

2015  
USA/Germany

DCP  
Colour

1:1.85  
5.1

30 min

**Synopsis** — A character study as well as a meditation on communication, creativity, and physical space, *Take What You Can Carry* is a picture of a young woman seen through the interiors she occupies and the company she keeps. A North American living abroad, Lilly aspires to shape an intimate and private place of her own while connecting to the world around her. When she receives a letter from home, it provides the conduit she needs to fuse her transient self with the person she's always known herself to be.

# TAKE WHAT YOU CAN CARRY

***Take What You Can Carry*, my first film made outside of Baltimore, is my most personal and formally playful work yet. Inspired by Georges Perec's text Species of Spaces, it imagines a character in transition, living in a foreign city for an indeterminate amount of time, trying to balance the various and distinct public and private manifestations of her personality.**

Hannah Gross, for whom the role was written, moves across the frame with a particular kind of precision, purposeful and hesitant at the same time. She imbues Lilly with a buried, private history that disappears with a smile. Lilly's grandmother, the film's other central character, is never seen, only heard through the letter Lilly receives from her and reads aloud, an actual letter written by my grandmother to me. For the supporting roles, I cast a number of actors I've admired from afar, including Angela Schanelec, Jean-Christophe Folly, and members of the Berlin-based theatre company Gob Squad. The excellent technical and producing team was European and the film was funded through a grant from The Wexner Center for the Arts and a fellowship from the Harvard Film Study Center. It was written and produced in a summer.

Because everything came together very quickly, I found myself writing for imagined locations while actively scouting real ones, adding new scenes to incorporate the people and places I found along the way. It was a continuing dialogue with Berlin and the friends I've made there, but in the end there is almost nothing of the city on screen except the sounds, as if its image existed only in the collective imagination.

"I would like there to exist places that are stable, unmoving, intangible, untouched and almost untouchable, unchanging, deep-rooted; places that might be points of reference, of departure, of origin...

Such places don't exist, and it's because they don't exist that space becomes a question, ceases to be self-evident, ceases to be incorporated, ceases to be appropriated. Space is a doubt: I have constantly to mark it, to designate it. It's never mine, never given to me, I have to conquer it."

— Georges Perec

Director — Matt Porterfield

Matt Porterfield has written and directed three feature films, *Hamilton* (2006), *Putty Hill* (2011) and *I Used To Be Darker* (2013), all produced in Baltimore, Maryland, where he was born and raised. His work is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art and the Harvard Film Archive and has screened at the Whitney Biennial, Walker Arts Center, Centre Pompidou, and film festivals such as Sundance, BAFICI, and the Berlinale (Forum, 2010 & 2013). Currently, he has two new features in development, *Metal Gods* and *Sollers Point*. *Take What You Can Carry* is his first narrative short. Matt teaches film theory and production at Johns Hopkins University and Maryland Institute College of Art.



Lead Actress — Hannah Gross

Hannah Gross was born in Toronto, Canada. She is a graduate of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, where she studied theater. Her film credits include Matt Porterfield's *I Used To Be Darker* (2014), Dustin Guy Defa's short *Lydia Hoffman*, *Lydia Hoffman* (2014), Nathan Silver's recent features *Uncertain Terms* (2014) and *Stinking Heaven* (IFFR 2015), as well as Charles Poekel's debut, *Christmas Again*, which premiered at Locarno in 2014 and will play in the NEXT Section at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival.

Supporting Actor — Jean-Christophe Folly

Jean-Christophe Folly was born in Caen, France, and graduated from the Conservatoire National Supérieur d'Art Dramatique in Paris in 2007. He has worked on various theater productions, most recently, Jean Genet's *Les Nègres*, directed by Robert Wilson. Jean-Christophe made his feature film debut in Claire Denis's *35 Shots of Rum* (2008), followed by Benoît Jacquot's *Villa Amalia* (2008), and *Eden Is West* (2009) by Costa Gavras. He played lead roles in Ulrich Köhler's *Sleeping Sickness* (2011) and Andrea Segre's *La Prima Neve* (2013), and has appeared in Claire Denis's *To The Devil* (2011), *Les Salauds* (2013), Alain Resnais's *You Ain't Seen Nothin' Yet* (2012), Nicolas Wackerbarth's *Everyday Objects* (2013) and Erik Bernasconi's *Fuori Mira* (2014).

Supporting Actress — Angela Schanelec

Angela Schanelec was born in Aalen, Germany. Writer and director, she studied acting at the College of Music and Performing Arts in Frankfurt/Main and worked as a theatre actress until 1991. Her first feature, *My Sister's Good Fortune* (1995), won the German Critics' Prize. Her other films include, *Places in Cities* (1998) and *Marseille* (2004), both presented in Cannes's Un Certain Regard Section, *Passing Summer* (2001), *Afternoon* (2007), *Deutschland 09 – Erster Tag* (2009), and *Orly* (2010). Recently, she contributed a short piece to the documentary anthology film, *Bridges of Sarajevo*, which premiered in the Special Screenings Section of the 2014 Cannes Film Festival.

Supporting Actors — Gob Squad

Gob Squad is a UK/German "post-dramatic" performance collective, founded at Nottingham Trent University in 1994. The group consists of seven core members working collaboratively on the concept, duration, and performance of original pieces that can be performed in theatres and galleries as easily as in everyday urban environments. These pieces often incorporate the audience, improvisation, radio play, Internet, and film and video formats into the performance and documentation of an event. Their most famous performances are *Super Night Shot* (2003), *Gob Squad's Kitchen* (2007) and *Before Your Very Eyes* (2011). The current Gob Squad line-up is Johanna Freiburg, Sean Patten, Sharon Smith, Berit Stumpf, Sarah Thom, Bastian Trost and Simon Will. Other artists, performers and technicians are invited to collaborate on particular projects.

Producer — Zsuzsanna Király

Zsuzsanna Király was born in Székelyudvarhely, Romania, and studied Journalism and Communications Science in Vienna and Berlin, where she received the Dr. Maria Schaumayer Foundation Grant for her Master's thesis on German language blogospheres. She worked in cultural public relations, for several film festivals (Viennale, VIS Vienna Independent Shorts, Berlinale, etc.) and in film production with X Filme Creative Pool. Since 2009 she has been working with Komplizen Film as Production Coordinator and Junior Producer. Her credits include Miguel Gomes's *Redemption and Tabu*, *Superegos* by Benjamin Heisenberg, *Tanta Agua* by Ana Guevara and Leticia Jorge, and *Sleeping Sickness* by Ulrich Köhler, amongst others. Zsuzsanna has been a member of the film networks Kino and Nisi Masa and joined the editorial team of *Revolver*, Zeitschrift für Film in 2011. In 2013 she took part as a story editor in the Script&Pitch programme of the TorinoFilmLab.

Director of Photography — Jenny Lou Ziegel

Jenny Lou Ziegel was born in Frankfurt/Main, Germany. In 2012 she graduated as Director of Photography from Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin (dffb) with the feature film *Reported Missing*, directed by Jan Speckenbach, shown at the Berlinale Perspektive Deutsches Kino 2012 and nominated for the European Discovery Prize by the European Film Academy. Their former short, *The Other Day in Eden*, played in Cannes Cinéfondation Section in 2008. The short *Jessi* (2010) by Marie-josephin Schneider won the Golden Lola for Best German Short Film and was nominated for Best Short by the European Film Academy. Her most recent works include *Cabana* and *Regulado* (2014), both directed by Filipa Cesar and shot in Guinea-Bissau, as well as the debut documentary *Legacy* by Roberto Anjari-Rossi, which premiered at Rotterdam International Film Festival in the Bright Futures Section in 2015.

*Take What You Can Carry* is Hannah Gross, Jean-Christophe Folly, Angela Schanelec, and Gob Squad feat. Sebastian Bark, Mat Hand, Tina Pfurr, Sharon Smith, Laura Tonke, Bastian Trost, Simon Will

Story and Direction — Matt Porterfield  
Producers — Zsuzsanna Király, Matt Porterfield  
Director of Photography — Jenny Lou Ziegel  
Editor — Amanda Larson  
Sound Design — Gene Park, Danny Meltzer

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