

SINS OF A FATHER

World Premiere in Competition



Saturday, January 31, 1:20pm, Metro 4, Theater 2

Monday, February 2, 4:30pm, Lobero

Tuesday, February 3, 7:20pm, Metro 4, Theater 2

PRESS NOTES

At the memorial for his father, WWII hero, Major James Prentis (Alan Bates), John (Lambert Wilson) confesses a dark family secret to his own son which he has harbored for over twenty years. A very British suspense drama, the likes of which have become wildly popular with American audiences, SINS OF A FATHER spans three generations to tell a classic story about the complex nature of heroism, betrayal, and father-son relationships.

A cinematic resurrection of a long-forgotten Alan Bates movie formerly entitled SHUTTLECOCK, based on the Graham Swift novel, the new 2015 feature reunites director Andrew Piddington, producer Graham Leader, its key stars and introduces the striking David Oakes (*The Borgias*). Everyone joined forces in London, in January 2014, to shoot a whole new layer of narrative to be integrated into the original film to tell a multi-generational saga of secrets and betrayal, revelation and redemption. SINS OF A FATHER is an extraordinary directing experiment, reuniting the same actors, 24 years older, to play the same characters, 24 years later.

SINS OF A FATHER is a Sealion Films production in association with Gigantic Pictures and Minerva Productions and runs 105 minutes.

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SINS OF A FATHER: Resurrection of an Unseen Alan Bates Film

Rarely do filmmakers resurrect a beloved project, let alone succeed in resuscitating an independent film unseen since opening the San Sebastian Film Festival to a standing ovation in 1991.

Graham Leader (producer) and Andrew Piddington (director) never accepted that the fate of their unfinished suspense-drama, starring the late Alan Bates as a WWII secret agent, was sealed, written in stone, even though it was a stubbornly difficult film to get going to begin with.

Today, Leader, whose credits include the Oscar-nominated, *IN THE BEDROOM*, can share, with the perspective and sense of humor of an independent film veteran, the agonizing details of how the whole project imploded numerous times, was compromised, and fell apart financially, such as back in the early 90s, when Britain's Channel Four, a key funder, changed leadership, and when, in 2008, the money he'd line up for the resurrection suddenly vanished along with the real estate market.

The project continued to sit in storage until 2013, when the filmmakers returned to the script.

This new attempt at resurrection was spearheaded by its new executive producer, the New York attorney Jonathan Gray, longtime counsel to producer Leader.

It took almost a year for Gray to acquire the outstanding rights to the original film, held by entities in France and the UK. A teaser cut from the original film supported a private-equity funding strategy and, within a few weeks, the money to shoot the new scenes and re-edit the film had been raised.

Apart from Alan Bates, who sadly died in 2003, the same cast were reunited in January '14 in London to shoot the vital new sequences that now make *SINS OF A FATHER* the film its makers had always wanted it to be, and more: a gripping, three-generational drama that mines the nature of heroism, cowardice, truth, betrayal.

New footage is seamlessly interwoven into a film that covers 1944 – 1986, cutting back and forth between the action of WWII, a Lisbon asylum and the Major's London club where, post-memorial, his son and grandson duel to accept a revelatory truth.

Alan Bates – the MAJOR, with a heroic past and murky present. Lambert Wilson - PRENTIS, his insecure, obsessively inquisitive son. David Oakes – MARTIN, his adoring, protective grandson. And Kenneth Haigh – DR QUINN, friend or fiend....

SINS OF A FATHER will be featured in competition at the 2015 Santa Barbara International Film Festival where, after 25 years, it will finally receive its World Premiere, fulfilling a promise Leader made to Bates shortly before he died.

Statement by Director Andrew Piddington

The project we started nearly a quarter century ago was never finalized in its psychological journey. We never finished it in the way that we wished to. While the film was completed in a sense, and selected to open the San Sebastian Film Festival, the movie for me was always emotionally incomplete.

We ran out of money during the shoot, had to make compromises, which left gaping moments in the original, which always irritated me.

Alan Bates was a great supporter of the film and considered it among his best work. When he died, Graham and I were inspired to do a redux, re-write it, set it later, hit re-set and create a new emotional framework for the film – beginning with an estranged family coming together after years apart to mourn the death of a fallen war hero.

That was our starting point, to open the film in 1986, and from there go back and forth in time to explore events which destroyed the family and pushed a son to the edge of madness.

To be able to return to an incomplete film and add layers of context that deepen a story is a director's dream. And to reflect that context across three timelines was fascinating. As the mystery unfolds, each timeline begins to overlap: the film's reality (1986), the period when everything unravels (1962), and the flashbacks to WW2 (1944), when events occur that impact everyone for the next 40 years. These overlapping time-zones meld into one in the mind of Prentis as he obsessively burrows into his father's past.

We brought the same actors back, and they're all playing their characters 24 years later in the same story.

To get the same actors standing alongside their younger selves is a unique psychological opportunity. You already have an intrinsic history etched in people's faces and the way they look. There's no extraneous make-up involved. With age, hopefully, comes the revelation of wisdom. When they refer to events in the past, they are referring to real events. They are informing the characters with their own lives.

The one thing that comes remotely close and was our inspiration to do this was that wonderful moment in GODFATHER 3, when Al Pacino suddenly becomes possessed with demons and sees himself as a younger person. Coppola cuts back to 1972 and the first GODFATHER movie and we see the young Al Pacino dancing with his Sicilian wife. And that extreme contrast of age and experience is just poles apart from what they should have created with their lives. And you see a whole chasm of regret.

SINS OF A FATHER is a combination of an American narrative, if you like, with the sympathy of a European cinematic eye. It's a combination I find extremely satisfying.

David Oakes, the newcomer, is the same age now as Lambert Wilson was when we made the original film, which is perfect for the story since they are playing father and son. And David gave a very interesting performance, slightly in awe of everything and everyone, which comes across as a fragile attempt to understand the situation presented in the film. Ironically, Lambert is now the same age as Alan was when we originally filmed in 1990. The symmetry serves the characters and story impeccably.

If you get the casting right in a film the movie is secure. I always knew, before we started shooting in 2014, that the performances that I would get would be very solid, and you can see it in all the new scenes we shot. And what's fascinating as a filmmaker is that the style and sense of place are seamlessly intertwined with the film that was shot 24 years ago.

The integrity of the movie is absolutely secure, right across the age, and I'm very thankful I had such good actors to give me that.

London

December 2014

CAST

Major James Prentis	ALAN BATES
John Prentis	LAMBERT WILSON
Adult Martin Prentis	DAVID OAKES
Doctor Quinn	KENNETH HAIGH
Marian Prentis	JILL MEAGER
Fizz	ARTHUR COX
Young Martin Prentis	GREGORY CHISOLM
Eddie	JOHN CASSADY
Beatrice Carnot	BEATRICE BUCHOLZ
Allyse	MAUD JUREZ
Eleanor	JASMINE HYDE
Eric	JOAO PERRY
Philippe Carnot	FERNANDO CASTELO
Ana (The Maid)	LUISA BARBOSA
Jenny	JACQUI SEDLAR
German Officers	DIRK BEAUCHAMP JOSE AGOSTINHO TEIXERIA

FILMMAKERS

Directed by	ANDREW PIDDINGTON
Produced by	GRAHAM LEADER
Executive Producers	CHRISTIAN ARDAN JONATHAN GRAY BRIAN DEVINE ANNE O'SHEA BRIAN QUATTRINI
Co-Executive Producers	BROOKE DEVINE BRIAN SR & SILVIJA DEVINE MARTINA LISEC JOSH ALEXANDER JOEL PLOTCH

Screenplay by	TIM ROSE PRICE ANDREW PIDDINGTON
Based on the Novel "Shuttlecock" by	GRAHAM SWIFT
Original Music by	BARRY ADAMSON
Editing	JON COSTELLOE JOEL PLOTCH
Cinematography	DENIS LENOIR A.F.C. ROGER EATON
Costume Design	ANNE DE LAUGARDIÈRE SHARON LONG
Production Design	MAURICE CAIN JAN WALKER
<u>2014</u>	
Line Producer	YVONNE ISIMEME IBAZEBO
1st Assistant Director	NICK JUSTIN
Associate Producer	PAMELA RYAN
Production Sound Mixer	NIGEL ALBERMANICHE
Post Sound Services Provided by	GIGANTIC POST
Re-Recording Mixer	TOM PAUL
Digital Intermediate Finishing Services	GOLDCREST POST PRODUCTIONS
Colorist	SCOT OLIVE
Production Council	GRAY KRAUSS STRATFORD DES ROCHERS LLP
Original Song Composed by	JOHN PETERSEN
<u>1991</u>	
Sound	DAVID JOHN
Casting (UK)	GAIL STEVENS
<u>1991 – Portugal</u>	
Production Company	ANIMATOGRFO