



EVENTS

Jawbone

+ Q&A with writer-actor Johnny Harris, actors Michael Smiley and Ray Winstone and director Thomas Napper

Marking the arrival of a new photobook *Jawbone: The Autobiography of a Film*, Johnny Harris reunites with his fellow cast members to reflect on the making of their brutal and authentic British boxing drama. The film follows the journey of Jimmy (fiercely portrayed by Harris, who also wrote the screenplay), a former junior boxing champion who after hitting rock bottom, returns to his childhood club hoping to train and fight again.

Signed copies of the book are available to purchase.

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A washed-up fighter returning to the ring. One more big fight. One last chance at redemption. Stop us if you've heard it all before – many, many times. Certainly, there's little new in this modestly proportioned British independent offering, apart from a rather oblique title inspired by a biblical reference to strongman Samson's implement of choice. Cinema history, however, teaches us never to underestimate the resilience of this particular story outline: Sylvester Stallone's original *Rocky* (1976) and Darren Aronofsky's *The Wrestler* (2008), for instance, have shown that the clichés can indeed spring to life again if you resist the temptation to reinvent the material and instead commit to its hackneyed truths wholeheartedly. That's exactly what writer-producer-star Johnny Harris has done here, delivering a purposeful, evidently sincere drama that's surprisingly involving even though we can guess pretty much all its moves in advance.

Probably best known as the reprehensible pimp in 2006's *London to Brighton*, and a regular in three series of Shane Meadows's TV youth saga *This Is England* (2010-15), Harris has carved out a solid list of credits in the past decade or so without quite assuming headlining status, and kudos to him for generating his own content to show off his range. As Jimmy McCabe, the one-time youth champion boxer now marinating in hard liquor, rage and self-loathing, he turns in a believably lived-in performance that's convincing from the off, as director Thomas Napper's camera confronts his bleary features in sundry full-on close-ups. We have only to look at this guy to know his story, and that same sense of presence and alertness extends to the film's other key performers. You'd forgive veteran Ian McShane for simply phoning it in as yet another sleek crime boss, but his big scene here is absolutely on the money, conjuring steely threat behind faux bonhomie. Ray Winstone also hits top form as boxing-gym proprietor Bill, a wise and watchful older man who's not about to waste a single breath or gesture. And almost eclipsing everyone is Michael Smiley – as ever, British independent cinema's most valuable supporting turn – here totally in the zone as the good-egg cornerman whose palpable investment in the ebb and flow of the bloody climactic bout helps to bring a familiar scene emotionally alive.

Napper (in his feature debut after a string of high-profile second-unit assignments) also makes an astute contribution at this point, playing with the shutter speed to create a flickering effect that conveys the dynamic essence

of the persuasive fight choreography, and helpfully providing a fresh visual approach when it's really needed. Elsewhere, he is also very attuned to a specific sense of place, with repeated low-angled shots of Jimmy running under the old brick railway bridges just south of the Thames effectively building oppressive weight on the hard-pressed protagonist. A small detail, perhaps, but typical of a film in which the direction and performances are focused and effective in getting the absolute most out of the material in front of them. Not a groundbreaker, but certainly an appreciable lesson in potency of application.

Trevor Johnston, *Sight & Sound*, June 2017

JAWBONE

Directed by: Thomas Napper
©: UME8 Limited, British Broadcasting Corporation
Production Companies: EMU Films, Marlin Films, Revolution Films
Developed with the support of: BFI Film Fund, BBC
Supported by: Creative England through the West Midlands Production Fund, Creative England through the West Midlands Production Fund
Presented by: BBC Films, Creative England
In association with: LipSync Productions LLP
Executive Producers: Adam Smith, Andrew Eaton, Christine Langan, Nichola Martin, Richard Holmes, Celine Haddad, Peter Hampden, Norman Merry
Produced by: Michael Elliott
Producer: Johnny Harris
Line Producer: Donna Mabey
Associate Producers: Jim Mooney, Walli Ullah, Mark Baxter
Production Co-ordinator: Caroline Bean
Production Accountant: Richard Juneman
Unit Manager: Tom Plumtree
Location Manager: Monty Allan
Post-production Supervisor: Miranda Jones
Post-production Co-ordinator: Nadiya Luthra
Production Secretary: Charlotte Dudson
1st Assistant Director: Liam Lock
Script Supervisors: Jane Burrows, Jane Simon
Casting Director: Dixie Chassay
Casting Associate: Isabella Odoffin
Written by: Johnny Harris
Director of Photography: Tat Radcliffe
Steadicam Operator: Matt Fisher
Focus Puller: Tim Potter
Clapper Loader: Jermaine Edwards
Gaffer: Andy Lowe
Grip: Robin Stone, Warwick Drucker
Stills Photographers: Lee Cogswell, Simon Thorpe, Liam Daniel
Visual Effects by: LipSync Post
Special Effects Supervisors: Scott MacIntyre, Scott Peters
Editor: David Charap
Assistant Editor: Gez Morris
Post-production Services by: LipSync Post
Production Designer: Nick Palmer
Assistant Art Director: Becky Gilbanks
Production Buyer: Annabelle Bevan
Costume Designer: Guy Speranza
Costume Supervisor: Sophie O'Neill
Costume Standby: Hilary Hughes
Junior Costume Standby: Caitriona Anglim
Hair and Make-up Designer: Scarlett O'Connell
Prosthetic Designer: Scarlett O'Connell
Titles by: LipSync Design
Music by: Paul Weller
Original Music Composed by: Paul Weller

Score Performed and Produced by: Paul Weller
Production Sound Mixer: Jerome McCann
Re-recording Mixer: Robert Farr
Supervising Sound Editors: Andy Shelley, Stephen Griffiths
Dialogue Editor: Justin Dolby
Sound Effects Editor: Matis Rei
Stunt Co-ordinator: Tom Lucy
Additional Stunt Co-ordinator: Vincent Keane
Boxing Consultants: Barry McGuigan, Shane McGuigan
Personal Trainers to Mr Harris: Shane McGuigan, Steve Broughton, Barry McGuigan
In loving memory of: Christopher Collins
The filmmakers wish to thank: Vicky McClure, Daniel Day-Lewis, Shane Meadows, Danny Leigh

Cast

Johnny Harris (*Jimmy McCabe*)
Ray Winstone (*Bill*)
Michael Smiley (*Eddie*)
Ian McShane (*Joe Padgett*)
Alex Earp (*housing office interviewee*)
Simon Manyonda (*housing officer*)
Nick Preston (*security guard 1*)
Daniel Wellington (*security guard 2*)
Jackie Clune (*manager*)
Steve Broughton (*Daryll, trainer*)
Haqi Ali (*passerby*)
Marcus Le Doux (*sparring partner*)
Ony Uhiara (*waitress*)
Richard Smikle (*Joseph*)
Anna Wilson-Hall (*Mary*)
Alan Gibson (*Tommy*)
Neil Bradley (*Michael, the newcomer*)
Scott Lawton (*sparring partner 2*)
Nigel Travis (*opponent's trainer*)
Paul 'Soggy' Counihan (*opponent's cut man*)
Luke J. Smith (*Damian Luke, unlicensed opponent*)
Neil Hateley (*opponent's pad man*)
Vincent Davis (*lackey*)
Jason Lowe (*referee/announcer*)
Jon Pegg (*Jimmy's corner man*)
Justin Baker (*opponent's agent*)
Stacy Buckley (*ring walker*)
Paul Brown (*vicar*)
Sonia Beck (*Kristina*)

UK 2017
91 mins

IN PERSON & PREVIEWS

Preview: Bodies Bodies Bodies

Sat 3 Sep 21:00

Oxide Ghosts: The Brass Eye Tapes + Q&A with director Michael Cumming

Tue 6 Sep 20:45

Preview: The Score + Q&A with director Malachi Smyth, actor Johnny Flynn plus further guests to be announced

Wed 7 Sep 18:00

TV Preview: Cunk on Earth + Q&A with writer, exec producer Charlie Brooker, actor Diane Morgan and Series Producer Sam Ward

Wed 7 Sep 20:40

Pam Grier in Conversation

Fri 9 Sep 18:00

Mark Kermode Live in 3D at the BFI

Mon 12 Sep 18:30

S.O.U.L. Fest x ABFF London 2022

Fri 16 & Sat 17 Sep

TV Preview: Inside Man + Q&A with David Tennant, Stanley Tucci, Dolly Wells, Lydia West, writer Steven Moffat and director Paul McGuigan

Mon 19 Sep 18:15

BUG 64

Fri 23 Sep 20:45; Thu 29 Sep 20:45

TV Preview: Don't Hug Me I'm Scared + Panel + Q&A with Creators Becky Sloan, Joseph Pelling and Baker Terry, Executive Producer James Stevenson Bretton, Producers Hugo Donkin and Charlie Perkins (Channel 4 Head of Comedy)

Wed 28 Sep 20:45

Madly, Deeply: A Celebration of Alan Rickman, hosted by Mark Kermode

Sun 2 Oct 16:00

Truly Madly Deeply

Sun 2 Oct 18:20

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