



Brian Tyree Henry in The Outside Story (all photos by Brandon Munoz)

THE OUTSIDE STORY

Brian Tyree Henry as *Charles Young*
Sonequa Martin-Green as *Isha Ellis-Winters*
Sunita Mani as *Officer Z. Slater*
Olivia Edward as *Elena Rose*
Lynda Gravatt as *Sara DaCosta*
Asia Kate Dillon as *Inez*
Maria Dizzia as *Juliet Rose*
Matthew Maher as *Neil*
Michael Cyril Creighton as *Andre Laird*
Rebecca Naomi Jones as *Amy*
Hannah Bos as *Paige*
Nadia Bowers as *Sylvia*
Paul Thureen as *Soren*
Jordan Carlos as *Calvin (Delivery Guy)*
David Zayas as *Tony Caravaggio*

Written & Directed by Casimir Nozkowski
Produced by Frank Hall Green, Brian Newman, Joseph Stephans
Cinematography by Zelmira Gainza
Edited by Eyal Dimant, Additional Editing by Zack Boger, Michael Taylor
Original Music by Alexander Trimpe
Production Design by Estee Braverman
Costume Design by Evren Catlin
Casting by Stephanie Holbrook, C.S.A.

Running time: 85 Minutes - Shot on Location in Brooklyn, NY

Tagline

Before we were locked down, he was locked out.

Short Synopsis/Logline

On a tight deadline, an introverted editor is locked out of his apartment and forced to interact with his neighbors, confront his personal demons and find a way back inside.

Synopsis

After many acclaimed supporting roles, **Brian Tyree Henry** (*Atlanta*, *If Beale Street Could Talk*, *The Eternals*) takes on his first big screen lead role as Charles, an introverted video editor, trying to recover from a broken heart. Perceiving a betrayal of trust as a sign his girlfriend Isha (**Sonequa Martin-Green**, *Star Trek: Discovery*) is leaving him, Charles preemptively blows up his relationship and sequesters himself at home (before it was cool). The fates don't comply and Charles accidentally locks himself out of his apartment. Stumbling into a life-changing odyssey up, down, around and *above* his block, Charles meets a world of previously avoided neighbors played by **Sunita Mani** (*G.L.O.W*, *Mr. Robot*), **Olivia Edward** (*Better Things*), **Asia Kate Dillon** (*Billions*, *John Wick 3*), **Maria Dizzia** (*Orange is the New Black*) and **Michael Cyril Creighton** (*The Post*, *Spotlight*) among others. In a timely story about not taking the world outside for granted, Charles is forced to re-evaluate the choices he's made when he sees his life in parallel with the people around him. From the widow next door, to the curious swingers upstairs, to the piano prodigy hiding out on the roof, Charles moves from one neck-snapping tableau to the next, disrupting and being disrupted in the process. With no shoes, no money, a phone running low on battery and the stars aligned to keep him physically separated from his comfort zone, Charles discovers in *The Outside Story* we've all got issues and it never helps to keep them on lockdown inside.

Writer/Director's Bio

Casimir Nozkowski is a filmmaker who has been featured on The Tonight Show, written about in the New York Times and shown at MOMA. He has directed and/or edited over 100 short films and sits on the Rooftop Films board of directors. His work has premiered at Sundance, SXSW, Telluride, Tribeca, Hot Docs, Woodstock, San Diego Comic Con and garnered millions of views online. Recent shorts include his films "IDAC" and "70 Hester Street" (Vimeo Staff Picks) and editing the animated documentary "The Shining Star of Losers Everywhere" (Sundance Film Festival premiere). He wrote and directed his first feature "The Outside Story" starring Brian Tyree Henry, Sonequa Martin-Green, Sunita Mani, Olivia Edward and Asia Kate Dillon which will be released in 2020.



Sunita Mani (Z. Slater) and Brian Tyree Henry (Charles) clash in The Outside Story

Director's Notes

The Outside Story was filmed in a run and gun 16 days on the streets of Park Slope, Brooklyn. We filmed in the late fall, in the freezing cold, our actors playing the seasons more like late summer and early fall in the script, wrapping themselves in blankets between our minimal number of takes. Actors flew in and out at breakneck pace, generously filming our movie on their off-days from other projects or even giving us days during their Thanksgiving break. Everyone truly hit the ground running to accommodate our rapid-fire schedule and breathe life into this real-time feeling, ensemble comedy. I pinch myself when I think of this cast - Brian Tyree Henry, Sonequa Martin-Green, Sunita Mani, Olivia Edward, Asia Kate Dillon, Maria Dizzia - my favorite actors from my favorite TV shows and New York theater - joining the film and making this first time feature director's dreams come to life.

My main character is an editor and disenchanted documentary filmmaker, trapped as a freelancer who edits In Memoriam videos for celebrities who aren't dead yet. His career was inspired by two things: 1) an actual job I held at the cable channel AMC where I was asked to update in house, In Memoriam videos celebrating actors who were still alive and 2) my appreciation and sometimes disappointment in the In Memoriam section of awards shows. Growing up, I loved the In Memoriam section of the Academy Awards for how it rendered actor and filmmaker legacies in just a few poignant clips. I became a connoisseur of In Memoriams, even making my own in 2017, and then building my first feature film around a character who made them - a perfect job for a stifled film artist hiding from life and immersing himself in the legacy of other filmmakers.



*Brian Tyree Henry (Charles) climbs the fire escape in *The Outside Story**

With *The Outside Story*, my goal was also to make a film that captured the poetry and drama in everyday life. Starting with a small problem - a man is locked out of his apartment - I intended that small problem to explode into an epic, life-altering odyssey that occupied a radius of only 1 or 2 blocks. But instead of monsters and sirens and long distances, I wanted to seek out the stakes found in everyday drama: parking tickets, errant water balloons, bathroom emergencies, lost keys and new friends. I wanted to illustrate how much action and life and fear and desire there was to be found in this relatively small footprint, even in your stairwell or the apartments above you. As I'd done in the countless short documentaries I'd made in previous years, I wanted to investigate all the things we take for granted in this city and have those discoveries inspire Charles - played so beautifully by Emmy and TONY nominee Brian Tyree Henry - to question the choices he'd made in his life.

The film intersects many of my passions. While aiming to be a universal story, I also grounded the movie in New York City iconography and my background as a lifelong New Yorker. Having made films that documented all corners of the city including ones that examine the local bodega, stoop sales, publicly funded stadiums, and my childhood home on the Lower East Side ("70 Hester Street" - a 2014 premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival), I drew on the making of those films to render the backgrounds of our main character's neighbors and obstacles/inspirations flanking his journey.

About the Production

I started writing *The Outside Story* in 2017 and it just flowed out of me. That feeling of the world being against you in little ways, death by a thousand paper cuts, was appealing to me as a foundation for a character whose problem was more of perception than actual circumstance. I wanted Charles to be stuck but not enclosed. Just the opposite, I wanted him to be stuck outside of his comfort zone with every option available to him but unseen because of his tunnel vision of woe.

And, of course, it was based on personal experience. Having locked myself out of my apartment, I'd tried all the things that Charles tries like climbing down my fire escape, calling the friend I thought had my duplicate keys and waiting on my stoop for a landlord who never comes. And each time, yes I was frustrated. But I also saw my life from a new perspective and ended up reveling in the forced timeout as I called it. Work was put on hold. Relationships were reconsidered. And I sat and watched New York walk, bike, skate and drive by, fascinated by the details of each passing individual. I probably could have called a locksmith - but I was renting, didn't want to pony up and was enjoying my time awaiting a solution that hopefully would come before dark.



Olivia Edward (Elena) in The Outside Story

I also took inspiration from movies that kept their circumference modest and scope intimate like *After Hours*, *Ghost World*, *The Kid with a Bike*, *Another Year*, *Chungking Express*, *Wendy & Lucy* and countless others that examined some version of “regular life.” I liked how in these films the stakes crept up on you and the main characters ended up moved and forever transformed by the smallest adjustments in their perspectives. I loved thinking about how from the outside, the characters in these movies might not merit a second look if you just saw them on the street. But by spending time with them in the framework of these beautiful, slow burning, sometimes funny or tragic films, we ended up witnesses to the micro-dramas we all face in our daily routines.



Sonequa Martin-Green (Isha) in The Outside Story

The actual production started to take shape when producers Brian Newman, Frank Hall Green and Joseph Stephans joined forces with executive producers Evan Thayer, Cameron O'Reilly and Lisa Kleiner Chanoff. Little by little, we accumulated the means to successfully film our stellar cast - who all took a leap of faith to join a production helmed by a first time director. Our casting director, Stephanie Holbrook was the first department head onboard, followed by Cinematographer Zelmira Gainza and editor Eyal Dimant. I started to work with Zelmira daily, meeting and scouting in Brooklyn for the vibe we wanted to give the film. While our location team, led by Greg Routt and Julia Thompson started to pull in the apartments and exteriors we needed to convey the community of our main characters, Zelmira and I storyboarded. We wanted the film to be funny but not lose its heart. We talked about tableaus and giving the frame a lot

of flexibility for actors to have room to improvise and play. We decided against a lot of intricate choreography and gave everyone a wide berth - looking to capture a restlessness and lattice of connections being made in the course of the film.

We knew we would shoot in New York City because I had baked the geography of my city into the script. As Charles - the main character - starts to get more adventurous, he ventures out into the world of Brooklyn to his local bodega, his park for a drink of water and to park his girlfriend's car before he gets a ticket (he fails). On top of that, when he befriends the neighborhood antagonist, Officer Slater, the parking cop with a chip on her shoulder, she takes him on a micro-odyssey of her own to all the great food establishments in the neighborhood Charles has been missing. We literally filmed at my favorite restaurants in Carroll Gardens: Esposito's Pork Store, Monteleone's Pastries, D'Amico's Coffee and Sal's Pizzeria - four lions of Brooklyn comfort cuisine. We brought Brian Tyree Henry, Sunita Mani and later Sonequa Martin-Green to these places (or the food to them for essential scenes) and asked them to stuff themselves - which they gladly did (Esposito's so lovingly accommodating the vegetarian Mani and Martin-Green with eggplant heros dressed to look like the essential Italian Combo Charles learns about in the script).

On top of that we invited the owners of Esposito's and D'amicos to play themselves in the scenes where Charles tries their food for the first time - even giving John Esposito a few lines which he nailed before showing us on camera how he makes his famous sandwich. He was a prime example of how we searched for authenticity throughout the film, imbuing our scenes with the real details and personality of our actual locations.

CAST

Brian Tyree Henry - CHARLES



Major Credits:

- *Atlanta (FX)*
- *Widows*
- *Spiderman: Into the Spideverse*
- *White Boy Rick*
- *The Eternals (2020)*

2-Time EMMY Nominee
2-Time TONY Nominee

Sonequa Martin-Green - ISHA



Major Credits:

- *Star Trek: Discovery*
- *The Walking Dead*
- *Space Jam 2*

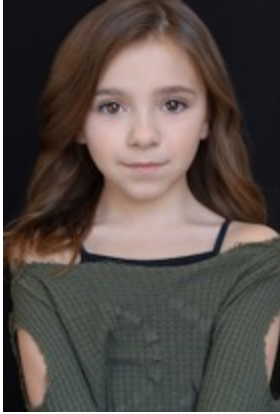
Sunita Mani - Z. SLATER



Major Credits:

- *G.L.O.W. (Netflix)*
- *Mr. Robot (USA)*
- *Turn Down For What (Music Video)*
- *Don't Think Twice*
- *Snowy Bing Bongs/Cocoon Central Dance Team*
- *Save Yourself!*

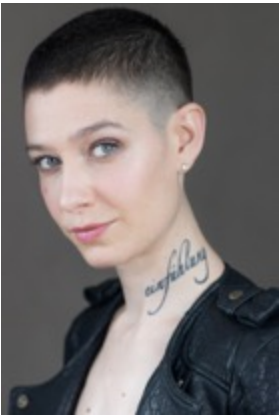
Olivia Edward - ELENA



Major Credits:

- *Better Things (FX)*
- *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend (CW)*

Asia Kate Dillon - IZZY



Major Credits:

- *Billions (Showtime)*
- *John Wick 3*
- *Orange is the New Black (Netflix)*

Maria Dizzia - JULIET



Major Credits:

- *Martha Marcy May Marlene*
- *True Story*
- *While We're Young*
- *Orange is the New Black (Netflix)*

Michael Cyril Creighton - ANDRE



Major Credits:

- *Spotlight*
- *The Post*
- *Game Night*
- *Two Broke Girls (CBS)*
- *High Maintenance (HBO)*

Rebecca Naomi Jones - AMY



Major Credits:

- *OKLAHOMA! (Broadway)*
- *Passing Strange (Broadway)*
- *American Idiot (Broadway)*
- *High Maintenance (HBO)*
- *The Big Sick*

Hannah Bos - PAIGE



Major Credits:

- *High Maintenance (HBO)*
- *The Incredible Jessica James*
- *How To Follow Strangers*

Matthew Maher - NEIL



Major Credits:

- *Captain Marvel*
- *Marriage Story*
- *Mozart in the Jungle (Amazon)*
- *Gone Baby Gone*

CREW

Casimir Nozkowski - WRITER/DIRECTOR



Major Credits

- ***IDAC***, short film, writer/director (Hot Docs)
- ***70 Hester Street***, short, writer/director (Tribeca Film Festival)
- ***Andrew Sarris: Critic in Focus***, short, writer/director (Telluride)
- ***Childhood Sale***, short, writer/director (San Diego Comic Con)
- ***The Shining Star of Losers Everywhere***, short film, editor (Sundance Film Festival, SXSW, ESPN)

Frank Hall Green - PRODUCER



Major Credits

- ***Wildlike***, writer/director
- ***Remittance***, producer
- ***Ghetto Clown***, producer
- ***Allegiance***, producer

Producer and Partner at Catch & Release Films

Brian Newman - PRODUCER



Major Credits

- ***The Heist***, producer
- ***The Wild***, producer
- ***Love & Taxes***, producer

Joseph Stephans - PRODUCER



Major Credits

- ***Wildlike***, producer
- ***Last Night In Rozzie***, producer
- ***I'll Meet You There***, production manager

Zelmira Gainza - DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY



Major Credits

- ***Luxor***, director of photography
- ***Egg***, director of photography
- ***Havana Motor Club***, director of photography

Estee Braverman - PRODUCTION DESIGNER



Major Credits

- ***Catfight***, production designer
- ***Aviva***, production designer
- ***You're Not Alone***, production designer

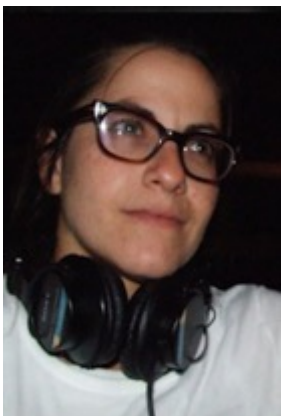
Stephanie Holbrook, C.S.A. - CASTING DIRECTOR



Major Credits

- ***Thoroughbreds***, casting director
- ***The Sinner (USA)***, casting director
- ***Servant (Apple+)***, casting director
- ***The Grudge***, casting director
- ***Madeline's Madeline***, casting director

Laura Klein - FIRST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR



Major Credits

- ***We The Animals***, first AD
- ***Joe Pera Talks To You (Adult Swim)***, first AD
- ***Shirley***, first AD
- ***Night Comes On***, first AD
- ***Obvious Child***, first AD

Eyal Dimant - EDITOR



Major Credits

- ***The Ballad of Buster Scruggs***, associate editor