



B O N E L E S S

Auden Lincoln-Vogel
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Starring
Auden and John Lincoln-Vogel

Written and Directed by
Auden Lincoln-Vogel

Cinematography
Philip Rabalais

Producer
Tristen Ives

2023

Overview

Genre – Fiction

Running Time – 76 minutes

Language – English

Format – HD

Writer / Director – Auden Lincoln-Vogel

Producer – Tristen Ives

Cinematographer – Philip Rabalais

Original Music – John Lincoln-Vogel
Philip Rabalais

Key Cast – Auden Lincoln-Vogel
John Lincoln-Vogel
Ben Dulavitch
Hannah Bonner
Chris Harris

Website – audenlincolnvogel.com/boneless

Trailer – [https://vimeo.com/732858473/
c0c95d5701](https://vimeo.com/732858473/c0c95d5701)



Logline

Where's Auden?





Synopsis

Mired in academic tedium, an awkward breakup, and a dismal day job, Auden invites his brother John to visit him in Iowa City. But when John arrives with his skateboard, flute, and a high-voltage attitude to salvage the summer, Auden is nowhere to be found. When he finally does show up, John seems to be the only one who notices something strange about his brother...



Director's Statement

I've always preferred working from the ground up—getting friends together, grabbing whatever's at hand, and worrying more about *how* we're making than *what* we're making. For me, then, shooting during the pandemic in the summer of 2020 on a micro-budget did not feel like a limitation so much as a way of committing to a method: a tight-knit pod of cast and crew shooting in easily-accessible locations around Iowa City, employing a directorial style that was more collaborative than premeditated. Although I had an outline of the film beforehand, we generally worked in loosely-structured improvised scenarios, which allowed us non-actors to feel more comfortable in our roles and provided abundant opportunities for spontaneous performances. My hope with this working method was also to introduce deeper stylistic fractures in the film as a way of exploring the distinct worlds of the two brothers. The awkward improvised dialogues

between Auden and his grad school friends just barely feel like they are from the same universe as John's extended free-form skate video in the middle of the film, making—I would hope—the relationship between the brothers all the more mysterious. As one can imagine, much of the film draws on John's & my personal experiences, and the process of filming even felt like a throw-back to our teenage years, shooting skate videos on a mini-DV camcorder. Acting opposite him was an experience that was both novel and quite comfortable, but attempting to direct at the same time posed a number of challenges. I was lucky to have several close friends as crew—Philip Rabalais (cinematography), Tristen Ives (producer), Trevon Coleman (AC), and Michael Wawzenek (sound tech), who could step out of their official roles and tell me with candor: “You can do better!”

FAQs

What was the most exciting part of the film to shoot?

The skateboarding. Although Philip Rabalais shot most of the film, some scenes, including the scenes of John skating, I shot with just me and John over a series of maybe five days. Although it was a bit stressful to ride a skateboard while holding a nice camera, it was a fun throw-back to the days when John & I made skate videos. It also helped to be wearing pads—if I had to fall, I wanted to hit my body, not the camera!

How much of the film was scripted?

Very little. I had a general sense of the film's structure and what scenes were necessary, but the actual dialogue was mostly the product of actors improvising around a series of emotional beats and restrictions. Usually we would do several takes in order to streamline the chatter a bit, and then begin to tweak the scene. For me, finding ways of guiding the improvisations was fascinating and varied a lot from actor to actor. Oftentimes there was very little direction necessary. With John he would sometimes begin doing something—like playing flute on the porch—and next thing I knew it was a scene in the film.

How does Boneless compare to your previous films?

Before I came to the University of Iowa in 2018, I was an animator living in Estonia who had no thought of making a live action film. In Iowa, my early forays into directing live action films were very much animation-inspired: puppet-like characters, heavy production design, etc. However, with my previous short, “Bill and Joe Go Duck Hunting,” I began to experiment with a broader variety of working with actors—restrictions, theatrical monologues, and, particularly, improvisation. *Boneless* built on a lot of the working methods I established in Bill and Joe, but it both goes further into naturalism in some ways with the skate videos and observational footage, and also goes back to my experimental animation roots in the animated interludes with macro shots of John's clothes.

What were the advantages and disadvantages of working with such a small crew?

There were some days when it would have been nice, say, to have another grip, but, overall, the advantages of working with a tiny crew far outweighed any disadvantages. Shooting with a small group of friends is not only the most fun way to make a movie, but also, aesthetically, it allowed for more experimentation and constructive criticism along the way. There is a critical mass of people after which I find myself losing flexibility, and so I prefer to err on the low side of that equation.

How long was the post-production process?

About two years. The flipside of making a film based around improvised scenarios is that one must face an enormous amount of editing work. In many ways, this film was rewritten during the edit. For example, we shot an entire final section of the film—perhaps half an hour—that was simply cut out. Although I prefer to work in this looser way during a shoot, it does not necessarily mean that the overall production will be faster.

Are there any scenes that were particularly hard to cut?

There was a lot of material with Ben Dulavitch, the roommate character, that was very hard for me to cut. Ben has been in all of my live action films and has such a peculiar performance style. A lot of weird and funny stuff worked well on its own, but didn't serve the overall film. So much so, in fact, that I might make a short out of that material...

What were you most surprised about while making this film?

In addition to being a plot point for my character, I had *actually* forgotten how much fun skateboarding is! The past two years of my life have pretty much been a triangle between my teaching job, the editing room and... the skatepark.



Auden Lincoln-Vogel

Writer, Director, Actor

Auden Lincoln-Vogel (he/him) is an American filmmaker whose work spans from animation to expanded cinema performances. His animations, experimental films, and live action narrative films have been screened at festivals including the Cannes Film Festival, Slamdance Film Festival, Black Nights Film Festival, Filmfest Dresden, and the European Media Arts Festival.

He is the recipient of a 2016 Fulbright Scholarship in Tallinn, Estonia, where he also received an MA in Animation from the Estonian Academy of Arts in 2019. In 2021, he received his MFA in Film and Video Production from the University of Iowa.

His work can be found at audenlincolnvogel.com





Tristen Ives

Producer

Tristen Ives (they/them) is a filmer who focuses on diaristic, experimental, and performative modes for political protest. They received their BA in Cinema and Film Production from the University of Iowa. They are the recipient of Public Space One's Free Studio Residency (2019-2020), and their work has been featured in Analog Cookbook. Their films have screened at ICDOCS, Winnipeg Underground Film Festival, CURRENTS New Media, Montreal Underground Film Festival, Light Matter Film Festival, Documenting the Archive Conference, Craft Culture Critique Conference, and FilmScene Cinema.

Tristen currently works as a Projectionist at SIFF and Northwest Film Forum in Seattle, Washington.

More of Tristen's work can be found at tristenives.com



Philip Rabalais

Cinematography & Music

Philip Rabalais is a filmmaker and electronic musician from Fairfield, Iowa. His work has screened at Slamdance, NoBudge, Chicago Underground Film Festival, Cosmic Rays, and Onion City; his work as a cinematographer has been featured in the Cinéfondation at the Cannes Film Festival. He received an MFA in Film and Video Production from the University of Iowa in 2020.

More of his work can be found at philiprabalais.com



John Lincoln-Vogel

Actor, Costume Design, Music

John Lincoln-Vogel (he/him) is a performance artist, clothing designer and musician. His music is a combination of Western Jazz mixed with traditional Japanese flute playing as well as experimental techniques. His improvisations inspire the symphonic mix of colors in his clothing designs through synesthesia. He also generates a surreal, multi genre style of performance art which he has showcased in Chicago and Colombia. Currently, John is making a dress for a celebrity from Cameroon and focusing on his dog-walking occupation.

More of his work can be found on [Instagram](#)
[@extendable_but_cheeks](#)



Cast

Auden – Auden Lincoln-Vogel

John – John Lincoln-Vogel

Roommate – Ben Dulavitch

Ex-girlfriend – Hannah Bonner

Survey Subject – Chris Harris

Grad Student Friends – Nina Kintsurashvili
Tom Jackson
Matt Hipps
Stephen Wardell

Cornhole Dudes – Calvin Greenberg
Liam Kaboli
Ben Smith
Izaak Perez
Sam Schintler



Crew

Director – Auden Lincoln-Vogel

Producer – Tristen Ives

Cinematographer – Philip Rabalais

Assistant Camera – Trevon Coleman

Sound Technician – Michael Wawzenek

Costume Design – John Lincoln-Vogel

Music – Philip Rabalais &
John Lincoln-Vogel

Technical Info

Shooting Format – Digital video

Aspect Ratio – 2.35:1

Running Time – 76 minutes

Audio Format – Stereo

Framerate – 24 fps

Language – English

Production Year – 2023

Production Location – Iowa City, IA, USA



