

KARDAR STUDIOS PRESENTS

JAMIE'S WAGER

A FILM BY SEAN KARDAR

STARRING **AMY BOOTH-STEEL** **KATE MARAVAN** **MUSHI NOOR** **USAAMAH IBRAHEEM HUSSAIN**
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER **DR YUSUF HAMIED** PRODUCER **DERKAN DOGAN & EHSAN BHAYAT**
EDITING HOUSE **CABIN EDIT** EDITOR **SAM OSTROVE**
MUSIC **MIKE TUCCILLO** SOUND DESIGN **750 MPH LONDON**
WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY **SEAN KARDAR**

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JAMIE'S WAGER

A short film by Sean Kardar

With the unexpected death of his father, Jamie finds himself in the middle of his Muslim uncle, Hafiz, and his father's New-Age girlfriend, Alicia, at the office of William's Funeral Directors.

Genre: Family Drama
Production Year: 2024.
Run time: 16:27 mins.



SYNOPSIS

With the unexpected death of his father, Jamie finds himself in the middle of his Muslim uncle, Hafiz, and his father's New-Age girlfriend, Alicia, at the office of William's Funeral Directors.

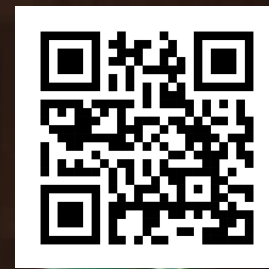
Presented with a series of burial options catering for every religious denomination, uncertain about his father's beliefs, or his own, he finds himself at a crossroads between religious tradition and his secular upbringing. Should he be buried as a Muslim? Or was he a modern day "spiritual?"

Sitting in a dated wood panelled office, the grieving family undergo the Funeral Director's well-oiled administrative process.

Desperately attempting to make sense of it all, wanting to do the right thing, Jamie's places a wager on what he believes may be the most pragmatic solution, but we are left wondering if this was the right decision and was he able to get closure?



TRAILER



DIRECTOR'S BIO

Sean is the son of a Vietnamese mother and a Pakistani father. Born in the banlieue of Paris in 1986, he moved to London at the age of six, a city he has come to call home.

His late father, AJ Kardar, was the first filmmaker from Pakistan to submit a Film to The Academy Awards "Jago Hua Savera" in 1960 and went on to achieve international festival recognition.

Sean's Vietnamese family are part of the French diaspora that fled the war in Vietnam and settled in Paris.

Having graduated in Film Studies at Queen Mary University in 2007, he spent his early years competing in international martial arts tournaments, travelling the world, representing the country fulfilling his ambitions of an athlete achieving European and World honors.

Sean is currently based in London working as a freelance self-shooting Director working in unscripted sports entertainment as he transitions his focus to a writer/director.





DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT



"The story of Jamie's Wager was inspired by conversations surrounding the passing of both my father AJ Kardar and my eldest brother, Karim Kardar.

In both instances there were family disagreements about how they should be honoured during their funeral. Both free spirited, it wasn't evident how exactly they should be defined upon their deaths. In this sense, the film is a simple family drama about a modern multicultural family in conflict about how to organise a funeral ceremony for someone whose religious beliefs were in question.

My intention was to juxtapose the ethereal and emotional phenomenon in dealing with death against the bureaucratic process of organising a funeral ceremony. In a world of labels and products, funerals become a shopping transaction. A somewhat dark but amusing experience at the same time.

As a third culture kid who was brought up a Christian, became agnostic and later found Islam, I feel Jamie's character speaks to a generation who are detached from their cultural roots and in search of a cultural identity and a sense of spirituality.

I find the search for spirituality in a secular society a fascinating subject to explore. Something I'm keen on developing in my writing/directing career.

I hope the film serves as a tool to spark conversations surrounding the inevitable nature of death and the questions that surround it, how do we prepare for it, what happens after it. I also hope it encourages debate around the practice of spirituality and religion in secular societies."

Sean Kardar



INTERVIEW

This is clearly a story inspired by personal events, what motivated you to turn this into your first film?

I come from a very mixed-cultural background and experienced similar conversations when my father and eldest brother died. The idea of a family struggling to define a relative's spiritual position within a bureaucratic process is something I initially found quite amusing as a story, but also a poignant comment on the intersections of spirituality and identity in secular society. I also feel as society becomes increasingly more multi-cultural, many people can/will be able to relate to the themes and emotions expressed in this story.

What was your pre-production process like?

As someone who does a lot of work in low-budget unscripted entertainment, where environments are a lot more uncontrollable, I really enjoyed the luxury of having a pre-production process, obviously within the confines of a short film budget, but it still really helped.

I took the opportunity to hone-in on my shot list and story board so I wasn't spending too much time on experimenting on set. I had a really good AD, Kashman Harris, who kept me on track!

It was also important for me to get Chris, my DOP, and Tuppac my Gaffer to perform reccees together and talk through the shot list and familiarise ourselves with the spaces.

I cut out each frame from my story board and stuck it onto a big piece of cardboard which I brought with me to set so I could see them all at once during production. That process really helped me mentally, knowing that if I could tick all these shots off, I had a complete story "in the can".

Tell us about the creative aesthetics of the film?

It was important for me to use different colors, tones and locations in the introduction scenes of Jamie, Hafiz and Alicia to highlight their contrasting worlds, to a point where they don't even seem to be from the same family. A young modern bedroom trading desk, a south-asian household and a hip, bohemian living space, all representing different people, beliefs and ways of thinking.

For the funeral director scene I wanted a dated wood panelled office to represent a world of bureaucracy, routine, process which acted indifferent to the emotional grieving family within it. It was like the space didn't care about what is essentially a really complex human phenomenon, much like the world we live in today.

CONT'D

What are some of the challenges you faced during production?

There were several to tackle, but ultimately a lack of time and the obvious budget limitations. Certain shots/scenes I would have loved to have more time to work creatively, but that's a luxury I didn't have for a 3-day production schedule in multiple locations across London.

I'm also a fan of long static takes which doesn't really lend itself well in a short film where you have to tell the story succinctly, so it was always going to be a challenging format to work in.

The final cemetery scene was also very challenging as we had a 24ft crane blocking a public pathway and we had a limited amount of time to get the shot before the sun created a huge shadow of the crane across the scene. I think we managed to get it in two takes.

What does this story and film mean to you? What did you intend on conveying?

From a personal level, it's an insight into a personal story of my own family experiences and I guess as a creative you feel most comfortable telling your own stories, but I'm not here really wanting to use the cinematic medium to pour out my feelings for the sake of it. I chose this particular story because

I felt it perfectly highlights the complex intersectionality of people and their beliefs in secular Britain.

As a Muslim, I have my own personal beliefs on certain practices, but this film wasn't an attempt at preaching a particular moral stance, for me I wanted it to serve as a piece of social commentary on the binary forces of secularism and religion, the plight of a third culture generation who are caught between worlds, and how these tensions can impact how we manage arguably one of the most universal experiences surrounding the human experience, death.

Whats next for you as a writer/director?

I want to continue to explore intersections of identity and spirituality in my work. I want to provoke debate on things I see and feel. I'm currently in the middle of developing an idea for a feature which I think will give me the opportunity to explore my themes and visual aesthetic to another level.

Also, having spent 20 years training and competing in international martial arts competitions, I'd also really like to explore that world in cinema, especially the relationship between oneness, flowstate, fighting and spirituality which isn't something I see being explored very often.



TRACY WILLIAMS

CAST



**USAAMAH
HUSSAIN**
AS JAMIE

Usaamah graduated from LAMDA last year but is already garnering applause for his professional stage debut role of 'Mohsen' in BROWN BOYS SWIM at the Soho Theatre. Jumping from one lead role to another, he also recently starred in PEANUT BUTTER & BLUEBERRIES at the Kiln theatre. He will also be appearing on your screen in VIRDEE for the BBC.



AMY
BOOTH-STEEL
AS TRACY

Amy Booth-Steel is known for Coronation Street (1960), Blue Jean (2022) and Nolly (2023). She has also been credited in One Day, Nolly, Stath Lets Flats, Call the Midwife, Doctor Who, The Year of the Rabbit and The Windsors. Amy is part of the mcewanandpenford talent collective.

CAST



Mushi Noor is an actor known for Coronation Street, Lies We Tell and My Kingdom. For the past few years he's played the role of DC Ahmadi on Coronation Street. Mushi originally trained with Davis Johnson in Manchester, and continued his training with Manchester Actors' Platform under the guidance of Simon Naylor and Karen Henthorn.



Kate is an actress, writer and teacher. She trained at RADA and works in Theatre, Television and Film. TV credits include Pan Tau (Caligari Films), Holby City, Giri/Haji (Netflix), Safe (Netflix), Lewis, Miranda, The Politician's Husband, Emmerdale, Absolute Power, Broken News. Film includes 6 Underground (Netflix), Seven Lucky Gods (nominated for Best Supporting Actress at Milan Film festival).





executive producer **DR YUSUF HAMIED**
writer **SEAN KARDAR**
director **SEAN KARDAR**
producer **EHSAN BHAYAT**
producer **DERKAN DOGAN**
asst. producer **RAHA MAHAMOUD**
casting director **JONNY BOUTWOOD CASTING**
script consultants **SCRIPT COMPASS**

post production editor
color
asst. editor
music
sound
sound designer & mixer

CABIN EDIT
SAM OSTROVE
MIKEY PEHANICH | BLACKSMITH
ESFANDIAR BARDON-RAFIZADEH
MIKE TUCCILLO
750 MPH LONDON
JAKE ASHWELL

CREDITS

first AD
director of photography
1st AC
2nd AC
crane operator
gaffer
spark
park
sound recordist
script supervisor
costume/make up
prop master/set dresser
standby Prop

KASHMAN HARRIS
CHRIS NGUYEN
ALESSANDRO OLIVERI
BALAWAL ATTA
CEM TOPAL
TUPAC CARROLL
DYLAN SCHULTZ-SOO
KAMAU KELLY
NICK SOUNDIS
SELINA WELSH
DENISE DOGAN
COLLETTE CREARY-MYERS
ANDREW SMITH

Production Assistant

SOHAIB HASSAN
ZOYA ALI
SEAN HATAMI
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