

CUCKOO



THE STORY AND KYLA'S VISUAL REFERENCES

Logline | A quiet teenager finds her voice when she befriends the toughest girl in school. But who's influencing who and how long until someone gets hurt?



Synopsis | Loner Jenny lives with her mum Erica in bohemian Brighton, having moved from Burundi after her father died. Struggling to fit in at school, Jenny is drawn to lively but troubled Alpha-female Nadine. Poles apart, Jenny and Nadine bond over shared hatreds, growing closer when Erica takes Nadine under her wing after learning of her unhappy homelife. Despite enjoying the exhilarating status of being Nadine's best friend, Jenny can't help but feel usurped, and the pangs of jealousy and betrayal are spiked as Nadine gets closer to Erica. Nadine's behaviour steadily improves, as Jenny's grows more and more violent.



GIRLHOOD





MOONLIGHT





WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT KEVIN





MARTHA MARCY MAY MARLENE



THE TEAM

Ohna Falby studied film and creative writing in NY before settling in London making TV commercials. Set up Sister Films in 2002, with Daniel Mulloy, and produced award-winning short films. Working across commercials, shorts, dance and art films, collaborating with talent and companies from the UK and Europe. Her feature slate includes three in development with directors she has nurtured successful short film partnerships with: *The Girl from the Estuary*, a UK-FR co-pro by Crocodile director Gaëlle Denis, (BFI and Bretagne), *Baby Star*, a dystopian dark comedy with *Feed Me* director Rachel Maclean (SFTN Creative Scotland), and a screen adaptation of Suhayla El-Bushra's play *Cuckoo*, with Mercury director Kyla Simone Bruce.

Kyla Simone Bruce is an award-winning writer and director with a background in video art. She has directed promos and documentaries for clients including The National Wildlife Trust, Armani, DKNY and Atlantic Records. After a BA from Glasgow School of Arts, Kyla graduated with an MA with Distinction from The London Film School in 2013, with her film *THE INTERPRETER*, which has been nominated for several awards, long-listed for the BAFTA Short Film Award 2015 and awarded 'Best Student Short' at London Short Film Festival. Her Documentary *SILVER RAILS* (following her father, the late Jack Bruce, and collaborators recording his final album in Abbey Road Studios) has been licensed by the BBC and her feature length international collaboration *UNDOCUMENT* (a series of character-driven short dramas exploring illegal immigration; set in Iran, Greece and England) premiered at the East End Film Festival, 2016 and was long-listed for two BIFAs, for Best Debut Director and Most Promising Newcomer. She is currently finishing her short film *MERCURY* (selected and pitched at NISI MASA Short Pitch) with writer Gorana Jovanović, producer Ohna Falby and starring Isabella Laughland and Harriet Cains.

Suhayla El-Bushra is a screenwriter and playwright. Recent short films include *BUSH* (Film4, dir Nadia Fall, producer Nicky Bentham) and *GONE* (LAMDA showcase, dir Emma Sullivan). Her screenplay *MOLLY* has been optioned by Neon Films, and she is developing original TV projects with Lime Pictures and CBBC after having been a core writer on C4 shows *HOLLYOAKS* and *ACKLEY BRIDGE*. Suhayla was writer in residence at the National Theatre Studio from 2015-16, during which time her adaptation of Nikolai Erdman's *The Suicide* was staged in the Lyttelton Theatre. Other stage work includes *PIGEONS* (Royal Court 2013 and tour) *CUCKOO* (Unicorn Theatre, 2014) *THE KILBURN PASSION* (Tricycle, 2014) and *ARABIAN NIGHTS* (Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh, 2017). She is currently under commission from Out Of Joint, English Touring Theatre, The National Theatre and The Bridge Theatre.