



ENGINES

a film by

Charlie Jimenez

Logline

When we burn, we fall; when we fall, we rise

Synopsis

Engines is a micro-short about the eternal cycle of creation and decay.

In an abandoned underworld, a drained swimming pool becomes the well of creation, where scarred ancient figures give birth to light and desire.

At its centre is Phanes, the androgynous god of light and creation, reimagined as a wounded, intersex angel reborn from a flood of flames.

Shot on Super16, *Engines* is a ritual of transformation. It explores the drive to create within entropy, surrendering to the flux: the unstable space between collapse and becoming. Phanes' symbolic emergence is a luminous act of becoming against the pull of ruin.

ENGINES

press & distribution contact

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technical details

Release 2026

Country United Kingdom

Language No Dialogue

Shooting Format Double X - B+W 16mm
Kodak Filmstock

Presentation Digital 4K

Aspect Ratio 1:65:1

Length 4:00

Colour Black and White, No Spoken
Language



Charlie Jimenez

Director, Writer, & Editor

Charlie Jimenez (b. 2001, London) is a Visual Artist and Creative Director working across photography, sfx, film, and live performance. Their practice explores the human body as a vessel - a site of mythology, memory, and transformation. Charlie creates ritualistic tableaux where the seams between the ethereal, grotesque, and surreal merge in visceral spectacles of theatrics and dreamscapes. Charlie's images are characterized by abject characters in liminal settings which border on dream-like and otherworldly. Non-linear and phantasmagorical in tone, their creations encourage close attention to motion and sound, their images dwell in the spaces between becoming and unbecoming. The human body becomes a site of transformation,- presenting an invented mythology. Drawing on personal experience, ritual, folklore, and fiction, Charlie's visions offer intimate, often disquieting spaces for audiences to witness embodiment of the seldom seen, and remade. Charlie's work has been exhibited and screened across Europe, including their award-winning short film Keratin, which won Best Short at ASVOFF 2024. Their practice has been featured in Dazed, Kaltblut, ShowStudio, and Nasty Magazine, with artistic collaborations including FKA Twigs (Eusexua concert), HMLTD, and Jockstrap. They hold a First-Class Honours degree from Central Saint Martins (Performance: Design & Practice BA).

F i l m s

Bed & Breakfast (upcoming)

Transmutation (2026)

Keratin (2022)

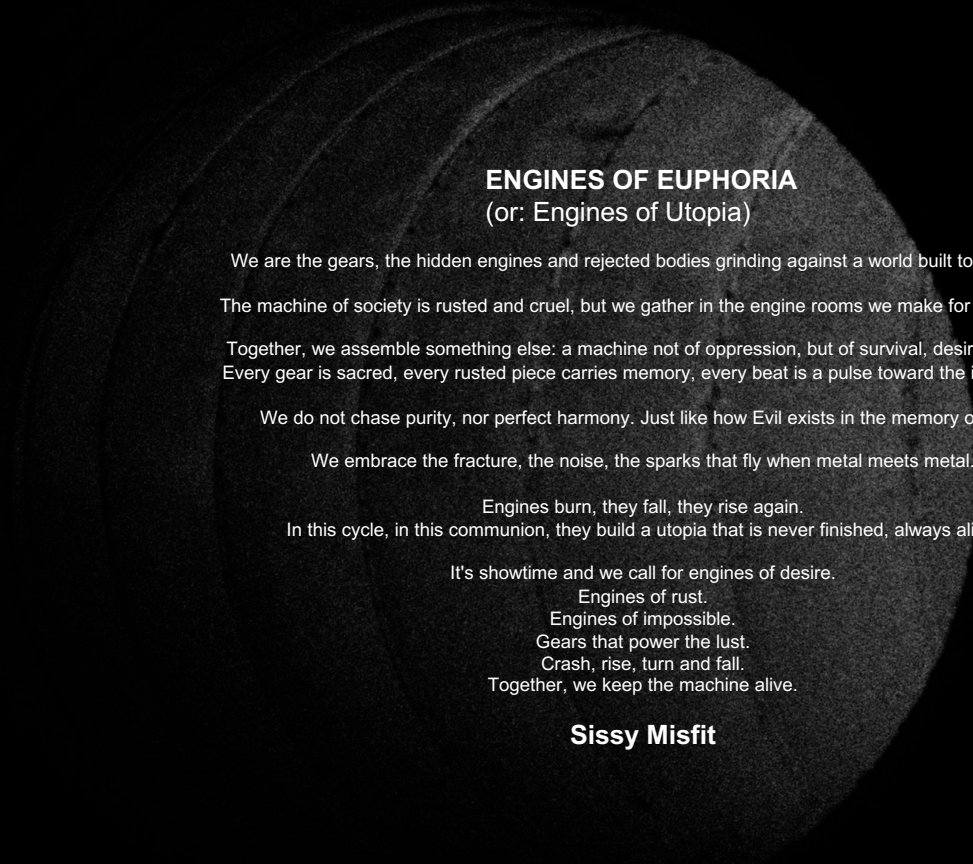
Best Student Film – ASVOFF 2024

Bloomsday Festival Award for International Experimental Shorts

Audience Award – Saigon Experimental 2023

A Fugue (2019)

1st place for Experimental – PHYFF 2020



ENGINES OF EUPHORIA (or: Engines of Utopia)

We are the gears, the hidden engines and rejected bodies grinding against a world built to break us.

The machine of society is rusted and cruel, but we gather in the engine rooms we make for ourselves.

Together, we assemble something else: a machine not of oppression, but of survival, desire, and joy.
Every gear is sacred, every rusted piece carries memory, every beat is a pulse toward the impossible.

We do not chase purity, nor perfect harmony. Just like how Evil exists in the memory of God.

We embrace the fracture, the noise, the sparks that fly when metal meets metal.

Engines burn, they fall, they rise again.

In this cycle, in this communion, they build a utopia that is never finished, always alive.

It's showtime and we call for engines of desire.

Engines of rust.

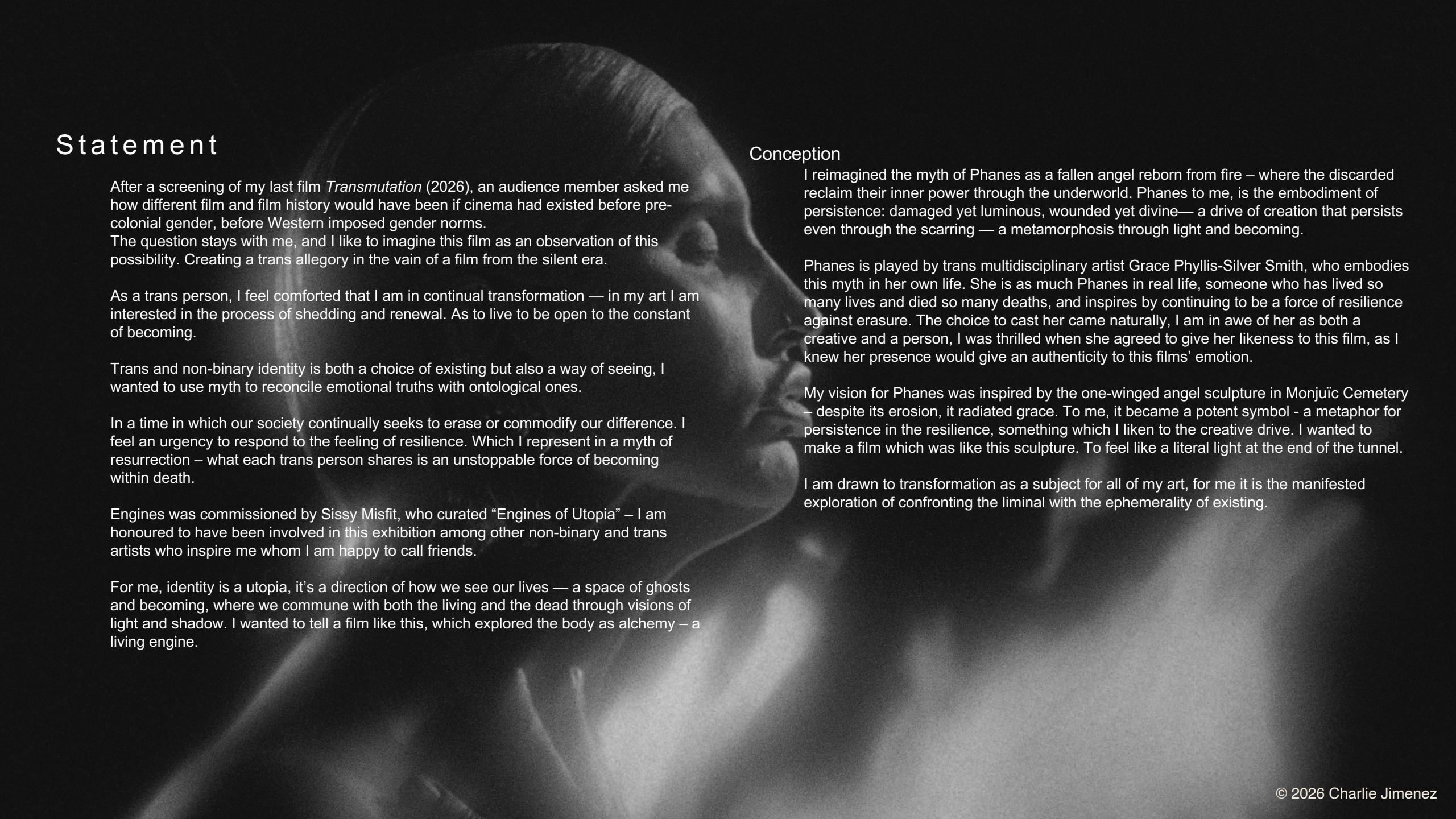
Engines of impossible.

Gears that power the lust.

Crash, rise, turn and fall.

Together, we keep the machine alive.

Sissy Misfit



Statement

After a screening of my last film *Transmutation* (2026), an audience member asked me how different film and film history would have been if cinema had existed before pre-colonial gender, before Western imposed gender norms.

The question stays with me, and I like to imagine this film as an observation of this possibility. Creating a trans allegory in the vein of a film from the silent era.

As a trans person, I feel comforted that I am in continual transformation — in my art I am interested in the process of shedding and renewal. As to live to be open to the constant of becoming.

Trans and non-binary identity is both a choice of existing but also a way of seeing, I wanted to use myth to reconcile emotional truths with ontological ones.

In a time in which our society continually seeks to erase or commodify our difference. I feel an urgency to respond to the feeling of resilience. Which I represent in a myth of resurrection — what each trans person shares is an unstoppable force of becoming within death.

Engines was commissioned by Sissy Misfit, who curated “Engines of Utopia” — I am honoured to have been involved in this exhibition among other non-binary and trans artists who inspire me whom I am happy to call friends.

For me, identity is a utopia, it's a direction of how we see our lives — a space of ghosts and becoming, where we commune with both the living and the dead through visions of light and shadow. I wanted to tell a film like this, which explored the body as alchemy — a living engine.

Conception

I reimagined the myth of Phanes as a fallen angel reborn from fire — where the discarded reclaim their inner power through the underworld. Phanes to me, is the embodiment of persistence: damaged yet luminous, wounded yet divine— a drive of creation that persists even through the scarring — a metamorphosis through light and becoming.

Phanes is played by trans multidisciplinary artist Grace Phyllis-Silver Smith, who embodies this myth in her own life. She is as much Phanes in real life, someone who has lived so many lives and died so many deaths, and inspires by continuing to be a force of resilience against erasure. The choice to cast her came naturally, I am in awe of her as both a creative and a person, I was thrilled when she agreed to give her likeness to this film, as I knew her presence would give an authenticity to this film's emotion.

My vision for Phanes was inspired by the one-winged angel sculpture in Monjuïc Cemetery — despite its erosion, it radiated grace. To me, it became a potent symbol - a metaphor for persistence in the resilience, something which I liken to the creative drive. I wanted to make a film which was like this sculpture. To feel like a literal light at the end of the tunnel.

I am drawn to transformation as a subject for all of my art, for me it is the manifested exploration of confronting the liminal with the ephemerality of existing.

P R O D U C T I O N

Engines came about very naturally in the 2-week period of the project, I had no choice but to proceed instinctually due to our tight deadline, it was exciting to get the opportunity to make a film in this way.

I find impetus in sculpting and movement, as one first senses and moves before they understand anything, it is a universal language. I had to rely on my resources, I see and I move before I give meaning, so I like to conceive my films like 'pregnant images' as Jung once fashioned .

I started with my dancers and the idea of a directing the body like an 'engine' which was directly translated with the choice to bathe my cast in mehron metallic paint, with pronounced jittery and sharp movements which emphasized a symbolic engine.

I like to make images which feel timeless, I had previously shot a film called *Transmutation* (TBC), which was my first film on 16mm, the tactility of celluloid is unmatched, it has this soft-amniotic look and feel, as if you were looking at fire and metal, which immediately transports an audience. I knew I wanted to make a film which felt ancient as much as it was modern, hence the B+W super16 shooting format.

I am drawn to making films which are dream-like, ritualistic, and visionary. I am very connected to making films like one is connected to a ritual, personal, sacred, and poetic - worlds which process and release feelings and spaces. When I am on a filmset, I feel as if I am at the place where I want to be, I feel so connected in my creativity and life, and it brings me the most ecstatic joy making a film.

This was an exciting project, and I had no time to waste. The moment I received the brief, I almost immediately started working, we were given a tight 2-week deadline, I had never conceived, shot, and edited a film in 2 weeks before.

We shot the film in two days in an abandoned leisure centre with two rolls of 400ft of Double X filmstock. The fruit of our labour made for a truly visionary film I am so proud of.

The shoot itself was like the film itself a fever dream: fire, motorcycles, and mime-like naked dancers in an abandoned swimming pool with murals designed by my good friend and art director Varvara Ivanova.

The adrenaline was high, the labour was challenging, there was not a moment to rest, my crew were made up of committed risk-takers and angels, who were there for the entire process, in that situation one has to be there 100% moment-to-moment. It was a film that could only have been made by the succession of every angel's ass working hard off. The only time I could hug and kiss everyone was when the film was successfully developed by Kodak the following week. And by prometheun fire did it ever! We gave birth to something beautiful.

I am forever gratefiul to my incredible team, Sylvia Ghroum for giving us the freedom to make our film, James Lahaise (DOP) for speaking my vision, Stefan (AD) for keeping me sane, Patrycja (Producer) for moving mountains, and the rest for committing their ass off for this film, at points risking health for a film we are all very proud of.

PRODUCTION PHOTOS

Photographed by Vianney Le Caer



C A S T & C R E W

Director & Editor - **Charlie Jimenez** [@charliejimenez](#)

Producer - **Patrycja Pietras** [@patrycjaapietras](#)

S t a r r i n g

Phanes - **Grace Phyllis Silver-Smith** [@pitp.onv](#)
Motorcyclist - **George Guy** [@wednesday.50](#)

Dancers

Zara Sand [@zarasands](#)
Chiara Martina Halter [@chia.ra.mar.tina](#)
Lindsay Dreyer Jude [@muchadoaboutlindsay](#)
Shea Sullivan [@mytinybabyhands](#)
Olivia Yu-Jin Chen [@liv...dancing](#)

Location Manager - **Sylvia Ghroum**

Assistant Director - **Stefan-Iulian Craioveanu** [@siovanu](#)

PA - **Isa Kana** [@isaloverk](#)

Grade/Colourist **Santino Napolitano** [@santino_colour](#)

Art Department & Set Design - **Varvara Ivanova** [@thh.png](#)
Art Assistant & Set Decorator - **Amélie Frances Cooper**
[@ameliefrancesc](#), **Emil Kasimir** [@emilkasimir](#)___, & **Lillis Franklin Goddard**
[@lillisfg](#)

Mural Painters

Sophia Dias [@sophhdias](#)
Hattie Ford [@hattieford](#)
Lois Costi-Mouyia [@lois4rtist](#)
Merin Young [@merrrrrryn](#)

KEY Makeup

Ria Simone [@rita_simone](#)

SFX Makeup

Jesse Marianni [@jessemarianni](#)
Elizabeth Clark [@elizabethclark_art](#)

SFX Prosthetic Wings

Naomi Fields [@naomifeldstudio](#)

Makeup

Sophia Marie Davidson [@sophiamariedavison](#)
Jade Woods [@_caatana](#)
Sophia Benabit [@sophiabbenabit](#)
Izzy Duck [@izzv_duck](#)

Director of Photography - **James Lahaise** [@james.lahaise](#)

AC/Loader - **Kate Lovrinov** [@kateklvrnv](#)

Movement Direction - **Yiling Zhao** [@yilingzhao](#)

Gaffer - **Tsvetina Rassovska** [@tsvetina.rsk](#)

Spark - **Oren Soto-Levy** [@aosoto7](#)

Spark - **Goncalo Lopez** [@gonloness](#)

Trainee - **Ana-Maria Margarit** [@anamariamargaritt](#)

Development & Scan - **Kodak**

[@kodak_shootfilm](#) **Digital Orchard**
[@digital_orchard](#)

Lighting Kit - **Green Kit**

[@greenkitlondon](#)

BTS photographer

Vianney Le Caer [@vlecaer](#)
Isaac Weinstock
[@louis_isaacs_photography](#)

Runners -

Christiano Harding [@s.h.a.n.o___](#)
Isaac Weinstock
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Special thanks to

Viscus [@viciusnephthune](#)
Tot Whittle [@totwhittle](#)

Simon [@sim.6.n](#)
Callum & Eli at Greenkit
Sylvia Ghroum
Antonio Zorro

Commissioned by **Sissy Misfit**

[@sissymisfitt](#)

Sponsored by **Rick Owens x Dr.**

Martens
[@rickowensonline](#)
[@drmartensofficial](#)

T e c h n i c a l D e t a i l s

Language - No Spoken Dialogue

Shooting Format – Super16

Presenting Format - Digital

Duration - 4 minutes

Colour – Black & White

Aspect Ratio - 1:65:1

C o n t a c t

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