School of Speech and Drama in London.

Andre Hayward (Andre): Andre is a long time member of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, a trombonist for the Dave Holland Big Band, and a member of the San Francisco Jazz Collective, led by Joshua Redman. He performed and recorded with singer and bandleader Betty Carter for five years, and has shared the stage with, among others, the Duke Ellington Orchestra, Slide Hampton, Jimmy Heath, and the Mingus Dynasty Big Band.

Crew Bios:

Jasmine McGlade (Producer): Jasmine McGlade is a writer and director; after graduating from Harvard, she worked as assistant to Kimberly Peirce (BOYS DON'T CRY, STOP-LOSS) and Gina Kim (NEVER FOREVER). GUY AND MADELINE ON A PARK BENCH is her first produced feature.

Justin Hurwitz (Composer): Justin was born in Los Angeles and attended Harvard, where he studied music and wrote for the Lampoon.

W.A.W. Parker (Executive Producer): W.A.W. (Adam) Parker grew up in Bozeman, Montana. He moved to the East Coast to attend Harvard, where he studied filmmaking.

Mihai Dinulescu (Producer): Mihai Dinulescu was born in Romania and has lived in Switzerland and Canada.

Kelly Kaleta (Choreographer): Kelly Kaleta grew up in Massachusetts and now lives in New York. She was a cast member of Chicago's famed tap revue IMAGINE TAP, and was a performer and choreographer for Gil Strominger's production, BREAK THE FLOOR.

Julia Boynton (Tap Dance Consultant): Julia Boynton, a world-renowned tap dancer and teacher, is producer of the Beantown Tap Fest, Boston's annual summer tap dance festival, and has performed with Brian Jones's ALL-TAP REVUE and Heather Cornell's MANHATTAN TAP.

Technical Notes:

Running Time:	82 minutes
Shooting Format:	16mm (black-and-white)
Past Festivals:	Tribeca Film Festival (World Premiere)
Upcoming Festivals:	Viennale AFI Los Angeles Thessaloniki International Film Festival Mar del Plata International Film Festival Torino Film Festival (main competition) Starz Denver Film Festival
Website:	www.guyandmadeline.com

Production Credits:

Cast:

Guy:	Jason Palmer
Madeline:	Desiree Garcia
Elena:	Sandha Khin
Frank:	Frank Garvin
Andre:	Andre Hayward
Alma:	Alma Prelec
Paul:	Bernard Chazelle
Eli:	Eli Gerstenlauer
Keith:	Keith Gross-Hill
Jerry:	Jerry Quinn

Maureen:	Maureen McCarthy
Willie:	Willie Rodriguez
Zerek:	Zerek Palmer
Guy's Mom:	Beverly Palmer
Guy's Sister:	Sharee Palmer
Guy's Brother:	T.J. Palmer
Pianist:	Joe Della Penna
Glass Harmonica Player:	Vera Meyer
Dancer at Party:	Kelly Kaleta
Girl at Party:	Vanessa Pope
Kevin:	Kevin Harris
Sophie:	Elizabeth Tingue
John:	Gonzalo Digenio
Eddie:	Eddie Wakes
Karen:	Karen Adelman
Dancers at Summer Shack:	Suzanne Bouffard
	Kelly Burk
	Carolyn Glicklich
	Chris Rowse

Crew:

Written and Directed by:	Damien Chazelle
Produced by:	Jasmine McGlade Mihai Dinulescu
Executive Producers:	J. Mark Inman W. A. W. Parker Arleen McGlade
Music:	Justin Hurwitz
Choreography:	Kelly Kaleta
Tap Dance Consultant:	Julia Boynton
Score Recorded by:	Bratislava Symphony Orchestra
Conducted by:	David Hernando
Associate Producers:	Evangelio Koehler Richard Ruiz

Songs:

“Cincinnati”:
Music by Justin Hurwitz
Lyrics by Damien Chazelle

“Love in the Fall”:
Music by Daniel DiMaggio and Justin Hurwitz
Lyrics by Damien Chazelle

“It Happened At Dawn”:
Music by Justin Hurwitz
Lyrics by Damien Chazelle

“Je Savais Pas”:
Music by Justin Hurwitz
Lyrics by Damien Chazelle

“The Boy in the Park”:
Music by Justin Hurwitz
Lyrics by Damien Chazelle

Closing Trumpet (“One for J Mac”): Music by Jason Palmer

Key Production Assistant: Keith Gross-Hill

Quad Sound Engineer: Maxwell Drummey

Additional Quad Sound Engineers: Loren Bienvenu
Jay Costa

Sound Design: Geof Thurber

Re-Recording Mixers: Raul Rosa
Greg McCleary

Gaffer: Ryan Gibeau

Key Grip: Greg Gagnon

3rd Electric: Jon Macleod

Additional Crew:
Alexa Bush
Katherina Cieplak-Mayer von Baldegg
Oliver Horovitz
Eveleen Hsu
Jacob Kramer
Dave McMaster
Vanessa Pope
Maud Streep
David Svedosh

Robert Young

Additional Musicians:

Greg Abrell
Karen Adelman
Shane Alessio
Claire Archer
Jane Bakevski
Marjan Bakrevski
Chris Baum
Michael Corayer
Keith Dickerhofe
Greg Duncan
Alex Fortes
Reed Gochberg
Nathan Goldstein
Anna Graettinger
Nina Han
Daniel L. Heath
Randall Heavilin
Beth Holub
Michael Horowitz
Hogyu Hwang
Mitch Kaplan
Grace Kelly
Shannon Kelly
Mei-Mi Lan
Jeanie Lee
Nick Machen
Kathleen Maguire
Michael McCabe
Linsey McDonald
Julie Metcalf
Marcus Miller
Adam Mills
Alex Mitchell
Wendy Mittelstadt
Maxwell Nwaru
Krista Olson
Emily Orser
Rachel Porter
Catherine Powell
Jeremy Quick
Jonah Rapino
Jordan Reddout
Willie Rodriguez
Petros Sakelliou

Keith Sanders
Nick Sanders
Jonathan Siegel
Masha Sverdlov
Perry Tsai
Jessica Wang
Lee Whalen
Kyle Wiggins
Yusuke Yamamoto
Maggie Zager
Elisa Zhang

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Andrew Bujalski
Matt Cantor
Linda Carey
Anna Chazelle
Patrick Coyne
Jaime Davila
Paul DiMaggio and Carol Ann Mason
Jim and Sandi Duffy
Connie Escher
Hope Farley
James Fasci
Omen Ferdowski
Lee Fish
Richard Fletcher
Linda Gougoutas
Emily Griffin
Amy and Matias Grum
Alfred Guzzetti
Elliott Gyger
Steve Hays and 120dB Films
Christopher Hasty
Eliza Jerrett
Mary Lee Johansen
Mike Judge
Lianna Karp
Lodge Kerrigan

Gina Kim
Julie Knippa
Evangelio Koehler
Robert Kraft
Tony Landano
Mark Lee
Andrea Legnini
Phil Limeri
John Lithgow
Chauncey Loomis
Alberto Luna
Mark Luxemburg
Arun Malik
Julie Mallozzi
Constance and John Martin
Gloria Maso
Kaoru Matsuzawa
Mark Maxwell
Frank McCarol
Alan and Gwen McGlade
Grace McGlade
Rachel McGlade
Tim O'Donnell
George Olken
Joshi Radin
John Rybicki
Laurie Santos
Jennifer Saura
Larry Shore
Richard Stephenson
Mona Singh and Trevor Jim
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