

Kismet







On a remote island, a depressed teen transforms into an alien to escape her pain—but when her fantasy begins to crack, she must decide whether to return to the life she left behind or disappear forever.





In the midst of her parents' messy divorce, Stella has begun communicating with aliens, who tell her they can take her pain away.

Convinced that these aliens live in the sea,
Stella throws her body into the winter ocean,
hoping that they will accept her as their own.



Her body washes up to shore,
and she's seemingly alright. . .



. . . Except, she thinks she's an alien named 'Kismet,' with no recollection of Stella's past painful memories.



A man and a woman are shown in silhouette, facing each other in a dimly lit room. The man is on the left, and the woman is on the right. They appear to be in conversation. A large, glowing, spherical lamp is positioned between them, casting a warm light. In the background, there is a window with a floral decoration hanging from it. The overall mood is intimate and contemplative.

Doctors think it's an attention-seeking response to the divorce and convince her parents to go along with it . . .

But something doesn't feel quite right.





Diving into the Surreal

The ocean is a liminal space that mediates
the human and alien worlds.

We will be shooting underwater scenes
using black and white infrared images
to highlight the otherworldly nature
of the underwater space.





Mythical Light Sources

Natural and artificial light sources will be used to create the feeling of an alien presence embedded into the everyday life of the characters.

The visual sci-fi elements are presented through Stella/Kismet's point of view, and the level of surrealism we experience fluctuates in tandem with her mercurial emotional state.



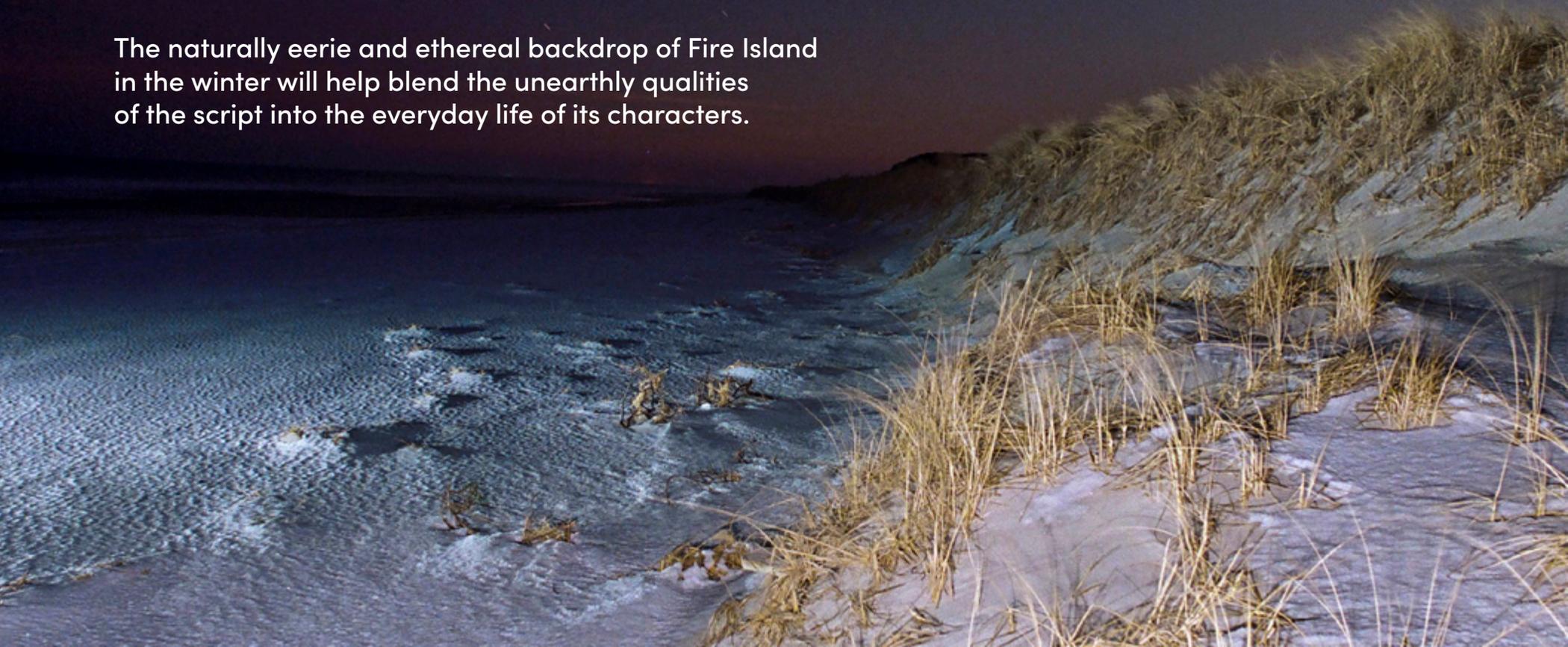






Filming on Fire Island

The naturally eerie and ethereal backdrop of Fire Island in the winter will help blend the unearthly qualities of the script into the everyday life of its characters.









INTRODUCING

SOFIA MORTERA
as
STELLA/KISMET

A sharp and wildly imaginative teen caught in the emotional fallout of her parents' divorce.

Overwhelmed and unable to express her struggle, Stella transforms into an alien alter ego named Kismet—an identity that allows her to articulate feelings Stella cannot. But it remains unclear whether this alien act is a coping mechanism or if she truly is the alien she claims to be.



ANNABELLE DEXTER-JONES

(SUCCESSION, HOLY MOTORS, AMERICAN HORROR STORY)

as

MARIANNE

A former actor who gave up her career to raise Stella. Post-divorce from James, she's adrift—loving but emotionally detached.

When Stella claims to be an alien, Marianne suspects it is a response to deeper mental health issues. Rather than confront the issue, she plays along and keeps the episode from James. But her deception crumbles as Kismet begins asking to see her father.

RAÚL CASTILLO

(TASK, LOOKING, WE THE ANIMALS, SMILE 2)

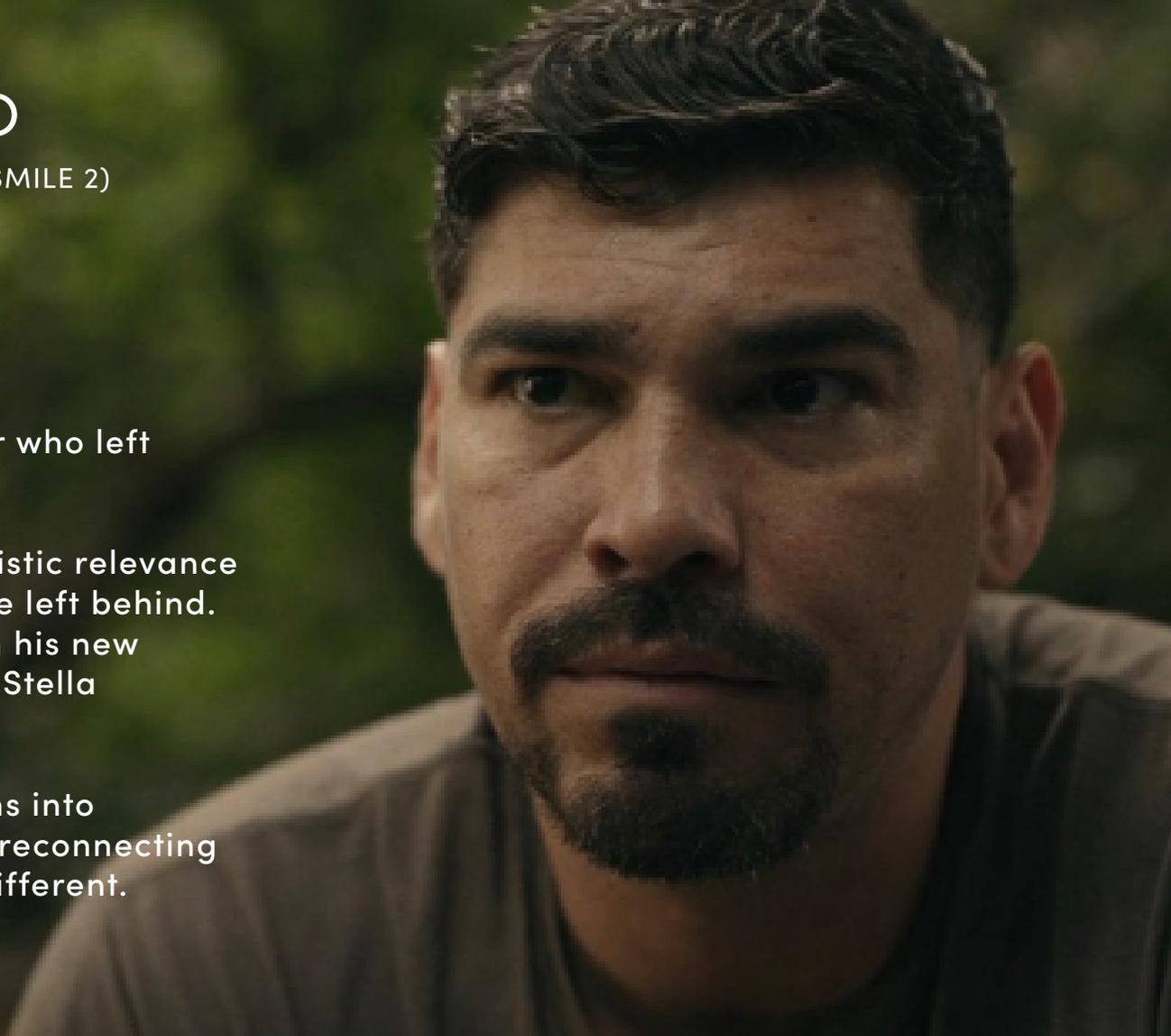
as

JAMES

A charming, self-involved ballet director who left Stella and Marianne for a new partner.

Now based in Brooklyn, he's chasing artistic relevance and avoiding the emotional wreckage he left behind. Eager to fold Stella into his new life with his new girlfriend, he's oblivious to the fact that Stella wants nothing to do with her.

When Stella shows up as Kismet, he leans into the dynamic, but remains unsure if he's reconnecting with his daughter or someone entirely different.





ALICE

Back on the island after a difficult breakup, Alice struggles to reconnect with her family.

After rescuing Stella from the ocean after an apparent suicide attempt, she throws herself into helping her, and forms a special bond with both Stella and her mother, Marianne. That closeness complicates things at home, stirring jealousy in her sister Ruby, who once shared a tight connection with Stella herself.



RUBY

Stella's best friend and Alice's younger sister, Ruby has started attending a new school off-island, giving her the chance to reinvent herself as a popular girl. However, when Stella claims to have transformed into an alien named Kismet, Ruby struggles to believe her. The tension deepens when she notices Alice growing closer to Kismet, sparking confusion and jealousy.

Director's Statement

KISMET is set during the winter on Fire Island, where I spent most of my formative time as a child. While I did not grow up with an obsession with aliens like the main character of KISMET, the story explores feelings I had as a thirteen-year-old while going through my parents' divorce, experiencing my first friendship breakup, and exploring my own identity. The script meditates on the deep emotional world of a 8th grader, dealing with loneliness, isolation, and the want to not be in her own body—a feeling we have all felt at thirteen.

KISMET riffs on the timeless coming of age story by using a sci-fi lens to interweave the dual struggle that teens and adults face in the internet age and post-Covid world. The rules of coming of age and parenting have drastically changed, leaving even those with the most well-meaning families unable to know how to cope, especially when a child undergoes severe mental health struggles.

KISMET aims to answer that gap—exploring the emotional world of a thirteen-year-old girl through a serious lens, while also offering a path of turning over this pain into growth, transformation, and a rekindled sense of self.



Accolades for the Script



KISMET was developed and written during Giovanna's Sundance Ignite Fellowship, under the mentorship of filmmaker Erin Vassilopoulos.



The script was selected for Wscripted's 2024 Cannes Screenplay List, presented by MUBI, curated by an international jury featuring BAFTA-winning and Oscar-nominated actress Vanessa Kirby (*The Crown*, *Pieces of a Woman*), director Nathalie Álvarez Mesén (*Clara Sola*) and writer and filmmaker Nathalie Marchak (*Out of Instinct*).



KISMET was selected and partially funded by the 2024-2025 Saul Zaentz Innovation Fund StoryLab, in partnership with leading industry mentors and Johns Hopkins University.



The project is a Semifinalist for ScreenCraft Film Fund Fall 2024. Judges include executives, agents, and managers from Buchwald, ACE Content, Anarchists United, Cold Iron Pictures, and Energy Entertainment.



Writer/Director

Giovanna Molina is a Mexican-Italian-American filmmaker from Brooklyn, NY, based in LA. Her films explore stories of isolation, belief and surrealism within a female coming-of-age context. She studied directing at UCLA and film and creative writing at Johns Hopkins University and has received grants and fellowships from Sundance, PBS, The Future of Film is Female and the Saul Zaentz Innovation Fund. Her most recent film, QUAKER, had its world premiere at the 2025 Berlinale, and her screenplay, KISMET, was selected for Wscripted's 2024 Cannes Screenplay list, present by MUBI.

[WEBSITE](#) | Directing Samples: [HICKEY](#) (Vimeo Staff Pick), [QUAKER](#) (Berlinale)



Producer

Zoey Pressey is Head of Production at Radiance Pictures – working day to day as a line producer and creative producer on individual projects while overseeing everything that Radiance produces. She has produced a variety of award-winning films, music videos, and commercials, including shorts featured at Berlinale, Tribeca, SXSW, Slamdance, Berlin Commercial, Aesthetica Film Festival, TIFF New Wave, Palm Springs International ShortFest, as well as on Vimeo as a Staff Pick, and music videos for Sabrina Carpenter, Tyla, and Maroon 5. Zoey is a graduate of NYU's Tisch School of the Arts with a BFA in Film & TV Production.

[WEBSITE](#)



Producer

Nuer Taqa is a Central Asia-born, U.S.-based producer who began his career in Paris. He has produced 35+ films, series, and commercials, and founded Radiance Pictures, a production company with over a decade of work that spans international co-productions, commercials, and music videos. His latest feature, BLKNWS: Terms and Conditions, screened at Sundance and the Berlinale. Fluent in multiple languages, Nuer brings a global lens to every story he produces.

[WEBSITE](#)



Cinematographer

Vittoria Campaner is a Los Angeles-based Italian cinematographer who has worked internationally in Italy, France, Norway, China, Taiwan, Trinidad and Tobago and the United States. Her work has been showcased in 100+ international film festivals, museums, and theaters, including Berlinale, SXSW, MountainFilm Festival, Telluride, and Palm Springs International ShortFest, and has been featured in IndieWire, The New Yorker, Deadline, and more. In 2020 she was selected as a Cinematography Fellow for the ASC vision program and Film Independent's Project Involve.

[WEBSITE](#) | Representation: Zero Gravity BTL

A wide-angle photograph of a sunset. The sun is a bright orange-red orb just above the horizon, partially obscured by the dark silhouette of a forest. The sky is filled with horizontal bands of orange, yellow, and red, with some wispy clouds. The foreground is mostly in shadow, showing the dark outlines of trees and a distant horizon line.

Thank you!

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