

BFI Network presents

# Smooth The Edges

*a Charles Newland film*

BFI NETWORK AND BARDENA FILMS PRESENT **SMOOTH THE EDGES**  
STARRING MEGAN PLACITO MAXIMILIAN NEWLAND COLIN WELLS  
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY **ROBBIE BRYANT** EDITORS MARTINA ZAMOLO & ALESSANDRO LUCHETTI MUSIC MALACHI LILLITOS  
PRODUCTION DESIGNER **BRYDIE TEGGART** SOUND RECORDIST **ADAM FLETCHER** COLOUR **CARL THOMPSON**  
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER **LAUREN PARKER** PRODUCED BY **ALESSANDRO LUCHETTI & LIZA MORTIMER**  
WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY **CHARLES NEWLAND**

 **BFI NETWORK** 

**BARDENA**  
F I L M S

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F I L M S

# SMOOTH THE EDGES

*Written & Directed by:*

**Charles Newland**

*Produced By:*

**Alessandro Luchetti**

**Liza Mortimer**

*Executive Producer for BFI:*

**Lauren Parker**

*Production Company:*

**Bardena Films**

*Editors:*

**Alessandro Luchetti**

**Martina Zamolo**

*Cinematographer:*

**Robbie Bryant**

*Composer:*

**Malachi Lillitos**

*Running Time:*

**12 minutes**

*Aspect Ratio*

**3:2**

*Film Colour:*

**Colour**



# LOGLINE

Chantel, a young woman of Romani-Gypsy heritage conceals her ethnicity to avoid workplace discrimination, but after losing her job, she confronts her identity while navigating the challenges of finding new employment and facing the prejudices of those around her.

# SYNOPSIS

In *SMOOTH THE EDGES* Chantel, a determined young Romani-Gypsy woman, suppresses her ethnic background to shield herself from prejudice. However, when she unexpectedly loses her job, she's forced to confront her identity head-on.

As she embarks on a journey to secure new employment, Chantel grapples with the societal biases she encounters and the internal conflict of staying true to herself while avoiding discrimination.

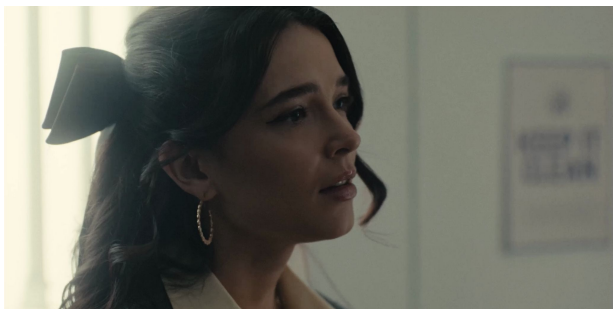
Through resilience and self-discovery, Chantel navigates the complexities of her heritage, challenging societal norms and ultimately embracing her identity with courage and dignity.

# Directors Statement

*SMOOTH THE EDGES* was born out of a desire to listen more carefully, to look more closely, and to question who British cinema has historically allowed to speak for itself. From the outset, this film was not simply about telling a story that involved Romani Gypsy characters; it was about building a process that was inclusive, collaborative, and rooted in lived experience. The decision to work with a Romani Gypsy cast and crew was not a stylistic choice or a gesture of representation, it was fundamental to the integrity of the film.

British film culture has long been shaped by narratives *about* Romani Gypsy communities rather than *from within* them. Too often these portrayals flatten complexity into stereotype, reinforcing myths rather than revealing truth. *SMOOTH THE EDGES* actively resists that tradition. By placing Romani Gypsy voices at the centre of the creative process, the film challenges the power imbalance that has historically excluded these communities from authorship, decision-making, and visibility behind the camera.

The making of the film was shaped by trust, dialogue, and shared ownership. Using a Romani Gypsy cast and crew and coming from that background myself - is groundbreaking not because it should be rare, but because British cinema has made it so. The industry often speaks about diversity while maintaining structures that quietly exclude marginalised communities from meaningful access. This film demonstrates that inclusion is not a compromise, it is an expansion of creative possibility. It enriches storytelling, deepens realism, and opens up new cinematic languages.



Megan Placito as ***Chantel***



Maximilian Newland as ***James***



Colin Wells as ***Graham***

# DIRECTOR

## Charles Newland

Charles Newland is a film director of Romani Gypsy origin based in the UK. He is the founder of film collective Notown Films and a member of the European Film Academy. His work has been featured by BBC, TATE, VICE, BFI, and The Guardian, and his films have been screened at a variety of international film festivals.

Charles began his career working in avant-garde and experimental film. Recently, he has been making documentaries on a freelance basis for a variety of international companies and organisations and has now moved into drama production.



## **PRODUCER** Alessandro Luchetti

Alessandro is a producer and editor. Over the past four years, he has worked on several short films that have gone to compete at BAFTA qualifying festivals including the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival, the London Short Film Festival, the Short Shorts Film Festival amongst others.

He co-produced the BFI NETWORK short film “Jim”, now on Channel 4 as part of Iris Prize 2022: Lonely Hearts. He also made short art documentaries for the Institute of contemporary Arts in London, and video essays for MUBI. He is interested in artful, humane and thought-provoking films.



## **PRODUCER** Liza Mortimer

Liza is a producer, filmmaker and performance artist. Her most recent production roles include Production Assistant for a project called, “Realities Checked”, (2024). In 2023, she Produced a short drama film, “Ice Cream”, which takes inspiration from growing up a Romani-Gypsy family. Her film, “Take us as we are”, has been screened at multiple festivals across Europe. Liza is currently working for a news and media publication, Travellers’ Times, as Project Manager, and is very passionate about helping Gypsy Roma and Travellers have their stories shared and their voices heard. Liza was brought up in Kent, and is now based in the East Midlands.



# CREDITS

*Directed by:*

**Charles Newland**

*Written by:*

**Charles Newland**

*Produced by:*

**Alessandro Luchetti**

**Liza Mortimer**

*Director of Photography*

**Robbie Bryant**

*Production Designer*

**Brydie Teggart**

*Editor*

**Martina Zamolo**

*Costume Designer*

**Grace Leivers**

*Hair & Make-up Designer*

**Kelly Taylor**

*Music by*

**Malachi Lillitos**

*Production Sound Recordist*

**Adam Fletcher**

*Executive Producer for BFI NETWORK*

**Lauren Parker**

*Head of BFI NETWORK*

**Alice Cabanas**



# CAST

*Chantel*

*James*

*Graham*

*Care Workers*

**MEGAN PLACITO**

**MAXIMILIAN NEWLAND**

**COLIN WELLS**

**TAMMY HEATH**

**ELEANOR KIRBY**



*First Assistant Director:*

*1st Assistant Camera:*

*2nd Assistant Camera:*

*1st Assistant Camera:*

*Still Photographer:*

*Gaffer:*

*Spark:*

*Spark:*

*1st Assistant Sound:*

*Art Department Trainee:*

*Make-up and Hair Artist:*

*Colorist:*

*DIT:*

*Runner:*

*Title & End Credits*

*Designed by:*

*Music recorded by:*

*Insurance:*

*Camera & Grip Equipment:*

**Poppy Higgins**

**Ben McFarlane**

**Anh Do**

**Darius Lemon**

**Max Newland**

**Michael Suszczenia**

**Edward Armstrong**

**Alex Mellor**

**Alex Stroud**

**Lucca Haskins**

**Kelly Taylor**

**Carl Thompson**

**Steven Day**

**Mia Newland**

**Bardena Films**

**Bardena Films**

**Malachi Lillitos**

**Film Insurance Co.**

**Panavision**

