



Give & Take -Press Kit

Media contacts

Screenplay / Produced by Gail Golden.

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Director Scott Andrew Kurchak

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Synopses

3-Line Synopsis

Ellie is a young actress with a love of all things fantasy and magic. But as she pursues her dream career in the fields of children's theater and theme parks, she finds that the other side of the rainbow isn't all ruby shoes and magic wands. A funny, wistful coming of age tale about learning to grant your OWN heart's desire.

Medium Synopsis

Ellie is an idealistic, young actress living in NYC. She's a very giving person, so when her husband, Mitchell, gets a job offer back home in Buffalo, Ellie reluctantly agrees to the move.

Mitchell loves Buffalo, so Ellie looks for happiness there, too. She joins a little theatre company and, unwittingly, winds up emotionally involved with the director, James.

Ellie just keeps on giving and others keep on taking! James casts Ellie in a theme park show and tells her it will be lots of fun, and she'll get to do it eight times a day! He neglects to mention the grueling physical challenges involved.

The show finally puts Ellie over the edge and, at last, she learns to take care of herself. She returns to Mitchell, but on her own terms this time.

Give & Take

Long Synopsis

It's Channukah in Ellie and Mitch's NYC apartment. And Mitch surprises Ellie with the news that they'll soon be moving back home to Buffalo where he has a job offer. Ellie reluctantly agrees to give up her budding acting career in New York City to move back home with Mitch. The only thing that excites Ellie about this plan is that in Buffalo she'll be close to her very favorite place, the little amusement park, Candy Island where she has such happy memories.

Back home in Buffalo, Ellie breaks her boredom by celebrating Judy Garland's birthday, complete with Judy's garland hanging on the ceiling and chicken wings for the winged monkeys! Ellie and Mitch love old movies: Ellie is a Wizard of Oz fan and Mitch loves It's a Wonderful Life so much that he keeps calling Ellie 'Mary Bailey.' She asks for Mitch's permission to start auditioning for local theatre. Mitch says, 'I hope this won't cut into our social obligations.'

Ellie auditions all over town and finally ends up at the GLOBE which is an acronym that stands for Gladys' Lackawanna Off-Broadway Entertainment. Here Ellie meets Gladys, the producer, who seems inordinately fond of costumes and James, the director, who seems inordinately fond of Ellie. Shortly thereafter, Ellie realizes she is pregnant and drops out of the theatre scene until she receives a phone call eight months later from James asking her to fill in as Laura in the GLOBE production of The Plastic Menagerie. Hiding her baby bump behind the scenery, Ellie gets through the show but is sad to find out that this is the last GLOBE production. It's not the last she sees of James, however! Avoiding Mitch at all costs, James spends a lot of time with Ellie. Ellie is so happy to have a friend, at last, in Buffalo and she writes a children's theatre play to keep the Globe people together. James tries to kiss Ellie and, when he is rejected, backs out of the show -- telling her that he just got a job as a director at Candy Island.

The children's theatre show tours for seven months and it doesn't go well. James shows up at the last performance, however, and offers Ellie an exciting proposition. He wants her to play the Sugarplum Fairy in a new show at Candy Island. Ellie is so happy! Candy Island is so much fun. James assures that the show will be fun. 'It's only 17 minutes long but you get to do it 8 times a day!'

Mitch is scared. He feels like he's losing Ellie to both James and Candy Island, but Ellie takes the role and reports to the backstage area of Candy Island for her first day of work.

Ellie is completely disillusioned by the conditions backstage -- princesses are smoking, costume characters are walking around without their heads on, and there's a cold-hearted corporate atmosphere about the place. There's nothing magical in this kingdom!

Up at the Candy Island dressing room, things are even worse. The actors were all hoping for rain so they wouldn't have to perform that day! Ellie never gets a proper rehearsal and it turns out that there are potentially dangerous pyro and tech aspects to the role. The next day, Ellie goes on as the Sugarplum Fairy and it's a disaster!

Everything that could go wrong, does go wrong!!

(continued)

Give & Take

Long Synopsis Continued...

Ellie, who has been acquiescing to Mitch and James and everyone throughout her life, at last puts her foot down. She quits the show at Candy Island. Ellie has decided to give to other givers and not to the takers in her life! In the hallways of Candy Island, Mitch is looking for Ellie. He's decided to be supportive of her and has come to take photos of her first day in the show. Mitch runs into James backstage and they have a little showdown, at last. Mitch and Ellie find each other in the hallway and decide to give it another chance, taking another shot at happiness together. He's thrilled to hear that she's left James and Candy Island, but when he calls her 'Mary Bailey' again, Ellie corrects him. Ellie tells him that she's not Donna Reed -- she's Leslie Caron, Audrey Hepburn, and Natalie Wood! Ellie and Mitch go off together. Can a girl who loves Wizard of Oz find happiness with a guy who loves It's a Wonderful Life?? We hope so!

Programming Descriptors

FORMS:Feature

GENRES:Comedy, Coming of Age , Independent

NICHES:Gay/Lesbian, Jewish, Women





bio

DIRECTOR -- Scott Andrew Kurchak is a Canadian born actor, director and writer who has worked extensively in Theatre / Television / Film in both the US and Canada. As a filmmaker Scott is now in post production and nearing completion of his War of 1812 short "A Cow's Tale: The Laura Secord Story" for his production company Arlington Place Pictures LLC. He is a founding member of the Buffalo Infringement Festival and has given many performances with Gail Golden and Dramatic Solutions, The Wondermakers , Young Audiences New York, and Univera's 2 Smart 2 Start.

Contact Information

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bio

WRITER/PRODUCER -- Gail Golden is a producer, actor, director, and writer. Give & Take, which is based on her experiences working in Entertainment at major theme parks in Florida, was an Official Selection (top 20 out of 500) at the Queens International Film Festival at the Museum of the Moving Image in NYC and now it's been produced! Ms. Golden is a published playwright and the director of The Wondermakers and Dramatic Solutions. She has done over 1,000 TV and radio commercials and has performed on screen in many films including The Year of Getting to Know Us with Jimmy Fallon and Sharon Stone and The Occupants with Cristin Milioti from Broadway's Once. Ms. Golden was the original voice of Strawberry Shortcake for American Greeting Cards and, since 2006, has been Mrs. Claus in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade on NBC. She has a BFA from Ithaca College and an MA from SUNY at Buffalo and studied improv at Second City Toronto, Chicago City Limits, and The Groundlings.

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Give & Take

Cast

ELLIE MAISEL – Bonnie Jean Taylor

JAMES – Guy Balotine

MITCH MAISEL – Kevin Craig

VINCE – Richard Lambert

GLADYS – Gail Golden

ANGELINA – Kathleen Golde

MORRIS – Todd Benzin

MATTHEW – Joe Demerly

PEG – Josie DiVincenzo

RHONDA – Jennifer Fitzery

SHERRI – Mary Ryan

HOLLY – Suzanne Fitzery

THE TUSH – Joey Bucheker

JACK -- Marc-Jon Filippone

Executive Producers Richard and Helena Maisel

Director Of Photography / Editor Matthew Nardone

Music Composed By Jonathan Dinerstein

Give & Take

Director' Statement

The first time I read Gail Golden's screenplay for Give & Take was while I was on winter vacation along the frozen shores of Little Basswood Lake in Northern Ontario. As the cold wind blew and the snow swirled outside I was so charmed by her somewhat autobiographical story that it warmed me up inside more than my hot cup of tea and the wood-burning stove next to me. I could not wait to get back to Buffalo NY and begin the work to bring this engaging home- spun story to life.

One of my main goals was to cast someone very strong in the role of Ellie. Someone that the audience could immediately fall in love with, someone that could capture the spirit of Ellie being a very loving very giving person with a pluckiness to keep going forward no matter what people take from her. We certainly found that in Bonnie Jean Taylor.

Visually I wanted the film to be warm and comforting and our cinematographer Matthew Nardone really helped to capture that feeling with our color palettes being influenced by the looks of George Walters' 1953 movie Lili With Leslie Caron and Mel Brooks' 1968 The Producers. Another big influence for me is Woody Allen and the way he incorporates musical montages to help with visual storytelling. These really helped to move our story forward.

Music was such a key element for this production as we needed a few key themes - something light and magical for Ellie that captures her beauty , something fun and bouncy almost carnival like or circus like as a theme to Candy Island as well as entertaining and engaging tunes for our montages. Our composer Jonathan Dinerstein created some truly beautiful original pieces for us.

Having been truly blessed with some fantastic locations, a remarkably skilled crew, and a wonderfully talented pool of professional actors offered to us here in Buffalo and Western New York I feel very fortunate and grateful to be able to share this story of a young woman pursuing her dream no matter what life or other people's agendas throw at her, to discovering that she really wants what she has and to continue pursuing her dream on her own terms.

