



Press kit
www.love-film.ch

LES HISTOIRES D'AMOUR DE LIV S.

THE LOVE STORIES
OF LIV S.



A film by Anna Luif

SYNOPSIS

Following an argument with her boyfriend, Liv Sàndor, 38, walks through the city reminiscing about past loves. In all her relationships, there was always one turning point, where everything went downhill. As she wanders through parks, streets and cafes, Liv faces her fears, her moments of joy and her demons, before she eventually finds the means to free herself of them.

For her third feature film, the Swiss filmmaker Anna Luif takes us on a rollercoaster ride through the tragicomic everyday life of a dreamy, funny and touching heroine. With quirky humour, dancing on the boundary between the imaginary and the real, the film plunges us into the whirlwind that is the psyche of a modern woman in search of herself.



SUMMARY

Liv (38) is wandering around town, visibly upset after her argument with John. Their love story that seemed so promising, has fallen to pieces, like all Liv's other relationships with men. In a park, Liv confides in a group of teenage girls and they try to get to the root of her problem. Is her parents' relationship to blame? They were never really right for each other. Or maybe her childhood? When Liv was 12, in the scouts, she had a crush on Ali Baba, but sabotaged any chance she had to get close to him, unable to assume her first feelings of love.

At the age 22, Liv moves in with Paul, a theatre director, convinced that she is in love. But thanks to Luc, she realises she is fooling herself – but still, doesn't dare acknowledge it: Liv brushes Luc aside and stays with Paul, but he cheats on her... with her best friend Emma. Her world falls apart. Liv gets involved with Étienne on a whim. After a few detours, she finds herself in bed with the seductive Seba, but a sudden shyness overcomes her and gets in the way of her plans.

Eventually, Luc reappears in her life, and this time around, Liv allows herself to live true love... but their bliss is short-lived. Liv cheats on Luc and the couple separate. Incapable of being alone, Liv embarks on an affair with Ben, a journalist. Their similarities end up taking their toll on both of them, reopening old wounds and sending Liv to the brink of a nervous breakdown.

Meanwhile, Emma and Paul start a family and invite Liv to their wedding. Taking advantage of the opportunity, Liv invites DJ Imalas, whom she has been chatting to online. Their first meeting is a complete fiasco that Liv tries to escape from by hiding in a shed with a pig. That's when she realises that she has hit rock bottom. Just as Liv loses all hope, a touching gesture from the teenage girls in the park rekindles a spark inside her. Liberated from her demons, Liv returns to the lake, where it all began. She dives into the cool water, swims freely through the waves and literally ends up in John's arms. Now she's ready for love.





DIRECTOR'S INTENT

The film sets off in a romantic idyll by a lake, then quickly takes a leap into a dramatic break-up. Although Liv wants nothing more than to find a partner in life, something inside her shuts down as soon as she gets close. Liv struggles to find the right balance. She adapts to fit into each new relationship, instead of staying true to herself. She's thrown about in her quest and fails every time.

The film is divided into chapters, each exploring a different type of love. The characters, the relationships, the places and the different rhythms symbolize different stages in her life. At every stage, Liv learns a lesson that propels her into the next chapter. Finally, she manages to break free from her internal prison and finds new hope.

I use different cinematographic devices to represent the fragmentation of this woman's identity, her search for love and for herself. Her point of view is expressed through flashbacks, voice-overs, quotes and stories shared with people she casually meets.

Liv finds herself homeless when John kicks her out, which exemplifies her inability to find someplace she belongs. She often

hides and observes others, physically symbolising her inner prison. Water is present throughout the storyline, from her meeting with John to her final rebirth. Mirrors represent Liv's lack of self-confidence and the reflections symbolise her journey of reflection.

The film portrays the dance of *closeness and distance* that takes place between two people in a couple, in a «dramaturgy of bodies in space»: the violent slap for Salami, the separation from Paul, her fleeing from Etienne, brutally being torn from Seba's arms, the affectionate embrace with Luc by the lake, the frantic dance moves with DJ Imalas...

Finally, the image of the goddess Diana/Artemis resonates at the beginning of the scene with the scouts, then at the shooting range, with the animals, the representations of nature, and at the end, when the teenage girls give Liv the crescent moon.



CREDITS

A film by Anna Luif

| | |
|-----------|-----------------------|
| LIV | Agnès Delachair |
| EMMA | Marie Fontannaz |
| LUC | Jean-Christophe Folly |
| PAUL | Baptiste Gilliéron |
| BEN | Andranic Manet |
| ETIENNE | François Neycken |
| SEBA | Dimitri Stapfer |
| DJ IMALAS | Antonin Schopfer |
| JOHN | Rémi Fortin |
| BEATRICE | Rebecca Bonvin |
| AGNES | Judit Jancsó |
| LASZLO | Tamàs Herczeg |

CAMERA Timon Schäppi • **SOUND** Benoît Barraud
• **LIGHT** Peter Demmer • **SET DESIGN** Peter Scherz
• **COSTUMES** Anna Van Brée • **MAKE UP** Adrienne
Chauliac • **CASTING** Lydie Le Doeuff • **ACTING**
COACHING Giles Foreman, Barbara Fischer •
PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR Olivier Monnard •
FIRST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR Thomas Kaufmann
• **LOCATION MANAGER** Marco Parrella • **EDITOR**
Nicolas Hislair • **MUSIC** Balz Bachmann • **SOUND**
DESIGN Benjamin Benoît • **SOUND EDITING** Denis
Séchaud • **COLOUR GRADING** Jürgen Kupka

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Adrian Blaser • **IN COPRODUCTION WITH** SRF Radio
Télévision Suisse and blue+

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FOCAL Stage Pool • Ernst Göhner Stiftung

ANNA LUIF

script, director



Hungarian-born screenwriter and director Anna Luif (CH/H) studied film at Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK). During her studies, she wrote and directed several short fiction films. In 2000, her film **SUMMERTIME** won the Swiss Film Prize and over 20 international awards. She directed the feature films **LITTLE GIRL BLUE**, released in cinemas in 2003 after a successful festival tour, and **MADLY IN LOVE** in 2010.

Since 2006, she teaches at the ZHdK and from 2012 to 2022 was in charge of FOCAL's fiction production department.

FILMOGRAPHY (screenwriter, director)

- | | |
|------|--|
| 2023 | WHAT A LOSS FOR THE WORLD (NIECE) director, editor, music clip |
| 2018 | BERN, BETHLEHEM scripts, with M. Lewinsky / SRF TV series |
| 2018 | LAST TEAR (NIECE) script, director, editor, music clip |
| 2018 | STILL ALIVE (NADJA ZELA) script, director, editor, music clip |
| 2012 | UN ONCLE D'AMÉRIQUE script, director, fiction short film |
| 2010 | MADLY IN LOVE co-writer script, director, feature film |
| 2007 | ST.HELVETIA (KUTTI MC) script, director, music clip |
| 2006 | I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR FREEDOM script, director, short film |
| 2003 | LITTLE GIRL BLUE script collaborator, director, feature film |
| 2000 | SUMMERTIME script, director, fiction short film |
| 1998 | DIEBE VOL 1-3 script collaborator, director (degree film) |



INTERVIEW WITH ANNA LUIF

Tell us about the film's genesis. Why were you interested in the subject of love?

Liv's story is strongly inspired by my own. Ten years ago, I had an accident that meant I had to put my life on hold for a few months. During this strange "in-between period", when I didn't know what was going to happen, I wrote texts without putting too much thought into them. Later, when I came across a piece of paper from that time, which in a scenic way summarised how my relationships and love life had evolved up to that point, I thought it could make for an interesting film. The film has another important autobiographical element: my parents' past during the war and in 1956 in Hungary, followed by their difficult marriage in Switzerland. Over the years, I have become increasingly aware of the impact their pain has had on my own relationships.

Liv is a 'normal' woman with no major problems in life. What is the tragedy of her life?

Liv suffers great fears. Fears of being abandoned, fears of showing herself, fears of not being appreciated for who she is. Liv's crescent moon - part of her disguise in the scouts scene - is damaged as a result of her parents' violent behaviour. The loss of this crescent

moon represents the loss of her integrity. However she longs for a relationship, she wants to love and be loved. She has to learn how to love and how to "have a good relationship". And to do that, she has to go along the path of trial and error, which begins with an unhappy first love as a teenager and ends only when Liv gives up her desperate search and lets go of her expectations.

How did you go about working on the script?

The storyline is certainly inspired by my own life, but I then tried to transform a personal story into a universal one and find the right narrative form. The film advances in the form of a spiral. Liv battles with her demons, turn after turn, eventually bringing her closer to herself. It was important to me that we learn Liv's story step by step, that we delve with her into her memories.

Halfway through the writing process, I felt the need to work with real characters. So I met with some actors and we improvised ideas for scenes from the treatment. This stage of the work gave me a great deal of new ideas and impulses.

Throughout the process, I felt that the story of my film should be located where it actually took place in real life: in the city of Zurich. Simultaneously, I also realised that by making the story evolve, by

INTERVIEW

removing it from my own, I had to create a certain distance. That's why we decided to shoot the film in French, the "language of love" and worked with the French-speaking scriptwriter Marie Fourquet.

Marie brought a fresh perspective to the story, improved certain passages and fine-tuned the French dialogue. Producer Aline Schmid gave me constructive guidance and support throughout the writing process. And at one point, I was joined by scriptwriters Franz Rodenkirchen and Françoise von Roy.

Why did you want to make a film about Liv?

I wanted to tell the story of what I've experienced and learnt in and about relationships. The film is a cinematic transposition of my experiences, observations and questions told in an emotional and humorous account. I wanted the audience to experience the fragmentation of Liv's identity, her search for and flight from men and herself, through a variety of cinematic devices. The storyline develops from Liv's point of view, using flashbacks, voice-overs, quotes, strangers who suddenly start talking, as well as lots of animals and sunlight. All in all, "The love stories of Liv S." is a film for anyone interested in relationships, who wants to feel empathy and laugh along with the protagonists.

Are there any role models who have influenced you?

"A comedic realism that serves realism first and comedy second" was apparently Greta Gerwig's motto when she made "Ladybird". That's the genre of film that has inspired me, American independent cinema. My role models are Miranda July (Me And You And Everyone We Know), Mike Mills (20th Century Women), Noah Baumbach (Frances Ha), Woody Allen and French directors who tell their stories in a tragicomic way, like Agnès Jaoui (Comme Une Image) or Céline Devaux (Tout Le Monde Aime Jeanne).

Tells us about the men in the film.

The choice of men and their love stories with Liv are based on the storylines of my own life. Some characters are picked as they are, from real life, some are invented and others are a combination of several people that really existed. It was very important for me to paint a true and loving portrait of the male characters.

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How was the casting process?

Alexandre Nazarian was in charge of casting the lead actress in Paris. Agnès Delachair was the first actress we met there and we chose her after several castings. She then attended all the casting calls for the male roles, so we could get a better idea of the dynamic between the actors. For the male roles, we worked with French performer and casting director Lydie Le Doeff, who has an incredible eye for talent and found us many diamonds in the rough.

What was work on set like?

Filming was initially planned for June–July 2020. Due to Covid, the shoot had to be postponed by a year. Which resulted in an incredibly stressful six months, because we didn't know if and how filming would take place.

The work with cameraman Timon Schäppi was inspiring and intense. As we were a year older, so to speak, we were very well prepared. And the work with set designer Peter Scherz and his team also benefitted from the Covid year, where we made use of the period of uncertainty to enrich – via Skype and Zoom – the mood boards.

Music plays a central role in the film. This is your fourth collaboration with composer Balz Bachmann. How do you work together?

There's a warmth and love in Balz Bachmann's music that is exactly what I'm looking for in my films. At the beginning, we sent each other playlists of film music, mainly French. And Balz then composed around thirty retro style demo tracks. In the end, it was a jam session based around the score of Miranda July's film "Kajillionaire" by Emile Mosseri that enabled us to come up with the final music. The collaboration with Evelinn Trouble and Michael Flury, who wrote and performed the song "My Eyes", which Liv sings at Emma's wedding, was also very inspiring.



CAST



AGNÈS DELACHAIR is a graduate of Ivan Bacchiocchi's International School of Mime, and together with her husband Sergi Emiliano Griell runs the «Troisième Génération» company, which translates the heritage of mime into the present. The Paris-born actress was awarded the Prix Jeune Espoir Féminin at the Festival Jean Carmet for the

short film *LA PART DE FRANCK* by Dominique Baumard in 2011. In film, Agnès Delachair played the lead role in *NE NOUS SOUMETS PAS A LA TENTATION* by Cheyenne Carron in 2010. Agnès Delachair has appeared in several series, including *GO FAST* (2008, Olivier Van Hoofstadt), *À L'AVEUGLE* (2012, Xavier Palud) and *LE CHALET* (2017, Camille Bordes-Resnais and Alexis Lecaye).



MARIE FONTANNAZ is a Swiss actress who graduated from the drama department of the Geneva Conservatory and the La Manufacture theatre school in Lausanne. She also studied film in Los Angeles. In film, she recently played a protective mother in *COLOMBINE* (2022) by Dominique Othenin-Girard. She has also appeared

in the series *STATION HORIZON* (RTS/Netflix), *DOUBLE VIE* (RTS), *QUARTIER DES BANQUES* (RTS) and *BIP* (RTS).



JEAN-CHRISTOPHE FOLLY is a French actor, originally from Togo, who has appeared in theatre, film and television. He made his big screen debut in *35 RHUMS* by Claire Denis (2009) and played the lead role in *L'ANGLE MORT* by Pierre Trividic and Patrick Mario Bernard (2019). He has also appeared in TV series such as *LE SANG DE LA*

VIGNE (2015) and *OVNI(S)* (2022). In Ruben Ostlund's *TRIANGLE OF SADNESS*, he plays Nelson, one of the pirates.

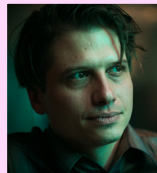


ANDRANIC MANET grew up in the Paris suburbs. A graduate of the Conservatoire National Supérieur d'Art Dramatique in Paris, the actor was awarded the prize for Best Actor at the Cabourg Festival in 2022. He plays DJ Dee Nasty in the NTM biopic *LE MONDE DE DEMAIN* (Netflix/Arte) and a dangerous lover in *VACANCES* by Béatrice Sebbah de Staël and Léo Wolfenstein (2022).

CAST



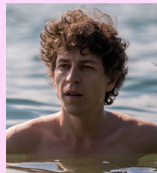
BAPTISTE GILLIÉRON is an actor from Lausanne who trained at the Haute Ecole de Théâtre de Suisse Romande. He has appeared in numerous plays. In film, he was nominated for the Swiss Film Prize for his role in *PAUSE* by Mathieu Urfer (2014) and has appeared in series such as *STATION HORIZON* (RTS/Netflix) and *DOUBLE VIE* (RTS).



DIMITRI STAPFER, a Swiss-German actor and director, won the Swiss Film Prize for his role in *LEFT FOOT RIGHT FOOT* by Germinal Roaux (2013) and has appeared in films such as *BEYTO* by Gitta Gsell (2020) and *LABYRINTH OF PEACE* by Mike Schaerer (2020).



ANTONIN SCHOPFER is a Swiss actor and director born in Geneva. His film credits include *CAMILLE* (2019) by Boris Lojkine, *FORTUNA* (2018) by Germinal Roaux and *L'INCLINAISON DES CHAPEAUX* (2016), which he co-directed with Thomas Szczepanski.



RÉMI FORTIN, a graduate of the Paris Conservatoire and the Strasbourg National Theatre School, is above all a renowned theatre actor. His film credits include *LE GARÇON GIRAFFE* by Anne Thérion (2015) and *HI, HOW ARE YOU* by Clémy Clarke (2021).



BEAUVOIR FILMS

BEAUVOIR FILMS produces documentaries and fiction films for cinema release, festivals and television. Priority is given to productions with a distinct visual and narrative approach. Daniel Zimmermann's **WALDEN** won the Special Jury Prize at the Karlovy Vary Festival in 2018 and was presented at Sundance. **THE GIRL AND THE SPIDER** by Ramon & Silvan Zürcher won two awards at the 2021 Berlinale. **MARGUERITE'S THEOREM** by Anna Novion was presented as part of the official selection at Cannes 2023.

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After graduating from the University of Fribourg, **ALINE SCHMID** studied in Stuttgart to become a scriptwriter. After working at several festivals, she became head of distribution at Cineworx in Basel, then administrator of the Cinéma Tous Ecrans festival in Geneva. With Intermezzo Films she

co-produced several films including, **SONITA** (Winner at Sundance/IDFA). In 2013, she took part in the Emerging Producers programme at Jihlava and in Cannes' Producer on the Move in 2015. In 2016, she founded Beauvoir Films in Geneva.



ADRIAN BLASER crossed the river Sarine in 1992 to study in Lausanne. He first worked at the Théâtre de Vidy and became Jean-Stéphane Bron's assistant on the film **MAIS IM BUNDESHUUS - LE GÉNIE HELVÉTIQUE**. He worked as a production manager and in 2008 worked at the Museum of

Contemporary Art in Belgrade before joining the set of **CLEVELAND VS WALL STREET** (2010). In 2011, he joined Bande à part Films in Lausanne as an executive producer (**L'EXPÉRIENCE BLOCHER**, **MOKA**, **LES PONT DE SARAJEVO**, **L'OPÉRA DE PARIS**, etc.). In 2017, he joined Beauvoir Films.



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DE LIV S. |
THE LOVE STORIES
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www.love-film.ch

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