



# Ashes to Ashes...

A DARK COMEDY ABOUT DEATH

# Ashes to Ashes

“In 'Ashes to Ashes', we explore the themes of death and love; death of love and death of a loved one.”

– Film Creator, Nicola Gaughan



# THE STORY

Sarah's mother is dying, but she is getting no support from her emotionally unavailable gym junkie boyfriend. All he does is work out and drink protein shakes.

It is Christmas and Sarah visits her mother one last time. Time and Christmas carols is all she can give her now.

In the middle of editing, Sarah sees messages on her phone from her family saying 'Where are you? It's Mum!' and rushes to the hospital, but she is too late. Three days before Christmas and she has lost her beloved mother. Her boyfriend Paul ignores her text and goes to the gym instead.

During the funeral service the priest falls asleep and starts snoring, causing a wave of giggles and nudges.

Going to collect her mother's ashes from the undertaker, Sarah is handed both her parents ashes in purple plastic tubs in an old hessian supermarket bag and can't decide exactly how to put them in the car. Does she strap them in with a seatbelt each? or put them in the boot (trunk)?

Leaving the two tubs next to her boyfriend's protein powder on the worktop, she starts making a cup of tea for her cousin Alice who's just popped by, but spills the coffee everywhere. Her cousin curiously asks if the tubs are the boyfriend's new protein powder. Learning they are actually Sarah's parents, Alice waves at them tentively and says 'Hello Aunty, Hello Uncle'. When Paul comes in from the gym again, a row ensues due to his lack of support and care. Sarah ends the relationship and tells Paul to get out. Before he leaves he makes up a new protein shake.

The family go to a bluebell glade to scatter the ashes and then goes to the cafe for a cup of tea. Meanwhile...

Paul is working out angrily in the gym. He takes a swig of his protein shake, but it doesn't taste quite right. There are black spots of ash in it. He gags and spit it out in disgust....

*Ashes to  
Ashes...*

A DARK COMEDY ABOUT DEATH

# CREW



# NICOLA GAUGHAN

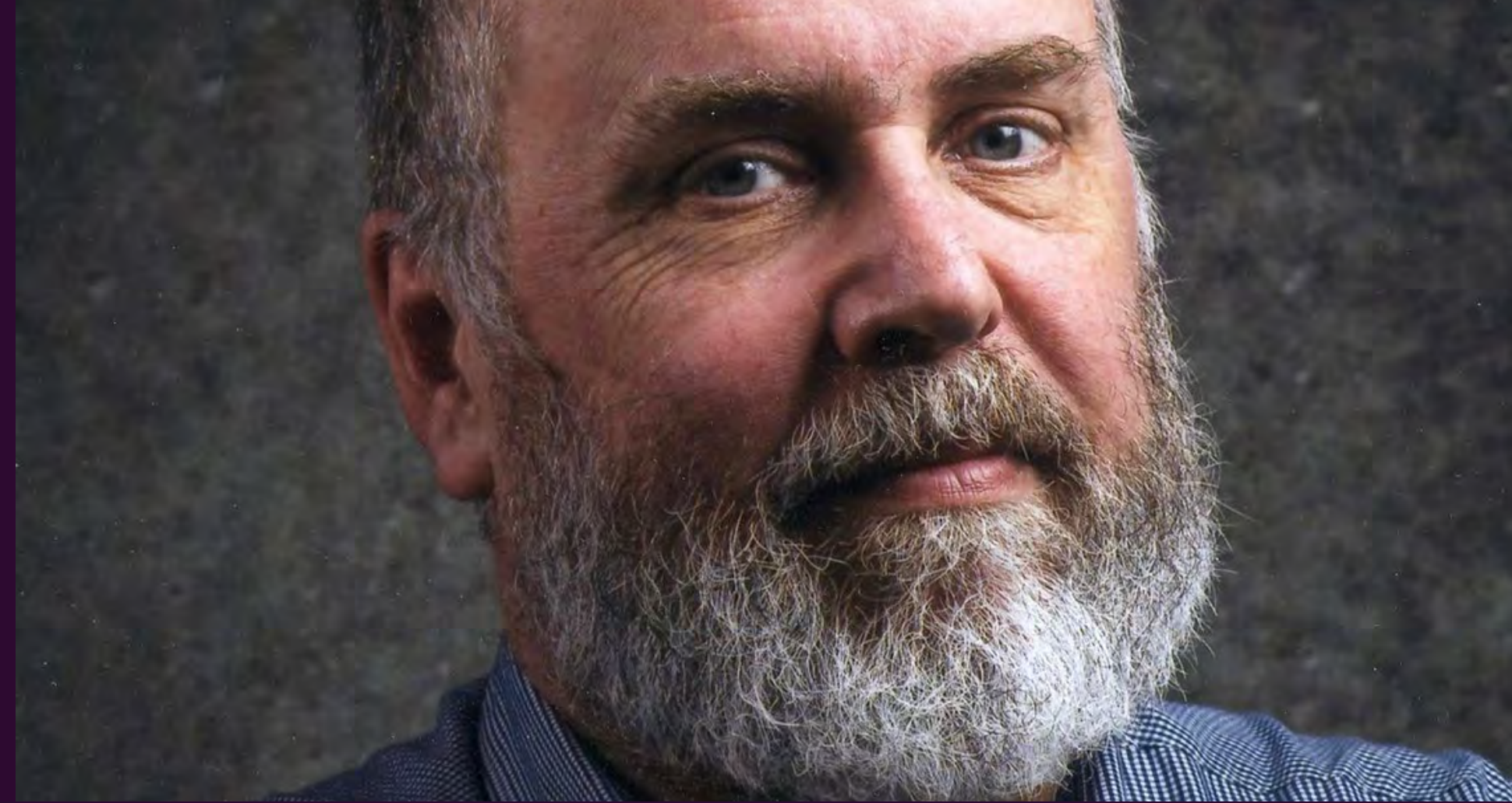
Director and Writer

Nicola is an experienced graphic designer and LRPS qualified photographer. She has acted as a stills photographer, and other roles. She completed the Film Foundation Fortnight at London Film Academy where she was DOP and co-writer/co-editor on *Slasher*. She was stills photographer in *Curtains*, which screened at the BFI Flare Festival and *Rough and Ready*, a comedy which starred page 3 girl Peta Todd. She was also a BTS photographer at the Raindance Film Festival and Questors Theatre in Ealing. Her first short that she wrote was *What did you do in the war Grandad?*, which won Best Documentary in 2020. She has also written a feature film about her uncle's WW2 RAF career (*The Ghosts of Wellington x3757*) which won Best Feature Screenplay by a London screenwriter in the New York Script Awards. She is enrolled on the MA in Film Practice at Arts University Bournemouth Online and undertook a Ways into Screenwriting course at City Lit in September 2023, where she wrote the short script *Ashes to Ashes*, which has just won the Screenplay Contest - Shorts in the Los Angeles Film and Documentary Awards 2025. Her other short script *The Eyes Have It* was an Official Selection in the New York Script Awards, and was selected for the London Lift Off Festival in December 2023.

# ROBERT VASS

Director of Photography

Robert is an experienced cameraman and has recently retired. He has been a regular member of Questors Theatre in Ealing for years where he is joint head of the Photography department. He is responsible for ensuring all productions have pre production and rehearsal photos taken for use in the production promotional material online and in the theatre. He also creates all the theatre's social media videos, working with the marketing department to ensure the videos suit the productions.



# ETHAN LYONS

Production assistant and trainee cameraman

Ethan has just graduated from the Film and Media degree at the University of West London in Ealing.

He has previously acted as production assistant for Nicola in her short *Blowing her own Saxophone* and more recently her short *The Cost of Silence*, where he acted as second cameraman.



# CRISTIAN CAIRO

Co-producer

Moving to the UK about 8 years ago from Italy, Cristian has written two books in English about coaching.

Since meeting Nicola, Cristian has become more interested in film and the production side of the industry.

He was co-producer for Nicola's short film The Cost of Silence.





# CHARACTERS

*Ashes to  
Ashes...*

A DARK COMEDY ABOUT DEATH



# SARAH

DINA SALAM

Sarah works as a video editor and is in the middle of editing a wedding video.

Her personal life is not quite so romantic. Her boyfriend has become so obsessed with the 'body beautiful' that he spends most of his time in the gym, crafting his physique. Their once passionate relationship has now become fractured and they're like passing ships in the night.

To add to the stress, Sarah's mother is dying. Having had a stroke, her mother has spent months in hospital and is slowly slipping away.

No emotional support is forthcoming from her boyfriend and Sarah is struggling to cope on her own, trying to tread the fine line between earning enough to keep herself afloat and spending enough time with her mother in her final days....alone.

*Dina is a member of Questors Theatre where she recently played Mrs Elton and Mrs Watson in Emma. She has also just played Willow in Nicola Gaughan's short film The Cost of Silence.*

# PAUL

Neer Vaja

Having once been a loving partner, Paul has become obsessed by the fitness bug and how his body looks. He now spends most of his time in the gym, and paying very little attention to Sarah.

He has become totally detached from their relationship and almost treats the house as a hotel, coming and going on his way to the gym, barely interacting or supporting Sarah. Her, to him, constant attempts to get him to engage with her, he views as suffocating and attempts to stop him achieving the 'body beautiful' and something he doesn't have time for.

He almost views Sarah's need for his support to cope with her mother's upcoming death as a weakness. Too late he will realise that love means and needs more than just being there.

*Neer is an up and coming actor and recently played Blake in Nicola Gaughan's short film The Cost of Silence. He has also played a character called Sid in a feature film that is being released this year called "Never Had A Chance"*





## ALICE Hannah Willey

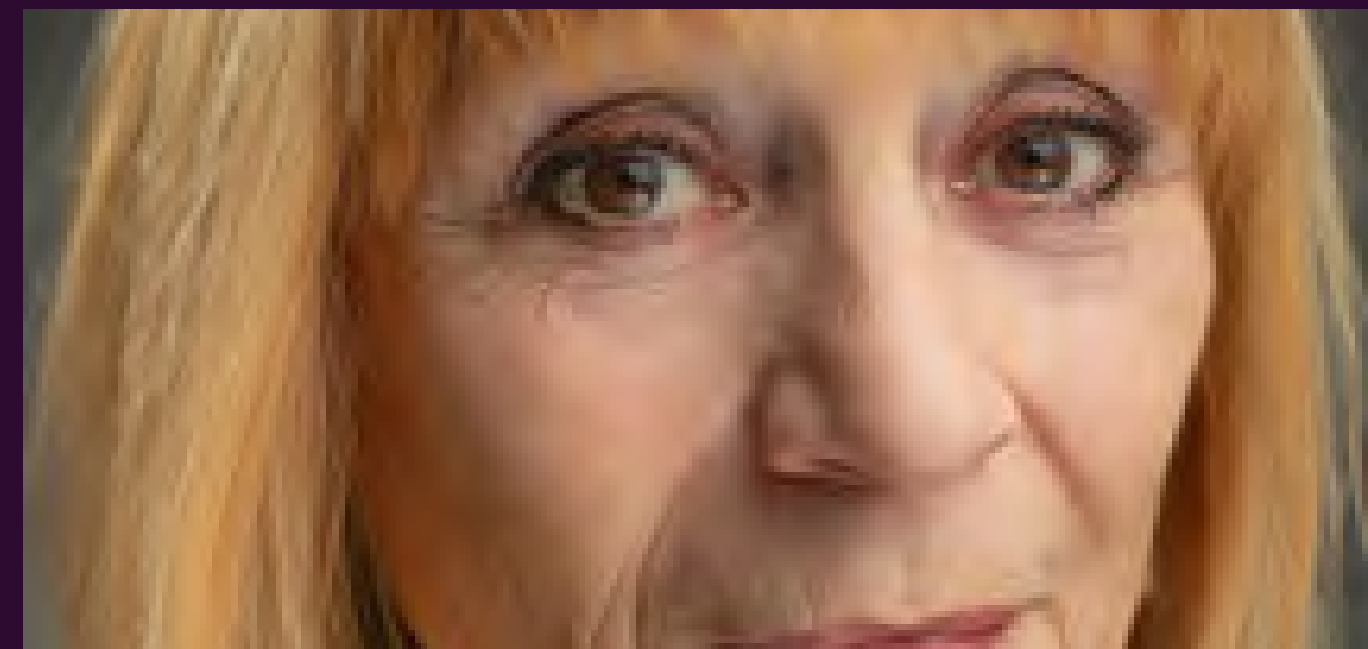
Sarah's cousin who lives nearby. She and Sarah have quite a close relationship.

*Hannah is an up and coming actor and recently played Sophie in Nicola Gaughan's short film The Cost of Silence.*

## FUNERAL DIRECTOR/VO Lucy Aley-Parker

The funeral director already knows Sarah, as their company dealt with the funeral for Sarah's father a few years previously. Now there are two lots of ashes to return to the family. She understands how difficult this is for Sarah.

*Lucy is an experienced actor, both theatre and in film/TV. She is a directing member of Questors Theatre and recently was the casting director for Nicola Gaughan's short film The Cost of Silence.*



## PRIEST Wesley Lloyd

The priest is tired (and hungover). It was a late night. He could really do without having to officiate yet another funeral, especially one on the day after New Year's day. Dearly beloved, we are here to remember..... Eileen, no erm Diana.... Why are they all giggling? Did I just doze off? Where is my Order of Service? Ooops... How embarrassing, I woke myself up snoring....

*Wesley is an experienced actor, both theatre and in film/TV, with over 100 productions to his name. He is a member of Questors Theatre and recently was the estate agent for Attrition, a film by Brendan Lonergan, for which Nicola Gaughan was co producer.*

# Ashes to Ashes

"Death is a very narrow theme, but it reaches a wide audience."

– Socrates





# LOCATIONS TO BE SOURCED

Dina and Pauls house  
Funeral home/hospital  
Taxi

Crematorium  
Gym  
Glade

# VISUAL STYLE & TONE

- Clean cut
- Purple
- Modern
- Muted
- Darkly funny

If we can get permission we would like to use Pink Floyd's 'Comfortably Numb' as a soundtrack



Purple often represents death



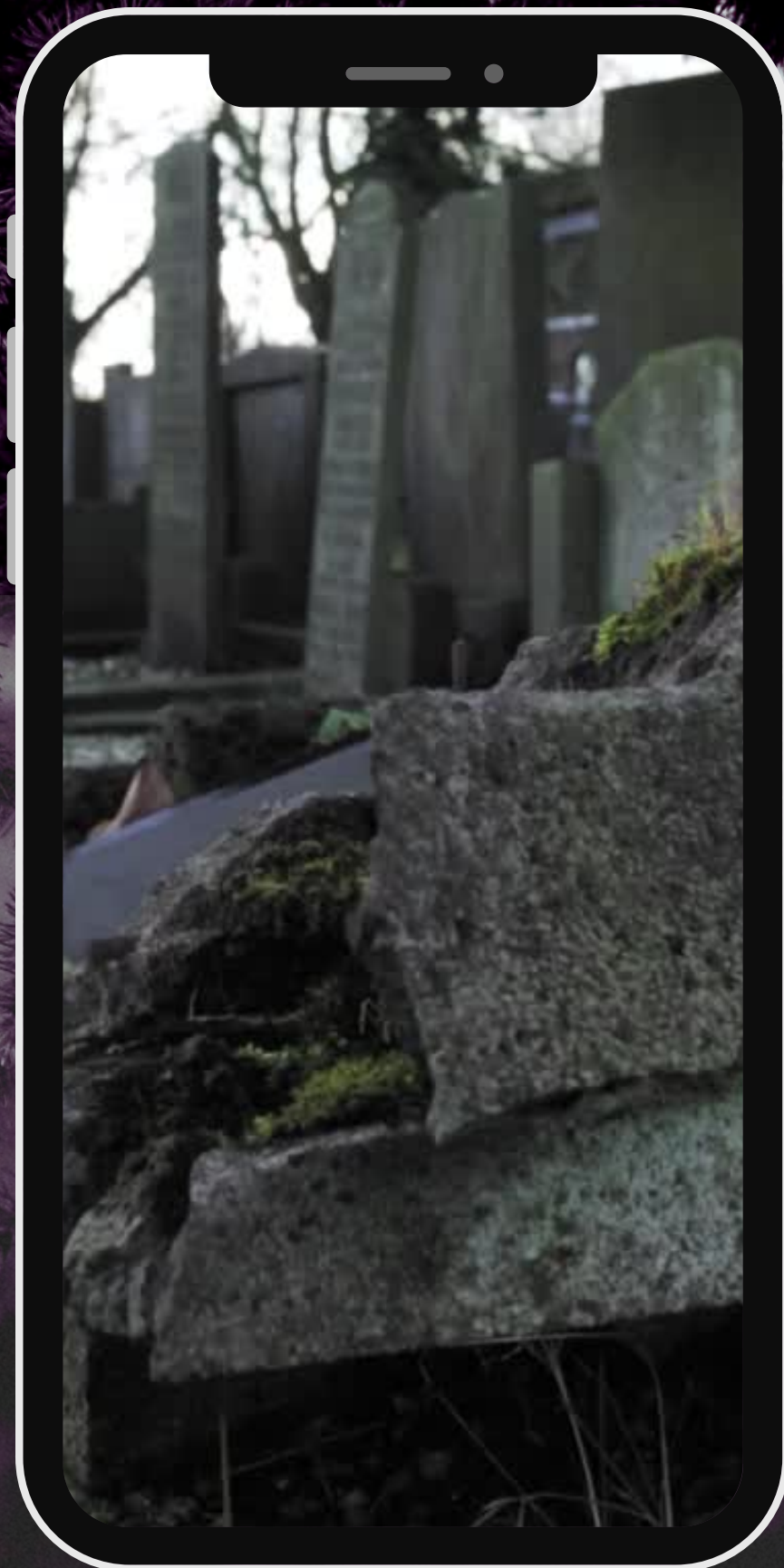
Yellow often represents obsession in films

*Ashes to  
Ashes...*

A DARK COMEDY ABOUT DEATH

*Ashes to  
Ashes*

@iconiccreative

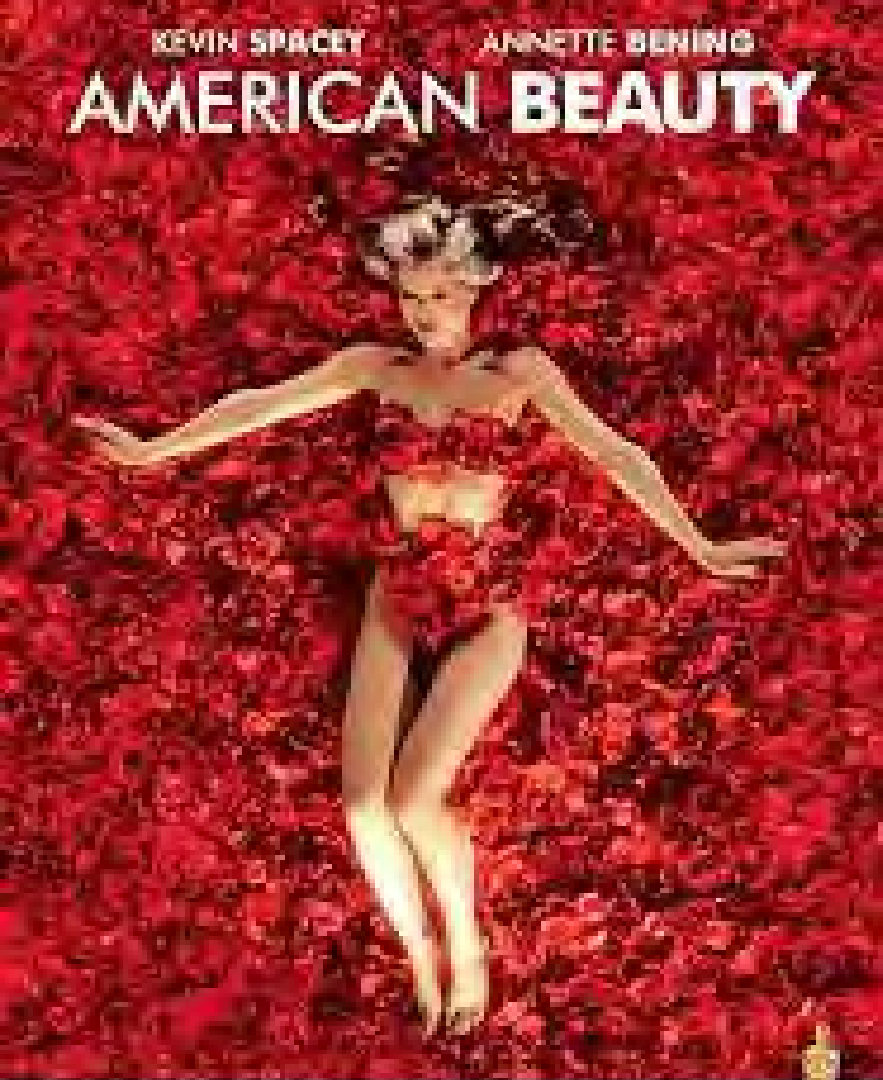


## PROMOTION STRATEGY

We plan to promote "Ashes to Ashes" on Instagram by teaming up with big accounts like @bigindie and @raindance, as well as @studiobinder.

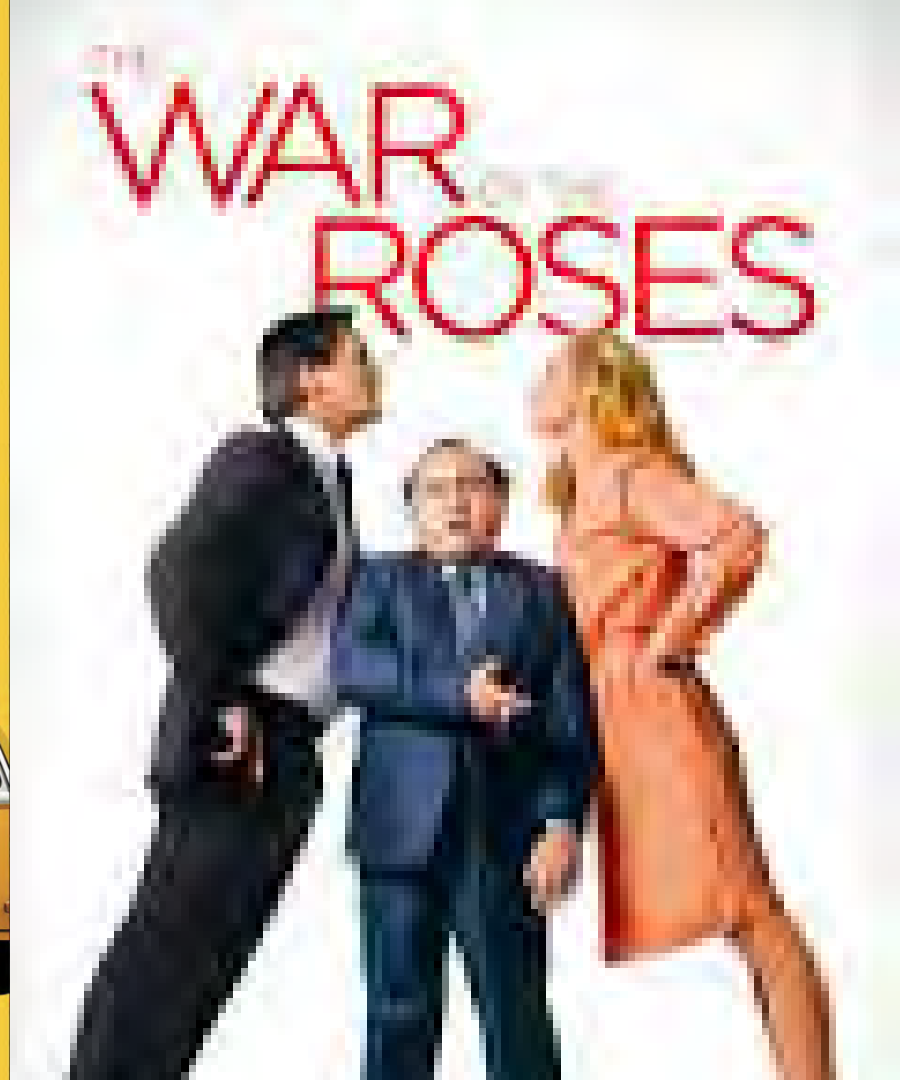
We'll share exciting previews, behind-the-scenes looks, and fun poster designs.

Plus, well-known film folks like The Hollywood Reporter and Film Freeway will give the film a shoutout. Our goal? Get people talking about the film and sign up to see more of it.



# TARGET AUDIENCE & MARKET POTENTIAL

As a dark comedy we feel this would appeal to viewers who appreciate films such as American Beauty and others.



# INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVALS

The Ashes to Ashes script has already been very successful in the festival circuit, winning the Screenplay - Shorts contest in the Los Angeles Film and Documentary Awards 2025, Official Selection in Best Script Awards London 2024, Hollywood Best Indie Film Awards 2024, New York Film and Actresses Award 2025, Los Angeles Movie and Video Awards 2025, Nominee in the Cambridge Short Film Festival 2025, Cannes Art Film Fest 2024, Finalist in the Barcelona Indie Awards 2024 and an Honourable mention in the Tokyo Screenplay Awards 2025.

We plan to enter the film into film festivals such as Sundance, Tribeca, Cannes and others.



# THANK YOU

**EMAIL**  
INFO@ICONICCREATIVE.CO.UK

**MOBILE**  
+44 (0)775 3413005