



ENTERTAINMENT

PRESENTS

From **GUNSLINGER**, the producers of **ANUVAHOOD** and **SHANK**,

SKET

A **GUNSLINGER FILMS** Production A **GATEWAY FILMS** Co-Production
in association with **AV PICTURES**, **CREATIVITY MEDIA** and **AQUARIUM**



PRESS PACK

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, INTERVIEW REQUESTS AND SCREENINGS, PLEASE CONTACT:

Monica Macasieb – monica@revolvergroup.com – Tel: 020 7243 4300

Tracey Zetter – m.zetter@sky.com – Tel: 07980 611312

FOR ONLINE QUERIES, PLEASE CONTACT:

Jamie Danan – jamie@cannonballpr.com – Tel: 07885 670 294

www.revolvergroup.com

www.sketmovie.com

The rise in the proliferation of girl gangs is symptomatic of some of the major problems facing modern society. SKET takes a controversial look at this phenomenon sweeping the streets of Britain.

'SKET' is a derogatory term, defined in urban street culture as a woman with no regard or care for morals or dignity. This fast paced retribution thriller provides a hard hitting front row seat of UK girl gangs and the adrenaline fuelled criminality they run on.

There is a distinct lack of public knowledge about female gang culture, which results in a high level of fascination – yet not one film has dared to explore it – until now.

I met with various members of male and female gangs in order to learn why young women were now, more than ever, adopting aggressive male behaviour. The more I immersed myself in their ideologies the more I realised that their shift in behaviour could be explained as progressive adaptation, a theme that is at the very heart of 'Sket': society is changing, and girls and women must change with it in order to survive.

- Nirpal Bhogal, Director

When a young woman is indiscriminately attacked and brutally murdered by notoriously violent gang leader Trey, her little 16-year old sister Kayla wants vengeance and will stop at nothing to get it. Deciding to join a rival girl gang led by the volatile and man-hating Danielle, Kayla's quest for revenge has far reaching repercussions, farther than she ever could have imagined.

Boasting a predominantly female cast and following extensive research including input from real-life girl gang members, SKET is written and directed by Nirpal Bhogal (Cold Kiss).

The strong British cast includes Ashley Walters (Bullet Boy, Dead Man Running) as violent gang leader Trey, Emma Hartley Miller (Wasted, Looking For Lucy) as hardened girl gang leader Danielle with Lily Loveless (Skins) as Hannah, Adelayo Adedeyo (Skins) as Kerry, Riann Steele (Treacle Jnr, Hamlet) as Shaks, Katie Foster Barnes (Doctors, Merlin) as Tanya and Richie Campbell (Anuvahood, The Firm) as Ruds. The film also stars newcomers Varada Sethu (National Youth Theatre of Great Britain) as Kiran and introduces Aimee Kelly in the leading role of Kayla.

SKET is produced by Gunslinger's Director of Production Nick Taussig and Daniel Toland (Shank, Bonded by Blood, Anuvahood). Terry Stone (Shank, Rise of the Footsoldier) also produces on behalf of Gateway Films. Patrick Fischer co-produces for Creativity Media.



SYNOPSIS

Kayla (Aimee Kelly), a young sixteen-year old, faces the harsh London streets of gangland culture alone. Her mother already dead, her only protector and loving elder sister, Tanya (Katie Foster-Barnes), is one day brutally murdered by violent, misogynist gang leader Trey (Ashley Walters). Swearing vengeance, Kayla joins a girl gang led by the violent, damaged Danielle (Emma Hartley-Miller) who has her own reasons for helping Kayla seek retribution.

LONG SYNOPSIS

Tanya (Katie Foster-Barnes) and her sister Kayla (Aimee Kelly) have just moved down to London after the death of their mother. Tanya wants to get to know their father that they haven't seen for years, but Kayla is ambivalent.

In another part of London, for Trey (Ashley Walters) it is business as usual as he sorts out his drugs and keeps track of those who still owe him money. Trey has been in this business for a while along with his girlfriend, Shaks (Riann Steele), and he's not about to let anyone undermine him.

When Kayla attracts some unwanted male attention on a bus, this leads to her first encounter with the girl gang led by Danielle (Emma Hartley-Miller). The girls step in and aggressively beat up the guys who were harassing her. Kayla is impressed and follows them off the bus. Danielle seems interested in her, but Hannah (Lily Loveless), Kiran (Varada Sethu) and Kerry (Adelayo Adedayo) want shot of her.

Danielle's going to give her one chance, if Kayla is willing to rob the local newsagent. Kayla's unsure, but the opportunity to become part of the group is too strong to resist. While Danielle provides a diversion, Kayla grabs the money from the till and runs. Danielle admires Kayla's quickness, though Hannah remains unhappy about the new girl. Kayla, however, has done enough to get an invitation to meet them again the following day.

The whole experience means Kayla's missed the meeting with her father. Tanya is not pleased and the conversation quickly escalates into an argument, before Kayla storms out. Kayla cannot forgive their father for walking out on them. In the local café where Kayla has sought refuge to cool down, she meets Shaks.

The next day there's nothing that can keep Kayla away from the girls – they're at Hannah's place. She is not made welcome, especially by Hannah, but she is not leaving, even though Tanya is waiting for her back at the café. Kayla's failure to meet her sister, leads to Tanya's chance encounter with Trey as she unwittingly intervenes in an argument between him and Shaks. Trey thinks that Shaks has gone soft, that she is not listening to him anymore, and now he is livid that another woman – one he does not even know - is daring to tell him what to do. His temper explodes and when Tanya tries to walk away, Trey grabs her and starts to brutally beat her. Tanya struggles to escape and when there is an opportunity to run, she does but Trey grabs her again and throws her to the floor. Tanya is barely alive when he stops.

Kayla is devastated to see Tanya in hospital, unconscious and fighting for her life. She is the only family she has left. She thinks she hears her say Trey's name and then in the waiting room, she is shocked to see Shaks. It is clear it is more than mere coincidence she is here. Kayla is furious and determined to get revenge on whoever did this to her sister, and Shaks has just given her the first clue. It is too late for Tanya though, and she dies before the night is through.

Trey is not best pleased to find out that Tanya has a sister: Kayla is a loose end he does not need. He is going to make sure this is sorted. Kayla goes home but it is not long before Reet (Leon Ajikamo) pays her a visit courtesy of Trey. Kayla's small and quick and Reet is out of shape. She bites him and manages to escape his clutches. However, she now cannot go home.



The girls are selling gear and laughing with the boys when an exhausted Kayla comes up to them. She wants their help, but they are not interested. Kayla tries to grab their attention by randomly attacking two passing men: she hopes this impromptu attack will win the gang's sympathy. However, Danielle remains adamant. This is not their battle.

Kayla talks to Danielle again and is finally given an ultimatum – she has to prove herself before the girls will help her. One of the boys from earlier, Ruds (Richie Campbell), has raped Kerry, and the girls are planning to teach him a lesson he'll never forget. They smash up his car and beat him with bricks and belts and any other objects they can lay their hands on. It is after the fight that Danielle learns Shaks is involved. There's only one person who could have killed Kayla's sister, but there is no way they can get to Trey. Kayla is relentless and Hannah gives her his address, knowing that she stands no chance on her own against him.

Luckily, only Shaks is at the warehouse when Kayla arrives, and she agrees to meet her in the cafe, though is shocked to see Danielle and the girls turn up with Kayla. Danielle and Shaks have a history together. Shaks will not help Kayla kill Trey but there's a rave the next evening and she knows he will be alone. If Shaks will drug Trey, then Kayla can kill him. Danielle still is not sure they should be involved, but nothing will change Kayla's mind.

Dressed up, the girls help Kayla get past the doormen and into the rave, and then into Trey's lair at the top of the building. Unfortunately though, Trey isn't drugged – Shaks simply couldn't do it – and Kayla is no match for him. When Danielle and the girls charge upstairs, Trey has Kayla pinned against the wall by her neck, her face all bloody. They had planned just to rescue Kayla and go, but Trey and Danielle have a shared past, which Danielle has kept secret – she is another of his female victims: he raped her when she was just fourteen years old. Danielle loses control and attacks Trey, until he's lying almost lifeless on the ground. This is Kayla's chance, yet she cannot do it. In that instant, Trey grabs the knife and tries to stab her but Danielle steps in the way. As the knife plunges into her chest, Danielle instinctively knocks him back and as he falls to the floor, she grabs a hammer and brings it down on his head.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

As a filmmaker, I thrive on topics of social interest. Therefore, when 'Sket' presented itself, a film detailing the rise of female gang crime in London, I took great effort in researching the subject. I met with various members of male and female gangs in order to learn why young women were now, more than ever, adopting aggressive male behaviour. The more I immersed myself in their ideologies the more I realised that their shift in behaviour could be explained as progressive adaptation, a theme that is at the very heart of 'Sket': society is changing, and girls and women must change with it in order to survive.

I took a lot of impetus from my own background. Growing up in East London I found myself, at least in my formative years, in a culturally segregated bubble, part of an Asian culture that often uses guilt and emotional manipulation to make sure that newer generations adhere to the same values of their parents. A street gang operates in a similar coercive manner, though it typically employs more violence. In this respect, I could identify with the experience of a street gang member, its members indoctrinated, forced to live a certain way, to adapt their morality according to the prevailing morals of the group to which they now belong.

Many young people are driven to join gangs as an act of rebellion – just as my heroine Kayla does at the start of the film – though the prevailing impetus is necessity: lacking a supportive family, they have little choice.

Kayla's necessity in 'Sket' is driven by the loss of her sister. Her grief quickly turns to anger. In Danielle, the leader of the girl gang, she finds a young woman who has adapted, both psychologically and morally, to the world around her. Danielle is the epitome of many of the girls I spoke to. An angry young woman who has seen and experienced so much violence that it has become a way of life, her only way of expressing her emotions.

This is why I wanted the final emotion felt by the audience to be one of compassion. I considered this deeply, and purposely wanted the viewer to be repulsed by the gang before moving into their world and becoming more sympathetic. I certainly didn't want to patronise. Drug dealing is shown, but there is no need to discuss it: it is a means to an end for the characters, no more than this. It also helps to illustrate the idea of female empowerment, also central to the film.

The gang has empowered itself through its ability to survive in a male-dominated street gang world. The character of Shaks represents a different type of female gang member, one who starts off utterly subservient to the male culture, but ultimately (through sex and drugs) becomes indispensable to it, on a par with the men. Shak's redemption comes in her realisation that she can escape the control of her male boss and lover, Trey, though she has to adapt significantly to do this.

There were so many stories and character arcs to explore in 'Sket' that my greatest challenge fell in deciding which to leave at script stage, and which to take onto the screen. A good example of this was Kerry's relationship with Ruds, which results in him being attacked and mauled by the girls. I decided to leave Ruds' assault of her slightly ambiguous. Danielle and Hannah know what has to happen – that Ruds has to be taken down – while the younger members of the girl gang simply follow orders, adhering to the group's hierarchy.

As a director I am a dramatist first and foremost, thriving on working with actors to create subtle performances full of idiosyncrasies, which play deeply to any audience. However, it was also important that the film was distinguished by more than just its performances. I chose to emphasise what London meant to me. Living here my whole life, my earliest memory was one of streetlight flooding through my bedroom window. I wanted to keep that orange glow, which Central London seems perpetually bathed in, throughout the film and allow the city to be full of sound but, to those that live there, strangely empty and lonely.

'Sket' is a labour of love for me and its producers, and perhaps the greatest challenge lies in getting both teenagers and older audiences in to see it. Beneath the sheen, music, gloss, swearing, violence and anger lies a social commentary on the rise of girl gang culture that can be felt and confronted by all audiences, young and old, poor and rich, I hope.

- Nirpal Bhogal, Writer/Director



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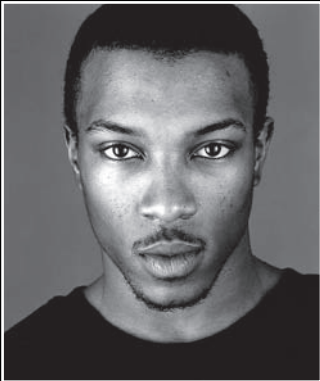
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DRAMATIS PERSONAE

THE CAST

ASHLEY WALTERS // *Trey*



"Trey is basically just a frustrated guy. He's been thrust into a position of great power in the area that he's from and when it comes to his status as a drug dealer or as a gangster, as some people would put it, I suppose deep down he'd like to have a normal life but being in that position there's kind of no way out. Usually the only ways out are prison or death unfortunately and he's kind of fighting against that and at the same time trying to maintain what he has because the minute you show any weakness, being in that position, there's always someone else looking to fill your shoes so to speak.

Where we find him in this movie, he's really cracking and doing silly things which are probably self destructive and not going to be good for him at the end of it."

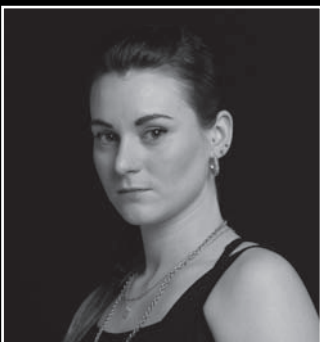
Ashley Walters' career has included a variety of diverse roles both on the small and big screen. Amongst his memorable feature credits are films like the award-winning *BULLET BOY*, crime drama *GET RICH OR DIE TRYIN'*, family adventure *STORMBREAKER*, thriller *SUGARHOUSE* and urban comedy *ANUVAHOOD*. Other feature roles include *LIFE 'N' LYRICS*, *DEAD MAN RUNNING*, *SPEED RACER* and *TUESDAY*.

On the small screen he was recently seen in the award winning dramatisation of Andrea Levy's novel *SMALL ISLAND*, supernatural thriller *BEDLAM* and sci-fi drama *OUTCASTS* as well as *FIVE DAYS*, *HUSTLE* and *W10 LDN*.

Theatrically he has starred as David in the Royal Court's production of *OFF THE ENDZ*, Darrell in *OXFORD STREET* and *IN THE RED AND BROWN WATER* for the Young Vic.

He will next be seen in Arjun Rose's horror *SUICIDE KIDS*.

EMMA HARTLEY-MILLER // *Danielle*



"Danielle has had a past with Trey and with Shaks. They were the gang she was with at a young age and she's experienced the rape and abuse and she's left that kind of life. When she first meets Kayla, she doesn't know Kayla has anything to do with these people and it really is a case of Kayla interests her. Although Danielle is in this gang and she's got these girls, she's a dealer and she's got these girls as runners and they've become her family, I don't think she's got anyone of equal match. I think she's quite a lonely character and I think Danielle is constantly searching for something. I think the friendship, the relationship with Shaks, from what they've been through, was really real and very close but I don't think she's ever had that again.

When Kayla comes on the scene, Danielle's getting to the point where she wonders if this girl's got the answer so at first it's kind of an intrigue thing. Then when Shaks becomes involved and when Trey becomes involved, for Danielle it becomes a lot bigger. Not that Kayla's irrelevant but for Danielle, they are kind of her nemesis and I think she's on a self destruct. It's one of those things that she knew at some point she was going to have to face and so when the whole Kayla and Shaks thing becomes introduced to her, I don't think she wants to help the girl, though it comes under the guise of that but I think it's more about her facing the thing that's followed her round her whole life really."



Edinburgh native, Emma Hartley-Miller is best known for her roles in two of ITV's longest running dramas CORONATION STREET and EMMERDALE. Other small screen roles include the BBC drama WATERLOO ROAD, THE ROYAL TODAY and SCOTTISH KILLERS.

Amongst Hartley-Miller's feature roles are WASTED, the story of two drug addicted runaways in Scotland, LOOKING FOR LUCY and THE BET.

Her stage roles encompass productions such as THE TEN TEN SHIFT, SHADOW COMPANION, THE SPACE BETWEEN OUR BREATH, LIVE AND DIRECT and ALL THE ORDINARY ANGELS.

LILY LOVELESS // Hannah



"In the group of friends, I'd say she was sort of second in command because in a lot of groups of friends, there's a hierarchy and if you were to look at it, she would definitely be number two on the list. She's aggressive but she's aggressive because of how insecure and awkward she is. She hates being in her own skin, she thinks she's ugly and she doesn't like herself. She doesn't like being herself and that's where all her aggression comes from because it's all pent up frustration."

Lily Loveless began her career starring as Naomi in the long-running and acclaimed Channel 4 youth drama SKINS. She went on to star in ARMY KIDS and THE SARAH JANE ADVENTURES and was most recently seen in Red Productions supernatural series for Sky BEDLAM.

Other roles include the short film LIL' BRO and the feature length TV thriller THORNE: SLEEPY HEAD based on the hit books by Mark Billingham.

SKET is her first feature role.

AIMEE KELLY // Kayla



"Even though she's really quite young, she's not innocent, not at all. She's very angry. She moves from Newcastle with her sister down to London and she doesn't have anyone else. Her sister gets killed and she can't go home so she ends up being homeless and sleeping rough for a night or two. It's basically her journey of finding and proving herself to the girls, to be a part of them because they're all she's got."

Casting director Jane Ripley found Aimee through a local drama group in Newcastle. When Aimee came to London to read for the part, the producers were so impressed with her performance they decided to re-write Kayla's character as Geordie. When Aimee got the overnight bus as the train was too expensive, Aimee managed

to charm a hairdresser to give her a free hairdo pre-audition. You get the picture, she's a fighter! SKET is Aimee's first feature film.



VARADA SETHU // Kiran



"She's really cool but that's just on the surface and when you really look into it, her humour actually comes out of desperation more than finding things funny. It's just a way for her to break the tension so she doesn't really know how to react to something so intense and so the only way she knows how to do it is taking the piss out of something basically. I think Kiran comes across as a cocky sort of person but I think you see a totally different side to her when you see Danielle in a really vulnerable situation."

Based in Newcastle, Varada Sethu recently was enrolled in the National Youth Theatre of Great Britain. Classically trained in 2 forms of Indian dance (Mohiniyattam and Bharathnatyam) from a very young age, she was a member of Senior Dance Company, the Mini V dance company and the Senior Theatre Company 'Spotlight' at school, in which she was also the Theatre Prefect.

Sethu is also involved with two film companies (Bridge & Tunnel productions, and S.H.A.M. films), and was cast as the lead actress in both their short films dealing with issues to do with asylum seekers (Asha : Hope), and the stereotyping of Muslim individuals (Impressions) respectively.

In May she won the title of Miss Newcastle 2010, and subsequently is a Miss England 2010 semifinalist.

She is currently taking a gap year before attending University of Bristol to be studying Veterinary Science in October 2011.

ADELAYO ADEDAYO // Kerry



"Kerry is very insecure and she doesn't really know her value, she doesn't know what she's worth. She just thinks that she's got to be sexual or sexy or what she thinks is sexy anyway, just to fit in and to get people to like her so basically all she's known through her life is that she's got to use her body or her looks or her attitude to fit in, get what she wants and be noticed."

Within the group of girls, she sees Danielle and Hannah as like a mum and dad figure and Kiran as a sister figure so if anything breaks away or anything comes in and threatens to break that, she gets her back up against the wall because it's all she has. That's her family and she needs the group so she's very dependent on them. At the same time, it's a weird one with Kerry because if anything else came along, like anything better, if she had a chance at another life or an escape route, she'd be the first one out of all the girls to jump and take it."

Adelayo Adedayo is best known for her role in Channel 4's long-running youth drama SKINS. Her other television credits include ITV's police series THE BILL, BBC TV's children's series MI HIGH and MEET THE BANDAIIS. She recently filmed the lead in the Olivier Award winning stage to film pilot GONE TOO FAR.



RIANN STEELE // Shaks



"She's Trey's girlfriend and she's moved up in the ranks with him. She's kind of been alongside him and as a result of that was almost like a lone ranger. She started off as a runner with Danielle and that's how they know each other but Danielle left and formed her own little gang and that's how Shaks has stayed alongside Trey but now Shaks is in flux. She wants to get out but doesn't know how to get out and an opportunity comes her way and she uses that opportunity, uses Kayla and manages to get out of the situation she's in. The relationship she has with Trey is very different to the relationship she has with herself around in the street and with the girls."

Riann graduated from Arts Educational in London and was cast immediately in *Coriolanus* at the Royal Shakespeare Company. Other productions with the company include *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Love's Labours Lost* and *Hamlet* with David Tennant. This subsequently was filmed at Pinewood for the BBC following a sell out run at the Novello Theatre.

Following this Riann was cast in *Holby City* as Nurse Lauren Minster. While *Holby* was airing Riann was filming a leading role in her first feature film *Treacle Jr.* directed by Jamie Thraves and co-starring Aiden Gillen and Tom Fisher. This film went on to win the Hitchcock D'Or at Dinard 2010. Riann then appeared in Joe Turner's *Come and Gone* at the Young Vic and has just completed a film pilot *Kodak Cowboy* playing Clarke Peters daughter.

KATIE FOSTER-BARNES // Tanya

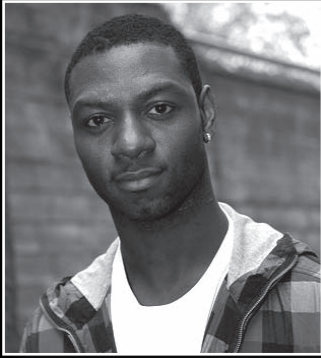
"Tanya is the elder sister of Kayla. She's a mother as well as trying to be all things because they've lost their mother, they're on their own and she wants to create a family for her and Kayla, some stability so they've come down to London, she's got a job and she wants Kayla to go to college or get a job so that they can live a normal life and so they're not living under this cloud of this broken family that they've become."

Katie Foster-Barnes trained at the Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts and went on to gain a variety of stage roles including those in *ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS*, *PIRATES OF PENZANCE*, *DRACULA*, *PETER PAN*, *RELATIVELY SPEAKING*, *THE PRIME OF MISS JEAN BRODIE* and *IF I WERE YOU*.

Amongst her television credits are the long-running BBC hospital drama *CASUALTY*, *DOCTORS* and the family adventure show *MERLIN*. Foster-Barnes features range from Tyler Ford's romantic comedy *PICADILLY COWBOY* to controversial artist Tracey Emin's *TOP SPOT*.



RICHIE CAMPBELL // Ruds



Ruds is one of the local boys of the area and has a soft spot for one of the girls within the gang. Essentially he represents a lot of young kids out there who feel they need to brag and keep up an appearance in front of their friends. He gets caught up in the wrath of the girls when he is accused of rape, and through this the audience are able to see how violent these girls can actually be.

I think firstly its a great vehicle for young actresses as these kind of roles are very far and few for females who want to be creative and diverse within their work. The subject matter is a very dark one especially as there has been a recent rise in girl gangs across the UK. As we were filming the tabloids were full with stories about girls being violently attacked by girl gangs and some for

no known motive. The film has a duty to make people aware of this issue but at the same time be entertaining and truthful and I think Sket has that mix. Whereas films like Anuvahood tackled similar social issues through humour, Sket does it through showing the stark realities of the rise of these gangs. For my money that's great because like anything if you don't discuss it you can't overcome it!

Richie most recently starred in THE SILENCE for the BBC and RANDOM for Channel 4. He will soon be appearing in the inaugural play of the Donmar Warehouse season at the Trafalgar Studios, LOWER NINTH directed by Charlotte Westenra.

Other credits include THE ONES THAT FLUTTER directed by Abbey Wright at Theatre 503, feature film THE FIRM, MINDER for Talkback/C5, DIRTY BUTTERFLY at the Young Vic, AND KILL THEM for Channel 4, 93.2 for the Royal Court, the feature film WILDERNESS for Ecosse Films and LITTLE SWEET THING at Hampstead Theatre/ on tour. He was nominated for a Screen Nation Film and Television Award in the category of Emerging Talent for his performance in THE BILL.



THE FILMMAKERS

NIRPAL BHOGAL - Director

Nirpal Bhogal trained as a director at the University of the Arts in London. After writing and directing several experimental shorts and music promos he made his breakthrough with the critically acclaimed short film COLD KISS – a powerful film dealing with the controversy of knife crime and both starred, and was executive produced by BAFTA nominated actor Ray Winstone. The subject matter saw the film featured in almost all British national newspapers along with ITV and several radio stations including BBC Radio 1.

Nirpal's artistic influences include the work of Francis Bacon, Manray, Rodin and Hieronymus Bosch. Screenwriters such as Peter Morgan and the literary greats influence Nirpal's writing: Chuck Palahniuk, Edgar Allen Poe and Rabindranath Tagore. Cinematically he is drawn to the work of Powell and Pressburger, Stanley Kubrick, Alfred Hitchcock and John Cassavetes.

Sket is his first feature.

NICK TAUSSIG - Producer

Nick Taussig is Deputy Managing Director of Revolver Entertainment, a leading UK independent 'All Rights' film distributor, responsible for such hits as KIDULthood, TELL NO ONE, JCVD, TYSON and SYNECDOCHE NEW YORK. He also heads up Gunslinger, Revolver's production arm. His recent credits include producer of ANUVAHOOD and SHANK. In 2007 he executive produced the BAFTA-nominated documentary film, TAKING LIBERTIES. This year seems him produce OFFENDER (formerly known as FELTHAM) and LENNY "THE GUV'NOR" MCLEAN BIOPIC.

He is also the author of three novels, most recently GORILLA GUERRILLA, and has just completed his fourth. His second book, DON DON, is being adapted for the screen by the team behind BRONSON (Grand Jury Prize Nomination Sundance 2009), the writer Brock Norman Brock and producer Danny Hansford.

DANIEL TOLAND - Producer

Daniel Toland has been instrumental in some of the British film industry's most acclaimed and successful features of the last twenty years, including Gary Oldman's NIL BY MOUTH, which won best actress in Cannes for Kathy Burke, and Guy Ritchie's LOCK STOCK AND TWO SMOKING BARRELS and SNATCH, two of the UK's most commercially successful and best loved films.

As a creative producer he has worked closely with new talent to help guide and shape their vision and is in constant demand for writing, script development and story analysis. With Revolver Entertainment and Gunslinger Films he produced SHANK, an edgy, urban action film for the youth generation released in cinemas in Spring 2010.

As director and producer he worked with Gunslinger in mentoring Adam Deacon on the urban British comedy, ANUVAHOOD, shot in September 2010 and was released in cinemas in March 2011 to a box office of over £2million. As well as SKET in 2011 Dan is writing and producing with Gunslinger the youth heist movie, SYMPATHY FOR THE DEVIL.



TERRY STONE - Producer

Terry Stone began his acting and producing career back in 2003. Having starred in various high profile TV soaps and several cult films, he then played one of the leading roles in, and produced, the BAFTA-nominated and Raindance winner ROLLIN WITH THE NINES in 2006. In the same year he was made a partner in Hanover Films and over the next two years produced RISE OF THE FOOTSOLDIER and DOGHOUSE.

In April 2009 he decided to start his very own production company, Gateway Films, with leading businessmen Terry Byrne, Tony Jimenez, Kevin Cash, Gustov Poyet, Graeme Muir and Mike Diamond.

Gateway Films has made six films in their first 24 months of business, which include BONDED BY BOND, THE HOLDING, and family comedy OUTSIDE BET starring Bob Hoskins, due for theatrical release through Universal this Winter.

PATRICK FISCHER - Co-Producer

Patrick has a varied background in film and television production.

After graduating from the University of Westminster, Patrick began his career as in house Producer at the Gumball 3000 Rally. During his two year tenure with Gumball, Patrick produced two feature films; LOVE LIVE LONG, helmed by Academy Award nominated director Mike Figgis and 3000 MILES featuring skateboarder Tony Hawk and Bam Margera of MTV's Jackass.

In 2007 Patrick left Gumball to set up the indie production company Red Sparrow, which went on to produce the Australian horror film SLAUGHTERED and the UK based thriller PSYCHOSIS for Lionsgate.

While producing through Red Sparrow, Patrick consulted at Met Film on feature film post-production and financing as well as setting up Met Film's nascent self-distribution operation, which kicked off in October 2008 with the theatrical release of the award winning punk-documentary HEAVY LOAD (BBC).

Patrick has collaborated with Richard Kondal since his first film at Gumball and in the summer of 2010, he introduced him to Alex Joseph and together they set up Creativity Media in autumn 2010.

Along with his work at Creativity Media, Patrick is also currently completing his MBA at the Cass Business School.



INTERVIEWS WITH CAST AND CREW

THE HISTORY BEHIND THE PROJECT

THE ORIGIN OF THE IDEA

Nick Taussig: While doing a workshop with The Sun newspaper around the release of SHANK, which involved active gang members, watching SHANK alongside victims of gang violence, then discussing the film and the issues it raises, I met Nirpal. His short film COLD KISS, produced by Colin Knox (father of the murdered young actor Robert Knox) screened after SHANK. When I saw this film, it was clear that Nirpal had great strength as a dramatist, and were we, Gunslinger, to make a film about girl gangs, then he clearly had the necessary skill and sensitivity to achieve this.

It seemed to us at Gunslinger that girl gangs were featuring more in the news, and that there was a growing trend of girls operating in gangs much the same way as boys do. With greater sexual equality has also come a dramatic change in female behaviour, many women adopting violence as men do. However, it should be stressed that the majority of the girls/young women we met as we researched the film were victims, and predominantly of male oppression, be this from a family member, family friend, boyfriend or male peer.

Nirpal Bhogal: We wanted a girl gang film to talk about what was going on at the moment because the media are pushing the whole idea of girl gangs rising up and prowling the streets and making it seem like they were literally taking over. I did about a month of research with Nick, pretty relentlessly actually, and I got lots of help from young women who have come from those sorts of scenarios who were very open and thankfully very honest, and from there I wrote the script from their experiences.



Dan Toland: I think there was an area there to really explore. Here we had a girl's journey, getting involved with a girl gang and her experience on the streets of London and the through line of her story of trying to find retribution for the killer of her sister represented a really exciting picture. I think Nirpal is a very drama led director and has a great understanding of his cast and obviously we had a piece that had a need for sensitivity but we also had to bring out the drama and thriller element, and we felt that he had a lot to bring to the table for that.

CASTING THE GIRLS

Nick Taussig: We began by meeting girls and boys who attend the Safe 'N' Sound Youth Project in Peckham, a safe and supporting environment for young people looking to extricate themselves from gang life, run by a former gang member Jennifer Blake. One young man we met here we cast in the film. However, it became clear that we needed trained actors also, and to this end we hired Jane Ripley, casting director of SKINS. Jane specialises in sourcing new talent and casts her net far wider than the majority of casting directors, looking in those places where others do not look. In Aimee Kelly she found a brilliant young actress to play the lead.



Nirpal Bhogal: The lead character was an East Londoner through and through but Jane (Ripley) approached me and said that she had a fantastic actress, she's incredible but she's Geordie. I said no, of course but Jane brought her in anyway and I was kind of blown away actually. She was really strong in the audition. It was interesting because she's a really internal actress. She'll find an emotion from a memory and just use it and I love working with actors like that. She's a lot more intelligent than her age shows because she's just 17.

Aimee Kelly: Jane said there's a part there but it's not your accent because it was supposed to be a London girl, but just give it a go. So I went in and gave it a go and I got a recall. They said, I'm sure we can make it work but they had to re-write my part to get it right. It was really lucky actually because I was just kind of plucked off the street I guess.

Dan Toland: Emma Hartley-Miller, who played Danielle, has got quite a broad Scottish accent but she came in and did a very good London accent but we had all these debates as to will the accent stay or drift during shooting. We decided to go with our instincts and Nirpal said that he loved her, so we went with her and she literally all the way through the shoot just stayed in character.

Nirpal Bhogal: She worked on the accent over the Christmas break and when we met up, I told her I didn't want her to break from the accent from this point. She was incredible in that way because she really just felt this accent and in the end, strangely felt like the most East London person in the film, felt most like the people I grew up with.

Emma Hartley-Miller: Once I started rehearsal and once I started in my East London accent I had to keep it all the way through. I think because the film's got to be so real, you've got to be that person and the last thing I wanted to be thinking about was my accent. To me, the characters were so well rounded and it was about real people in real situations but then on top of that you've also got the narrative, you've got a story so you've got a thriller.

Lily Loveless: I'd never read a script quite like it. On the surface the characters were all hard girls but when you read it you realised why they were like that, that they had more depth to each character and it was more than just another gang sort of film. It's not purely a film made to shock and entertain for the violent factor. It's about some very lost girls who are in a certain situation and just doing the best they can and it's a completely different world to what most people know.

Adelayo Adedayo: There are lots of things in the news right now about girl gangs and I think this script really shows why they do these things and how they end up in these situations. It's bringing to light something that is currently an issue.

Nirpal Bhogal: It was really important to me that the girls bonded, really important that they liked each other, otherwise the whole film fails. I made sure that during rehearsals that I shut up and just let them talk, not even about the film. I said to them as they walked in, that my rehearsal is just about talking about the script, it's not actually about acting, it's just about getting to know each other and they really bonded quite quickly.

Varada Sethu: We do kind of feel like a gang a little bit, in a friends kind of way. I think we've been cast really well as well because I think we fit into our relationships with each other really similarly to our characters. I've never seen a film about girl gangs and I thought it was really good that they were bringing it to the forefront of cinema.



THE RIVAL GANG

Ashley Walters: For me on a personal level the script was really different. It's about people seeing how life is really and giving them an insight into what girl gangs are all about and hopefully they'll come away understanding it more. It's kind of about engaging with them and finding out what the real problems are behind it and this film goes deep into that.



Riann Steele: I think it's just a glimpse into a world that people know exists but are turning a bit of a blind eye to. Maybe it's putting a magnifying glass onto something.

Nirpal Bhogal: I'm very proud about the kind of battle between Shaks and Trey and their dynamic. I really wanted Trey to seem like a multi-dimensional person, like a person

with real frailties, a man who had actually made the wrong decisions and found himself stuck in this world and she brought out a really compassionate side to this character and he brought out this forceful masculinity and they balanced off each other absolutely beautifully.

The Look and Feel of SKET

A LONDON CENTRIC FILM

Nirpal Bhogal: I always wanted to make the film a very London film. I cut to the city of London all the time because I wanted to create a kind of them and us mentality which is how I feel the youth of today feel. Somewhere like Hoxton really interests me. You look at East London and ten years ago it was really rough and ignored. All of a sudden you get the middle classes moving there and you see these kids who have had two generations of nothing, seeing expensive cars, council houses converted to beautiful flats, coffee shops they can't afford, restaurants they can't afford pop up all over the area where they've grown up. There's a massive them and us. There's a massive divide so for me it's really important to show both sides of London.

Dan Toland: People always go down to the Heygate estate in Elephant and Castle but I think it was quite important to find a really different look for the film. I knew of Rowley Way which is a very distinct looking estate, just a panoramic curve and sweep to it and we just thought it would be absolutely ideal. There was another estate up in Camden that had the same kind of look that gives us the expanse of the story as well.



You've got these wide open London expanses and shots of London at night and in the daytime and Aimee's character's very much lost in that world and there's a very strong sense of isolation as well but with a very rich deep palate of colours. We found a new camera which has only recently come out, the Arri Alexa, which has taken over from the RED, and we found that just paid dividends to the look which is an isolated London but it's a London rich in colour and texture.

Nirpal Bhogal: Visually I always had a definitive idea of how I wanted the film to look and I always wanted a kind of nicotine-like orange to the whole colour palette and also reds and showing wet streets of London. It's not an original statement but it's not really something that's been seen in what would be described as an urban drama. Visually we picked really interesting structures, just beautiful bits of architecture to use throughout the film.



A Realistic Portrayal of Girl Gangs

THE INSIDER'S VIEWPOINT

Nirpal Bhogal: We had a great script consultant called Marc Sutcliffe who came from the Safe 'N' Sound Youth Project in Peckham. He was just a fiercely intelligent young man. We went to Safe 'N' Sound to kind of talk to the kids down there and it's a place where youth who have just got out of care or just got out of prison can go to. It's a real community place which kind of provides family support for them and it's a wonderful institution. Marc had just got out of prison but you could see when we discussed the script, he was very aware of cinematic adventures but also very aware of what would play to him. So I knew early on that we had to bring him on board, just to make sure that I didn't create anything that felt slightly patronising or missed its mark in any way.

Nick Taussig: We met Marc down at the Safe N Sound Youth Project and he was very committed from the get-go and eager to be involved. We, the filmmakers, knew that we needed someone like Marc working beside to us to ensure authenticity, not least because the audience would not forgive us for creating a narrative and environment which was not believable. Marc and Nirpal spent a number of days going through the script, focusing on dialogue, character and setting. He was then beside Nirpal on set, working closely with the cast also to make sure their performances were imbued with as much realism as possible.



Marc Sutcliffe: I go to Safe to use their music studio and I was told that there were people coming to ask a few questions about the script of a film. I always wanted to do something in films and when we were asked to read the script, I read it and thought it was a bit far-fetched so I gave Nirpal a few ideas of mine to make it more real. I liked the fact that it was different as it wasn't as all the gang films which tend to be the same.

Aimee Kelly: Marc is kind of our mentor on set. He's had a lot of experience with gangs and violence and street crime so he's very much an insider. If you've got anything that you need to question, he's the guy to ask and he'll always have an answer.

Adelayo Adedayo: He basically helps us with dialect and attitude and it really helps because sometimes you don't realise that with that kind of culture there's always two ways to say things. These girls literally have their own culture, their own language, their own attitude, their own movement and his input helps you fit right into that uniform.

Emma Hartley-Miller: Marc was amazing. He was really helpful because I'm not from London and having Marc there was just great because it's not just a language thing like with the slang; it's, as much as you can research, you can never know in this situation the background stuff because you've not lived that life. So Marc was great if you weren't sure about something or something didn't sound right, he just covered everything.

Marc Sutcliffe: I loved working on the film. It was a lot of fun and I hope I get the chance to do it again.



THE REASON BEHIND THE GIRL GANG

Ashley Walters: I think we do it a lot of the time where we call a group of people a gang if a gang means a group of like minded people around the same age group that all feel disconnected from society and the rest of the world, and you join with other people who feel the same way. Like with Aimee's character, she's coming from Newcastle, she's in a completely new place and you know when you first come here to anyone it would be a bit daunting and she's found these girls that are just as angry as her, got problems like she has and she can relate to them so they join together, they join forces and they feel like a family and that's what gang mentality is all about first and foremost.

Nirpal Bhogal: The amount of girl gangs is rising but it's more of a response to how society is at the moment. I think today there's more pressure on young girls than there's ever been before. It's a real way of defending yourself against rumours, against pressure. It's really interesting because a lot of girls I spoke to actually came from families of violence and they all saw violence as youngsters and they always saw lots of male oppression so obviously they shied away from men and found themselves in these units where a lot of the females, at the heads of these organisations took on very masculine roles.

Katie Foster-Barnes: I think they're gathering together to protect themselves really and lashing out.



Riann Steele: I think people are joining gangs to belong and especially in the adolescent period. Everybody kind of rebelled when they were a teenager and you look to join up with people who in your head are your family because your family don't understand you and I think it's about belonging really.

Adelayo Adedayo: I think these girls come together because they don't have anything else. You want to look for love and care and attention and if you don't get that from the people around you, you're going to seek it elsewhere. I think its girls who are lost and because

they've all got a common feeling, they just band together. I think you are literally thrown into a situation and because you're all thrown into the situation you hold onto each other and you build a friendship through that.

Lily Loveless: I think if there's male violence around, female violence is going to go up. I think if a man is violent there's a reason behind it and if a woman is violent there's a reason behind it and obviously they've seen a lot of violence in their lives and they're going to repeat it.



SHEDDING LIGHT ON THE PROBLEM

Aimee Kelly: I hope when people watch it, they'll see that it's so easy for a normal person with a normal life to be corrupted just because they're an outsider, just how easily it's done and how quick the process is.

Emma Hartley-Miller: We all learn from the people around us, just experiences that we've been through and that affect you as a person so although it's horrific some of the things they do, I think we need to look a little bit further because they're just as much victims as what they're inflicting on people.

Adelayo Adedayo: I'm in no way condoning the things that girl gangs do because they're not nice things really but I hope that people can understand that there's a reason why they do these things and if people understand the reasons, then hopefully people can get involved and maybe help to change their circumstances.

Nirpal Bhogal: I hope people take away a real sense of compassion towards every single character and I hope people see these groups of girls, what could be called girl gangs in a different light, as people who have been very oppressed, very hurt and very frail, who are fighting to survive.

Nick Taussig: It's a tough world out there for many young women and when they do participate in gangs, the reasons are all too clear. Better to try and understand why, than solely to condemn them. The Safe 'N' Sound Youth Project will be receiving a share of net profits from the film, to enable them to continue their good work with young people.

SAFE 'N' SOUND YOUTH PROJECT

The film's production was made in conjunction with the sound advice and input from the Safe 'N' Sound Youth Project, London.

Jennifer Blake was inspired to set up Safe 'N' Sound (S'N'S) (formally known as Eternal Life Support Centre) in 2004 as she became increasingly concerned and recognized the rising challenges, social issues, high levels of exclusion and criminal activity amongst young people. As an Ex gang leader herself she is well placed to understand the needs of young people. She has an inspired insight of the types of services that are needed to enable change to take place.

The changes needed far outweigh the current local provisions, not to mention the fact access to local services is extremely limited. Jennifer is highly gifted and has an innate sense of the changes that are needed to enable young people to take their rightful place as valued members of society. Jennifer is renowned for being able to identify achievable goals that will help young people caught up in criminal activities. She has an uncanny knack for being able to identify their qualities, strengths and weaknesses. Using a range of tried and tested methods Jennifer uses the skills they bring to the table to motivate them to strive for change and to take responsibility for their own actions. S'N'S is a specialist project designed to address the needs of young people. It provides practical, emotional and psychological support for young people and parents covering a wide range of issues. A key part of their work also involves working directly with the perpetrators of crime. S'N'S's aim is to reduce the high levels of gang, knife and gun crime among young people.

S'N'S have been providing frontline services since 2005 to the following organisations: Metropolitan Police (who come against young people that are uncooperative), probation, prisons, social services, schools, YOT, local councils. S'N'S also offer support to young people who are homeless, facing legal proceedings or immigration related issues.

For more information on S'N'S, please contact:
Safe 'N' Sound Youth Project, 91 Peckham High Street SE15 5RS
Tel: 020 735 88566



CREDITS

Cast

Hannah	Lily Loveless (Skins)
Shaks	Riann Steele (Treacle Jr., Hamlet)
Kayla	Aimee Kelly
Danielle	Emma Hartley-Miller (Wasted, Looking for Lucy)
Kerry	Adelayo Adedayo (Skins)
Kiran	Varada Sethu (National Youth Theatre)
Ruds	Richie Campbell (Anuvahood, The Firm)
Tanya	Katie Foster Barnes (Merlin, Vera)
Trey	Ashley Walters (Bullet Boy, Get Rich or Die Tryin')

Crew

Writer/Director	Nirpal Bhogal (Cold Kiss)
Producers	Nick Taussig (Anuvahood, Shank, Taking Liberties) Daniel Toland (Anuvahood, Shank, Bonded by Blood) Terry Stone (Outside Bet, The Holding)
Cinematographer	Felix Wiedemann (Anuvahood, Misfits)
Casting Director	Jane Ripley (Skins, Shank)
Production Designer	Melanie Light (Psychosis, Shadow People)
Art Director	Belinda Cusmano (Dead Cert, Spooks)
Editor	Richard Elson (Chromophobia, The Sick House)
Costume Designer	Guy Speranza (The Dark Knight, Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix)
Composer	Chad Hobson (Anuvahood, Shank)
Music Supervisor	Sarah "Goldielocks" Akwisombe
Co-producers	Patrick Fischer, Sean O'Shea, Laurence Brown
Executive producers	Justin Marciano, Yogita Puri, Ajay Parkash, Mike Diamond, Ajay Chadha
Associate producers	Andrew Woodyatt, Lucy Taylor, Richard Turner, Stuart Thomson and Monica Macasieb



NOTES TO THE EDITOR:

About Revolver Entertainment

Founded by Justin Marciano in 1997, Revolver Entertainment is one of the UK's leading independent all-rights film distribution companies with offices in London and Los Angeles. Revolver has won no less than 14 major awards from the entertainment industry for its creative initiatives in the last five years.

Revolver's multi-award winning marketing campaigns set the company apart from its competitors and have enabled Revolver to define itself by its dynamic move into new areas such as film production and highly successful simultaneous release strategies. The company recently set up its own production arm - Gunslinger, which has produced three films in its first 15 months including Shank, a top 10 UK box office hit in 2010, and Anuvahood, which has broken all previous box office records for Revolver, taking more than £2.1 million at UK cinemas since its release on 18 March.

Its most notable recent releases include Banksy's BAFTA and Oscar® nominated Exit Through the Gift Shop and French box office hit Heartbreaker. Revolver won two major awards at the 2010 Screen Distribution and Marketing Awards – Best Foreign Language Film of the Year Award for Heartbreaker and Best Premiere for The Infidel.

A pioneer in film distribution methods, Revolver was the first in the UK to release a live action digital 3D feature film – U23D, and the first to simultaneously release a UK title across cinemas, DVD, VOD, electronic rental and sell-through – the horror film Mum & Dad. It also released the first fully environment-friendly feature film in the UK. Big River Man being delivered to the market via digital means wherever possible.

Forthcoming releases include Sleeping Beauty by Julia Leigh, starring Emily Browning and Ill Manors directed by urban music sensation Plan B (a.k.a. Ben Drew). Other upcoming titles in the company's roster include the Stone Roses inspired Spike Island and Jon Hewitt's X.

