

The Main Feature



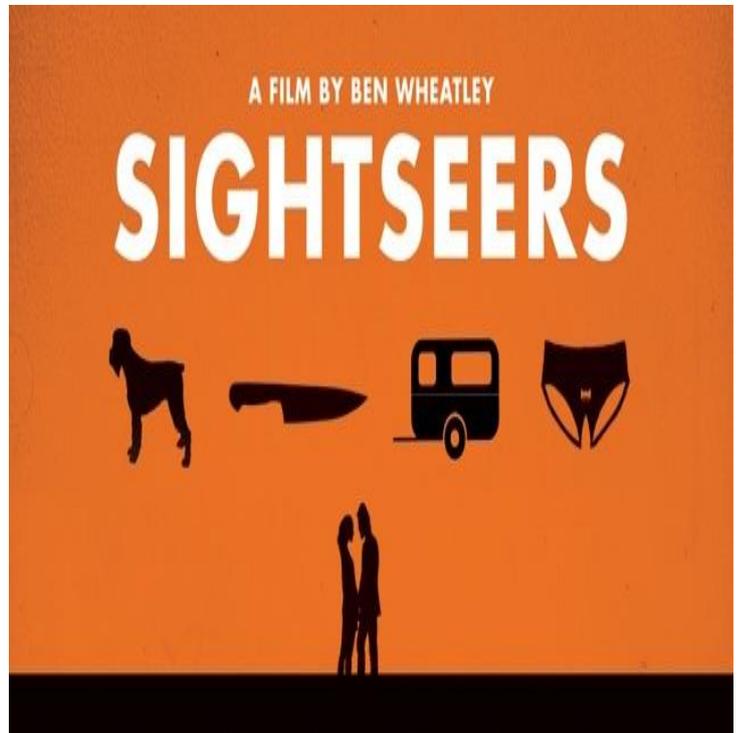
Season 34 - Issue 3 (screening 10.12.13)

UK Release 30 November 2012
Cert 15 88 mins

Director: Ben Wheatley
Director of Photography Laurie Rose
Edited by Amy Jump, Ben Wheatley, Robin Hill
Production Designer Jane Levick
Music Composed by Jim Williams
Sound Design Martin Pavey
Costume Designer Rosa Dias

Cast:

Tina Alice Lowe
Chris Steve Oram
Carol Eileen Davies
tram conductor Roger Michael
Crich tourist Tony Way
Mr Grant Seamus O'Neill
Janice Monica Dolan
Ian Jonathan Aris
head shaman Tom Meeten
Chalid Sulinan Aymen Hamdouchi
hiking shop assistant Kali Peacock



Sightseers has a script by comedians Steve Oram and Alice Lowe, who star as odd couple Chris and Tina. The pair developed the characters over several years on the UK comedy circuit and in a short film. After some final tweaks by Amy Jump, Wheatley's writing partner, editor and wife, the script was ready to shoot.



Alice Lowe: "Steve Oram and I are both comedians. We started talking about our shared Midlands background, and we just started improvising as these characters. We were talking about these camping holidays we'd been on in childhood, and starting talking as if we were a couple having an argument."

The characters came out quite spontaneously, but also they quite dark as well, which was quite amusing to us. So we did that as live double act. It got picked up for a TV teaser, and then all the TV channels rejected it as they said it was too dark. We knew there was something in it. We put it online and sent it to Edgar Wright, who I'd worked with before, and not expecting anything, just thinking he might enjoy it and then he got into contact with us and said you should take this to Big Talk and develop it as a feature."

During 12-hour shoots, Oram and Lowe stayed in character in locations such as the Crich Tramway museum, the Ribbleshead Viaduct, the Keswick Pencil Museum and assorted peaks.

Wheatley confides: "I was watching Andrea Arnold's Wuthering Heights the other day and I recognised the same crag that we shot on. I thought, 'Hang on - I know this rock!'"

Wheatley and his regular cinematographer Laurie Rose, another key team member, deliberately shot a Britain unlike its usual postcard image. They used locations such as North Yorkshire and the Lake District, revealing a dark, austere side to their beauty.



Like many British holidaymakers, the cast and crew of *Sightseers* were at the mercy of the climate.

"We had all weathers, but it was part of the story. The Lake District is incredibly beautiful but it can be harsh. There were cyclones blowing across Windermere. We saw it coming towards us and it knocked the whole crew over like bowling pins."

Did places like the Crich tram museum realise what they were letting themselves in for?

"I'm fond of those places, and I hope the film doesn't come across as snide," Wheatley says. "It's more about the characters being funny in those situations. We tried to be sensitive. We didn't want *Sightseers* to be some London-centric p---take. I'm not from London, and my films are purposely not set in London."

Alice Lowe: "I think it was the juxtaposition really, this idea of the stereotype of Britishness, and British tourists, which is this polite veneer, very friendly, 'Oh, I'm sorry you trod on my toe' thing. We wanted to do something that confounded that, and that translated really well to a film idea, extreme spikes of very normal characters but in a very extraordinary situation! It's very filmic as well: murder, sex, violence, all of those things. The meat of drama."

Steve Oram: "There's no real moral message. It's just showing people honestly as well. We did loads of research into serial killers, and we wanted them to feel like realistic serial killers."

Alice Lowe: "We knew that they had to have realistic psychologies for you to even go halfway to understanding them, or you wouldn't empathise with them, and you wouldn't want to spend time with them on this journey. You'd be disgusted by them, and we knew there had to be some psychological reason why they were the way they were; they had to be damaged people. What had led them to this particular scenario, and their coming together had obviously triggered something as well. That's the whole concept of the movie, two people coming together and becoming more than the sum of their parts."

Steve Oram: "We had a responsibility I think, as filmmakers, to not treat these things flippantly. It happens and it's horrible."



Alice Lowe: "We didn't want to make a light, Carry On-style murder comedy, we wanted it to have some psychological veracity to it. And to challenge people. I don't think you watch the film and feel they get off scot-free. They are punished in the end for their transgressions in quite a classical way."

Steve Oram: "It all goes tits-up in other words!"

If nothing else, *Sightseers* will make you think twice about dropping a Cornetto wrapper on any English heritage site – or not without checking over your shoulder first. Next time you are in a slow moving queue of cars on a Bank Holiday caused by a caravan being towed by the lead vehicle, you may just want to remember this film and accept the situation!

Iain McGlashan

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Top 10 tips for writing a Hollywood blockbuster (source BBC website 2.10.13)

Tony Gilroy, one of Hollywood's most sought-after screenwriters, is responsible for *The Devil's Advocate*, *Armageddon* and the *Bourne* films, to name just a few.

1. Go to the movies

I don't think there is anything you can learn from courses or books. You have been watching movies since you were born. You have filled your life with narrative... and food. It's already way down deep inside you. Going to the movies, having something to say, having an imagination and the ambition to do it is really all that is required. You can learn how to do anything.

2. Make stuff up but keep it real

This is imaginative work - screenwriters make things up. Everything I have in my life is a result of making things up. There is one thing that you have to know that is a deal-breaker - human behaviour.

The quality of your writing will be directly related to your understanding of human behaviour. You need to become a journalist for the movie that is in your head. You need to report on it; every scene has to be real.

3. Start small

Big ideas don't work. Start with a very small idea that you can build on. With *Bourne* I never read any of the books; we started again. The very smallest thing with [Jason] Bourne was, "If I don't know who I am and I don't know where I'm from, perhaps I can identify who I am by what I know how to do." We built a whole new world around that small idea. You just start small, you build out and you move one step after the next and that's how you write a Hollywood movie.

4. Learn to live by your wits

My father was a screenwriter but it's not some pixie dust creative family thing. I learned from watching how hard he worked and learned about the tempo of a writer's life - you have to live by your wits.

If you are living with someone who lives by their wits, it seems normal to you, it doesn't scare you as much and you understand the rhythms of it.

5. Write for TV

It's getting harder and harder to make good movies. TV is where the ambiguity and shades of reality live, it's where stories can be interesting. A lot of writers are very excited about TV right now and it's a writer-controlled business. When writers are in control, good things happen. They are more rational, they are hardworking, they are more benevolent. Every time writers have been put in charge of entertainment, things have worked out, so with TV maybe we will see a writer-driven utopia.

6. Learn to write anywhere, anytime

I have an office at home, I've written in a million hotel rooms, I can write anywhere now. My whole goal is to want to be at my desk. If the writing is going well, I don't want to quit. I'm older and wise enough now that if something is going well, I don't stop. I call and say I'm not coming home for dinner and just keep going. More than anything else, I want to want to go to my desk and to not be afraid of going to work.

7. Get a job

I spent six years tending bar while I figured out how to write screenplays. If you want to write, if you are a young writer and nobody knows you, find a job that pays you the most amount of money for the least amount of hours, so that you have the most amount of time left over to write. You want to live some place where you have some sort of cultural connection and can see as many films and be around as many people as possible. You want to be some place where you can just write and write and write.

8. Get a life

If you don't have anything to say and if you haven't done anything except see a bunch of movies, then what's the point? You can only write what you know about and that will either limit you or open the possibilities to everything. Be interested in lots of things and stay interested. My knowledge is very wide and incredibly thin. It's much more interesting when journalists and cops and doctors and bankers become screenwriters than 20-year-old film students. There are some exceptions, of course, but if you don't have anything to say, then why are you here?

9. Don't live in Los Angeles

I don't think there is any reason to live there, I think LA is probably very bad for you. It's a bad place to feed your head. In LA you are driving around all the time, surrounded by people who are making you depressed. I don't think Hollywood really helps a young writer feel any sense of romance about their life. Even if it's a delusion, you want to feel special when you go to work in the morning.

10. Develop a thick skin and just keep going

I have assumed both positions of the Hollywood Kama Sutra - top and bottom. It's very important to be able to handle rejection. I think one of the reasons writers are shy is because we are all very suspicious of our own process because it fails so often. It's no different from being a novelist or a composer or a painter. When you get rejection from the outside world, you either move on or you don't. But I think the hardest times are all the days when nothing happens and everybody who has ever written anything knows what I'm talking about. A great day of writing tops everything.

Reactions to **Amour** – 26.9.13

| Score | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---------------------|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | ~ | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| Total received – 24 | Average Score – 6.46 | | | | | | | | | |

Your Comments

Despite the subject matter, a remarkable portrait with marvellous performances

A very moving depiction of the tragic effects of marital breakdown.

Beautifully acted but so moving

Not exactly laugh a minute

Great film (not for the oldies) – harrowing

Very slow and very depressing

Very sad story – beautifully portrayed

Grim

Very long – some of the links very odd

Definitely not my type of film

Would not want to watch again – too harrowing

Enjoyed is not a good description but thought it a thoughtful film

Fantastic acting – if they were! Should no seniors be watching this film?

Harrowing but a quite remarkable film with outstanding performances

I cannot give this film less than 10. It is the most realistic portrayal of a couple in such a situation that has ever been made

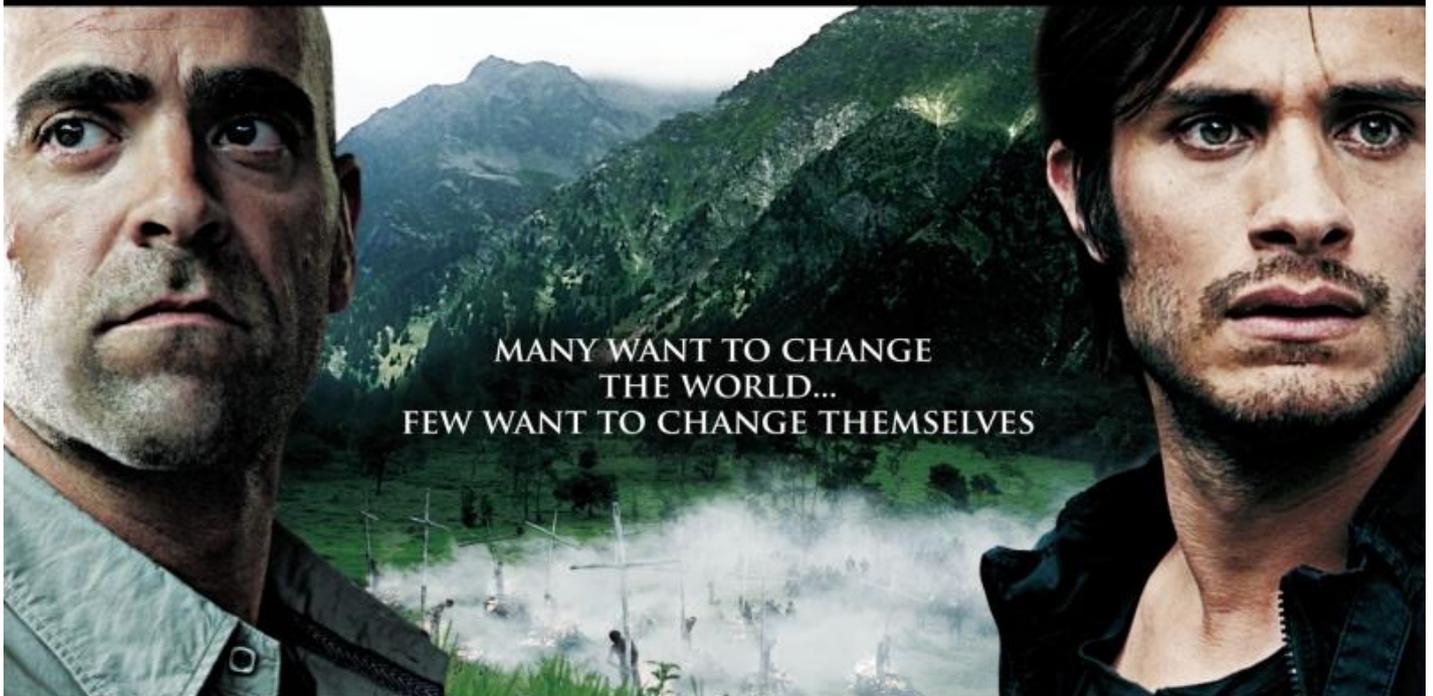
Well done for getting it sorted!

Our next film

8pm on Thursday 24 October 2013

LUIS TOSAR

GAEL GARCIA BERNAL



DIRECTED BY ICIAR BOLLAIN

EVEN THE RAIN

WRITTEN BY PAUL LAVERTY

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