

Directed by **Theo Shivdasani**

a Kind of Purity

Electronic Press Kit



Poster & Deck designer Madison Coby



Synopsis

Dalia Rifai, an artist unable to catch a break, works as assistant to a rising contemporary artist who has mastered the alchemy of turning trauma into cultural capital. As she prepares an exhibition that could secure his breakthrough, she maintains the façade needed to survive. Disillusioned, Dalia is pushed to breaking point—until a sudden act shatters the pretence.

Written by award-winning screenwriter **Peter Fellows** (*The Death of Stalin*, *Veep*), directed by **Theo Shivdasani** (*The Good Life*), and produced by **Jon Tarcy** (*The Effects of Lying*, *Bad Major*), *A Kind of Purity* is a darkly comic satire of the contemporary art world.

Title: A Kind of Purity

Country: UK

Production Year: 2026

Language: English

Duration: 15.03

Aspect Ratio: 16:9

Frame Rate: 24 fps

Exhibition format: 2K DCP,
2K ProRes

Sound: 5.1



Cast



AIYSHA HART
Dalia Rifai
(*Mogul Mowgli, Desert Warrior*)



NABHAAN RIZWAN
Dharam Gill
(*Industry, In Camera*)



HONOR SWINTON BYRNE
India Paget
(*The Souvenir*)



ADAM JAMES
Humphrey Perry-Jones
(*Wicked, The Day of the Jackal*)



CYRIL NRI
Hindolo Kargbo
(*Bridgerton*)



LUKE MILLINGTON-DRAKE
Gallery Assistant 1
(*The Magic Faraway Tree*)





Director's Statement

This film began with a sense of unease I felt walking through contemporary art galleries and museum exhibitions. Again and again, I saw works in which the figure of the “other”, often racialised, displaced, or exiled, appeared as an injured body—a body offered up as evidence of suffering. These figures seemed to circulate not as subjects with histories or voices, but as proof of violence, as objects of pity.

I wanted to understand how the art world, an ecosystem driven by speculation, capital, and the hunger for novelty, turns such lives into currency. In a strange economy, the injured body becomes both bare life and high-value aesthetic commodity.

This film rejects catharsis altogether; it withholds the consolations that conventional narratives typically offer. Instead, it turns its attention to the violence of representation itself: how an industry fluent in the rhetoric of “giving voice” and “bearing witness” can simultaneously perpetuate silence, turning suffering into an empty spectacle of empathy.

At its centre are two figures: Dharam Gill, a cynical artist who has perfected the alchemy of turning trauma into cultural capital, and Dalia Rifai, his exhausted assistant, frayed by overwork and trapped in his orbit.

At its core, the film is about complicity, about how an art world that claims to represent the marginalised so often ends up exploiting them. Dharam manipulates this economy knowingly; Dalia is crushed by it. The viewer, in turn, must confront their own position within this chain of consumption.

Beneath this lies a deeper question about what kinds of subjectivity artists of colour are permitted to inhabit. The Western art market rewards confession, self-exposure, and personal trauma. It demands that the brown or postcolonial artist translate their difference into something easily consumable: testimony, identity, pain. What it rarely allows is ambiguity, distance, or impersonality. The right to abstraction, irony, or indifference remains largely reserved for others.

You would not, for instance, be allowed simply to paint flowers.

Dharam emerges from this contradiction. He understands that “sincerity” is a market category, that his value depends on his ability to perform identity on cue. His cynicism is not innate but learned, a strategy of survival within a system that thrives on critique, even the critique of itself.

Ultimately, the film lays bare the politics of identity, revealing how race, trauma, and marginality have themselves become commodities. What begins as a language of resistance can so easily turn into another marketable aesthetic, packaging difference for consumption and selling pain as proof of authenticity.

I was excited to bring this idea to life with the screenwriter Peter Fellows. His writing brings a dark, subversive humour that heightens the film's sense of absurdity, echoing the satirical spirit of filmmakers like R. W. Fassbinder and Kamal Swaroop.

Theo Shivdasani, London, 2026.

Key Crew

Director of Photography
PAUL MORRIS

Editor
ANNA MELLER

Production Designer
IDA FLY HEDQVIST

Composer
OLIVER WEEKS

Costume Designer
NATALIE WILKINS

Casting Director
FAYE TIMBY

Hair and Make Up Designer
MEAGAN EDWARDS

1st Assistant Director
CHARLIE ELLIOT

Production Manager
MAYA WILLS

Supervising Sound Editor
ROLAND HEAP

Picture Post
THE LOOK

Sound Post
SOUND DISPOSITION



Key Crew Bios



THEO SHIVDASANI - Director

Theodore Shivdasani is a London-based filmmaker. In 2024, he wrote and directed *The Good Life*, which premiered at the Smita Patil International Film Festival. He is currently developing his debut feature.



JON TARCY - Producer

Jon Tarcy is a producer working across film & television. He set up Piros Films in 2024, with the aim of making bold, commercially leaning films with an international focus. The company now has a slate of projects including *Bad Major* a dark comedy based on the famous satirical anti-war novel *The Tot Family*, and set to star Jason Isaacs and Josh Gad; *Beach Ghouls*, a comedy-horror written by the rising stars Tom Palmer & Tom Stourton and directed by BAFTA winning director Tom George; and *Punishment*, the first ever English-language adaptation of Rabindranath Tagore's work. In 2024, he was selected for the prestigious BIFA Springboard scheme for producers working towards their second feature.



PETER FELLOWS - Writer

Peter Fellows is a multi-award-winning screenwriter, producer and director best known for his work on the popular HBO television programmes *Veep* and *Avenue 5*, the critically acclaimed feature films *The Death of Stalin* and *The Personal History of David Copperfield*, and for *Everything You Didn't Say* – an award-winning short starring Olga Kurylenko.

In 2017, Peter was a recipient of the BAFTA Roccliffe new writing award for his screenplay, *Dry*, and he was listed as a Forbes 30 Under 30 in April 2021. His critically acclaimed Channel 4 pilot *Disability Benefits*, co-written by and starring comedian Rosie Jones, was released in May 2022 and picked up Best Newform Series at the C21 Drama Awards. The show went to series in late 2024, with Peter directing and executive producing all six episodes. Renamed '*Pushers*', it was released on Channel 4 in 2025 to critical acclaim. Peter's latest short, *The Breakdown of a Toxic Relationship as Told by Fluffmeister*, a *Poodle of Questionable Heritage* has recently begun its festival run, screening at various BAFTA-qualifying film festivals. Peter has also found success in non-fiction with his historical shows *Vikings: The Rise and Fall* (2023) and *Frontier* (2024) – both of which were nominated for Emmys. He's working on a number of new television shows and feature films, and has developed projects with the likes of Film4, the BBC and NBC Universal.



LINKS

[BTS Photos](#)
[All Stills](#)

[Vimeo link to view film](#)
(password: AKP2026)

[@pirosfilms](#)
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