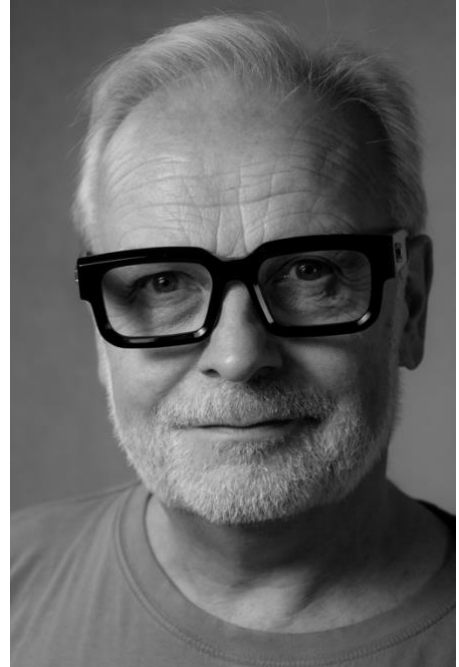


"KILTER"

Written & Directed by Ivan Clements, MA

KILTER is a film born from lived experience — an exploration of injustice, silence, and the fragile path from trauma to redemption. It emerged from my personal journey through a system that often fails to distinguish truth from manipulation, and from my determination to tell that story not with bitterness, but with compassion.

This film exists at the intersection of **social realism and moral inquiry**. It asks how we find balance — the “kilter” — after profound emotional dislocation. While inspired by personal events, *KILTER* reaches beyond autobiography. It reflects a wider social malaise: fear of speaking out, institutional inertia, and the quiet resilience of those who survive both abuse and false accusation.



My aim as a **CollaborAuteur** — a filmmaker who fuses auteur vision with collaborative trust — was to shape a production culture rooted in empathy and transparency. Every element of *KILTER*, from its restrained cinematography to its layered sound design, was constructed through open dialogue with cast and crew. The result is a film that listens as much as it speaks.

Visually, *KILTER* draws from the **moral ambiguity and emotional precision** of films such as *The Silence of Lorna* (Dardenne Brothers), *A Prophet* (Audiard), *Manchester by the Sea* (Loneragan), and *Gran Torino* (Eastwood). The camera observes rather than dictates — capturing moral complexity through framing, silence, and gesture. Static compositions give way to movement as characters reclaim agency; sound carries the emotional undercurrent where dialogue dares not.

Thematically, the film is about **forgiveness, truth, and the human cost of silence**. It explores how systems can be weaponised, how identity fractures under accusation, and how healing requires moral courage. My goal was to expose injustice without perpetuating division — to create a work that encourages reflection and reconciliation, not retribution.

In making *KILTER*, I was guided by three principles:

- **Ethical authenticity:** ensuring all representation is grounded in respect and truth.
- **Emotional economy:** using restraint — in performance, image, and sound — to create intimacy and empathy.
- **Collaborative authorship:** inviting every creative partner to enrich the film’s vision through their own lived insight.

Sound and music became vital emotional agents. Working closely with composer Nico Willems and sound designer Alan Deacon, I pursued an aural landscape that reflects Athena’s inner life — the pulse of dread, the quiet ache of hope. The score evolves from tension to tenderness, echoing her moral transformation.

KILTER is not a story of victimhood, but of awakening. It acknowledges the darkness of coercion and the despair of injustice, yet finds light in the possibility of redemption. In making it, I learned that filmmaking is itself an act of healing — a conversation between pain and empathy, silence and voice.

Through *KILTER*, I aim to invite audiences to listen differently: to see that truth often resides not in the noise of accusation, but in the quiet spaces where courage begins.

The theme tune and lyrics for the film supports my vision for the story I'm trying to communicate.

"Zongela motema ya solo"

Milimbisa yo moko
(Forgive yourself)

Zongela motema ya solo
(Return to the heart that is true)

Milimbisa makambo nyoso
(Forgive yourself for everything)

Ya kala pe ya sekoyo
(Past and present)

Zala na boboto epai na yo moko (mpe) na mokili
(Be kind to yourself and the world)

Ozali na mwinda nakati
(You have a light inside)

Zongela motema ya solo
(Return to the heart that is true)

Mwinda na yo ya solo
(Your true light)

Zongela bolingo
(Return to love)

To sangana
(Let's come together)

Refrain:
Limbisa motema, motema, motema ya solo
(Forgive the heart, heart, heart that is true)

