



A perfect day never goes as planned.

## LOGLINE

Fading actress Celia Dalvi arranges her perfect day; it doesn't go as planned.

## SYNOPSIS

AND NOW I LAY ME DOWN tells the story of Celia Dalvi, a wealthy, aging actress who attempts to have her perfect last day on Earth. It doesn't go quite as planned. A brief examination of wealth and entitlement mixed with sorrow and self-pity on the way to newfound enlightenment. And Cheetos.



Stories find me. They tap me on the shoulder or bullet train through my chest. AND NOW I LAY ME DOWN came to me in a vision.

In 2022, I lost part of my nose to skin cancer. As a forty-something woman in Hollywood, isn't aging enough?

Throughout my year of trips to the hospital, I was trying to cast and fund my first feature film, a comedy (thank God) END OF THE LINE. I had fantastic support from Film Independent, and my top choice of actor Megan Mullally had signed on to play my film's mother. I was in go mode! But the day I realized I wouldn't be able to get the necessary funding to make my feature film without a new directing sample, I just about had a nervous breakdown. I cried. I let it all out. I meditated for twenty minutes, and when I got up, I saw an entire short film flash before my eyes. I even got the title: And Now I Lay Me Down. I knew I would make this beautiful and funny film, and it would change my life.

AND NOW I LAY ME DOWN was inspired by the existential dread of losing my looks and career in one fell swoop. I saw an aging woman in the film industry dealing with rejection and the challenges of being a mother. Amidst flashes of pink and gold, I saw my character—Celia Dalvi. She was a woman with bravado and entitlement. Celia shows how maintaining the appearance of perfection is doomed. My film asks how to be happy when life is filled with sorrow. Celia's reward ultimately is not the resurrection of her career but the reconnection with herself. Sometimes smelling the flowers isn't enough. You have to eat them.



Title of Film:

Country of Production:

Date of Completion:

Shooting Format.

Screening Format.

Ratio:

Sound:

Duration:

Genre:

Language:

**AND NOW I LAY ME DOWN** 

**USA** 

2024

Sony Venice, X-OCN 1.85:1

**DCP** 

1:78

**5.1** 

27:14

Comedy/Drama

**English** 









## RANI DEMUTH - WRITER / DIRECTOR

## What made you think you could cast Jane Kaczmarek in your short film?

The last time I became obsessed with a specific actor being in my film, I got him. Eric Roberts played the lead role in my UCLA graduate thesis film, THE DOUBLE. This experience led me to believe that if a script is good enough and someone is right for the part - anything is possible. I imagined Jane in the part of Celia Dalvi, and I couldn't get her out of my head. I wrote her a letter, and before I knew it, we were in a Zoom meeting together. We both had laryngitis and sounded like frogs, but proceeded to make a lovely connection.

#### What was your first impression of Jane?

The first time I met Jane in person, I was blown away by how warm and inviting she was. She made me feel like I was her best friend, and we had known each other for years. We talked for hours, and by the end of the meeting, Jane was standing up, eating deli meat out of her refrigerator—like one does when alone. I knew I loved this woman.

#### What themes did you want to explore and why?

When I came up with the idea for this film about a woman who just couldn't take it anymore, I began to research suicide. I came across a staggering statistic that nine out of ten people who attempt suicide and fail never go on to try again. In an instant, people reported experiencing instant regret and saw how their problems weren't worth losing their lives over. Celia's character plays out this same narrative. Through self-introspection, you can heal yourself.

## JANE KACZMAREK – LEAD ACTRESS / EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

#### What was your first impression of the script for AND NOW I LAY ME DOWN?

My first impressions of AND NOW LAY ME DOWN were both hysterical and heartbreaking. Both the lookbook and the script were fanciful and funny but also cut to the quick. I knew the creator of Celia Davi and her world was someone I wanted to work with. And I'm so happy I did.

#### Why did you decide to do a short film?

I'd put my career on the back burner to raise my three children. They were now off to college and careers, and my nest was empty. I'd become very civically involved in my Pasadena Community, but I was itching to do more acting again. A short film provided the perfect opportunity to jump back in.

#### Were there any elements of your character, Celia Dalvi, that you could relate to?

There were many aspects of Celia Davi's life I could relate to. First and foremost is the baffling heartbreak of signing divorce papers! My ex has remarried and lives close by, and I often thought of Nora Ephron saying, "Marriages come and go, but divorce is forever." I could also relate to Celia as an actress who enjoyed great early success and now faced navigating an entirely new world of show business.

#### You let this short film shoot in your home. Do you regret it?

I thoroughly enjoyed being on set because it was my home! I loved having it filled with a talented and very funny crew. Also, an early call time is much easier when you just walk across your backyard to hair and makeup.

#### Did you enjoy working with Rani?

I loved working with Rani because she was the mastermind behind the script. To read a story that captures high humor and real pathos in 20 minutes is about as close to perfection as it gets. She gave me free rein and trusted my instincts and our collaboration was golden. Every time I looked at her after a take she was smiling ear to ear, which is about the greatest 'thumbs up' an actress can get from her director.

## ROGER M. MAYER - PRODUCER

#### What drew you to be a part of AND NOW I LAY ME DOWN?

From my first meeting with Rani DeMuth, I knew immediately we would be making something special. The script was solid, but it was the fierceness in her approach that drew me in. I'm here because of her, plain and simple. I approach producing differently than most. For me, it's the director and the crew. I'm a crew's producer. If you can get everyone on the same page like this project, there is nothing you can't accomplish. From the get-go, the key crew's reaction to her script and lookbook was over the top.

#### How would you describe this movie?

My elevator pitch is if "Wes Anderson made SUNSET BOULEVARD in color as a short." But the humor is even more present here, allowing the despair to dangle ever so delicately. There is the sacrifice that women often have to make more than men to maintain a successful career, especially as a parent. It's also about Cheetos.

#### How does this film compare to your past projects?

This is the best short film I have ever produced. I say this with all the humblebrag I can muster; this deserves serious recognition. Filmmaker Rani DeMuth, star Jane Kaczmarek, DP Ernesto Lomeli, Production Designer Vanesa Liska, Costume Designer Flora Ronzone, Editor Yvonne Valdez, and Composer Brad Oberhofer came together to create something spectacular, and their work deserves to both individually and collectively be formally recognized.

#### What was your biggest accomplishment in pulling off this film?

The question is the answer. The biggest accomplishment is always getting a film to the finish line and becoming aware of its magnitude. The biggest achievement hasn't even happened yet, as we are just getting started on the film's next journey and what it means for everyone involved. Especially filmmaker Rani DeMuth. You are seeing the second Genesis of a bonafide writer-director.

## CHRISTINA SIBUL - EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

## In a world where TV and feature films dominate, why did you choose to EP a short film for Rani DeMuth?

From the beginning of my career, I've had excellent luck championing first-time feature filmmakers.

The most loved film I've ever done, THIRTEEN (2003 Sundance Director's Award, many others), was the debut film of writer/director Catherine Hardwicke. Catherine went on to hold the box office earnings record for a female director for her film TWILIGHT in 2008.

Rani and I actually worked on Catherine Hardwicke's THIRTEEN together. She was an intern for Nancy Richardson, our editor, through whom we found our editor Yvonne Valdez for AND NOW I LAY ME DOWN.

Years later, we connected through Film Independent's Artist Development Program when Angela Lee asked me to look at Rani's feature screenplay END OF THE LINE. We met, began the development process, attached actress Megan Mullally in a key role, and then realized we could use a fresh directorial sample for Rani.

AND NOW I LAY ME DOWN demonstrates Rani's tremendous ability to hone in on both the large and small fragile moments of life.

I've been lucky in many ways, but I've also found the right horses to pick. Rani demonstrates everything I look for in a filmmaker – an original voice and vision, a deep knowledge of filmmaking, a world viewpoint expressed within her film, and a life lived with joy as well as concern about important issues.

She is singular and a great 'horse' to bet on. Watch her.

#### What made you think of Jane Kaczmarek for the role of Celia Dalvi?

We were very lucky to have Jane sign on to this project. She has well-honed comedic chops and the emotional depth necessary to play character Celia Dalvi.

Jane and I are active alumni of the David Geffen School of Drama at Yale University. I had met her quite a few times as part of that alumni network and had seen some of the changes that had happened in her life, down to where she lived. Her current home felt joyful, personal, and warm – a place where Celia may live happily.

I knew that Jane would innately understand Celia's journey. Jane is a woman with a generous, expansive spirit who deeply values her friends and family. She extends her good fortune to others and is genuinely curious about their experiences in life. She shares many of the qualities the end of the film reveals about Celia.

As a woman in Hollywood, Jane has experienced much of what has scarred Celia in the first section of the film. Like Celia, Jane has come to a similar emotional space in her life – the best is yet to come.

#### What was the vibe like when you visited the set? Were there any surprises?

Rani runs a beautifully collaborative set but with a firm hand. She has a specific vision about the look of her films, from the art direction and color palette to the composition of the shots. I got the sense that her collaborators (many department heads being women) truly enjoyed diving deeply into the specificity of her vision.

Rani had a particularly strong connection and dialog with her DP, Ernest Lomeli. Although they had never worked together before, they were very much on the same page.

#### Do you think it's a good time for women writer/directors in Hollywood?

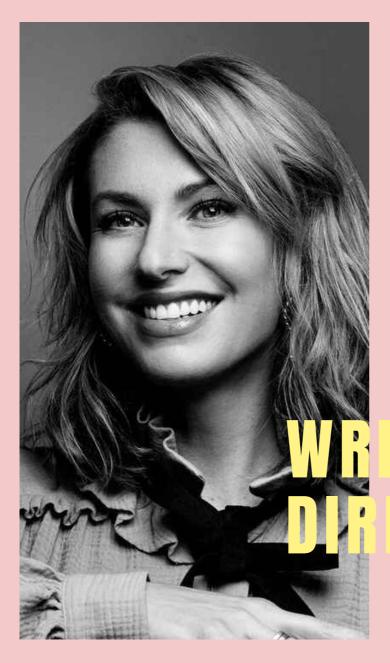
When I started in the industry, I was frequently the only woman in the room. Rom-Coms focused on relationships as the only route to a woman's happiness, and it was a great rarity to work with a female film director.

Thankfully, the needle has changed in many ways, but the process of aging in Hollywood can be seen as an engendered process – something that AND NOW I LAY ME DOWN thematically embraces.

#### Do you think that things are changing for the better for women in the film industry?

Absolutely. Women are now openly looking out for women coming up, championing female voices as creators, and expanding the diversification of the extraordinary stories we are willing to tell. This being said, I do see a significant disparity in the ease of financing the initial films of female creators versus male writers and directors, and it's not hard to see how the old scars and thought patterns influence some of the current decisions.

But the world is changing, and women are increasingly powering through with the help of other women and allies of all genders.



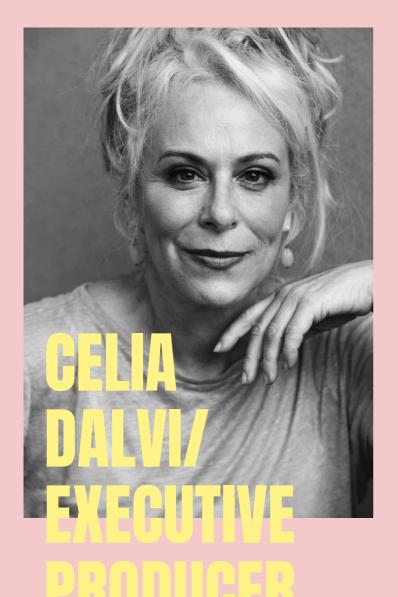
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## **RANI DeMUTH**

Rani DeMuth is a Santa Barbara-based independent writer/director. Her feature script, END OF THE LINE, was selected for Film Independent's Screenwriting Lab, Directing Lab, and 2021 Fast Track Finance Market. Christina Sibul (THIRTEEN, BUTTER, MONICA) and James Ponsoldt (THE SPECTACULAR NOW, THE END OF THE TOUR, SHRINKING) are set to produce. Emmy Award-winning actress Megan Mullally is attached to play the film's mother.

In February of 2024, Rani completed her newly penned short film AND NOW I LAY ME DOWN starring Emmy-nominated actress Jane Kaczmarek. Rani's films have screened at over fifty international film festivals and have won awards in every category of filmmaking. She was granted the Los Angeles Museum of Art's first "Art of Film Award" for her short film THE DOUBLE, starring Eric Roberts. The films sold to Shorts International, the UK-based distribution company responsible for launching all Oscar Award-nominated short films into theaters nationwide.

Rani earned her BFA in painting and experimental film from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and her MFA in film directing from The UCLA School of Film and Television.



JANE KACZMAREK

Jane Kaczmarek is best known for her role as Lois on television's award-winning MALCOLM IN THE MIDDLE, for which she received seven consecutive Emmy nominations, multiple Golden Globe and SAG nominations, as well as the Television Critics Award two years running, the only woman to be so honored. Her television career began with the iconic series ST. ELSEWHERE, THE PAPER CHASE and HILL STREET BLUES after graduating from The University of Wisconsin and the Yale School of Drama. She has starred in innumerable television shows since then and continues her role as "Judge Constance Harm" on the Simpsons. Ms. Kaczmarek co-stars with LaKeith Stanfield on the Apple TV series THE CHANGELING.

In New York, Kaczmarek has appeared both On-and Off-Broadway, appearing at New York Theatre Workshop, The Public Theatre, The Second Stage, The Manhattan Theatre Club and spent seven seasons at The Williamstown Theatre Festival where she and Alfred Molina appeared in And No More Shall We Part, The Roommate by Jen Silverman, and Tell Me I'm Not Crazy. Additionally, Jane is a frequent host and reader on Public Radio's Selected Shorts, where she also hosts Movie Night With Jane. Her Los Angeles theatre credits include Kindertransport (Ovation Award), the premiere of Donald Margulies' Pulitzer Prize-winning Dinner with Friends, Raised in Captivity (LA Drama Critics Award), and Good People (Ovation nomination). She and Alfred Molina recorded A View from the Bridge for BBC Radio and appeared as James and Mary Tyrone in Long Day's Journey into Night at the Geffen Playhouse. For LA Theatre Works, Jane has performed Awake and Sing, and Death of a Salesman opposite Stacey Keach, among others. Ms. Kaczmarek also notably shared the "The Stage Manager" role with CODA Oscar Winner Troy Katsur in the Pasadena Playhouse / Deaf West Theatre coproduction of Our Town.

Kaczmarek is the founder of Clothes Off Our Back, an online auction of celebrity finery that raised over \$4M for children's charities. She has traveled throughout Africa and India, visiting the children and hospitals that have received help from the organization. A great lover of classical music, she is a trustee of the Pasadena Conservatory of Music, The Pasadena Education Foundation, which enhances the Pasadena public schools, and the 2023 Tony Award-winning Pasadena Playhouse under the artistic leadership of Danny Feldman. Jane has raised three children in Pasadena and now divides her time between Pasadena, New York, and the Berkshires.



#### ROGER M. MAYER

#### **PRODUCER**

Roger M. Mayer is a film producer with his company Brooklyn Reptyle Productions. He is a producing veteran with over forty feature credits to date. ANTIBIRTH, starring Natasha Lyonne and Chloe Sevigny, THE RAMBLER, starring Dermot Mulroney, and THE OREGONIAN, starring Lindsay Pulsipher, are among his favorites. Originally from West Covina, California, he has lived in Colorado Springs, San Francisco, Brooklyn, and Chicago and currently resides in Los Angeles. Roger is known for his knowledge of cinema history, theory, and every facet of film production, from development to pre-production, production, postproduction, deliverables, and distribution. He worked for the Sundance Film Festival from 1999 to 2012 as a Print Traffic Coordinator and Associate Programmer. Roger was the Festival Director and Head of Programming for the Silver Lake Film Festival in Los Angeles from 2003 to 2007. He was the Festival Director and Head of Programming for the Downtown Film Festival Los Angeles from 2009 to 2012.



## EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Christina Sibul is a veteran producer, development and production consultant, and industry executive. Recent credits include BUTTER starring Mira Sorvino, and MONICA, starring Patricia Clarkson and Trace Lysette, written and directed by Andrea Pallaoro. MONICA premiered at the 2022 Venice Film Festival and is nominated for a 2024 Spirit Award. Christina recently consulted on the upcoming Paramount Players release ON THE COME UP.

Other credits include Alexander Payne's SIDEWAYS, Catherine Hardwicke's THIRTEEN, Tom McCarthy's THE STATION AGENT, HOUSE OF SAND AND FOG for Dreamworks, LORDS OF DOGTOWN, 40 DAYS AND 40 NIGHTS, TRAFFIK and many more. Her movies have won Academy Awards, BAFTA Awards and Spirit Awards among others.

Christina is a graduate of Yale School of Drama.



#### RAD OBERHOFER

## **COMPOSER / EXECUTIVE PRODUCER**

Brad Oberhofer (he/him) is a composer, producer, and musician from Brooklyn, NYC and Tacoma, WA, now based in Los Angeles. Brad has toured and performed at major festivals around the globe, on Late Night TV, and in commercials with his band, Oberhofer. After years of touring with his band and producing its music, he began to compose for film (THE JEWEL THIEF, TABLE 19, AFTER MARIA), commercials (Calvin Klein, NBA, Keurig,) and television (AMERICAN HORROR STORIES, THE ANDY WARHOL DIARIES, ALONE TOGETHER). He recently created the new mnemonic for Bento Box Entertainment (Bob's Burgers, Central Park). Brad has performed as an instrumentalist on recordings for Katy Perry, King Princess, Moses Sumney, Amber Mark and many more. His most recent studio album, Smothered, was released in November 2021 via Telefono Records.



#### ERNESTO LOMELL

## **CINEMATOGRAPHY**

Ernesto Lomeli is an LA-based award-winning cinematographer from Mexico. Most recently, you can see Ernesto's work in the Disney documentary STAN LEE and Amy Poehler's Emmy-nominated documentary LUCY AND DESI. He has shot music videos for Christina Aguilera, Beck, T-Pain, and Gary Clark, to name a few. He has photographed countless commercials, including campaigns for Jimmy Choo, Fendi, and Alfa Romeo.

Ernesto is moving into narrative work and recently shot NORTH STAR, an award-winning short film featuring Kevin Bacon and Colman Domingo.
Ernesto's narrative feature credits include Alex Kahuam's FAILURE! and Eric Badros's MUSE.

Ernesto was taken under the wing of one of his heroes, Oscar-winning director and cinematographer Guillermo, Navarro, ASC, who became both a mentor and a great friend.

Ernesto studied at the Los Angeles Academy of Art San Francisco and AFI.

#### YVONNE VALDEZ EDITOR

**Yvonne Valdez** is a veteran assistant film editor and award-winning editor. She has worked with Hollywood's most prominent film directors and editors, including Oscar-winning director Oliver Stone on ANY GIVEN SUNDAY and Oscar-nominated editor Mark Goldblatt, ACE, on X-MEN: THE LAST STAND and CHAPPIE. Under Goldblatt's mentorship, Yvonne learned how editing can shape a film and how substance is as important style. With over thirty years in the business, Yvonne has mastered the art of ferreting key moments from thousands of hours of footage to tell a compelling story. Yvonne's feature editing credits, have screened at SXSW and Sundance.

#### KEVIN RAGSDALE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Kevin Ragsdale is an LA-based producer and actor. He co-founded Pretty Dangerous Films in 2003 and produced ten motion pictures including Stuart Gordon's adaptation of David Mamet's EDMOND, starring William H. Macy and Julia Stiles; Paramount/Showtime's horror release, THE CURSE OF EL CHARRO; and Asia Argento's adaptation of J.T. Leroy's THE HEART IS DECEITFUL ABOVE ALL THINGS starring Asia Argento, Peter Fonda and Winona Ryder. In 2006, Kevin founded KNR Productions with his brother, Rich, and continued producing music videos, commercials, web content, and feature films. KNR has visited the Sundance Film Festival twice with the feature films PHANTOM LOVE and BIG RIVER MAN. Kevin was an Executive Producer on Amy Heckerling's VAMPS, starring Sigourney Weaver, Krystin Ritter, and Alicia Silverstone. He co-wrote and produced the international horror hit GHOST HOUSE. Upcoming projects include the release of KNR's first graphic novel and a feature treatment of their award-winning short film, THE LOOP. Kevin holds an MBA from Chapman University.

#### FLORA RONZONE COSTUME

Flora Ronzone is a veteran costume designer from Australia. She began her career twenty-five years ago, working for the Australian Royal Opera and Ballet, and the London English Youth Ballet. In the United States, Flora was a Costume Construction Instructor and Resident Costume Designer for the Cosumnes River College in Sacramento. There, she was nominated for an Ellie Award for Best Costume Design for her work on *Macbeth*. In 2012, Flora took her talents to Hollywood, where she has shined as a Costume Designer for countless theatrically released films, television series, commercials, and video games. Flora owns and operates her own clothing business, *Planet Chaotika*.

## VANESA LISKA PRODUCTION DESIGN

**Vanesa Liska** is a Cuban/Puerto Rican American, born in Miami Florida. Vanesa pursued her passion for the arts, instilled by her Cuban grandmother at Ohio State University, where she studied sculpture, installation art, and film.

In 2018 Vanesa produced and directed the award-winning feature documentary, AMIGO, SKATE CUBA. Vanesa has also produced and directed music videos, episodic content and commercials

Today, Vanesa hones her skills in Production Design and Art Direction, seeking out projects that deep dive into the human and inspire change.

Vanessa is best known for her work as production designer of THE ELLEN DEGENEROUS SHOW. She served as art director for TURNING THE TABLES WITH ROBIN ROBERTS, UNAPOLOGETIC WITH AISHA TYLER, GAME FACE, AMERICAN ROMANCE, RUBBERHEAD, BLOODSHED, ROCK THE BLOCK, CELLULOID DREAMS, among many other films and TV shows.



## DAVID GUERRA MANUEL

**David Guerra** is an award-winning actor, director, teacher and performing artist. Born in Los Angeles, he earned an Associate in Arts degree from East Los Angeles College and graduated with honors and distinction from the University of California, Santa Barbara, with a BFA in Theatre.

David's favorite stage credits include: *Grail Project,* a three-time Ovation Awards winner; tours in Edinburgh Festival Fringe '14, '15, and '18 with three different Theatre Movement Bazaar productions; *A Mulholland Christmas Carol* with Theatre of NOTE; and *Piñata Dreams* by Josefina López. David has toured internationally, including in Shanghai and Beijing, China; and Puebla and Hermosillo, Mexico. Some of his film and television credits include: KUKULKAN: A MAYAN STORY; WHERE THE SKY IS BORN; LA ROSA Y EL GATO; FLOR DE NARANJA; DIAGNOSIS X; AND UNTOLD STORIES OF THE ER.



## SHI NE NIELSON MAYA

Shi Ne Nielson is an actor and producer from Colorado. If you watch shows on ABC, NBC, or CBS, chances are you have seen Shi Ne grace the screen. She has had reoccurring roles on ER, GREYS ANATOMY, THE YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS, and most recently appeared as "Roxy" in CHARMED. She has been on CSI:NY, THE NEW ADVENTURES OF OLD CHRISTINE, LAW & ORDER LA, PARENTHOOD, NCIS, and HAWAII FIVE-O. She has shared the screen with Ray Liotta, Reese Witherspoon, and Rami Malek. Shi Ne can currently be heard in QCode's scripted podcast series "Evergreen," in which she co-stars with Alan Cumming and Lana Condor. Shi Ne studied at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts (West), where she graduated from their Third-Year Company Program. She is represented by Luber Roklin Entertainment.



## LEJANDRA FLORES ALEJANDRA

Alejandra Flores has a BA from the Conservatory of Theatre (CUT) at the National University of Mexico, UNAM. She has worked with the Center Theatre Group at the Mark Taper Forum, Latino Theatre Co., Cornerstone Theatre Company, Bilingual Foundation of the Arts, and Cal State University, to name a few. Her film credits include FALLING FOR CHRISTMAS, A WALK IN THE CLOUDS, FRIENDS WITH MONEY, and EL SALVADOR. Her television credits include BETTER CALL SAUL, STATION 19, AMERICAN GIGOLO, GASLIT, SONS OF ANARCHY, 24, and ER. Alejandra hosted and produced the Community Affairs show Foro 22 on KWHY-TV. Alejandra received the City of Los Angeles (COLA) Individual Artist Fellowship grant from the Department of Cultural Affairs. She received a Drama-Logue Award for Outstanding Achievement in Theater and a Cesar Award for supporting actress. She is the Founder and former Artistic Director of The Los Angeles Theatre Academy, a nonprofit theatrical/educational organization.





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