



# GREAT



## 2026 NEW BRITISH PROJECT SHOWCASE

Presented by



With thanks to BBC Film & Film4



DAUGHTER OF EDEN  
Fateme Ahmadi

**GREAT 8**

# CONTENTS

- 5 **WELCOME**
- 6 **ANCESTORS**  
David Turpin
- 8 **BLACK CHURCH BAY**  
Rhys Marc Jones
- 10 **DAUGHTER OF EDEN**  
Fateme Ahmadi
- 12 **FLORID**  
Billy Lumby
- 14 **IN STARLAND**  
Ray Panthaki
- 16 **MASC**  
Bertil Nilsson
- 18 **OUR SHARE OF SAND**  
Shalini Adnani
- 20 **SALVATION**  
Tom Nicoll



IN STARLAND  
Ray Panthaki



GREAT 8

# WELCOME TO THE ANNUAL GREAT 8 SHOWCASE

As we all get set for Cannes, the British Film Institute and the British Council have partnered once again to highlight a selection of new UK/UK co-pro feature projects from exciting first-time and early career filmmakers.

Over the last nine editions our Great 8 selection has championed some of the UK's brightest new talents, highlighting filmmakers and films in advance of their world premieres, and before many of them found significant international festival, awards, and box office success. Our filmmaker alumni includes Rose Glass, Rungano Nyoni and Charlotte Wells, and the programme's back-catalogue of features includes ANIMOL and ISH selected last year, following on the heels of KNEECAP, BLUE JEAN, SCRAPPER, AFTERSUN and BEAST.

GREAT 8 is an online presentation which is available from now until the festival closes on 24 May 2026. It unveils unseen footage from a handpicked selection of titles, each with a brief introduction from the filmmaker.

In this brochure you can find more information about both films and filmmakers, as well as the contacts for each project. If you like what you see, please contact the sales agents and teams directly for more information.

Thanks as ever to BBC Film and Film4 in helping to assemble this showcase - and thank you for joining us, and for your continued support of UK films and filmmakers





# ANCESTORS

## David Turpin



### Synopsis

A love story, a noir mystery and a metaphysical fable, ANCESTORS follows Beau (Éanna Hardwicke) as he searches 1980s London for his missing friend, Tiny (Jack Wolfe). Dream, reality, memory and history entwine, forcing Beau to come face-to-face with truths beyond life and death.

### Director's Bio

David Turpin is an Irish-born filmmaker who began his career as a musician and performance artist. His first work for cinema was the screenplay for supernatural mystery THE LODGERS, which premiered at TIFF in 2017, and was subsequently acquired by Netflix in a worldwide five-year deal. His second feature as screenwriter, THE WINTER LAKE, premiered in 2021. David's work has been supported by Screen Ireland and Creative Europe MEDIA fund, and he is currently in development with Screen Ireland, BBC Northern Ireland, Film4, Tailored Films, Keeper Pictures and others. All David's work is characterised by his interest in symbolism, lyricism, and how the interweaving of real and imagined planes of being can express the experiences of the othered. ANCESTORS is David's first feature as writer-director.

**Production Credits**  
Samson Films (Ireland)  
Lunatica (UK)  
Screen Ireland  
Yellow Moon  
Northern Ireland Screen

**Genre**  
Drama  
**Country of Origin**  
Ireland, UK  
**Delivery Date**  
Q4 2026  
**Territories**  
Worldwide rights available  
**Sales Contact**  
Mister Smith  
Emma Mason  
emason@mistersmithent.com

**Director**  
David Turpin  
**Writer**  
David Turpin  
**Producers**  
David Collins  
Eamon Hughes  
Miranda Ballesteros  
**Cast**  
Éanna Hardwicke  
Jack Wolfe  
Jessica Reynolds  
Rupert Everett  
Christina Hendricks

GREAT 8

DIRECTOR





# BLACK CHURCH BAY

Rhys Marc Jones

## Synopsis

BLACK CHURCH BAY is a mystery-drama about a conflicted young teacher (Tom Cullen) dealing with the consequences of a high school student (Joe Locke) disappearing.

It follows the immediate aftermath of the event, exploring the lengths a person might go to hide their true self - to save their skin at the expense of their soul.

## Director's Bio

Rhys Marc Jones is a Welsh-Irish filmmaker who studied at NYU Tisch as a three-time BAFTA Scholarship recipient. His screenplay for BLACK CHURCH BAY won the Black Family Feature Prize, the highest accolade bestowed by the faculty at NYU - and his shorts, including RIPPLES, and PALE SAINT have played festivals worldwide, receiving three BAFTA Cymru nominations. An Alumni of Cannes Cinéfondation and Torino Film Lab, Rhys also received BFI Flare x BAFTA Mentorship from Wash Westmoreland - and is a Berlinale Talent.

### Production Credits

The Bureau  
Ossian International  
BBC Film  
Ffilm Cymru Wales

### Genre

Mystery Drama  
Country of Origin  
UK

### Delivery Date

2026

### Territories

Worldwide rights available

### Sales Contact

Clémentine Hugot  
ch@lebureaufilms.com

### Director

Rhys Marc Jones

### Writer

Rhys Marc Jones

### Producers

Alex Polunin  
Tristan Goligher

### Cast

Tom Cullen  
Joe Locke  
Marli Siu  
Rakie Ayola  
Dylan Michael

GREAT 8

DIRECTOR



# DAUGHTER OF EDEN

## Fateme Ahmadi



### Synopsis

London, 2006. In the months leading up to Saddam Hussein's execution, Nessa, a British Iraqi nurse, encounters an older woman, Maryam, at the hospital and suspects that she is the government informant responsible for her parents' execution in Iraq years earlier.

Nessa infiltrates Maryam's life, aiming to find the truth. To her surprise, Maryam begins to develop a closer bond with her - but Nessa cannot let go of the obsession. Nessa's search for truth turns into something darker when she finally feels certain that she has the right person and as the lines between truth and projection blur, Nessa is forced to confront the consequences of what her pain has set in motion.

### Director's Bio

Fateme Ahmadi is an Iranian writer and director based in London. Since graduating from the London Film School in 2013, her short films have screened internationally and won numerous awards including BITTER SEA, nominated for Best British Short at the BIFAs, and LEILA'S BLUES, which premiered at Cannes Directors' Fortnight. She is a fellow of the inaugural Pillars Artist Fellowship supported by Netflix and Amazon Studios, and an alumna of Berlinale Talents, Edinburgh Talent Lab, and Film London Lodestar. Her work also includes CHANDRA, developed at the 2015 Asian Film Academy Colour of Asia programme at Busan International Film Festival.

#### Production Credits

Lunapark Pictures  
Shudder Films  
Newgrange Pictures  
BFI  
BBC Film  
Fís Éireann/ Screen Ireland  
Civic Studios  
Three Point Capital

#### Genre

Psychological Thriller

#### Country of Origin

UK

#### Delivery Date

Autumn 2026

#### Territories

Worldwide rights available

#### Sales Contact

Lucky Number  
Olivier Barbier  
olivier@luckynumber.fr

## DIRECTOR



#### Director

Fateme Ahmadi

#### Writer

Fateme Ahmadi

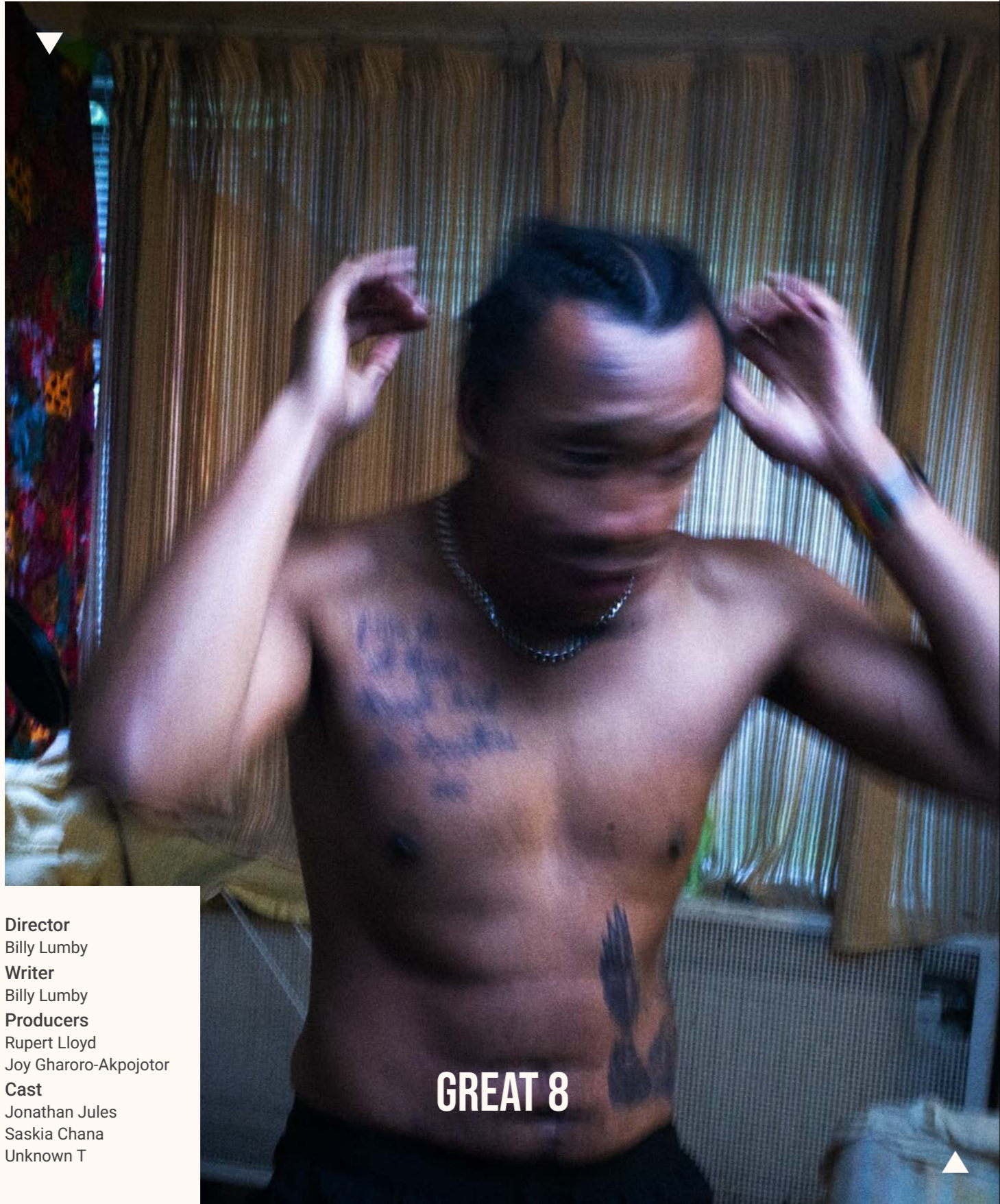
#### Producers

Jack Tarling  
Pietro Greppi

#### Cast

Yasmin Al-Khudhairi  
Hiam Abbass  
Amir El-Masry  
Lindsay Duncan

## GREAT 8



# FLORID

## Billy Lumby

### Synopsis

Set in the world of London's supported accommodation and psychiatric wards, FLORID tells the story of Jamal, a young man who hears voices.

Struggling to balance his medication with his musical and romantic desires, Jamal's equilibrium is rocked when Kyla moves in next door.

Told from an authentic first-person experience, FLORID has been made with the community it is based in. It is an emotive and immersive story that seeks to bring the audience into an unseen world.

### Director's Bio

Billy Lumby is a BAFTA-nominated writer/director. Born and raised in London, his first short film GOD VIEW was screened at top festivals around the world including Clermont-Ferrand, and was broadcast internationally by television networks such as Canal+. His second short SAMUEL-613 was commissioned by Dazed & Confused magazine and was nominated for a BAFTA. Billy has attended talent labs at Berlinale and the BFI London Film Festival. He is a Screen International "Star of Tomorrow".

#### Production Credits

ATAR Studios  
Joi Productions  
BBC FILM  
Film i Väst  
Filmgate Films  
Head Gear Films  
Metrol Technology  
Trigger Films  
Academy Films

#### Genre

Drama

#### Country of Origin

UK

#### Delivery Date

2026

#### Territories

Worldwide rights available

#### Sales Contact

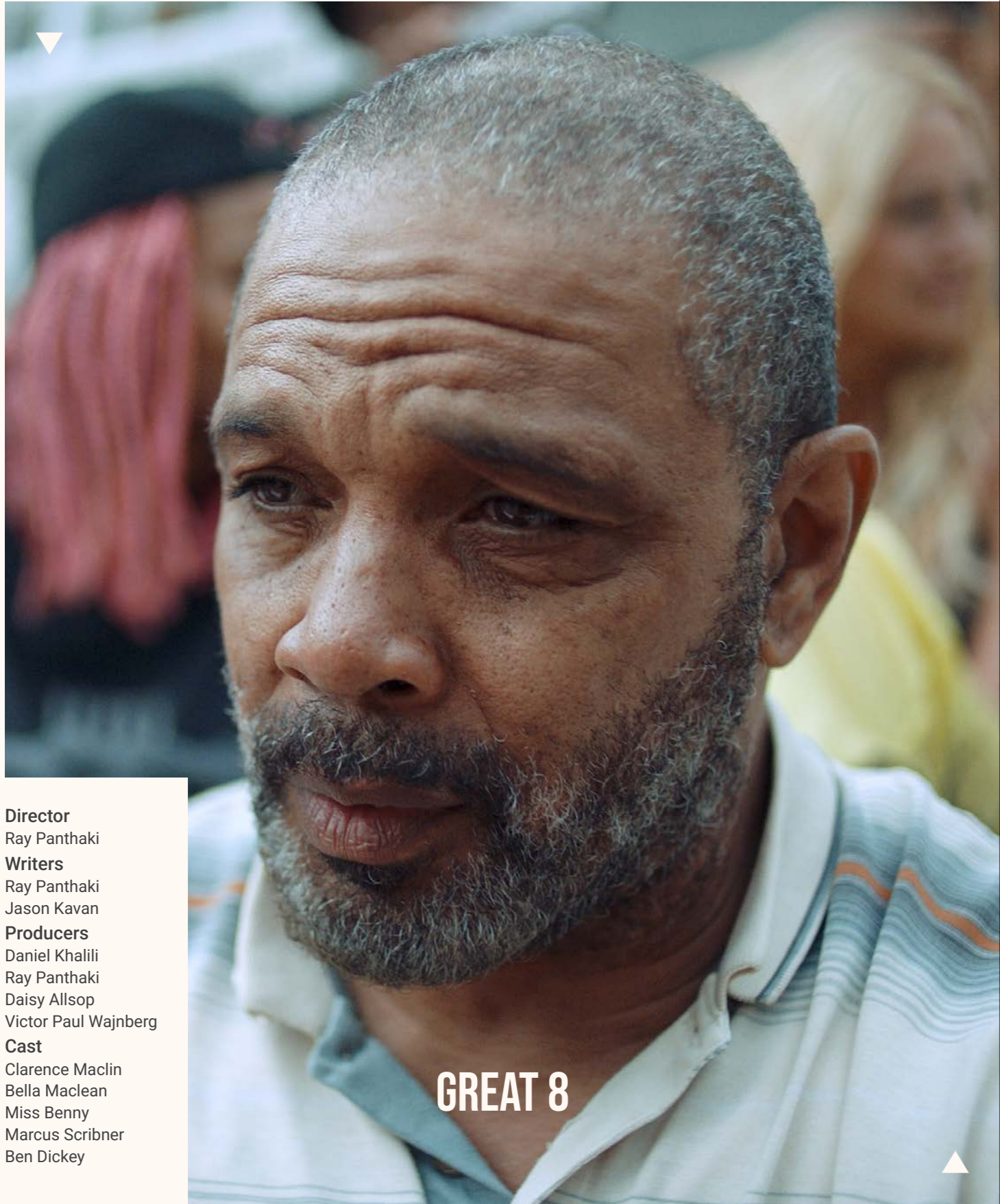
Atar Studios  
Rupert Lloyd  
rupert@atarstudios.com

**Director**  
Billy Lumby  
**Writer**  
Billy Lumby  
**Producers**  
Rupert Lloyd  
Joy Gharoro-Akpojotor  
**Cast**  
Jonathan Jules  
Saskia Chana  
Unknown T

GREAT 8

DIRECTOR





# IN STARLAND

## Ray Panthaki

### Synopsis

In small-town America, Ernie - a 50-year-old loner with a mysterious past- lives a quiet, solitary life.

After a chance encounter with a group of influencers in their twenties who are passing through town, Ernie invites them into his home - a decision that unsettles the fragile world he's spent years trying to exist within.

They move fast, live online, turning everything into something to be seen. Finally finding a place he can fit in, Ernie is drawn into a digital world of hedonism, self-exploration and belonging - but the connection he's been searching for begins to come at a cost.

As the line between private life and performance starts to blur, and the town grows more watchful, a carefully held secret begins to surface...

A coming-of-middle-age story about what we inherit, the patterns we carry, and the choices they leave us with.

Starring Academy Award and BAFTA nominee Clarence Maclin (Sing Sing) in his first leading role.

### Director's Bio

Ray Panthaki is a British actor, writer and filmmaker. A BAFTA Breakthrough Brit and BIFA-nominated actor, he has collaborated with directors including Danny Boyle, Bong Joon Ho and Ed Zwick.

As an actor, he appeared in BOILING POINT, earning a BIFA nomination for Best Supporting Actor as part of an ensemble recognised with eleven BIFA and four BAFTA nominations.

His filmmaking is rooted in naturalism, exploring identity through behaviour and observation.

His short films LIFE SENTENCE and ERNIE developed this approach. IN STARLAND is his feature directorial debut.

#### Production Credits

Le Bateau Lavoir  
Archface Films  
Killer Films

#### Genre

Drama

#### Country of Origin

UK

#### Delivery Date

2026

#### Territories

Worldwide rights available

#### Sales Contact

Le Bateau Lavoir  
info@urbanwayproductions.com

#### Director

Ray Panthaki

#### Writers

Ray Panthaki  
Jason Kavan

#### Producers

Daniel Khalili  
Ray Panthaki  
Daisy Allsop  
Victor Paul Wajnberg

#### Cast

Clarence Maclin  
Bella Maclean  
Miss Benny  
Marcus Scribner  
Ben Dickey

GREAT 8

### DIRECTOR





# MASC

## Bertil Nilsson



### Synopsis

Robin is a young man caught between multiple identities - autistic, biracial, queer - and different ideas of masculinity. This leads us on an intimate, and at times funny, journey of self discovery and missteps told in five chapters over the course of a critical year in Robin's life.

He tries on different roles, failing from job to job while transforming his appearance and mannerisms to fit in. But will revealing what he's most desperate to hide finally open the door to belonging?

### Director's Bio

Bertil Nilsson is a British-Swedish filmmaker and artist based in London. MASC is his debut feature. His first fiction short, REPAIR, premiered in competition at Clermont-Ferrand in 2023, was selected at BFI Flare and Outfest LA, and acquired by Disney+ and Canal+. It previously won Best Script in the UK parliament's film competition. He has collaborated extensively with dancers and acrobats, including his series of portrait films FIGURES, which featured on Vimeo Staff Picks and NOWNESS, and two photography books.

**Production Credits**  
Duktiga

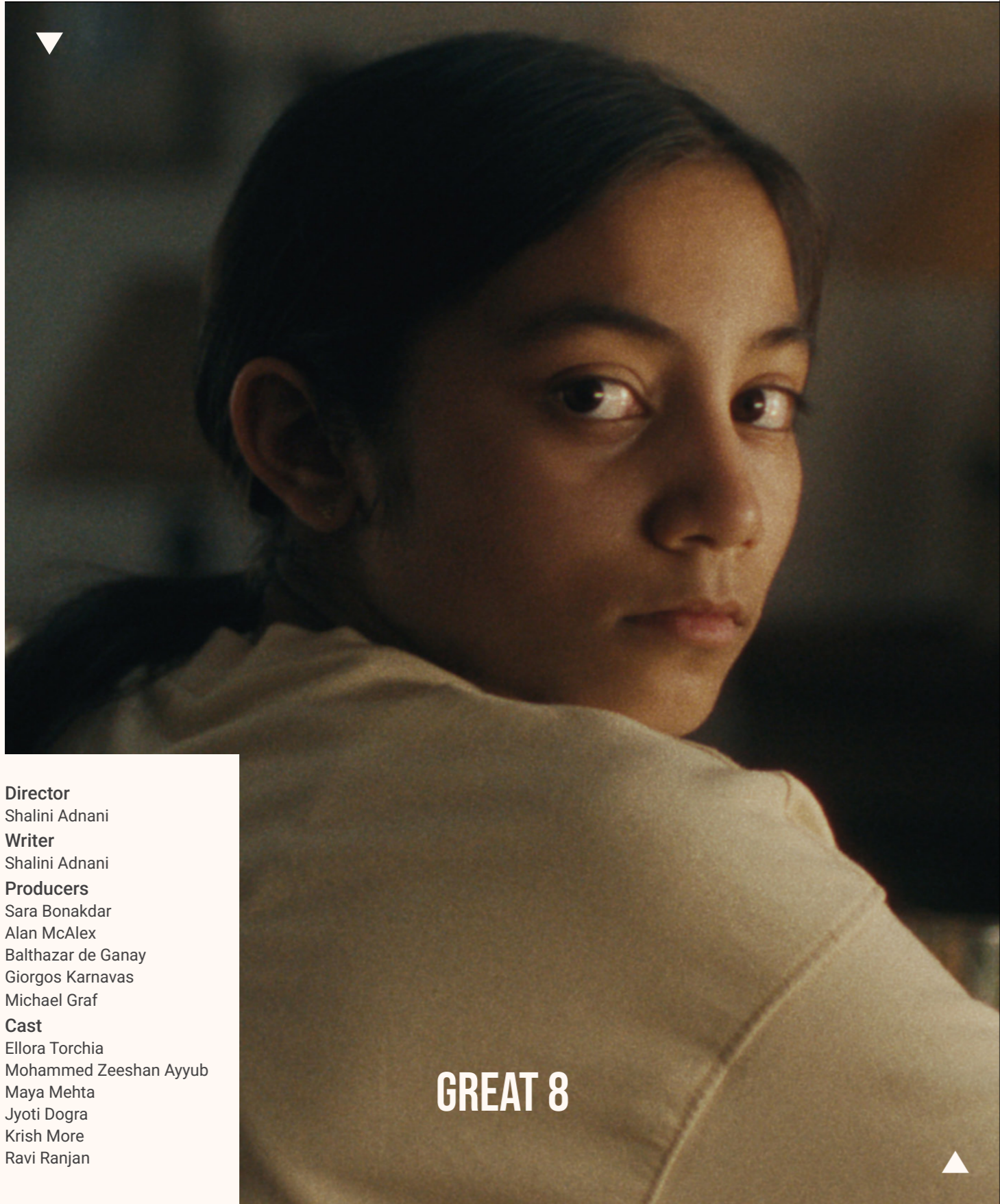
**Genre**  
Drama  
**Country of Origin**  
UK  
**Delivery Date**  
June 2026  
**Territories**  
Worldwide rights available  
**Sales Contact**  
office@duktiga.com

**Director**  
Bertil Nilsson  
**Writers**  
Bertil Nilsson  
Joshua Griffin  
**Producers**  
Bertil Nilsson  
Joanne Michael (EP)  
**Cast**  
Joshua Griffin  
Tega Alexander  
Ed White  
Reece King

GREAT 8

DIRECTOR





# OUR SHARE OF SAND

Shalini Adnani



## Synopsis

After years apart, 12-year-old Maya returns to India with her mother to reunite with her father - a sandmining business man. Immersed in a world where labour, legacy and extraction collide, she forms a fragile bond with Kiran, a young worker.

After a tragic accident, a police investigation turns Maya into a key witness, with her father relying on her to absolve him. Torn between loyalty and a growing unease she cannot name, Maya begins searching for the truth. As her mother quietly unravels, Maya uncovers a pattern of silence, exploitation and repeated harm forcing her to confront her father's deception and the family's complicity she must choose to break.

## Director's Bio

Shalini Adnani is a Chilean-born, Indian-origin writer and director based in London. Her short film WHITE ANT premiered at Sundance, was long listed for a BIFA, won Best UK short at Raindance 2023 and was acquired by Canal+. Her BFI and Film4 funded India-set feature debut 'Our Share of Sand' is currently in post-production. She is a London Film School and Berlinale talents alumni and was named a Screen International Star of Tomorrow 2025.

**Production Credits**  
Fifth Mirror Pictures  
In co-production with Heretic  
In association with Suitable Pictures  
Film4  
BFI

**Genre**  
Drama  
**Country of Origin**  
UK  
**Delivery Date**  
2026  
**Territories**  
Worldwide rights available  
**Sales Contact**  
Kasiyana Angelova  
Global Constellation  
kasiyana@globalconstellation.eu

### Director

Shalini Adnani

### Writer

Shalini Adnani

### Producers

Sara Bonakdar  
Alan McAlex  
Balthazar de Ganay  
Giorgos Karnavas  
Michael Graf

### Cast

Ellora Torchia  
Mohammed Zeeshan Ayyub  
Maya Mehta  
Jyoti Dogra  
Krish More  
Ravi Ranjan

GREAT 8

DIRECTOR





# SALVATION

## Tom Nicoll



### Synopsis

A tenacious aspiring guru must go to extreme measures to pay off the debts he's accrued from trying, and failing, to set up an online life-coaching business in a post-industrial Scottish town.

Exploring the world of male influencer culture and how it might be affecting the young men who come into its orbit, SALVATION blends mounting tension, dark comedy and a forensic focus on its protagonist to explore the very modern story of a delusional life coach spiralling out of control.

### Director's Bio

Tom Nicoll is an award-winning Scottish director, whose work has screened at festivals worldwide, received Vimeo Staff Picks, and been shown on online film channels including Short Of The Week. He has had a short film funded through Creative Scotland's SFTN Emerging Talent Scheme which screened on the BBC and received funded development for a feature film with Screen Scotland. Tom is a member of the European Film Academy, BAFTA Connect and Directors UK.

**Production Credits**  
Lane Films  
Creative Scotland

**Genre**  
Psychological Thriller  
**Country of Origin**  
UK

**Delivery Date**  
2026

**Territories**  
Worldwide rights available

**Sales Contact**  
Lane Films  
hello@lanefilms.co.uk

**Director**  
Tom Nicoll  
**Writer**  
Tom Nicoll  
**Producers**  
Dom Riley  
Tom Nicoll  
Scott Trotter  
**Cast**  
Liam Harkins  
Stephen McMillan  
Kathleen McDermott  
Conor McCarron

GREAT 8

DIRECTOR



