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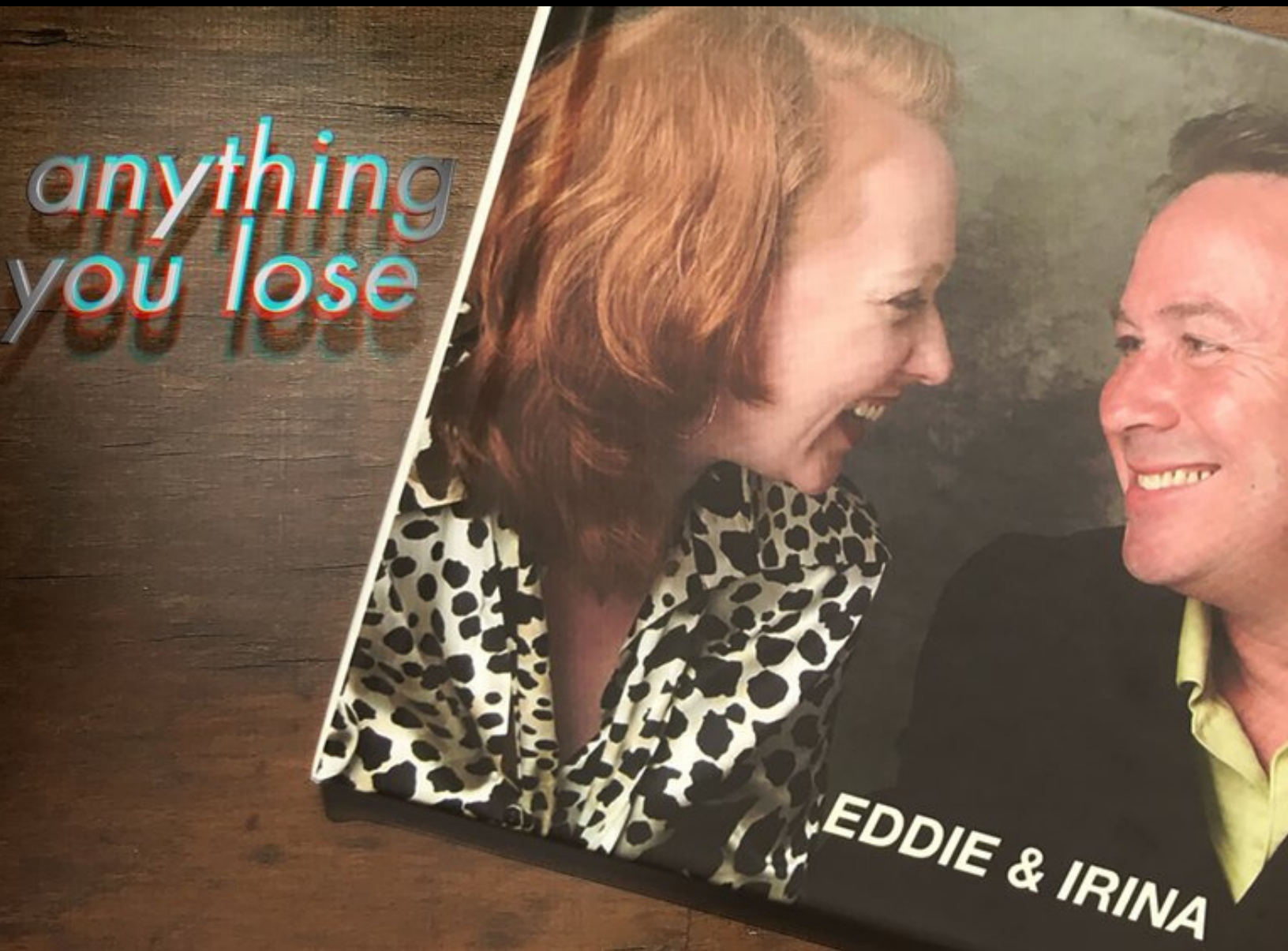
NEWS

WHERE EVERY FRAME TELLS A
CAPTIVATING STORY

STARRING IRINA VODAR AND THE TEAM OF ANYTHING YOU LOSE
AWARD WINNER AT PAGEANT FILM FESTIVAL
IN THE BEST DOCUMENTARY (NARRATIVE) CATEGORY

DEEP DIVE INTO ANYTHING YOU LOSE

YEAR OF 2023



DIRECTED BY

Irina Vodar

Written By

Irina Vodar & Fernanda Rossi



PAGEANT FILM FESTIVAL

KEY CAST

Dr. Kausal Kadam

Dr. David Barad

Dr. Jacques Moritz



LOGLINE

Anything You Lose explores the world of Reproductive Technologies and its effects on mental health. The documentary delves into the booming industry, where clinics compete for clientèle with high success rates, and follows the director on her personal seven-year journey. Irina Vodar and her husband Eddie are a couple who want to have a child but face challenges and pressures along the way. Through cinema vérité footage and narration, Vodar shares her intimate story of hope and resilience, and examines the psychological impact of reproductive technologies on patients, such as addiction, shame, isolation and silence.

SYNOPSIS

"Anything You Lose" is a poignant documentary that delves into the world of Reproductive Technologies and its profound impact on mental health. Directed by Irina Vodar, the film chronicles her seven-year personal journey alongside her husband Eddie as they navigate the challenges of trying to conceive. Set against the backdrop of a booming industry where clinics vie for clients with promises of high success rates, the documentary sheds light on the emotional toll experienced by individuals undergoing fertility treatments. Through a blend of cinema vérité footage and heartfelt narration, Vodar shares her story of hope and resilience, while also exploring the psychological consequences faced by patients, including addiction, shame, isolation, and silence. "Anything You Lose" offers a compelling exploration of the intersection between reproductive technologies and mental well-being, inviting viewers to reflect on the complexities of the human experience in the pursuit of parenthood.

THEIR STORY



"Anything You Lose" is a tender exploration of the intertwining threads of relationships and infertility. Eddie and Irina embarked on a deeply personal journey as hopeful parents, spanning from seeking surrogacy in India to pursuing advanced IVF treatments in New York. As their quest for parenthood took unexpected turns, Irina found solace in the editing room, shaping this film into a beacon of purpose amidst uncertainty. Reflecting on the myriad choices faced, including the difficult decision between pursuing treatment or prioritizing the partnership, the film emerged as a testament to resilience and self-discovery.

Supported by post-production funding from NYSCA, "Anything You Lose" received heartfelt praise during its test screening at Fertility Fest 2019 in London's Barbican Theater. However, the onset of COVID-19 ushered in a period of reflection and distance, prompting a deeper exploration of truths. In a transformative week in 2023, on the fourth anniversary of the London screening, Irina crafted a one-hour TV cutdown version, encapsulating the essence of her journey in a coming-of-age narrative.

Beyond merely recounting the infertility struggles, "Anything You Lose" is a gentle call to recognize the emotional toll of reproductive treatments, including the often-overlooked PTSD and mental stressors. With its lyrical editing and flowing verité style, the film offers a nuanced portrayal of infertility's dilemmas, urging for greater awareness and understanding. Enhanced by evocative graphics, an original musical score, and visually captivating montages, it serves as a roadmap of transformation.

Irina's endeavor is not only for her own healing and those who have traversed similar paths but also to introduce this important topic to a new generation of viewers with tenderness and empathy.



Dr. Mrs. Kaushal Kadam

Dr. Mrs. Kaushal Kadam, the esteemed Medical Director of Corion, brings over two decades of experience to her practice, offering the gift of parenthood to countless couples. Renowned for her personal touch, she oversees every aspect of patient care, from initial consultations to ultrasounds and pregnancy tests. This hands-on approach sets Corion apart, ensuring that delicate stages of treatment are expertly managed under her guidance.

Dr. Kadam's dedication is evident in Corion's specialized focus on treatments for repeated implantation failure and third-party reproduction. Supported by a dedicated team of ART specialists, including embryologists, counselors, secretariat staff, and skilled nursing and technical professionals, Corion excels in providing comprehensive care tailored to each patient's unique journey.



Dr. David Barad

Dr. Barad is a distinguished specialist in reproductive endocrinology and infertility based at the Center for Human Reproduction in New York City. Boasting an impressive 44 years of experience in the medical field, he holds fellowship status from Harvard Medical School in Boston and is esteemed as a fellow of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

Additionally, he is an esteemed member of both the American Society of Reproductive Medicine and the Society of Reproductive Endocrinology. Renowned for his compassionate approach, patients often describe Dr. Barad as a "kind professional who makes you feel like you're family." His expertise and dedication to patient care have earned him a reputation as a trusted and empathetic practitioner in the field of reproductive medicine.



Dr. Jacques Moritz

Dr. Moritz is a compassionate OB/GYN with over 30 years of experience in New York City. For a quarter-century, he served as the Director of Gynecology at Mount Sinai West, where he advocated for patient choice in childbirth. Dr. Moritz's dedication to patient-centered care is evident in his creation of Manhattan's only two in-hospital birthing centers.

He generously shares his knowledge by lecturing on advancements in gynecological procedures and has contributed chapters on uterine fibroids. Recognized for his expertise and care, Dr. Moritz has been consistently listed in New York Magazine's "Top Doctors" for the past five years.

DIRECTOR | PRODUCER | EDITOR

Irina Vodar

AWARD WINNER AT PAGEANT FILM FESTIVAL
IN THE BEST DOCUMENTARY (NARRATIVE) CATEGORY

Irina Vodar is an award-winning filmmaker and graphic designer with over twenty years of experience in film and Broadcast Design with ABC News. Her distinctions range from the 30th Daytime Emmy Award Nomination, to the Telly Award, The George Foster Peabody Award, and others.

As an Indie Filmmaker, Irina wrote, produced and directed two full length documentary films. Her debut doc feature Miss Gulag, produced in association with Neihausen-Yatskova Films on a beauty pageant in a Russian prison for women, premiered at the Berlin Film Festival in 2007 (available on Amazon Prime). Miss Gulag received positive reviews from critics and audiences, broadcasted on BBC, Canadian CBC Documentary Channel, distributed educationally, and won several awards, such as Best Debut Feature at the Moscow International Human Rights Film Festival and the Saratov Film Festival. It was also screened at various international film festivals, such as Berlin, Sheffield, Silverdocs, Seattle, Morelia, Vienna, ZagrebDox, and Warsaw. The film was praised for its humanistic and compassionate portrayal of the women, as well as its insight into contemporary Russian society.

Her second documentary Anything You Lose, an insightful portrayal of infertility journey, won funding from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) and test-screened at the Barbican Theater in London, as part of the International Fertility Festival in 2019, to audience acclaim.





Co-Writer
Fernanda Rossi

Fernanda Rossi, an internationally acclaimed author, speaker, and story analyst, has lent her expertise to over 500 fiction scripts, documentaries, and fundraising samples, including two Academy Award®-nominated documentaries and numerous projects funded by ITVS and the National Film Board of Canada. With a global reach, she has delivered lectures in more than 12 countries and prestigious markets like Hot Docs and Sheffield Doc/Fest. Additionally, Rossi serves as a trainer for special programs and evaluates grants for foundations. Her book, "Trailer Mechanics: How to Make Your Documentary Fundraising Demo, 2nd Edition," is hailed as the definitive guide by industry professionals for documentary demo production.



Cinematographer (US)
Benjamin Nicholas

Benjamin Nicholas has a passion for capturing the authenticity of family dynamics, the innocence of children, and the complexities of non-actors in his work. With a decade of experience directing commercials and shorts, preceded by a background in documentary filmmaking, Nicholas brings a unique perspective to his projects. His talent has been recognized with the BRONZE director of the year award by SHOTS in 2021 for his impactful spot for the Montreal Children's Hospital.



Experience the enchantment of cinema at the Pageant Film Festival in Gangtok, an annual extravaganza celebrating the art of storytelling through film. Set against the stunning backdrop of Gangtok's landscapes, our festival is a harmonious fusion of cinematic brilliance, cultural richness, and the essence of creativity. As we anticipate the grand culmination of the 2023 Final Edition, we extend a heartfelt invitation for you to dive into a realm of spellbinding narratives and revolutionary cinematography.

anything
you lose

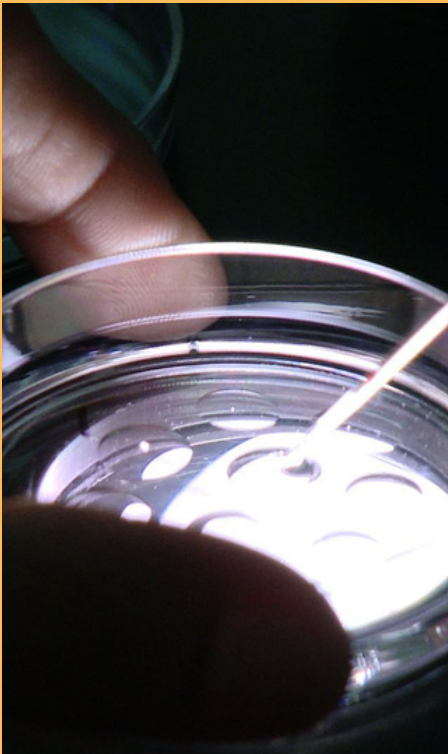


EXPERTISE REVIEW

ANYTHING YOU LOSE

The review written by Chandrima Panja

“Anything You Lose” is a compelling and thought-provoking documentary that explores the world of Reproductive Technologies and its effects on mental health. The film delves into the booming industry, where clinics compete for clientele with high success rates, and follows the director Irina Vodar on her personal seven-year journey.



Irina and her husband Eddie are a couple who want to have a child but face challenges and pressures along the way. Through cinema vérité footage and narration, Vodar shares her intimate story of hope and resilience, and examines the psychological impact of reproductive technologies on patients, such as addiction, shame, isolation, and silence.

The film is a powerful commentary on the psychological toll that infertility can take on individuals and couples, and the lengths that people will go to in order to have a child. The documentary is a poignant reminder of the emotional and financial costs of assisted reproduction, and the impact that it can have on mental health.

ONE OF THE MOST STRIKING ASPECTS OF THE FILM IS ITS ABILITY TO CAPTURE THE COMPLEX EMOTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF THOSE WHO ARE STRUGGLING WITH INFERTILITY. THE FILM DOES AN EXCELLENT JOB OF EXPLORING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES ON PATIENTS, SUCH AS ADDICTION, SHAME, ISOLATION, AND SILENCE, AND THE WAYS IN WHICH THESE ISSUES CAN BE ADDRESSED.

The film's central message is one of hope and resilience, as we see Irina and Eddie's journey unfold and witness the profound impact that it has on their lives. The documentary is a powerful reminder that no matter how difficult the journey may be, there is always hope for a brighter future. Overall, "Anything You Lose" is a must-see documentary for anyone interested in exploring the complex issues surrounding infertility and reproductive technologies. With its powerful message of hope and resilience, this film is sure to leave a lasting impression on audiences.

DIRECTOR'S INTERVIEW

By Chandrima Panja



THIS INTERVIEW QUESTIONS WERE SET BY OUR REPORTER CHANDRIMA PANJA.

1. What inspired you to make this documentary?

I was inspired to make this documentary because I was looking for some answers I couldn't find anywhere else. I read about some amazing miracle baby stories in newspapers and magazines, but I was not prepared to find myself under the most significant duress of my entire life, and facing an existential crisis. Sensing that this time would be of paramount importance, I used the camera as a shield to capture circumstances as they unfolded.

2. What was the most challenging aspect of making this film?

I first recorded the seven years it took to complete my reproductive journey. During this time, I bore witness to

day-by-day developments, and rarely spoke on camera or in life, unless it was dictated by necessity. In fact, when my reproductive journey ended, I was emotionally stunted and went into a further isolation. I felt ashamed, was grieving, and couldn't find any advice from other people on how to survive this transition. I bore a mark as the only one who was not successful with her miracle baby story. But through my small sisterhood of experts gathered for the production, I learned that negative outcomes are actually a statistical majority. It felt like a conspiracy theory when after a while the link to the U.S. CDC stats report (Center for Disease Control) had disappeared, returning "page not found". But six years later, I found confirmation in an article penned by the Chair of British Embryology Authority. So it was true, and a case of a cover-up... The most challenging aspect of this project was to rebuild my sense of dignity after being victimized, and to write and record the voice-over for the documentary from this new, healed, and educated vantage point.

3. What message do you hope viewers will take away from the film?

"...it's a documentary and it brings you back to reality." - commented one of my viewers. It's hard to deliver a digest of the project. It speaks personally to each separate viewer, depending on their stage in life.



There are so many layers... For young people unfamiliar with the precious spark of life, who are flooded with hormones and future plans, I wanted to create a footnote to be incorporated into their planning. For those who see sex as purely pleasure without a reproductive aspect, or who see pregnancy as a mistake and something shameful, I wanted to provide some balance by telling a contrasting story of people who would give anything to have that happen. There's something for everybody, for career women who build their sense of self based on ambition, for media who propagate the geriatric motherhood scenario, for doctors who treat the disease and not the patient, and for women who steel their hearts to survive and win.

4. How did you choose the subjects of the documentary?

The subject chose me. I just had to obey the instructions of my intuition. Keeping myself busy with filmmaking allowed me to find some meaning in what otherwise might have been a senseless torment. Later, when looking for ways to recuperate, I found an excellent book that sold over 16 million copies, by Victor E. Frankle, "Man's Search for Meaning", with advice on deriving meaningful lessons from overcoming a challenging situation.

SINCE IT WAS MY LIFE RECORDED IN THE FOOTAGE, I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO FIGURE OUT A WAY TO PERSEVERE AND BRING AT LEAST THE FILM PROJECT PORTION OF THIS TIMELINE TO SUCCESSFUL FRUITION.

5. What was the most surprising thing you learned while making of this film?

I was on the receiving end of the unexpected throughout this project, it's difficult to single out any one occurrence. Perhaps, it is the path the film had to take in order to break through the gridlock of the conventional perspective.

Anything You Lose is the second Feature Documentary I've produced. My first film, Miss GULAG, premiered at the 59th Berlinale and is available on Amazon Prime. Naturally, I was expecting that my second film would follow a similar path. I was surprised to see how easily women's issues get bumped by any other event in the news cycle.





Since it was my life recorded in the footage, I had no choice but to figure out a way to persevere and bring at least the film project portion of this timeline to successful fruition. I had to take many breaks, but each time I picked up and kept going. I heard that I was not respecting the conventions of the documentary film genre, that I could never be objective about the story and my character. That it could be shown only if someone really-really loved it. Perhaps the COVID-19 time of isolation helped to move the needle and shift perception closer towards empathy as a counterpoint to current stressors.

After an early screening at the 2019 Fertility Fest in London, I received unanimous rejections after applying to major festivals, at which point I stopped mentioning that I am a filmmaker.

But four years later, in summer of 2023, my intuition guided me to release the project. My plan was to upload it to YouTube and let it sink. Before uploading, I decided to take a final look, and in four days cleaned up the edit, and thus the final version was created. My journalist friend Kasia begged me to wait and try just one more festival. I didn't want humiliation, but my habit of doing due diligence for the project made me enter the IndieFilm Awards. Shockingly, Anything You Lose was awarded with three wins in three categories. Since then, the film has gone viral on the Indie Film Festival Circuit.

6. What was the most difficult scene to film?

We have been filming for seven years so we got very used to a camera presence, and it was not distracting. And actually, the presence of a cameraman during the key moments of the story was very welcomed. My husband and I had a third person who was not emotionally vested in the scene, and was capable of normal interaction, distracting conversation or a supportive word when we were dumbfounded.

Still, the most difficult scene to film was the first time my husband and I had an open argument. We were aware of the camera presence, but getting out the truth of each respected position felt more important. It was a testament to our mutual belief in the validity of the project.

7. What kind of research did you do before making this film?

We started treatments like any other couple. Being a documentary filmmaker, I have been following the subject in the documentary community.

The success of such documentaries as Google Baby by Zippi Brand Frank (2009), Made in India by Vaishali Sinha, Rebecca Haimovitz (2010), and the BBC House of Surrogates series (2013) may have been raising ethical issues surrounding ReproTech, but never failed to showcase a successful happy ending with a baby in the arms.



So, when Columbia University pointed us in the direction of a surrogate, I had no doubts that we should go to India.

8. What was the most rewarding part of making this documentary?

It was an unsurmountable task to look repeatedly at the footage of my misfortune. I was caught in the loop of replays that later formed the basis of this story. I had no choice but to overcome the challenge and derive the lessons, if I ever wanted to recover. So, I watched my raw footage, studying the structure of how it came about.

An actor friend offered an approach to my creative endeavor: "First you take something difficult, work, work at it and make it simple. Then you take simple, work, work at it and make it easy. Then you take easy, work, work at it and make it beautiful."

The most rewarding part of making of this documentary was to communicate with viewers from this perspective of the elevated, inherent beauty of life. I took up a complex, challenging subject full of dilemmas and ethical contradictions, kept true to the core essence, and made a universal love story.

I am so honored to have completed the task, and have it resonate with the international community.

9. What advice would you give to someone who is struggling with infertility.

At least 70% of ReproTech patients are unacknowledged, silenced, left to their own devices, cast out from the fabric of society. The more we build awareness, the easier it will be to acknowledge infertility as a medical condition and not a stigma (like mental illness, cancer etc.)

There is great strength in knowledge and being grounded in the reality of a situation. Without realistic expectations, we fall under the spell of magic thinking – to have a miracle baby just like other people, closing the gap between the real and the miracles.

CONTACTS

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IRINA VODAR
Director of **ANYTHING YOU LOSE**



Behind the scenes shooting of **Anything You Lose**

Amit Vachharajani of Backpack Films and
Mrinmayee Ranade, freelance journalist

Cast and Crew

- CREDITS Directed By.Irina Vodar
- Written By. Irina Vodar & Fernanda Rossi
- Produced By. Irina Vodar
- Cinematography (U.S.) Benjamin Nicholas, Fabricio Elizondo
- Cinematography (India) Gargey Trivedi, Rakesh Haridas
- Editor. Irina Vodar
- Additional Edited Sequence "Medical Shots": Maria Diakova
- Additional Edited Sequence "Mother's Monologue". Jodi Gibson
- Composer. Greg Lostracco
- Indian Unit Production Manager. Amit Vachharajani
- Indian Unit Translator. Mrinmayee Ranade
- Post Production services by **BUTTONS NY**
- Re-recording Mixer. Rich Macar
- Colorist. Anand Modi
- 3D Animation by. **NEITHER-FIELD**
- Medical Animations Art Director. Jungwoo Lee
- Medical Animations Illustrator. Jung-Im Chae

Thank You for your participation