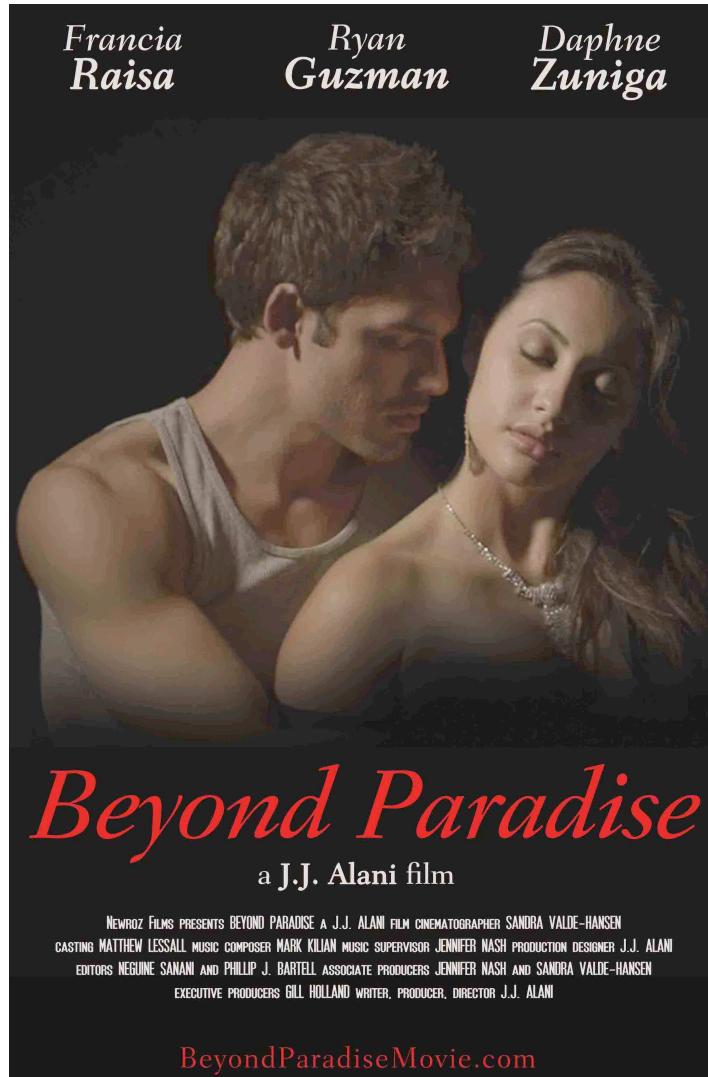


BEYOND PARADISE

a J.J. ALANI film



<http://beyondparadisemovie.com/>

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BEYOND PARADISE

CAST

Sebastian	Ryan Guzman
Shahrzad	Francia Raisa
Elana	Daphne Zuniga
Ray	Misha Crosby
Sean	Max Amini
Parissa	Yareli Arizmendi
Dr. Richards	Mel Fair
Zara (Tehran flashback)	Rome Shandaloo
Hosain (Tehran flashback)	Christopher Maleki
Kira	Kira Soltanovich
Faraz (Tehran flashback)	Ali Olomi
Sara (piano student)	Olivia Zalevsky

FILMMAKERS:

Writer/Producer/Director	J.J. Alani
Executive Producer	Gill Holland
Associate Producers	Sandra Valde-Hansen and Jennifer Nash
Director of Photography	Sandra Valde-Hansen
Composer	Mark Kilian
Music Supervisor / Editor:	Jennifer Nash (II)

Editors	Phillip J. Bartell and Neguine Sanani
Casting Director	Matthew Lessall
Production Designer / Art Director	J.J. Alani

Genre:

Drama, Romance. 101 mins feature film (English.) HD 16x9.

Logline:

Haunted by a tragic past, a stunning music student flees her homeland and ends up in an estranged marriage in Los Angeles, where her piano teacher's lover (Ryan Guzman) sparks a passion in her that threatens to destroy everything.

Synopsis (Short)

Haunted by an Acid Attack, a stunning and gifted singer flees her homeland and winds up in a semi-arranged marriage in Los Angeles. She befriends her piano teacher, a growing friendship nourished by their common taste for Tchaikovsky's music. But that's not the only thing they share in common... She falls for the poetic gardener Sebastian (Ryan Guzman) Elana's lover. Inflamed by the poems of Rumi and Lorca, their secret romance threatens to destroy all.

Synopsis (Long)

A love triangle: Shahrzad (Francia Raisa), a stunning music student, her husband Sean (Max Amini), a successful stand-up comedian, and Sebastian (Ryan Guzman), a poetic Spanish American gardener. Caught in the middle is Shahrzad's piano teacher, Elana (Daphne Zuniga), a former screen femme fatale, who is having her own furtive affair with Sebastian.

Soon Sebastian falls in love with Shahrzad. Shahrzad discovers her semi arranged marriage with Sean is doomed.

Unexpectedly, a friendship flourishes between Shahrzad (Muslim) and her piano teacher Elana (Jewish), nourished by their passion for classical music, especially Tchaikovsky's music. It grows stronger when they learn of each other's secret tragedies.

Shahrzad becomes the focus of attention of two women, Elana and Parissa (Yareli Arizmendi) her mother-in-law. Simultaneously, Shahrzad becomes the object of desire for three men: Sebastian, Sean and Ray (Misha Crosby), the loner brother-in-law.

Infusing the young lovers' secret romance are Rumi's ecstatic poems and Lorca's mysterious poetry that drive Sebastian in pursuit of Shahrzad, inflaming a passion that threatens to destroy all.

Logline (Español)

Atormentado por un pasado trágico, una hermosa estudiante de música huye de su país y termina en medio de un matrimonio demi-arreglado en Los Ángeles, donde el amante (Ryan Guzmán) de su profesor de piano despierta una pasión en lo que amenaza con destruirlo todo.

Synopsis (Español)

Atormentado por un ataque ácido, una hermosa y talentosa cantante huyó de su país y termina en un matrimonio semi-organizado en Los Ángeles. Se une la amistad allí con su profesor de piano Elana, una amistad alimentada por su amor común de la música de Tchaikovsky. Pero esto no es lo único que tienen en común... Ella se enamora de un jardinero (Ryan Guzmán) amante de Elana. Enjuagarse con los poemas de Rumi y Lorca, su romance secreto amenaza con destruir todo a su paso

Logline (Français)

Hanté par un passé tragique, une chanteuse belle et talentueuse Shéhérazade fuit son pays et se termine dans une mariage demi arrangé à Los Angeles, où l'amant (Ryan Guzman) de sa professeur de piano suscite une passion en elle qui menace de tout détruire.

Synopsis (Français)

Hanté par une attaque à l'acide, une chanteuse belle et talentueuse Shéhérazade fuit son pays et finit dans un mariage semi- arrangé à Los Angeles. Elle s'y lie d'amitié avec sa professeur de piano Elana, une amitié nourris par leur goût commun pour la musique de Tchaïkovski. Mais ce ne est pas la seule chose qu'ils ont en commun... Elle tombe amoureuse d'un jardinier (Ryan Guzman) l'amant d'Elana. Enflammé par les poèmes de Rumi et Lorca, leur romance secrète menace de tout détruire sur son passage.

Cast

Ryan Guzman (Sebastian)



Ryan stars in the iconic writer/director of *Boyhood* (Multiple Awards winner & Oscar front runner) Richard Linklater's next film *Everybody Wants Some*, a spiritual sequel to Linklater's *Dazed and Confused* (1993.) Annapurna Pictures/Universal will release *Everybody Wants Some* in fall 2015.

Starring alongside Jennifer Lopez and Kristin Chenoweth, Ryan plays the titular role in *The Boy Next Door*, the Blumhouse erotic thriller. Directed by Rob Cohen, the movie continues distribution by Universal in US and Worldwide, topping many domestic VOD charts.

He also stars in *Jem and the Holograms*, a Universal wide release October, 2015. For the revitalization of NBC's *Heroes Reborn* franchise, Ryan joined its cast. The 13-episode *Heroes Reborn* is expected to air in the Fall of 2015.

Ryan is well known to the world's youth for his mysterious sexy role as irresistible "Jake", a principal role, on the international hit ABC Family TV series *Pretty Little Liars*.

Lionsgate/Summit Entertainment re-cast Ryan to star in '*Step Up: All In*' #5 of the Step Up franchise. Shot in 3D, it continues its international release. Lionsgate announced Ryan's starring #4 '*Step Up Revolution*' grossed more than \$140M worldwide.

Ryan plays "Sebastian" the romantic leading role in the cross-cultural drama, *Beyond Paradise*, a poignant love story, executive produced by Gill Holland (*Sweet Land*, the Sundance Triple Awards winner *Hurricane Streets*, *Spring Forward* & *Loggerheads*) and written/produced/directed by J.J. Alani (*David & Layla*.)

Represented by a CAA team headed by Matt DelPiano, Ryan is managed by Tim Taylor, Luber Roklin Entertainment.

A successful model, Ryan Guzman sought out a talent manager and started the audition process for acting roles. A few months later auditioning for *Step Up Revolution*, he landed the coveted male lead, his first acting role.

He quickly followed with two indie projects: the action film *April Rain* directed by Luciano Saber and *There's Always Woodstock* directed by Rita Merson.

A model and an MMA fighter, Guzman caught the notice of Hollywood. He was

seen in television commercials for Old Navy, Gillette, Candies and the Oprah Winfrey Network. A successful print model in San Francisco signing with LOOK Modeling Agency at the age of 18 and in Los Angeles, he joined the esteemed Wilhelmina Agency at age 22. He modeled for Abercrombie & Fitch, Affliction and Reebok among others.

Born in Texas and raised in Sacramento, Guzman never thought of becoming an actor. At the age of 7, he developed an interest in martial arts and earned his first black belt in Tae Kwon Do by the age of 10. This led him into the octagon as a MMA fighter in Sacramento until his fighting license expired in 2010, while also modeling. A gifted athlete, he was a sought-after left-handed pitcher with a fastball clocked between 87-90 miles per hour. When Guzman was still a teenager, shoulder injury ended this career dream.

Francia Raisa (Shahrzad)



As a Gracie Award and La Femme Film Festival Rising Star Award recipient, 2012 Teen Choice, IMAGEN and an ALMA award nominee for her portrayal of 'Adrian Lee' on ABC Family's critically acclaimed series **The Secret Life of an American Teenager**, Francia Raisa continues to prove herself as a star on the rise. Francia was featured on the August 2012 cover of Backstage magazine as one of Young Hollywood's top Latinos in American TV and Film, further proving she is a unique talent to watch.

Francia stars as the stunning Persian **Shahrzad**, the much coveted romantic lead, along side Ryan Guzman, in the cross cultural drama, **Beyond Paradise**, a poignant love story executive produced by Gill Holland (*Sweet Land, Hurricane Streets, FLOW: For Love of Water, Spring Forward, Loggerheads*), and written/produced/directed by J.J. Alani (*David & Layla*.)

Francia was born and raised in Southern California. A month into her senior year of high school, Francia booked her first lead role, starring opposite Hayden Panettiere in **Bring it On: All or Nothing**.

Not long after wrapping **Bring it On**, Francia booked the lead female role of MGM's TV movie for ABC Family **The Cutting Edge 3: Chasing the Dream**, before ultimately landing her breakout role as 'Adrian Lee,' a series regular ABC Family's award-winning **The Secret Life of the American Teenager**. Created by Brenda Hampton (*7th Heaven*), the program broke all records for an original series on the network, including taking the #1 spot in its time slot for cable TV when it premiered in summer of 2008. The show is one of the most popular teen TV shows on air. Up next, Francia will be seen on an upcoming episode of **The**

Mindy Project, and she has been cast as a recurring player in The CW pilot *The Company Town*.

Francia starred as Tory Bell with WWE Superstar Mike “The Miz” Mizanin in the ABC Family original movie *Christmas Bounty*, produced by Michael Luisi (*The Call*) and WWE Studio

In addition to her success on television, the horror film *Chastity Bites*, in which Francia stars, was released early November 2013 by Gravitas Ventures via Warner Bros.

Daphne Zuniga (Elana)



Daphne Zuniga is beloved by generations of moviegoers for her performances in such classic films as Mel Brooks' *Spaceballs*, and *The Sure Thing*, in which she starred opposite John Cusack. On television, she starred as Jo Beth Reynolds on the hit series *Melrose Place*, played the scheming Victoria Davis for five seasons on *One Tree Hill*, and starred on the ABC Family series *Beautiful People*.

Over the past several years she has also starred in a number of highly rated movies for television, including *On Strike for Christmas*, *A Family Thanksgiving*, and her latest, *Gone Missing*. On stage, she starred in the world premiere of Theresa Rebeck's play *The Scene*, and will soon be seen in the film version.

Filmmakers

Gill Holland, Executive Producer



Spirit Award nominee for Producer of the Year; Gill Holland produced *Hurricane Streets*, the first film ever to win the 3 top prizes at Sundance. He has produced 100+ independent films as credited on IMDB- Internet Movie Database.

His filmography includes other Sundance favorites *FLOW: For Love of Water*, *Spring Forward*, *Loggerheads*, *Catechism Cataclysm*, *It Felt Like Love*, the FOX sitcom *Greg The Bunny*, the Spirit Award winner and first carbon-neutral independent film *Sweet Land*, Al Gore's 2008 Reel Current Award winning doc *Mountain Top Removal*, SXSW audience prize winner *Maidentrip* and the Emmy-nominated doc *Dear Jesse*.

Gill introduced Alani to the independent community in New York. He was the co-producer of Alani's first feature *David & Layla*, a Jewish- Muslim cross-cultural love story, years ahead of its time.

He produced three volumes of cineBLAST! Short film compilations. He is partner at The Group Entertainment, the KY/NYC management/production company, and former adjunct professor at NYU Graduate Film School. Gill worked at the French Film Office and has been on the jury for shorts at Sundance and selection committee for the Academy Awards, Student Division.

Gill and his wife Augusta Brown were instrumental in turning an economically depressed and run-down east downtown Louisville area into NuLu – a thriving arts/design and sustainability district. Holland coined the term NuLu and serves as President of the NuLu Business Association. 5 years ago, Holland opened NuLu's flagship arts center "The Green Building", the only LEED "Platinum" commercial building in Kentucky.

Continuing to produce 4 to 6 Indie films per year, Gill is also working on developing Louisville's Portland district to be 'green'- eco-friendly and sustainable.

J.J. Alani, Writer / Producer / Director



Based in Los Angeles, Award-winning Writer/Director J. J. Alani aka J. Jonroy Alani also works in New York and Paris. A Directors Guild of America (DGA) member and a Writers Guild of America (WGA) member in New York since 1996, Alani is the writer/producer/director of *David & Layla*, a controversial political romantic comedy. (He dedicated this film to his family members lost in a genocide campaign.)

His new feature *Beyond Paradise* is a cross-cultural drama love story. The genesis of the story is at [Director's Inspiration](#).

Alani tweets about World Cinema on Twitter @FilmFavorites. With 24,000+ followers, the site posts the Logline and the Trailer of uncommon recent & classic must-see films of the world.

Official Selection at 28 international film festivals, *David & Layla* won 8 Awards, including Mon Amour Festival's Grand Prix du Public against *La Vie en Rose*, *2 Days in Paris* and *Lady Chatterley*.

Alani is the Executive Producer of *Margreet* (2015.) It was officially selected to World Premiere at Cannes Film Festival 2015 Short Corner. *Margreet* is produced by Alani's PA Zoya Skya, actress/producer who costars with Riley Smith (I) in the film.

David & Layla received praise from the Nobel, Laureate, Oscar nominee Screenwriter and Playwright, Harold Pinter: "A bold, politically relevant film

against impossible odds." Plus, critical reviews in The New York Times, Variety, The Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, LA Weekly, etc.

Alani has completed two scripts inspired by man's first written epic poem, etched on clay tablets, the 5000-year-old historical allegory *Gilgamesh*. These two epic scripts are posted on IMDbPro as *Gilgamesh* and *Gilgamesh: In Search of Immortality*.

Alani is in development of a new independent movie posted on IMDb.com as *Amorous*.

He studied at The UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television and at the USC School of Cinematic Arts (Advanced Screenwriting Practicum) in Los Angeles, 1985-1989.

After theatrical release in 20+ cities, Hollywood's largest studio, Time Warner "Warner Bros." Netflix, iTunes, Amazon, Vudu, Turner Classic Movies, etc., continue the digital distribution of *David & Layla*. Its musical score is on 60+ international music sites, including iTunes.

Following Creative Photography studies at the London Camden School of Arts, Alani worked briefly as a Fashion Photographer in London and Paris. He continues his interest in photography on Twitter @1PhotoDaily.

In Paris, he studied at the Sorbonne University, 1990-1994, receiving a "Diplôme Supérieur de Langue et Civilisation Françaises."

In New York, he coached graduate students at the Graduate Department of New York University Film School- Tisch School of the Arts on their final thesis projects, 1996-2000.

He served as an Acting Coach at the Circle in the Square Broadway Theater School in New York where his then wife, Olga Alexandrova aka Layla Alexander was studying, 1995-1999.

Earlier in England, he received a (B.Sc.) First Class Honors in Science and Sociology at Leicester University, (D.I.C.) Diploma of London Imperial College, and a Masters Degree (M.Sc.) in Cybernetics at London University.

In London, as a Marketing Executive with ICL, he worked with the creators of the Monty Python London TV series, while at night he studied 'Acting, Speech, and Movement' at the 'City Lit'- the City Literary Institute.

A member of The Royal Photographic Society (U.K), Alani is an Art collector and a Patron of *World Music Institute* in New York.

He is the founder of 'Human Rights For All – No Exceptions!' featured on Facebook and on Twitter at @HRights4All, each with thousands of followers. These sites focus on female empowerment and equal human rights for oppressed

women and the voice-less minorities of the world, including LGBT – Gays, Lesbians, ...

A dual American and British citizen, J.J. Alani was born in the Middle East. He is fluent in English and French, some Spanish and Portuguese, and speaks and understands a few Middle Eastern languages. He has lived and worked in Paris, London, Rio de Janeiro, San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York.

Sandra Valde-Hansen, Cinematographer / Associate Producer



Sandra shot the indie guru Gregg Araki's latest feature *White Bird in a Blizzard* (a French-US production) starring Shailene Woodley, Eva Green, Angela Bassett, Shiloh Fernandez and Christopher Meloni. It premiered at Sundance Film Festival 2014. Magnolia Pictures released it in autumn 2014. Previously Sandra shot Araki's *Kaboom*, which was an official selection at Cannes Film Festival 2010, Sundance Film Festival 2010 and released by IFC in 40 cities in the US.

Sandra's narrative work has been seen in festivals spanning across the world from SXSW to Cannes. Her critically noted films *Fly Away*, *Acts of Mercy* and *Christmas in Compton* are in release via VOD.

Sandra continues to shoot powerful stories in the realm of independent social and political narrative, as in J.J. Alani's *Beyond Paradise*, a drama cross-cultural love story executive produced by Gill Holland.

Sandra is also on the faculty for the American Film Institute Cinematography Department.

Sandra shot the last season of the popular MUN 2 Reality show, *The Chicas Project*, which brought Sandra across the country.

Phillip J. Bartell, Editor

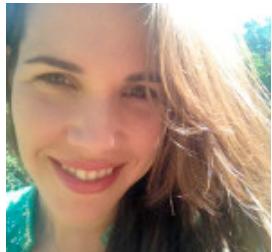


Phillip J. Bartell edited the 2010 Sundance Award winner *Undertow* (Contracorriente.)

He edited such critically acclaimed films as Robert Cary's *Ira & Abby* and *Save Me*, Q. Allan Brocka's *Boy Culture*, Patrik Ian Polk's TV series *Noah's Arc*, and Tribeca Film Festival winner, *Spork*.

His edited documentary *I Am Divine* recently premiered at South By Southwest, and feature film *G.B.F.* premiered at last year's Tribeca Film Fest.

Jennifer Nash, Music Supervisor / Music Editor / Associate Producer



Jennifer Nash has been involved in Music Supervising and Music Editing of over fifty -50- films as credited on IMDB. Her first project was *The Rich Man's Wife* starring Halle Berry on which she was the assistant to music editor Abbey Treeloggen. She soon moved into music editing on major motion pictures including *ANTZ*, *Lords Of Dogtown*, *Pearl Harbor*, *In The Valley Of Elah*, *R.E.D.* and *The Perks Of Being A Wallflower*. More recently, she was Music Supervisor on four films including *Beyond the Lights* directed by Gina Pirnce-Bythewood and produced/distributed by Relativity Media and *Ride* written/directed by Oscar winner actress Helen Hunt.

Beyond Paradise gave Jennifer a chance to expand her skills as the film features on-camera musical performances. This required her guidance during pre-production, production, and post production.

It also introduced Jennifer to the classical music and poetry of Persia. She worked closely with the director to combine European and Iranian classical music to help tell this complex, cross-cultural love story.

She has written/produced two albums of original music as well as performing and touring with her band. She naturally gravitated towards Music Supervision, on some project creating original music with her husband, composer/music educator Dan Ostermann.

J.J. Alani, Production Designer / Art Director



See Writer/Producer/Director's bio above.

Director's Inspiration

“When nothing existed, love existed; and

When nothing shall remain, love shall remain

It is the first and the last.”

- Princess Shéhérazade, One Thousand and One Nights.

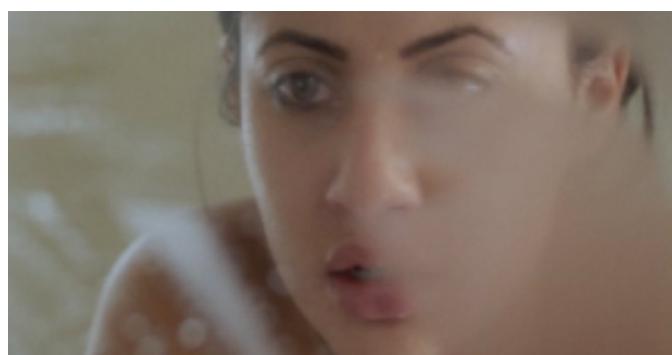
Genesis

Early 1990's I was living in Paris studying 'Langue et Civilisation Françaises' at Sorbonne University. While browsing books in a bookshop on the left bank, I bought "*Schéhérazade où l'éducation d'un roi*" ("Sheherazade or the education of a King") a book by Marie Lahy-Hollebecque. From this book, I saved the above quote about "love", which on screen starts the movie *Beyond Paradise*.

Schéhérazade is the wise princess of the famous One Thousand One Nights stories, conceived thousands of years before the invasion of Persia by Muslim armies. She inspired the lead character name "Shahrzad" of *Beyond Paradise*.

A dual U.K. and U.S. citizen but of mixed Middle Eastern descent, I've spent most of my life in exile – away from motherland and family – studying, living, and working in London, San Francisco, Rio, Los Angeles, New York and Paris.

I'm drawn to the stories of displaced people, the plight of the lonely, voiceless and marginalized minorities of the world, especially women, children, and gays and lesbians. The human being's most powerful and mysterious feeling of "*falling in love*" intrigues me. I'm attracted to cross-cultural love stories involving clash and conflict, aiming for a greater understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures.



Shahrzad (Francia Raisa) Tehran flashback

Beyond Paradise is the first movie about the lives of certain Iranian immigrants uprooted from their homeland and displaced to California. In particular, the film is about the tragic consequences of the violent abuse of a young classical music student 'Shahrzad' who flees Iran to marry an Iranian in Los Angeles, but then

Qismet (Destiny) leads her to fall in love with Sebastian, a Spanish-American gardener.

Perhaps as a therapy against her past tragedy, Shahrzad trains to be a singer and a pianist. She becomes an avid reader of Rumi, the 13th C. Persian poet. *Rumi was the most widely read poet in America in 2007*. Rumi's ecstatic poetry is naturally used in the film, a bit similar to the use of Neruda's poems in the Italian movie *Il Postino*. Set in Los Angeles, *Beyond Paradise* is mostly in the English language.

Shahrzad loves Tchaikovsky's music. Music and poetry quickly became integral parts of this storytelling. More at [Director's Inspiration](#) at the official movie site BeyondParadiseMovie.com



Meet the Cast of the "Sequel" to 'Dazed and Confused'

By [Joe Robberson](#) on February 9, 2015



Bauer Griffin / Getty Images

[Richard Linklater](#) had a very big 2014, releasing *Boyhood* to critical and audience acclaim and being nominated for every award in the process. But most movie buffs know Linklater for one reason: *Dazed and Confused*. The 1993 film was a seminal one for countless '90s kids and a frequent Top 5 inclusion whenever friends play "Desert Island" during a slumber party.

Fast forward to the here and now. Linklater's next movie will be *That's What I'm Talking About*, a "spiritual sequel" to *Dazed* the writer/director has been working on for a long time. *Talking* doesn't follow Pink, WOULDABEEN, or Jodie. It features a brand new cast of potential stars, but you can count on the look and feel of the film to be in line with *Dazed*. It takes place in the '80s and follows a group of guys who play baseball together.

Could *That's What I'm Talking About* (the title comes from a quote from *Dazed...* for the uninitiated) do for its young stars what *Dazed* did for [Matthew McConaughey](#), [Ben Affleck](#), [Milla Jovovich](#), and [Cole Hauser](#)? It's very possible knowing Linklater's eye for young talent. Let's meet his new cast:

• 1

RYAN GUZMAN



Role: Roper

Where you've seen him: *Step Up Revolution*, *Pretty Little Liars* (TV), *The Boy Next Door*

• 2

ZOEY DEUTCH



Role: Beverly

Where you've seen her: *Beautiful Creatures*, *Vampire Academy*, being Lea Thompson's daughter...

• 3

TYLER HOECLIN



Role: McReynolds

Where you've seen him: *Road to Perdition*, *7th Heaven* (TV), *Teen Wolf* (TV),

• 4

WYATT RUSSELL



Role: Willoughby

Where you've seen him: *This is 40*, *22 Jump Street*, *Cold in July*, being the son of Kurt Russell and Goldie Hawn

• 5

BLAKE JENNER



Role: Jake

Where you've seen him: *Glee*

6

GLEN POWELL



Role: Finnegan

Where you've seen him: *The Expendables 3*



Paramount Pictures
