

# matrescence

*press notes*

*A first-time mother struggles to navigate the  
difficulties of postnatal depression.*



# matrescence

*noun [ U ] /mæ'tres.ənts/*

*The process of becoming a mother: Those physical, psychological and emotional changes you go through after the birth of your child.*





## synopsis

Set in the early 2000s, *Matrescence* is a poignant drama that follows Heather, a first-time mother struggling to navigate the isolating reality of new parenthood with her newborn son, George.

New mothers are constantly told they should feel elated — overcome with joy at the arrival of their child. But for Heather, nothing feels further from the truth. The days and nights blur together, basic routines feel gruelling, and the baby she longs to bond with cries endlessly in place of silence.

Heather is unraveling, but no one can know. With a home visit from a health visitor looming, she clings to the hope that if she can just get through it, she might survive another unrelenting day. But when she accidentally locks her son inside the house just minutes before the appointment, something inside her snaps.

For the first time, Heather admits the truth...

...she needs help — and she needs it now.





specifications

runtime	<i>15 minutes</i>
shot on	<i>ARRI Alexa Mini</i>
shooting format	<i>3.2K, Apple ProRes 4444</i>
audio format	<i>Stereo</i>
aspect ratio	<i>16:9</i>
language	<i>English</i>
year of completion	<i>2025</i>







## Harvey Albury

biography & director's statement

Harvey is a young aspiring filmmaker from Farnham, Surrey. While studying Film Production at the University of Portsmouth, Harvey became inspired by stories centred around challenges with mental health, themes of loss, and family.

“I wanted to make *Matrescence* for my own mother and other mothers who have had a challenging postnatal experience. We approached the story with care, drawing on both first-hand and second-hand research, to ensure we captured an honest and authentic portrayal of what that journey can be like.”



A group of approximately 12 women are seated in a circle of orange plastic chairs in a large, high-ceilinged room with brick walls and arched windows. The room has a high ceiling with a grid of recessed lighting. The walls are made of red brick and feature large, arched windows that let in bright light. The women are dressed in casual clothing, and the overall atmosphere is calm and focused.

cast



A close-up, artistic portrait of a woman with dark, wavy hair. Her eyes are closed, and her expression is serene. The lighting is soft and directional, coming from the upper left, which casts gentle shadows on the right side of her face and highlights the texture of her skin and hair. The background is dark and out of focus.

Georgie McGuigan

*as Heather*

Georgie recently earned her Master of Arts degree from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and was thrilled to join the *Matrescence* team upon her return to London.

Exploring Heather's real and raw experience of postnatal depression has been a profound and moving experience, and she hopes that the care and dedication the team have poured into telling this story will have a far-reaching impact, helping more women feel truly seen, heard, and understood.





Elliott Pugh  
as George

At just three weeks old, Elliott made his acting debut in *Matrescence* as newborn George. He handled his first on-set experience like a true professional. Sleeping on cue, charming the crew, and bringing authenticity and emotional depth to the film in a way no prop baby ever could.

Elliott is the cousin of producer Erin Sian Thomas, and his appearance made the film all the more personal and meaningful.



Claire de Boer  
as Nina

Claire de Boer is a Dutch actress with credits spanning television, film, and stage. She has appeared in popular series such as *Brassic*, *Fifteen-Love*, and *Emmerdale*, and has performed in a variety of acclaimed films and short productions.



Nicola Fishwick  
as Sasha

Nicola Fishwick is a British actress and voiceover artist, known for her roles in films such as *Rise of the Footsoldier*, *False Front*, and *Spiders on a Plane*. She has also appeared in numerous short films, including *The Man From Before* and the chilling horror short *Versipellis*.

Her voiceover career progressed in 2023, during which she lent her voice to a video game, several commercial campaigns, and a lead role in an animated feature film.





core crew





Elidijona Kurtolli

*Writer*

“Writing *Matrescence* was a deeply emotional journey. Postnatal depression is a harsh reality for many, and at times it was hard to carry on writing—especially knowing my mum, someone I love deeply, went through this.

The project became a love letter to the women in our lives and strengthened my drive to tell a story that speaks to mothers everywhere. Seeing the script come to life was a gift, and we’re all so proud of what we’ve created.”



Harvey Albury

*Director*

“The process of directing *Matrescence* was absolutely wonderful. Having the crew’s support, knowing we were all doing this for the right reason, and showcasing a story that isn’t spoken about enough.

The story was very personal to me, with people close to me experiencing similar themes to those in the film. There were some incredible challenges on set, but as a crew, we worked well around them and achieved a film that I believe we’re all extremely proud of.”



Erin Sian Thomas

*Producer*

“Producing *Matrescence* has been an incredibly personal and emotional journey. Featuring my own family, childhood toys and baby equipment, this project is the most meaningful I’ve ever worked on.

Managing everything, from the sensitive themes to having a real baby on set, has been both challenging and rewarding. I’m immensely proud of what we’ve achieved as a team and the important message we’ve shared through this film.”





Maddie Byge

*Director of Photography*

"I could not be more proud to have worked as Director of Photography on *Matrescence*. When I was approached about this concept, I immediately recognised its poignance, and I feel privileged to have helped bring Heather's story to life visually.

The amazing camera and lighting department worked tirelessly to perfect the raw yet beautiful style of this film, and I couldn't be more proud of our output. I really hope that by sharing our work, we help to destigmatise postnatal depression and bring awareness to this underrepresented side of motherhood."



Aidan Vind

*First Assistant Camera*

"Working on *Matrescence* has been a fun yet emotional journey, as this project is deeply personal and meaningful to many of our crew—and their mums.

Being part of the camera department came with the challenge of visually expressing the emotional weight of postnatal depression. Through cinematography and lighting, we aimed to fully capture the feeling and tone we wanted to portray. Everyone involved should be incredibly proud of what we've achieved."



Callum Hehir

*Head of Sound & Composer*

"Working with this crew throughout the entire production process was an absolute joy. We had an amazing dynamic on set and in post, and I'm very happy and proud to have been a part of it.

I'm especially proud of my incredible sound crew during post-production. We collaborated closely and effectively as a team to get the score and final mix sounding truly fantastic."





Daniel Lloyd

*Post-Production Sound*

“This film was very special to me because I love my mum, and I feel that postnatal depression is a topic that isn’t talked about enough. It was incredibly important to raise awareness around it, and I was honoured to contribute to a project that shines a light on such an important issue.

Working on *Matrescence* was an inspiring journey, and I’m grateful to have been part of a team so dedicated to telling meaningful stories. I hope this film resonates with audiences and continues to spark important conversations about maternal mental health.”



Elliott Miles

*Editor*

“Editing *Matrescence* has been a slow but rewarding process. I knew from the start that the pacing and overall tone were of the greatest importance, and I believe we’ve gotten it to a point where it feels both natural and authentic to the original vision of *Matrescence*.

Personally, it’s been one of the more challenging edits I’ve worked on, as we’ve strived to linger on emotional moments, sparse in action—very different from most other student films. And I think that’s what makes our film special.”



Directing Dept.

first assistant director  
first assistant director  
third assistant director  
intimacy coordinator

Andrew Fitzgerald  
Andrew Bill  
Daniel Sawyer  
Rosanna Normanton

Producing Dept.

executive producer  
line producer  
assistant producer  
associate producers

Riyadh Haque  
Emelia Johnson  
Lee Samuels  
Hazel Clements  
Will Pugh  
Clive Albury  
Vanessa Albury  
Marie Thomas  
Nefise Kurtolli  
Mehdi Kurtolli  
Glyn Williams  
Sarah-Jane Vind  
Loli Strudders  
Adam Thomas  
Saga Lowenborg

Camera & Lighting Dept.

gaffer  
sparks

Jonny Stroud  
Jack Palladino Hebditch  
Aidan Vind  
Jack Palladino Hebditch  
Daniel Lloyd  
Lee Samuels  
Jack Palladino Hebditch  
Emelia Johnson  
Elidijona Kurtolli  
Erin Sian Thomas

Sound Dept.

score mixer

Alex Shelley

Art Dept.

head of production design  
set dressers

Ruby Parker  
Aimee Gayle  
Erin Sian Thomas  
Lucy Turner  
Ruby Parker

hair & makeup

BTS Dept.

BTS photography & videography

Elliott Miles  
Becky Serecut  
Célia Kavaruganda

Catering Dept.

Clive Albury  
Vanessa Albury

Transport Dept.

Erin Sian Thomas  
Aidan Vind  
Daniel Lloyd  
Jonny Stroud  
Lucy Turner  
Aimee Gayle  
Jack Palladino Hebditch  
Hazel Clements  
Marie Thomas

Extras

Hazel Clements  
Nefise Kurtolli  
Vanessa Albury  
Marie Thomas  
Sarah-Jane Vind  
Jenny Rainbird  
Ruby Kidner  
Jade Harris-Myers  
Cally Evans  
Rose Kemp  
PRIYA  
Mikkaela Falshaw

EPK

Erin Sian Thomas

additional crew





## festivals & awards

We poured our hearts into *Matrescence*, a film rooted in truth, care, and community. After months of hard work and personal investment, with real family members involved, real stories shared, and an emotionally resonant subject at its core, we hope this film reaches people who need it most.

We'll be submitting *Matrescence* to festivals that spotlight emerging voices, women-led storytelling, films about motherhood, and international collaboration, including *Women X*, *Watersprite*, *Underwire*, and a selection of Kosovan and Albanian festivals, including *Tirana International Film Festival* and *DokuFest*, in recognition of our writer Elidijona's heritage.

At its heart, *Matrescence* is a story about motherhood, identity, and the unspoken struggles many women face after birth. Our mission is to connect with audiences who relate to the emotional weight of this experience, from young adults and student filmmakers, to women and parents who've felt unseen.

By platforming conversations around postnatal mental health, we hope the film becomes part of a wider movement to break stigma, spark dialogue, and offer a sense of comfort to those going through similar things.

### Raindance Award for Best Short Film

Harvey Albury, *director*  
Erin Sian Thomas, *producer*

### Philip Barantini Award for Best Directing in a Short Film

Harvey Albury, *director*

### Sennheiser Award for Best Sound in a Short Film

Callum Hehir, *head of sound & composer*

### Matt Lewis Award for Best Camerawork in a Short Film

Maddie Bye, *director of photography*



# Q&A *with some of the core crew...*

Where did the inspiration for *Matrescence* come from, and why is your film important?

HARVEY, *DIRECTOR* | Our mums. Postnatal depression isn't spoken about much. Our parents never told us our mums experienced it until this year, and it's seen as something to be embarrassed about or ashamed of, which it really isn't, because it's something that naturally happens and isn't anyone's fault. I think it's really important that this is shown on screen.

ERIN, *PRODUCER* | We found that the UK statistic is 1 in 10 mums will experience postnatal depression. There are eight of us in the core crew, and three of us have mums who experienced it. That's already more than the UK statistic.

What message do you hope audiences take away from your film?

ERIN, *PRODUCER* | Just to talk about it more. Every so often, a new baby is born into a family, and everyone is so focused on coming round and cuddling the baby—but nobody ever asks how the mum is actually doing. We hope it sparks better conversations, because it's such a huge change in

anyone's life, going through pregnancy and having a baby. Postnatal depression is so common, and not many people realise they have it.

ELIDIJONA, *WRITER* | My hope is that if this film reaches even one mother facing postnatal depression and emboldens her to seek help or changes just one person's perspective on PND and motherhood, then it will have done its job.

HARVEY, *DIRECTOR* | We also want to show mums that they can be transparent and talk about it with others. There is help out there. There are support groups and people who really do care. You might not think they do, but they really do.

How did you approach character development?

ELIDIJONA, *WRITER* | Character development was one of the biggest challenges I faced. The script changed so dramatically with each rewrite that it was sometimes difficult to keep track of my characters. Despite the complexity, the process was genuinely fascinating. I drew a lot of inspiration from films and TV shows that explore motherhood, like *Maid* and *Tully*. At the same time, I also looked beyond stories about postnatal depression, seeking out characters who





resonated with me for their emotional depth, like Connell from *Normal People*, or Carmy and Natalie from *The Bear*.

How long was the writing process?

ELIDIJONA, *WRITER* | The writing process definitely took a while, but it was necessary. Stories and characters need time to evolve. What I started with is completely different from what I ended with, and that just means the story paved its own path.

How do you see your style or approach evolving in your next films?

ELIDIJONA, *WRITER* | I think I'm still a long way from perfecting a unique voice, but that's totally fine! I will always thank *Matrescence* for opening the door and allowing me to take the steps toward actually finding a style that works for me.

How did you approach the film's score, and what impact did you want it to have?

CALLUM, *COMPOSER & HEAD OF SOUND* | I wanted to approach the score from a unique perspective. I wanted it to feel like someone doing something for the first time. To capture that sense of discovery and vulnerability, I chose to write the score on piano—an instrument I had never composed for before.

I drew heavy inspiration from the ambient work of

Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross, particularly their film compositions. Their tracks, some of which feature in series like *The Bear*, evoke a recital-like atmosphere that perfectly matched the tone I was aiming for in *Matrescence*.

What was the most challenging part of filming?

ERIN, *PRODUCER* | Definitely the baby scenes. It was such a unique challenge. No matter how much we planned, we were always at the mercy of his mood! It made everything more unpredictable than the rest of the shoot and really tested our flexibility as a crew. But even with all the chaos, those scenes ended up being the most rewarding.

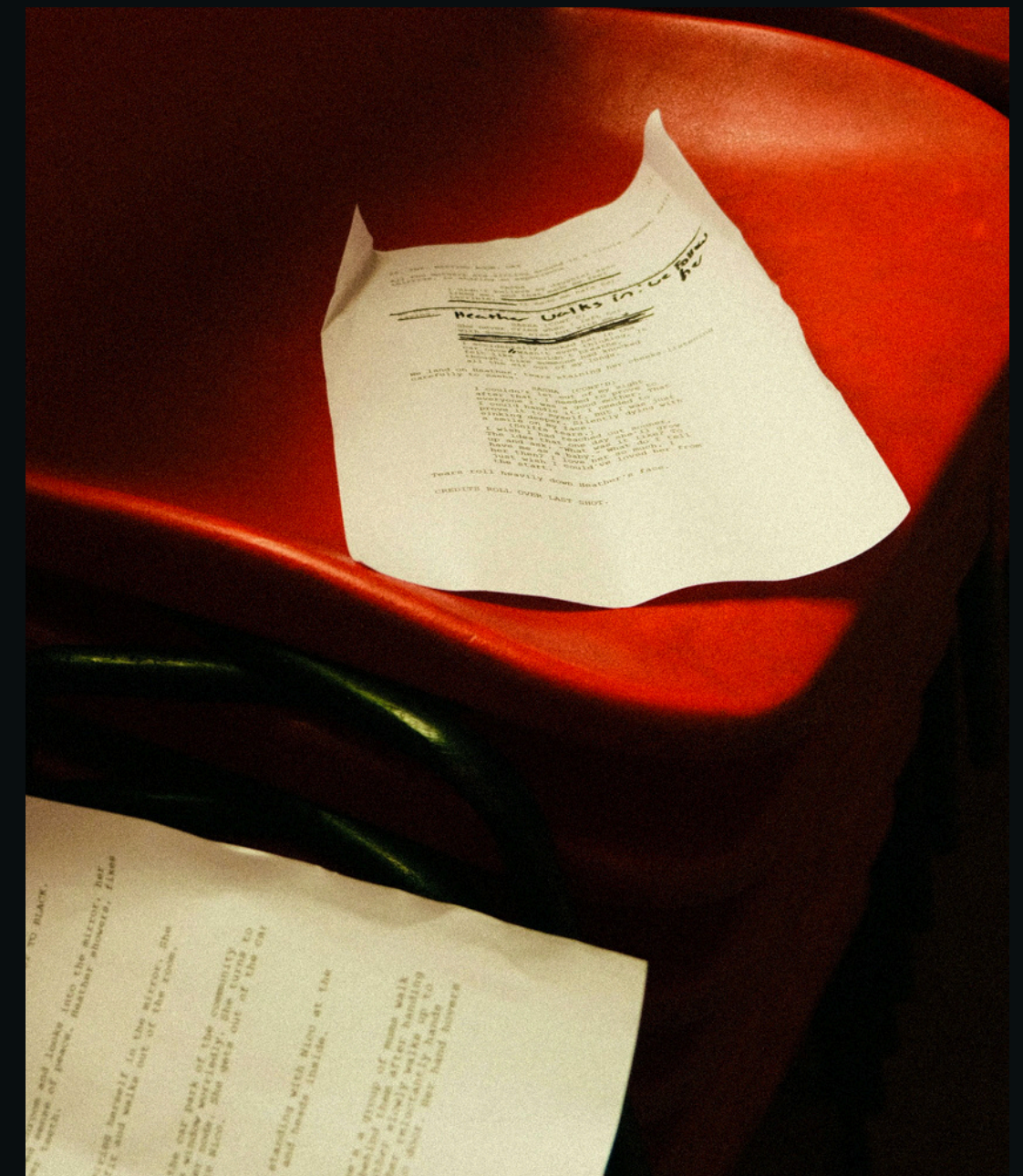
How did you get a real baby for a graduate film?

ERIN, *PRODUCER* | He's actually my baby cousin! He was 3 weeks old at the time of filming. My aunt, Hazel, was amazing throughout. She worked closely with us to plan each shoot day around his feeding and changing schedule

We had to plan the shoots really carefully around his feeding schedule, filming the calm scenes just after he'd been fed, and saving the more unsettled moments for just after he'd been changed, or when he was naturally getting a bit fussy as his next feed approached. Hazel was amazing at helping us

manage all of that, and honestly, we couldn't have done it without her.

It was all very carefully and considerately done, but it really helped us get the emotional beats we needed. Those scenes became some of the most impactful in the film.





Click [here](#) to view a selection of *high-quality* stills from the film





Click [here](#) to view a selection of *behind-the-scenes* content





# matrescence

Click [here](#) to download our logo

font

montserrat, extra light

colour palette

#abbec6

#516269

#b1d5e4

#40484c





a Harvey Albury film | with support from



for press enquiries, please contact  
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