

Bookends

PRESS KIT

Runtime: 99 minutes

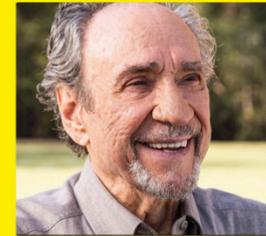
Languages: English, German, Yiddish

Country: United States

Official selection:

Santa Barbara International Film Festival

F. Murray Abraham



Noam Ash



Charlie Barnett



Caroline Aaron



Bookends

Directed by Mike Doyle

A chapter closes... and the story begins.



SYNOPSIS

When Nate is forced to leave his fabulous city life behind and move in with his grandparents after a bad breakup, he is determined to escape the confines of retirement community life and his meddlesome grandparents' relentless attempts to 'improve' him. But when his Holocaust-surviving grandfather, Saul, shows signs of cognitive decline and his grandmother, Miriam, refuses to acknowledge her husband's early dementia, Nate finds himself torn between his desire to flee, family responsibilities, and an unexpected romance with his grandparents' handsome doctor...

CAST

Academy Award winner F. Murray Abraham
(Amadeus, The White Lotus)

SAG Award winner Caroline Aaron
(The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel, 21 Jump Street)

Noam Ash
(The Other Two)

Charlie Barnett
(Russian Doll, The Acolyte)



CREATIVE & CREW

Directed by: Mike Doyle.

Written by: Noam Ash.

Produced by: Alon Shtruzman, Scott Einbinder, Noam Ash, Henry Russell Bergstein, Warren Ostergard.

Director of Photography: Tari Segal.

Original music by: Dabney Morris.

Production company: 5X Media.

In association with: Vitamin A Films, Ice Berg Productions, Creative Partners Productions, Plattinum Records, and Midnight Theatricals.

Executive producers: Scott Krieger, Chad E. Brown, Gil Goldschein, Noah Eisenberg, Nicole Eisenberg, Stanford Brown, Nick Francescon, Deborah Shmueli, Oded Shmueli, C. Graham Berwind III, Eleni Gianulis-Vermeer, Rebecca Gold, Shira Milikowsky, S. Asher Gelman, Stefano Milici, F. Murray Abraham, Caroline Aaron, Mike Doyle, Charlie Barnett.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

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I come from a small family. My parents divorced when I was quite young, so the family got even smaller. Just the three of us: my rebellious brother, who always seemed to be running away from home; my mother, a single woman with professional aspirations that took her away from home as well; and me. I spent a lot of time alone as a kid. While not ideal, it fostered my imagination and creativity. It made me self-sufficient, but it also made me desperately crave family.

Fortunately, the branches of my extended family reached far and wide around the New York Tri State area. So while I had periods of loneliness, a cousin, aunt, or grandparent was never too far away. In fact, my grandparents on the Italian side became my surrogate parents during my childhood and into my 20s. They lived nearby, and there was always a place for me in their home. They taught me so much. Especially my grandmother, Theresa. We shared a connection unlike any other in our family. She taught me how to cook, play cards, how to laugh, and how to love. More than anything, she taught me to appreciate the present moment. She made me the adult I am today, and of all of her grandchildren, I know I held a special place.

That's what drew me to BOOKENDS. I see so much of myself in Nate and Miriam. The resonance of their relationship is universal—the connection, the guidance, the love. Much like Nate, as I was opening new chapters in life, my grandparents gave me the tools to navigate them while closing certain chapters in their own lives. With a lot of laughs, tears, and... trips to the grocery store to return nearly expired produce.

I love the films of Greta Gerwig, Luca Guadagnino, and Nora Ephron, to name a few. They create intimate ensemble films that deftly weave character and story with humor, heart, and depth.

BOOKENDS celebrates the beautiful messiness of life, the resilience of the human spirit, and the unbreakable bonds that tie us to those we love across generations.

MIKE DOYLE

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FROM THE WRITER

“

It's impossible to fully express the impact my grandparents have had on my life. That our relationship went through so many wonderful stages—from infancy all the way through to adulthood—is one of the greatest blessings of my life.

My grandparents always supported and accepted me for who I am. When I left for college, my parents and I decided it was time to tell them I was gay, only to be met with a snort and a laugh—did we think this was news? They'd known since I was 5. And that is what I think of when I think of my grandparents: unconditional love.

When heartache struck in my 20s, and I needed a soft spot to land after a bad breakup, my grandparents were there, as always, to welcome me into their home. But it soon became evident, no matter how hard they tried to conceal it from me, that they needed me as much as I needed them.

The reversal of roles between generations is hard. Emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Reconciling that the people who once bathed me and taught me to drive might now need help with those simple tasks themselves was a gut punch. But it also made me, at long last, grow up. It is a curious phenomenon: sometimes you learn more about who you are not by self-exploration or introspection, but by seeing what's uncovered in the process of helping others. My grandparents and I did that for each other.

BOOKENDS is a life-affirming story about how people on opposite ends of life's journey are, perhaps ironically, best suited to helping each other face the challenges of starting and ending time on this earth. It's a manifesto, a romance, and a love-letter to the people who taught me, by example, the best way to live.

In a world filled with strife, division, and hard-heartedness, it is my hope that BOOKENDS inspires audiences to slow down, open up, and reconnect with their loved ones. Because if my grandparents taught me anything, it's that family—however we define it—is everything. I hope the film inspires you to go spend some of your precious, limited time, with yours.

NOAM ASH

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CREATIVE TEAM



MIKE DOYLE (director): Mike's feature film debut, *SELL BY*, which he wrote and directed, premiered in Toronto in 2019 at Inside Out, then traveled the festival circuit garnering awards including best feature, best screenplay, and best director. It was acquired by Netflix under the title *ALMOST LOVE*, and stars Kate Walsh, Scott Evans, Augustus Prew, Michelle Buteau, and Patricia Clarkson. His next feature, *PASSING THROUGH*, premiered in April 2023 in Torino, Italy, at the 38th Lover's Film Festival and is now enjoying a great run on all major platforms.

Mike's first film, *SHINER*, a short starring Amy Ryan, premiered at Tribeca and launched his directing career. Mike most recently directed the short films *CLEMENTINE*, *VARIATIONS*, and *THE CHASE*. Mike is executive producing and writing the series *TODO POR AMOR* with director Jayro Bustamante. Additionally, Mike is co-creating a new series, set up at Netflix. Mike became WGA when he was hired by Judd Apatow and Universal to pen the comedy, *UNTITLED GAY MARRIAGE*. Mike is a veteran actor, with years of experience in film and television, working with greats like Clint Eastwood (*Jersey Boys*), Karyn Kusama (*The Invitation*), Richard LaGravenese (*You're Not You*), Nancy Savoca (*Union Square*), & Martin Campbell (*Green Lantern*) to name a few. He was last seen in *FALLOUT*, NBC's *NEW AMSTERDAM* and Showtime's *CITY ON A HILL*. Mike holds a BS in economics from Georgetown, and he trained as an actor at The Juilliard School.



NOAM ASH (Writer, Producer, Nate): Noam Ash first gained recognition as the creator of the hit web series *MY GAY ROOMMATE* and subsequent TV pilot *BOY·FRIENDS* from Keshet Studios, which garnered over 11 million views and received critical acclaim from *Vanity Fair* and *The New York Times*.

He guest starred in HBO Max's *THE OTHER TWO* as well as starred in and executive produced *THE INFLUENCERS* on Amazon Prime. He appeared in Prime Video's *ABSENTIA* and subsequently sold a one-hour drama to Sony Pictures Television. *BOOKENDS*, which he wrote, produced, and stars in, is his debut feature. He is repped by Sweeney Entertainment and HJTH Law.



SCOTT EINBINDER (Producer, Executive Chairman 5X Media): With over 30 years of experience in the packaging, financing, sales, and distribution of filmed content, Scott is the Co-Founder and Executive Chairman of 5X Media. Under a successful, multi-year deal at the Screen Gems division of Sony Pictures Entertainment, his company co-produced *THE COVENANT*, which opened #1 at the US box office. He produced the critically acclaimed film *KILLER JOE* starring Matthew McConaughey from legendary director William Friedkin and was the founding Co-CEO at Cristal Pictures, which co-financed and co-produced the box office hit film *THE HITMAN'S BODYGUARD* starring Ryan Reynolds. In addition to his domestic accomplishments, Scott is also one of Hollywood's top dealmakers doing business in China.



ALON SHTRUZMAN (Producer, CEO 5X Media): Before co-founding 5X Media, Alon was founder and CEO of Keshet International, which he grew into a global production and distribution studio that sold and produced TV shows and movies in the US and globally. Credits include *LA BREA*, *A SMALL LIGHT*, *ECHO 3*, and dozens more. Prior to leading Keshet, Alon was one of the founders of the Israeli cable industry, serving as GM of Hotvison and VP Content at Hot, where he launched channels, a pioneering VOD service, and commissioned hundreds of programming hours. Alon also served as SVP at Fox International Channels in London and was President of Media for Playcast.

CREATIVE TEAM



HENRY RUSSELL BERGSTEIN (Producer, Casting Director): Bi-coastal casting director, producer, and talent consultant. Before returning to independent casting in 2023, Henry was VP of Casting at HBO Max, overseeing casting for scripted and unscripted series, docudramas, and animation. Emmy-nominated: HBO's SUCCESSION, Netflix's INVENTING ANNA. Other television: FX's ADULTS, NBC's STUMBLE, HBO Max's THE OTHER TWO, Amazon's MOZART IN THE JUNGLE, Netflix's BLACK MIRROR, Hulu's RAMY (pilot). Film: MASS (Independent Spirit Robert Altman Award), BLACK BEAR, THE KINDERGARTEN TEACHER, SATURDAY CHURCH, IT FELT LIKE LOVE, GRANDMA, THE WEEK OF, VAMPIRES VS. THE BRONX, and FRANCES HA. Theater: Broadway and Off-Broadway specializing in new plays and musicals. Most recently: OH, MARY! (B'way & Off-B'way), TITANIQUE, WHITE GIRL IN DANGER, and THE BURNING CAULDRON OF FIERY FIRE. Over 20 productions at Vineyard Theatre and numerous productions at Ars Nova, LCT3, Signature, Rattlestick, and PS 122. Podcasts: HOMECOMING and ANTHEM: HOMUNCULUS.



WARREN OSTERGARD (Producer): Born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio, Warren Ostergard is a veteran producer with over twenty years of experience and more than forty-five feature credits. A seasoned DGA Unit Production Manager and skilled line producer, he brings expertise in film finance, development, production management, post supervision, and tax credit delivery. His deep relationships with film offices, sales agents, and creative teams have made him one of the more prolific independent producers working today. Recent projects include THE HILL starring Dennis Quaid (Briarcliff / Netflix / Universal / SONY), the breakout hit SOUND OF FREEDOM (\$250M worldwide, Angel Studios), and Lionsgate's BLACKWATER LANE starring Dermot Mulroney, Minka Kelly, and Maggie Grace. Warren also produced the A+E podcast series SOUL INCARCERATED, which chronicles the 1970s Virginia prison band Edge of Daybreak and their remarkable reunion 40 years later. Additional credits include AGENT GAME (Saban/Sony), THE ROYAL (Samuel Goldwyn Films), SPY INTERVENTION (Cinedigm), LIFE LIKE (Lionsgate), THE JOURNEY IS THE DESTINATION (Netflix), and CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES (RLJ Films).



PRESS

 **DEADLINE** TIP US

F. Murray Abraham, Caroline Aaron, Noam Ash & Charlie Barnett Board 'Bookends'



EXCLUSIVE

F Murray Abraham, Caroline Aaron, Noam Ash, and Charlie Barnett
Courtesy/Getty/Casey Kringle/Courtesy

EXCLUSIVE: Oscar winner [F. Murray Abraham](#) (*Amadeus*, *The White Lotus*), [Caroline Aaron](#) (*The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, *21 Jump Street*), [Noam Ash](#) (*The Other Two*), and [Charlie Barnett](#) (*Russian Doll*, *The Acolyte*) are set for [5x Media's *Bookends*](#) from filmmaker Mike Doyle.

VARIETY

'Bookends' Star and Writer Noam Ash on Authentic Queer and Jewish Casting and How 'Heated Rivalry' Could Help Sell the Film

By Marc Malkin



DEADLINE
HOME / AWARDS / FESTIVALS

Santa Barbara International Film Festival 2026 Winners — Full List

 By [Glenn Garner](#)
February 14, 2026 10:42am

As the [Santa Barbara Film Festival](#) wraps up its 41st edition, the jury has selected this year's winning films.

The ADL Stand Up Award sponsored by ADL Santa Barbara/Tri-Counties
Bookends
Dir. Mike Doyle





QUICK LINKS

[Linktr.ee/Bookendsmovie](https://linktr.ee/Bookendsmovie)

[Stills gallery](#)

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CONTACT

5X Media is a Los Angeles and Madrid-based international production, talent management, and TV/film sales company from partners and media exec vets Alon Shtruzman and Scott Einbinder. BOOKENDS reps 5X Media's first feature.

✘ 5X MEDIA

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