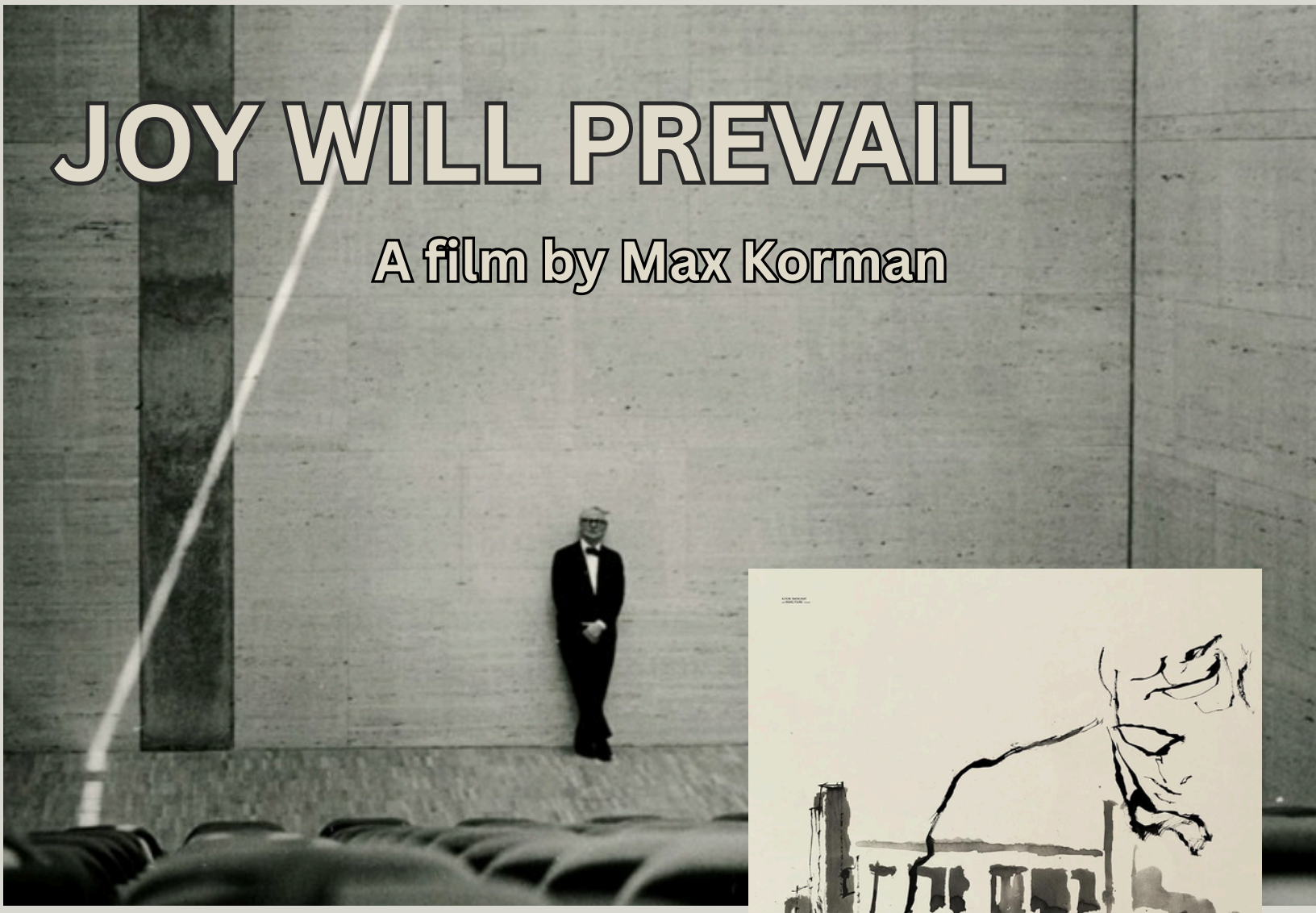


JOY WILL PREVAIL

A film by Max Korman



2026 | Biography, Drama | 107 min. | United States | English

ABOUT

The last three years in the life of renowned architect Louis I. Kahn, and the relationships — both professional and romantic — that inspired his final residential commission.

Written & Directed by:
Max Korman

Production Company:
Backlight Film Company
MAKE/FILMS
a.film

When a young, idealistic father, Steve Korman, approaches Kahn to design a country home for his family, the architect initially declines. But, as personal and professional tensions mount, he unexpectedly agrees, beginning a three-year collaboration that serves as a creative and spiritual reckoning for both men. It would culminate in the final house that Kahn ever designed, completed shortly before his sudden and mysterious death.



LOUIS KAHN

Louis Kahn was one of the most influential architects of the 20th century, known for monumental forms, geometric order, natural light, and expressive materials. His celebrated works include the Salk Institute, Kimbell Art Museum, Phillips Exeter Academy Library, and National Assembly Building of Bangladesh.



THE KAHN KORMAN HOUSE





When Steve Korman approached Louis Kahn to design a home for his family, the commission became the beginning of a three-year collaboration. The resulting Kahn Korman House would become Kahn's final residential commission and a lasting part of the Korman family's history.

MAX KORMAN

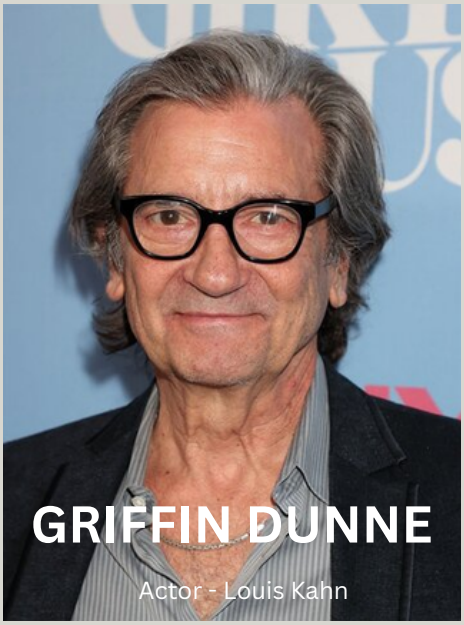
Writer & Director



Graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with an M.S. degree in Physics; a triple-major in Mathematics, Logic & Computation, and Philosophy of Science; research experience in Quantum Engineering; and teaching experience in Mathematical Logic.

Max is the grandson of Steve Korman, and the only person in the Korman House's 50 years & 9 inhabitants to have been born into the house, making this debut film a deeply personal love letter to his family & origins.

MEET THE CAST



GRIFFIN DUNNE

Actor - Louis Kahn

An acclaimed actor, director, and producer whose career spans five decades. He is perhaps best known for his Golden Globe-nominated performance in Martin Scorsese's ***After Hours***, which he also produced, as well as roles in An ***American Werewolf in London***, **Quiz Show**, ***Dallas Buyers Club***, and Wes Anderson's ***The French Dispatch***. His television work includes; ***This Is Us***, ***Succession***, ***Goliath***, and ***Only Murders in the Building***. As a filmmaker, Dunne has directed features including ***Practical Magic*** and the acclaimed documentary ***Joan Didion: The Center Will Not Hold***, about his aunt, the celebrated writer Joan Didion.



ALEXIS BLEDEL

Actor - Harriet Pattison

An Emmy Award-winning actress best known for her portrayal of Rory Gilmore in the acclaimed series ***Gilmore Girls***, a role she reprised in the Netflix revival ***Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life.*** Her film credits include ***The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants*** and its sequel, Robert Rodriguez and Frank Miller's ***Sin City***, and ***Tuck Everlasting***. Bledel later received widespread acclaim for her performance as Emily in Hulu's ***The Handmaid's Tale***, earning four Primetime Emmy nominations and winning the 2017 Emmy Award for Outstanding Guest Actress in a Drama Series.

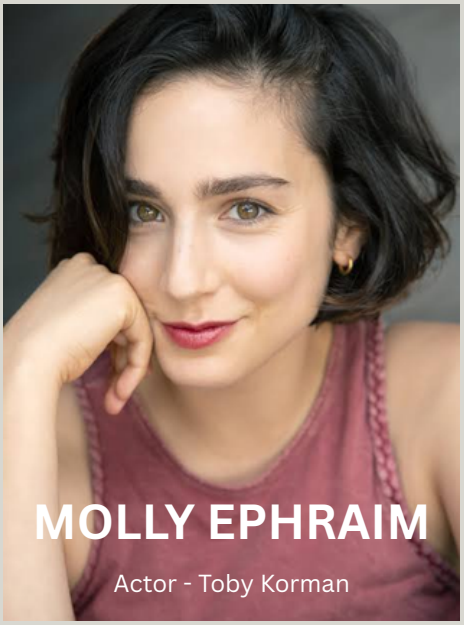
CAST



JENNIFER BEALS

Actor - Esther Kahn

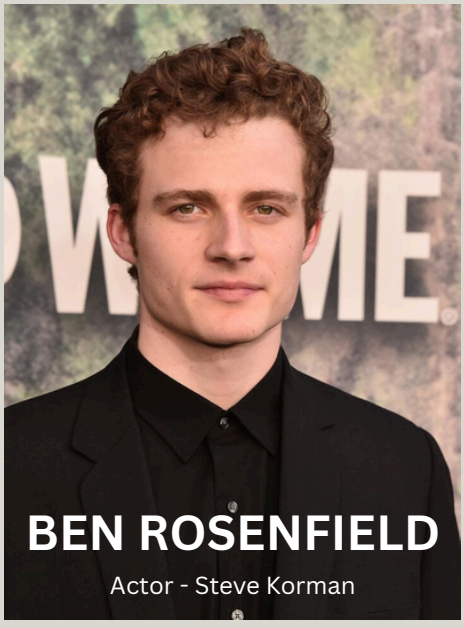
An internationally acclaimed actress whose career spans more than four decades. She rose to prominence with her Golden Globe-nominated performance as Alex Owens in the landmark 1983 film ***Flashdance***. Beals later became known to a new generation of audiences as Bette Porter in the groundbreaking series ***The L Word***, a role she reprised in ***The L Word: Generation Q***, on which she also served as an executive producer. Her extensive film and television career has included roles in ***Devil in a Blue Dress***, ***The Book of Boba Fett, Taken, and Law & Order: Organized Crime.***



MOLLY EPHRAIM

Actor - Toby Korman

An actress known for her work across film, television, and theater. She starred as Maybelle Fox in Amazon's ***A League of Their Own*** and appeared in HBO's Perry Mason, AMC's ***Halt and Catch Fire***, Hulu's ***The Act***, and the long-running comedy ***Last Man Standing***. Her film credits include Jason Reitman's ***The Front Runner*** and the ***Paranormal Activity*** franchise. A Philadelphia-area native, Ephraim began performing professionally on stages including Philadelphia's Prince Music Theater and Arden Theatre Company before studying at Princeton University. Most recently, she has appeared in the comedy series ***The Paper***.

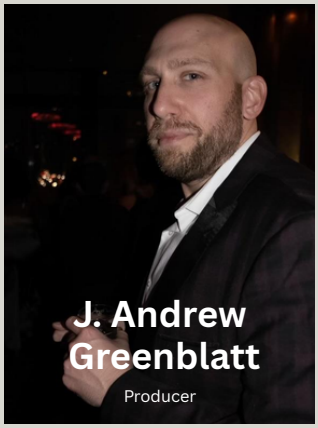


BEN ROSENFIELD

Actor - Steve Korman

An American actor whose film and television work includes HBO's ***Boardwalk Empire***, David Lynch's ***Twin Peaks***: ***The Return***, and the FX limited series ***Mrs. America***. His film credits include J.C. Chandor's ***A Most Violent Year,*** James Schamus's ***Indignation***, Woody Allen's ***Irrational Man***, Hannah Fidell's ***6 Years***, ***Person to Person***, and ***Mickey and the Bear***. Rosenfield first gained attention for his performance in ***Greetings from Tim Buckley*** and has since built a career across independent film, television, and the New York stage.

KEY CREATIVE TEAM



Andrew has worked in the entertainment industry for more than two decades. This will be his 10th feature film as either producer or executive producer in the last 15 years. Andrew's films have premiered at top film festivals around the world, including Sundance Film Festival, SXSW, and the Toronto Film Festival. His producing credits include ***Everything Must Go*** starring Will Ferrell, ***Café*** starring Jennifer Love Hewitt, and ***The Golden Voice*** starring Nick Nolte.



A composer of music for film, television, and the concert stage. His score for Lulu Wang's acclaimed feature ***The Farewell*** was shortlisted for the Academy Award for Best Original Score. His other screen credits include Wang's Amazon series ***Expats***, ***The Novice, Goodnight Mommy***, ***Wander Darkly***, and ***The Adults***. Weston began his career working as a music assistant to Philip Glass, and his concert music has been commissioned by organizations including the Kennedy Center and the Venice Biennale.



An American film editor who frequently worked with American independent film directors Steven Soderbergh (***Schizopolis, The Limey, Full Frontal***) and Sofia Coppola (***Lost in Translation***, **Marie *Antoinette, Somewhere***, ***The Bling Ring, The Beguiled***, ***On the Rocks, and Priscilla***). Flack's work on ***Lost in Translation*** won her the BAFTA Award for Best Editing. She won a Primetime Emmy Award and an American Cinema Editors Eddie award with Robert Pulcini for co-editing the HBO film ***Cinema Verite***.



A cinematographer whose work spans narrative film, commercials, music videos, and live performance. His narrative credits include ***El Tiguere*** and **A *West Side Story* Story**, both official selections of the 2025 Tribeca Festival, as well as ***Hija del Mar***, ***Prime***, and ***A Certain Kind of Person***. He photographed ***Arctic Monkeys: Live at Kings Theatre*** and has shot commercial and branded work for clients including Versace, Google, Michael Kors, Nike, and Spotify.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Winter, 2023. I found myself alone in the living room of my family home – a house designed by Louis I. Kahn for my grandfather, Steven Korman, between 1971 and 1974. Sitting there, I began to see the house, and the final chapter of Kahn's life, as the ingredients for a timeless story about art, family, and the search for joy. That night, I decided to write the script that would become JOY WILL PREVAIL. The film is not only a portrait of one of the twentieth century's greatest architects, but also a deeply personal meditation on my own origins.

Kahn was a brilliant and deeply human figure, burdened by the tension between artistic ambition and personal responsibility. My grandfather embodied a different kind of idealism: A young father, devoted family man, and heir to a multigenerational real estate business who believed profoundly in optimism and possibility. Their collaboration on the house becomes a kind of spiritual journey, stripping away their egos and culminating in a catharsis found through the act of creation. Writing and directing the film proved similarly transformative for me, deepening my understanding of both the house in which I was raised and the family who shaped it.

Growing up in a Kahn-designed home gave me an instinctive understanding of his architectural language: Silence & light, natural materials, geometric order. Those principles became the foundation of the film's visual language. We photographed at authentic architectural landmarks, employed restrained and deliberate camera movement, and embraced a 4:3 aspect ratio whose proportions recalled the windows of the Korman House. Together, these choices sought to create a cinematic experience that feels intimate, contemplative, and deeply connected to Kahn's own aesthetic philosophy.

Harriet Pattison wrote that the Korman House gave Kahn "perspective on the sweep of his life," allowing him to "engage in the future in a very personal way – projecting his hopes for a dawning era of openness and acceptance that transcended his own time." In a world marked by decay, cynicism, and uncertainty – as true in 2026 as it was in 1974 – we still possess the ability to create meaning through acts of imagination, generosity, and craftsmanship. It is my hope that JOY WILL PREVAIL reminds audiences that the pursuit of beauty and the creation of lasting work remain among our most enduring expressions of hope.

TALLINN BLACK NIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL 2026

35TH PHILADELPHIA FILM FESTIVAL

PÖFF BLACK NIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL

PHILADELPHIA FILM FESTIVAL 2026

PRESS AS OF 8/25/2026

Production has recently wrapped in Philadelphia on Joy Will Prevail, a period drama about the final three years in the life of architect Louis Kahn, and the relationships — both romantic and professional — that inspired his final residential commission.

DEADLINE



For those watching from Venice, the film is also an invitation to rediscover a lesser-known—and more sentimental—chapter of the architect's biography: that of a man who, between a pastel dedicated to San Marco and an unbuilt project for the Giardini della Biennale, found in the lagoon city not just a backdrop, but one of his most enduring and personal sources of inspiration.

VT venetotoday



It is precisely this profoundly human dimension that makes Joy Will Prevail more than a simple biopic. Max Korman constructs a work that uses the figure of Kahn to question the relationship between artistic creation and everyday life, between ambition and fragility, between personal memory and collective legacy.

EROICA FENICE

Chronicling the creation of Louis Kahn's final house, Joy Will Prevail tells a story not only of architecture but also of redemption, inspiration, and the belief that great works of art can emerge from even the most challenging chapters of a life. At the heart of the film is the idea encapsulated in its title: that through creativity, human connection, and shared purpose, joy can prevail.

Corriere dello Spettacolo
Quotidiano di Cultura fondato e diretto da Stefano Duranti Poccetti

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