



**OFFICIAL
SELECTION**

INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL
ROTTERDAM
2023

ALPHA KINGS

A film by Faye Tsakas & Enrique Pedráza-Botero

15' | U.S.A | 2022



WORLD PREMIERE

International Film Festival Rotterdam ([IFFR](#))

January 29th, 2023

NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE

True/False Film Festival

March 3rd, 2023

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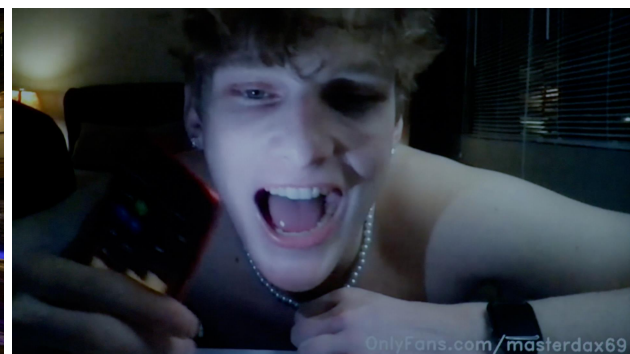
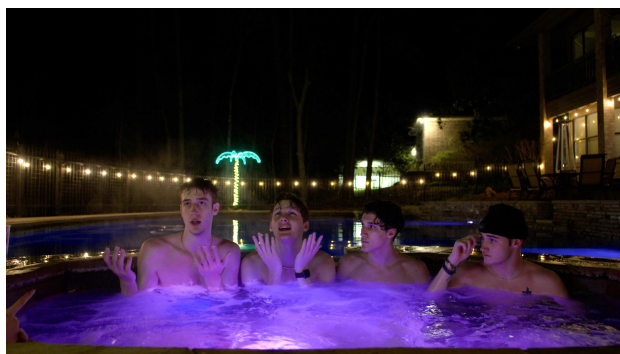
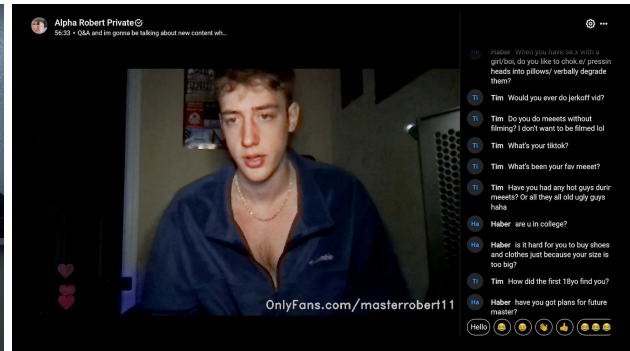
LOGLINE:

From a rented mansion in suburban Texas, a group of young men sell a hyperbolic, alpha-male version of themselves on the internet.

SYNOPSIS:

A group of young men in Montgomery, Texas forgo college to support themselves as “Masters” in the world of online Financial Domination, where thousands of paying clients consent to relinquishing control over their finances. Through the course of one night, the film alternates between the online world and observational moments, weaving between vignettes of virtual, live-streamed sessions and cam shows in which anonymous participants engage in consensual erotic labor.

Alpha Kings explores the dichotomy between these “Masters” alpha-male online personas and their true private selves, drawing on themes of desire, masculinity, sexuality, power, and performance. In a current social-political climate in which the American Dream seems far-fetched, the film’s subjects grapple with uncertainty about the future, their place in society, and the value of their work.



DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

At a time where the top twenty percent of Americans own eighty percent of the country's wealth, and the country recovers economically and socially from a global pandemic, what does the future hold for generation Z? With student loan debt reaching \$1.6 trillion dollars, and no clear path towards traditional career trajectories, how does an accelerated, hyper-capitalistic digital era impact the next generation? How does the culture of commodified celebrification through social media impact our country's youth?

Through a rigorous research process, we looked at the growing number of profiles on Twitter and OnlyFans aimed at monetizing content through erotic interactions between creators and their followers. We discovered a group of young male "Masters" in the world of online Financial Domination, or "Findom," who have recently come to rely on their internet pseudonym accounts for their livelihood.

Alpha Kings is born from an interest in exploring sex work in the digital sphere. We were intrigued at the idea that men seek to worship other men virtually, based on virile physical traits and a desire for verbal dominance - a highly traditional, almost archaic model of masculinity. Social media influencer culture, fandom, and the democratization of digital currencies on the internet has paved the way for the existence of this niche subculture – one rooted in an intense desire for a "superior man." In a society consumed by self-documentation and driven by capitalist thinking, wealth and power seem to be paramount to our online identities. Within this context, reaching sexual ecstasy by throwing it all away exists as the ultimate dystopian fetish.

Through an observational approach and a focus on stillness, the film embraces internet aesthetics and constructs an idiosyncratic visual language, presenting a privileged look at this line of work while provoking questions about the psychology at play.



DIRECTOR(S):



Enrique Pedr za Botero

Enrique is a visual artist and filmmaker from Bogot , Colombia. He served as Manager of Sundance Institute's Documentary Film Program for five years, running creative labs (Edit and Story Lab, Music and Sound Design Lab, Art of Editing Lab) and international programs, as well as contributing to awarding \$1-2 million/year in unrestricted grants to documentary filmmakers globally. He was Senior Programmer for Ambulante Documentary Film Festival and has worked with other arts organizations such as Film Independent. Throughout his career, Enrique has served as consultant and Juror in numerous selection committees for nonprofit institutions and media funds in the U.S. and Latin America, including Sundance's Documentary Fund, Proimagenes Colombia, IMCINE Mexico, John Hopkins' Saul Zaentz Innovation Fund, Concordia's Fellowship Program and Brown Girls Doc Mafia. Enrique holds a BFA in Film & Television from the New York Film Academy and is currently pursuing an MFA in Documentary Film & Video at Stanford University.

His work focuses on identity, memory and the complexity of home, aiming to break conventions of masculinity and sexuality. He's interested in the evolution of the documentary form at the intersection of socially-conscious work and the art of filmmaking.



Faye Tsakas

Faye is a Greek-American filmmaker from New York City. She spent several years as a Film Executive, serving as VP Development & Production for Los Angeles based Passage Pictures in which she oversaw development for the company alongside its CEO. She was Director of Acquisitions & Production for independent Film & Television distribution company FilmRise where she championed the release of award winning documentary and narrative films, including Sundance Grand Jury Prize winner *The Miseducation of Cameron Post*. Faye is a Features Programmer at Big Sky Documentary Film Festival and served on the jury of the Bushwick Film Festival in 2019. She has participated in the IFP Project Forum, the Hot Docs Project Forum, and the Sheffield Doc Fest project MeetMarket for several consecutive years. Faye received her BA in American Studies from Cornell University and is currently pursuing an MFA in Documentary Film & Video at Stanford University.

Faye's documentary work explores the presentation of American culture in the context of rapid globalization and capitalism; she is drawn to observations of youth culture, excess, disparity, and absurdity. Faye's work has been featured by Maryland Film Festival, Nowness, New Filmmakers NY, Vimeo Staff Picks, Paper Magazine, Boooooom.tv, The Film Shortage, and Maff.tv.

CREDITS

Directed, Photographed & Edited by
Faye Tsakas & Enrique Pedráza-Botero

Featuring

Master Dax
Master Hercules
Master Robert
King Jess
Jolie Daspit
Skylar Breann

Consulting Producer

Stefan Weinberger

Production Assistant

Jolie Daspit

Technical Support

Srdan Keca
Frank Floyd

Sound Mix

Dan Olmsted

Color Grading

Robert Arnold

Post Sound Assistance

Sruti Visweswaran

Faculty Advisor

Jamie Meltzer

Thanks

Rowan Ings
Lauren Howell
Susana Barrón
Riel Roch Decter
Robert Greene
Gabby Green
Nora DeLigter
R.J. Lozada
Christopher Nguyen
Joel Rakowski
Maya Daisy Hawke

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Pacific Pioneer Fund

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Department of Art & Art History
Stanford University*

