

WOULD YOU TAKE A LIFE TO SAVE A LIFE?



# PROTECTOR

RAVEESH NARANG  
PRODUCER

STEVE KELLY  
DIRECTOR

SIMON FANTAUZZO  
WRITER



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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A taut thriller that brings a tension to a working environment similar to Boiling Point and Spotlight. The film will cast light on a world that is familiar on the surface but much deeper than any outsider might imagine.

Due to the investigative nature of a social workers job the film will also borderline on the crime/private detective genre as our protagonist delves into various cases to unravel the truth in the stories she is told. An air of mystery and sense of unknowing will be created that most audiences would not expect.

This is a world that has not been seen before in details on either the big or small screen so not only will it feel original in its setting but will create controversy and conversation that is sure to attract an audience.

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### GENRE

*Drama/ Thriller*

### AUDIENCE

*Men and women, 18+*

### BUDGET

*800k- £1.5m*

### LOCATION

*City, England*

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### THEMES

*Drugs, Child Abuse,  
Domestic Violence,  
Alcoholism, Murder,  
Divorce, Religion, Hope*



## WHY THIS FILM

Every few months there are scandals regarding social services. Stories about children that have slipped through the cracks. Time and time again we hear how social workers missed the signs, didn't act fast enough or simply didn't care about a child's welfare.

Not many know the pressure that comes with such a position, the strain it can have on a worker's psyche. We forget that they are human beings with their own pain and problems and issues and worries. Few realise that the average career of a social worker is just eight years before the stress becomes too much.

Stuck between a rock and a hard place. If they act too fast, they are criticised for destroying families, too slow and they're the villains of the nation. They rarely get a win.

Nobody mentions the depression and guilt that comes with the role of a protector. Or how they must live each day with the horrors they have witnessed, read or recorded burnt into their minds.

We have films about police officers and doctors, lawyers and fire fighters but rarely are social workers in the spotlight. Seldom shown in films, when they are the characters are often portrayed as uncaring jobsworths or misguided do-gooders, never are they portrayed warts and all.



In THE PROTECTOR we intend to rectify that by delving deep into the world of child services and showing the good and bad of those who give their life to helping others.

These are flawed individuals who make mistakes, none of them are angels. They live a life of high stress and big risks and make sacrifices that can have consequences on their own sanity, health and families.

By the films end our audience may not agree with all our character's choices but they will walk away with a new-found respect for the social services and be asking themselves, what would they do in those situations?



## PLOT SYNOPSIS

This modern-day thriller follows GWEN, a burnt-out social worker slipping closer and closer to the edge. Having worked in child protection for the past fifteen years, Gwen is starting to unravel due to the constant barrage of desperation and horror she witnesses every day.

Domestic violence, sexual abuse, alcoholism, drug use and mental illness are a daily occurrence as she tries desperately to save children from parents who are weak, sick or downright evil.

With her world getting darker and the wins further apart, she's losing all hope and pushing everyone away. Having little patience for her family or co-workers, she finds herself becoming more and more ostracised, self-medicating through alcohol and desperately searching for a way out.

Overworked and stressed, Gwen juggles her never ending list of problem clients with no end in sight until she receives a referral asking specifically for her. It's from CLAIRE, a young woman who met Gwen as a teenager.

The social worker saved Claire from her violent father and victimised mother, it was Gwen's first win and one of her few happy memories at work.

Seeing that Claire is repeating history by falling for a toxic, manipulative abuser, Gwen tries desperately to get her and her daughter to safety.

Unfortunately, Claire's husband TONY is a master of mind games and too good at covering his tracks, making everyone (including Gwen's manager) doubt the young woman's story. With no one believing Gwen it becomes her personal quest to save Claire. Freeing her new client will be the win she needs, the victory she's been chasing and the salvation that could save her soul.

As the situation becomes more dangerous and time starts running out, Gwen becomes desperate, losing her friends, her marriage and her sanity as she struggles to protect Claire. Realising Tony will never stop, Gwen is left with a desperate choice- Having to decide if she will take one life to protect another.

A gripping and tight thriller, Protector does not let up from start to finish. Inspired by classics like Taxi Driver, The Bad Lieutenant and You Were Never Really Here the film tells a familiar tale with a current, realistic twist, showing how cruel the world can be and the sacrifices made by those who fight to save it.





## CHARACTER BREAKDOWNS

### GWEN WALKER

*(45, Mixed race, Female)*



When Gwen was young she believed she could change the world.

An idealist from the start, Gwen felt that any problem could be solved through hard work, kindness and compassion.

Poverty. Wars. Famine. Crime. Corruption. Homelessness. All could be solved if people just put their minds together, their differences aside and thought about each other a little bit more.

A natural empathic, she was drawn to social services, especially that of child protection, believing if she could save the children of today then the adults of tomorrow would be a lot more caring to one another.

But it didn't work out like that, with every bruised arm she saw, incident report she read or tearful confession she heard, her sunny disposition grew a little bit darker. It all started to become hopeless.

And worst of all, Gwen started to feel like a failure.

The comfortable veil of her middle class suburban upbringing was torn off and she soon realized that good thoughts and sincere intentions meant nothing when faced with the onslaught of domestic violence, mental health issues, drug abuse and sexual predators.

Nothing mattered anymore, not her loving husband or beautiful boy, nor her large house or affluent friends. How could it when somewhere a poor, defenceless child was being put through unspeakable torment and horrors.

As the years rolled on, she tried to ignore the demons cackling in the back of her mind. She wanted to drown their taunts in booze and choke them on cigarette smoke but they were always there, day and night, reminding her of the suffering she was unable to stop.

Yet still, inside is that one small flame that the darkness hasn't squashed, that flicker of light that makes her keep going, keep crawling towards salvation. Every day she tells herself that all she needs is one win, one family she saves, one child she frees and it will all be worth it.

She can't let that light go out. Because if it does then she will have truly lost.



## CLAIRE FRANKLIN

(27, White, Female)

Violence was all Claire ever knew.

In fact, when she was young, she thought that all mummy's used make up to hide their black eyes and split lips. It was only when she got older did she realise how mean and vicious her dad was.

As the years went by Claire became angrier, not just at her father but also at her mother for staying with him, for putting up with the beatings and believing the same lies that he'll change.

Eventually social services got involved, Claire was furious and scared at first. She didn't know what to do or say, somehow feeling like she was betraying her family, even though she knew that what was going on was broken and wrong.



This is where she met Gwen. At the time, Gwen was a young social worker who was compassionate and patient, she listened to Claire's story and promised to make things better. And she did.

Claire was taken from her parents and put into foster care, staying in contact with Gwen until she was eighteen. Now an adult, Claire went into the world believing she'd never make the mistakes her mum did but she was wrong...

At first Tony was romantic and kind, but it didn't last. Originally, it was an insult aimed in her direction, then a slap and finally a fist. Claire always told herself that she'd leave a partner if they hit her, but she didn't. She was paralysed by her own fears and couldn't help believing his lies. Even after they had their daughter Magenta, the beatings continued, getting more and more vicious.

After the last attack, Claire kicked Tony out of the house, refusing to take him back. Yet she knew she was weak, she knew that she's fall for his silver tongue, like her mother she believed the lies.

So, she went and found the one person she knew she could trust in this situation, the only person she believed would protect her no matter what... That person was Gwen.



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## **TONY FRANKLIN**

*(32, White, Male)*

Tony considers himself a diamond geezer. A man about town. The kind of bloke that ladies want to sleep with, and guys want to be mates with and on some level, he's not wrong.

Handsome, successful and full of banter. If you were to meet him in the pub, the chances are that you'd would walk away thinking you'd met a friend for life.

Though, the truth is that under the charming exterior lies a vicious bully and control freak with a short fuse and hot temper. He gets off on the power that comes with demeaning those around him before gas lighting them into thinking they'd brought it upon themselves.



When he met Claire, he found someone he could bully and abuse, someone he could keep at home to raise his kids who wouldn't step out of line. If she did though he'd quickly put her back in her place, fear was the key. It's what his dad did with his mum and they stayed together for over forty years.

But Claire eventually got brave enough to kick him out of their house and for the first time in his life, it looked like Tony had lost. Someone had said no to him. And this could not stand. No one was getting the better of him, especially some skirt.

He decided to not only get her back but to make her regret ever leaving him in the first place. His plan was simple, he'd woo Claire back by showing remorse, making her believe that he'd changed and he was a new man. He'd crank up the charm, make all the right moves, say all the right things and become the Tony she first fell in love with.

Only then, once he had her in his grasp, would he let the charade slip and make sure that she never got away from him again.



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## **ASHLEY WALKER**

*(45, White, Male)*

Gwen's husband.

The two met at an anti-war protest and have been together ever since. Gwen was smitten with Ashley's kind nature and compassion, he was besotted by her energy and enthusiasm for life.

They got married at twenty-six, she a qualified social worker and he a copy writer in an advertising firm. At first everything was perfect. They bought a large house and had a wonderful child, Luke. They were happy, they were secure and they were deeply in love.



Then Gwen started to change, she grew distant and forgetful, she started to lose that smile and radiance. Ashley at first put it down to stress but as he noticed the empty bottles of wine and rum slowly pile up, he realised that there may be a problem developing.

He tried to speak to Gwen about it but she just brushed off his concerns. Still, Ashley knew something was wrong. He started to believe that her job was getting to her, that the pain and suffering she was dealing with constantly was starting to burn her out. Occasionally he'd hear her crying in the bathroom when she thought no one was around.

Despite being patient and considerate, he felt that Gwen was falling deeper into her depression. She started to grow angry and belligerent, often snapping at him for little to no reason. Their love making stopped, they slowly grew apart.

Ashley began to feel like it was all getting too much, he was doing most of the childcare and housework whilst maintaining a full time (and stressful) job. With this pressure, his own resentment of his wife grew.

Feeling overlooked and underappreciated, he knows this relationship won't last if it continues this way. The idea of a divorce horrifies him, it's his worst nightmare, but he cannot continue living in this downward spiral. He cannot continue to watch the woman he loved destroy herself, not just for his sake but for their son's as well.



## SOCIAL WORKERS

**KATE DIXON** (*mid- 50's, Black, Female*)

Considerate and wise, Kate has worked in social services for decades. For a long-time she was on the ground, visiting clients and dealing with case work but now works in management, using her experience and advice to help others.

**CONNOR MOSHDALE** (*Early thirties, White, Male*)

A Christian punk rocker. His heart is in the right place and he's a decent social worker but there is an element of hypocrisy and aloofness to him. Failing to see his own personal contradictions, he firmly believes he is doing the lords work, providing it doesn't get in the way of his dream to become a rock star.

**IRENE VALE** (*Early twenties, mixed race, trans female*)

A young trans woman early into her career. With a rebellious streak and abundance of dark humour, Irene is practically fearless. After pulling through a complicated and emotional upbringing, where she "came out" in her mid-teens, she has reached adulthood with a strength and confidence seldom seen in people double her age.

**GEORGE BAILEY** (*Early sixties, White, Male*)

Never married, no children. He started in social work late, working in care homes and volunteering in homeless hostels before studying and making the switch. With his kind heart and giving nature, he is almost an uncle to his team mates and Gwen's best friend in the service.

**JOANNA HEDGE** (*Late thirties, White, Female*)

If Joanna had any passion for her job, she lost it a long time ago. Happy to get by with doing the bare minimum, she is callous and uncooperative, ready to throw the policy and procedures at anyone who questions her decisions or judgement. She is the kind of social worker that gives the others a bad name.. And Gwen knows it.





## SERVICE USERS

### **DERREN "DEZ" GRENVILLE and LYRIC ANDERSON**

*(50 and 21, Mixed Race, M/F)*

A career criminal, Dez has been in and out of jail more times than he cares to remember. After meeting sixteen-year-old Lyric, he fell in love and decided to go straight. Despite the age difference, the two made it work and now have three triplet boys. After dropping a cigarette on the sofa, Dez accidentally burnt down their house, leaving the family in cramped temporary accommodation.

Finding a home for a family with young children would not usually be a problem but Lyric's demands and the limited boroughs Dez can move too (due to his past gang activity) means that they have been in the TA much longer than normal and their stress is starting to grow.

### **HUGH JOHNSON- SHARPE** *(Late forties, White, Male)*

Hugh had it all. He grew up in privilege. His father was strict but Hugh had everything he needed to ensure he was a successful adult. He became a philosophy professor at a prestigious university before settling down with his wife where they had two wonderful children.

But when she died of cancer Hugh's world fell apart. Always being told to keep a stiff upper lip, Hugh hid his pain and instead spent his nights with the bottle and the internet, trying to distract himself from his grief.

It was here he began to believe in Qanon and other conspiracy theorists, starting to see a plot in every action and suspicion in everyone he met.

### **ZOE ARCHILETTI** *(Early 30's, Italian, Female)*

Zoe came to the UK with dreams of making it as an actress and model but instead spent her twenties working in bars, cafes and restaurants. Too ashamed to go back to Italy as a failure, she now has little contact with her family.

She got pregnant after a one-night stand and, due to her Catholic upbringing, decided to keep the baby. Unfortunately, she was quickly diagnosed with post-natal depression and despite her medication, has been unable to shake off the feelings of dread and despair.

And the more her child cries, the more hopeless she feels until she starts to wonder if he is better off dead.

### **SETH AND JASMINE ELTON** *(Mid- 20's, Both White, M/F)*

These two never had a chance, all they've ever known is crime, abuse, poverty and drugs. Originally Jasmine's drug dealer, the two eventually hooked up and got married, continuing their deviant ways, working as drug dealers by day and living as junkies by night.

Somewhere in all this they had a child, TRAVIS, yet neither took good care of him. They didn't really know how. When they get arrested, Seth agrees to have the child adopted, believing it is for the best but Jasmine refuses. She's determined to get her child back, no matter what.



## SOCIAL WORKER STATISTICS

91% of UK social workers scored moderate to high emotional exhaustion.

48.5% experienced depersonalization.

Burnout is a major issue, with a lifetime burnout rate of 75%.



Staff shortages were (93%), and unmanageable caseloads (90%).

9 out of 10 social workers feel at personal risk.

In Community Care's online survey, 85% had been physically assaulted.

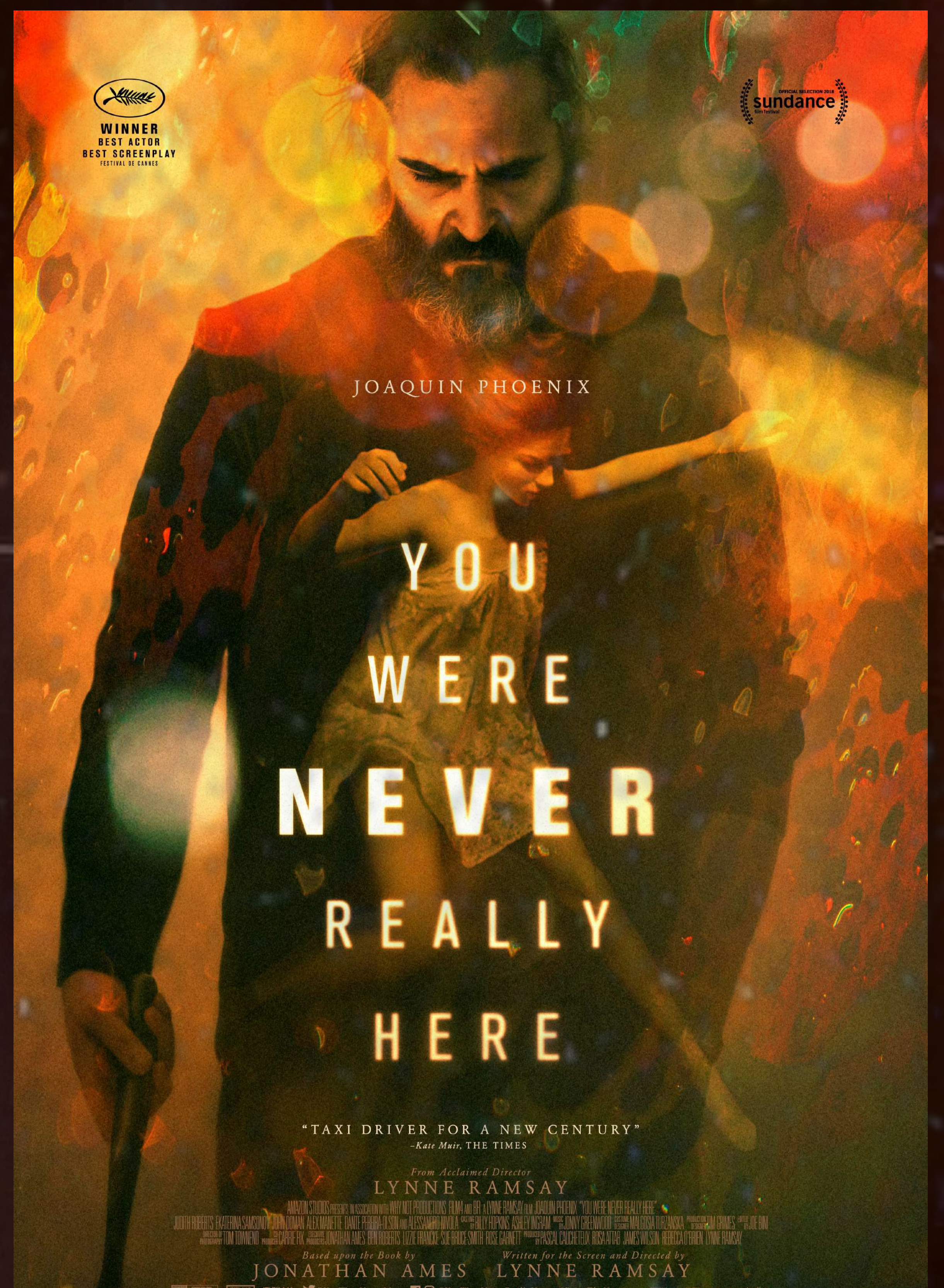
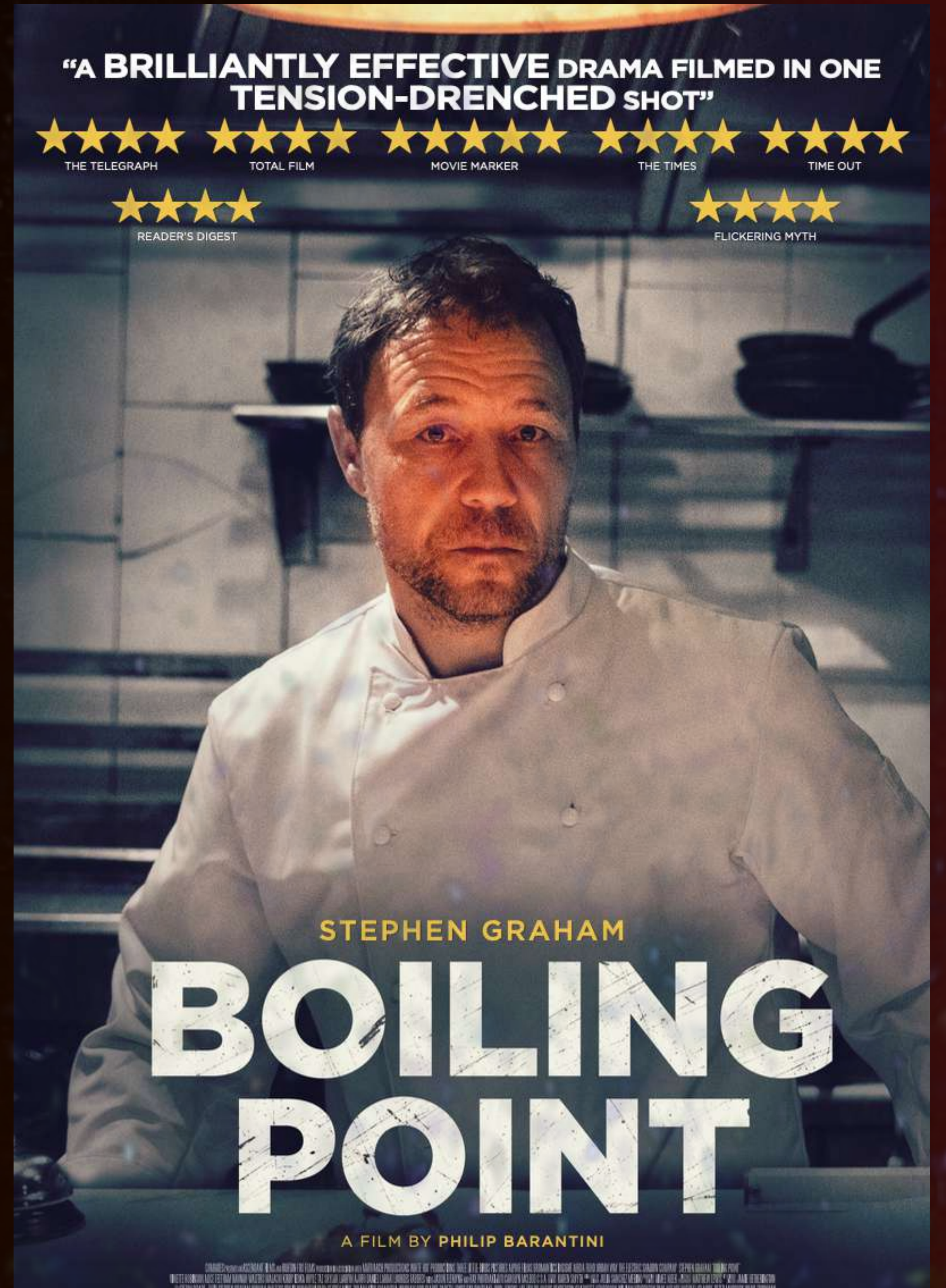
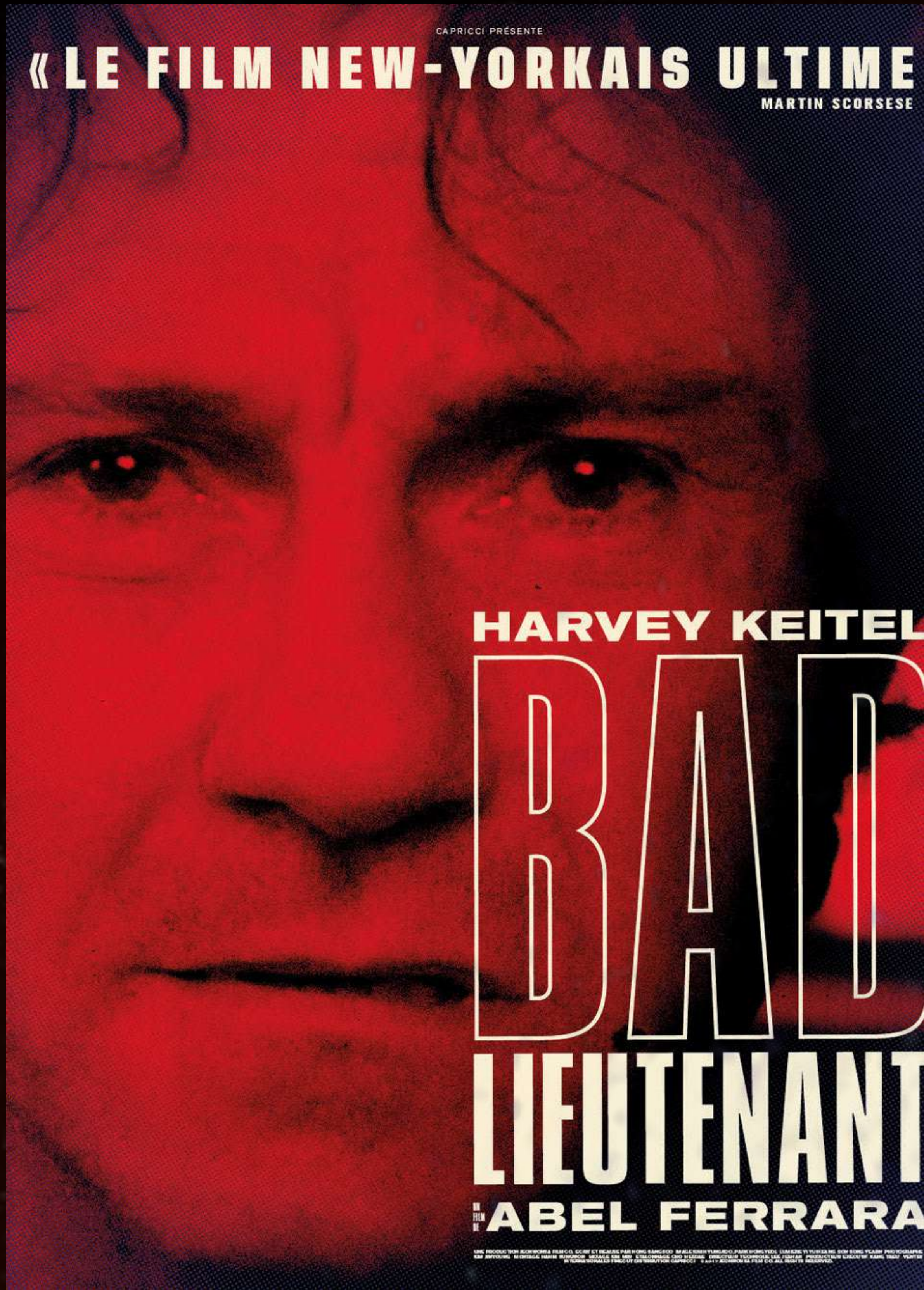
77% were worried about their mental health due to the pressure they're under.

The average career lifespan for a social worker to be between seven and eight years.





## SIMILAR FILMS





## DIRECTOR'S PITCH

Cinematically, this thriller will be shot, edited and scored as a multi-cultural and internationally successful, modern classic. Many scenes will be shot in the twilight and darkness of a cramped, uncaring metropolis. Our colour palette of reds, yellows and blues is complimented with all-in-one flowing camera moves, locking our focus on our heroine, Gwen. Filming with the Sony Venice camera and Cooke anamorphic prime lenses, we will have a vibrant, high-end Super 35mm widescreen feel, which will look great in the cinema and it'll pack-a-punch on laptops and digital screens too. This package will allow us to study a seemingly ordinary, loving mother and help us to chart her decent into darkness.

We will feature richly textured brooding urban landscapes that morph through Gwen's eyes as she begins to see the evil that lurks within a supposedly caring society. We see what she sees, hear what she hears and feel the horrors of injustice and violence that surrounds her. These urban locations become characters themselves, exuding menace. A metropolitan city surrounded by low cost, low rent housing developments and multi-occupancy victorian stock...this film taps into the pulse and psyche of a modern day, broken society.

The pulsing sound design for this dark thriller will feature a hypnotic score, fused with the sound-capes of a multi-cultural city. This cacophony will constantly ramp up as the underscore charts Gwen's descent and the movies' climax.

Protector will be a viscerally powerful, compelling, crowd-pleasing and mesmerising redemptive thriller.





## STEVE KELLY - DIRECTOR

SMK is a writer, editor and multi award-winning director working in Film, Television and Commercials and is best known for his hit movies...

The Bromley Boys *'A Must See'*  
The Times

City Rats *This noir-cult-classic*  
*debuted at No.3 in the UK Film*  
*charts.*

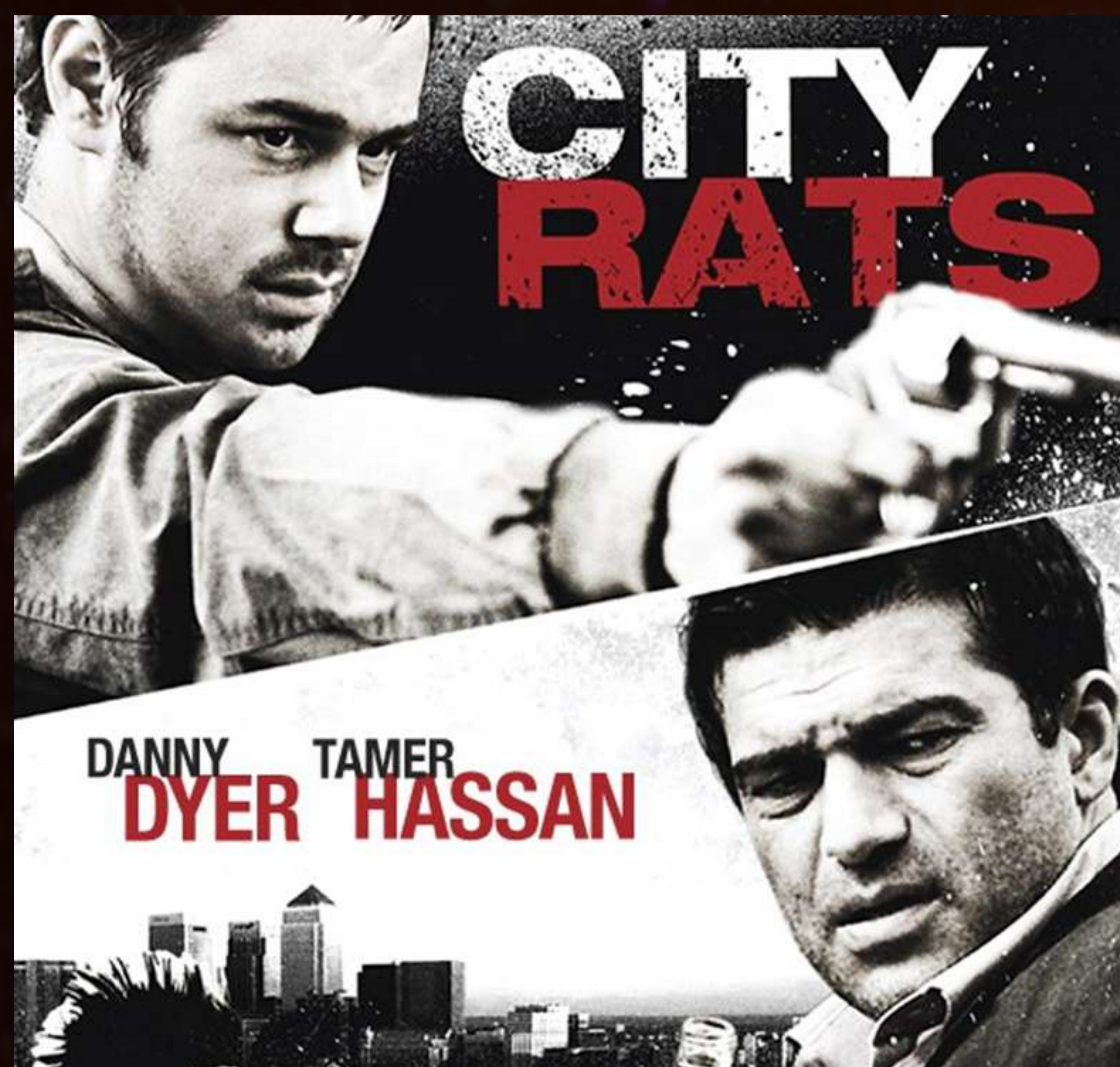
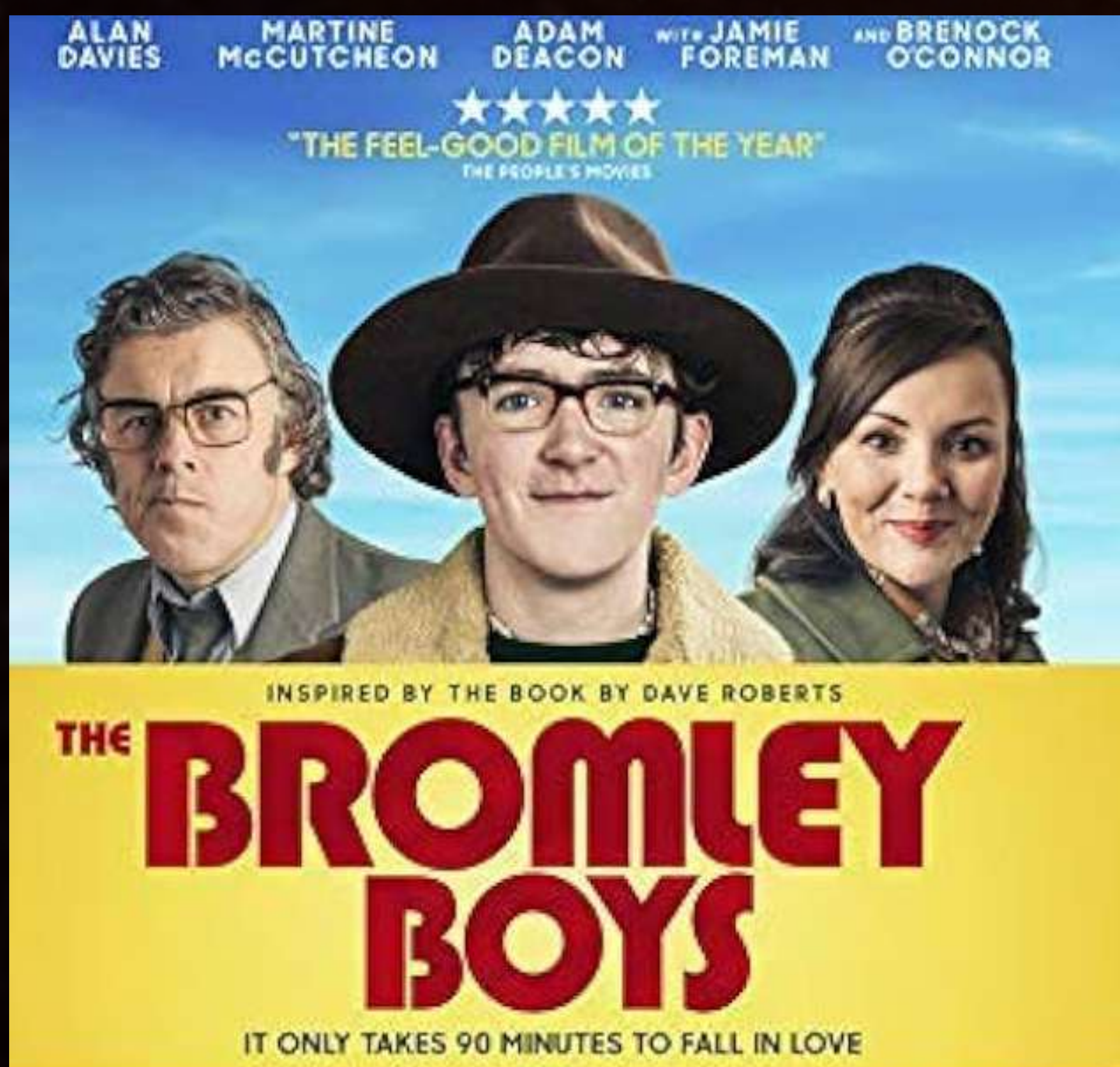
The Shouting Men *'Very, very Funny'*  
The Daily Telegraph.

His BBC One films include 'The Singing Cactus', 'Pieces of Silver Lining', the international thriller 'War Crimes' and prime time dramas Casualty, Holby & Father Brown.

*'I love to deliver visually stunning and compelling human stories.'*

His work has been streamed and broadcast on Netflix, Amazon, BBC, ITV, C4, Apple, SKY One Britbox and Sky Cinema.

'Whatever the opportunity I tackle, I always seek to create a fun atmosphere where the team and talent can work to their fullest potential helping each project to pack a punch critically and commercially.'





## SIMON FANTAUZZO – WRITER

Simon's first screenplay, *City Rats*, reached number 3 in the UK charts and grossed £1.5m at the box office. It was also nominated for various awards at the Slamdance Film Festival in America. (2009).

*Estranged*, his second feature starring Amy Manson and James Cosmo was produced by Steven Schneider and sold domestically to Netflix by WME and globally by Good Universe (now Lionsgate).



His third, *Convenience*, starring Vicky McClure, Ray Panthaki and Adeel Akhtar became something of a cult classic, garnering many great reviews from the likes of *Empire Magazine* and winning a Welsh BAFTA.

2020 was a productive year for Simon. *Ernie*, a short film produced for the *Uncertain Kingdom Project*, was screened to much praise whilst his fourth feature, *State of Siege: Akshardham*, was released in India for *Contiloe Entertainment* to rave reviews.



He has also written the first two seasons of *Taj: Royal Blood* for the same company. A sixteen-part historical drama based on the Mughal Empire which was released in March 2023 and became the highest streamed show ever for its platform (ZEE5). A third and fourth series has already been commissioned.

Since then, he's become a much sought-after scribe for television, being tasked as head writer on a new TV series of *State of Siege* and being commissioned to write the TV adaptation of *The Guardians of the Halahala*. A book series by *Shatrujeet Nath* for *Jaya Entertainment*.

In 2023 he also sold the option rights of his vampire show *The Dependence* to *Narang Films*. This joins an ever-increasing list of work that is in development.

These include crime drama *Forced Hands* to be directed by *Ron Scalpello* (*My Name is Lenny*, *The Corrupted*). *The Holiday Gig*, a Christmas comedy for *Misher films* (*You People*) and *French Angel*, a biography of the wrestler *Maurice Tillet*, being directed by *Ray Panthaki* and produced by *Daniel Khalill* (*Trespass Against Us/Hadwins Judgement*).



## RAVEESH NARANG – PRODUCER

Narang Films is an eight-decade old Film and Television production company from India, having started its cinematic journey during the black and white film era.

We were the first Indian production house to make a feature film "Chittagong Armoury Raid" based on a revolution movement in the early 1950's and the first to produce a movie shot completely under water; "Anmol Moti" in 1969. Always striving to break the mould, we have been known to push the envelope and back unique stories, producing television content for over three decades and spanning various genres such as historical, mythology, crime and drama.

Recently, we set up our production company in London and are working towards producing unique and compelling stories which will captivate the audience's imagination.



Our Director, Raveesh Narang, has been part of the Film and television business for the past decade and has great experience in creative development, production planning and execution. Having worked on various projects with varied budgets and time frames, has helped him develop a skill to deliver quality products with quick turnaround time using smart production setups.

We have produced various shows for "Doordarshan" which is the Indian Government broadcast network, a Cricket chat show "Cricket Tales" in 2018, Travel and lifestyle show "Saathi Satrangi" in 2019, and multiple shows in various genres since 1990's. Raveesh has also been a creative producer for a Weekly television crime show "Saavdhaan India" from 2015- 2018.

We are currently in development of multiple web-series and Films in India and the UK. A Neo-Noir crime thriller series set in Mumbai, India titled "BombayNoir". A drug based Crime series set in the Golden triangle region of South Asia titles "The Green Web", and many other Indie-Films with various Writers from UK and India.



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