

STUDIOCANAL



PRODUCTION NOTES

Run Time: 158 minutes
UK Release date: 19th April 2019
Rating: 18

UK PUBLICITY CONTACTS

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STUDIOCANAL

Cast: Mel Gibson, Vince Vaughn, Tory Kittles, Michael Jai White, Jennifer Carpenter, Laurie Holden, Fred Melamed, with Thomas Kretschmann, and Don Johnson

Written and Directed by: S. Craig Zahler
Produced by: Keith Kjarval, p.g.a., Dallas Sonnier, p.g.a., Jack Heller, Tyler Jackson, Sefton Fincham

SYNOPSIS:

DRAGGED ACROSS CONCRETE follows two police detectives who find themselves suspended when a video of their strong-arm tactics is leaked to the media. With little money and no options, the embittered policemen descend into the criminal underworld and find more than they wanted waiting in the shadows.

Summit Entertainment presents, a Unified Pictures production, a Cinestate production, in association with Look to the Sky Films and The Fyzz Facility, in association with Realmbuilder Productions.

STUDIOCANAL

Synopsis

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About the Production

DRAGGED ACROSS CONCRETE was filmed over eight weeks on location in Vancouver and Surrey, British Columbia during August and September 2018. The film, produced by Keith Kjarval of Unified Pictures and Dallas Sonnier of Cinestate, was written and directed by S. Craig Zahler.

Director's Commentary

DRAGGED ACROSS CONCRETE was the first feature script that I wrote after the release of my directorial debut, *Bone Tomahawk*. Although challenged—and at times hobbled—by the limited resources at my disposal on that western picture, it was incredibly satisfying to bring a script of mine from the white page to the silver screen. Much of my performance-showcasing directorial approach was reprised and better realized in my second motion picture, the prison thriller *BRAWL IN CELL BLOCK 99* (which stars Vince Vaughn, Jennifer Carpenter, and Don Johnson). Both pieces exemplify my interest in making rich genre fiction that has multiple viewpoints, complex characters, scenes that breathe, and moments of drama, comedy, and surprise.

For my third movie, I wanted to make a suspenseful crime drama with an ensemble like those found in *Prince Of The City*, *Taxi Driver*, *Dog Day Afternoon*, and *The Sweet Smell Of Success*. No script of mine better displays my continuing interests in complicated characters and unlikely plotting than *DRAGGED ACROSS CONCRETE*. As is often the case in my novels and screenplays, the protagonists are in perilous circumstances against which they struggle in different and surprising—though logical—ways.

At the start of this story, two longtime police partners, Ridgeman (Mel Gibson) and Anthony (Vince Vaughn) are suspended for use of excessive force during the arrest of a known criminal. These two flawed, but decorated officers are ostracized for their behavior and soon find themselves reconsidering their moral codes. They are neither innocent good guys nor amoral bad guys, but human beings who do both commendable and dubious things: these two cops have no easy choices if they want to provide for their loved ones.

Apart from this pair, but no less conflicted, is the third protagonist, Henry Johns. This young black man, recently released from prison, soon discovers that his mother has returned to prostitution, which she practices in the house wherein his disabled brother lives. Disgusted with the situation, the newly freed ex-convict returns to the underworld that sent him to jail to earn some quick cash.

STUDIOCANAL

Surrounding this trio is a large supporting cast. Included in this group is the frustrated, Melanie, a tough former cop (and Ridgeman's wife) who was forced to retire from law enforcement at a young age because of a disability. There's also Biscuit, the slightly successful wheedling criminal, who is a childhood friend of Henry Johns and his partner in a new criminal undertaking, and Denise (Anthony's fiancé), an inquisitive and very observant social worker. Elsewhere is Kelly Summer (Jennifer Carpenter), a distressed young mother who must return to her job at a bank and leave her newborn baby for the first time. Lieutenant Calvert (Don Johnson) is another distinct face—Ridgeman's high-ranking former partner who offers his cohort some critical advice that may or may not be heeded.

The scope and amount of plotting of this large movie required a more detailed visual style than the hand-held kind that I used on my previous pictures, but the overall approach had the same end goal: never distract the audience from the characters and the story. Although there are many highly stylized movies that I adore, my own approach to filmmaking is performance-centric. I never want the camera choices that I make to get between the actors and the audience. I want the audience to connect as directly with the characters as possible, and in my view, elaborate crane shots and canted shots and flashy filters and long lenses work against this idea, as do using close ups as the default shot size (most things in life are not viewed in close up and people often express themselves with their hands). Still, I worked as a cinematographer for years and have great relationships with my returning cinematographer and the look of DRAGGED ACROSS CONCRETE was carefully planned in terms of lighting, color palette, and use of shadows in order to create strong atmospheres and expressive tones with these visual elements.

My approach to music was also non-intrusive and precise. Because I have faith in the script and the actors, I don't need to tell the audience how to feel about what is happening. The emotions should come from the content of the film, and if they don't, I don't want to force it down somebody's throat with "sad" music or "suspenseful" music. With my editors, I cut the entirety of *Bone Tomahawk* and *Brawl In Cell Block 99* with zero music in place, and afterwards, once every scene worked to its maximum potential, I added musical grace notes in the right spaces with my co-composer, Jeff Herriott. The scope and environment of DRAGGED ACROSS CONCRETE is bigger than those pictures and there is a larger sense of American communities and how they do and don't co-exist. In this modern concrete landscape, a jazz orchestra illustrates the many hues of Ridgeman, Anthony, Henry Johns, Biscuit, Melanie, Kelly Summer, and the others who struggle to find their melodies. Herriott and I show influences of hard bop composers/leaders like Charles Mingus (*Black Saint and the Sinner Lady*), John Coltrane (*Africa Brass*), and Oliver Nelson (*Blues and the Abstract Truth*) as well as the great modern jazz leader Maria Schneider (*Thompson Fields*) and the jazzy *Taxi Driver* score by Bernard Hermann (one of his best), though our senses of melody and harmony are quite different and resulted in a unique take on composed, orchestrated jazz.

Cinematic reference points are difficult outside of my own two movies, but I can point to some favorites of mine that achieve my ultimate goal through very, very different means. *Prince Of The City*, *Hana Bi (Fireworks)*, *The Cook, The Thief, His Wife, And Her Lover*, *The Killing*, *Heat*, *Bridge On The River Kwai*, *Ping Pong*, *Nashville*, *The Sweet Smell Of Success*, *Taxi Driver*, *Gun Crazy*, and *The Wild Bunch* all achieve something more than the mere telling of a story. Each of these pictures has distinct characters, narrative momentum, and moral complexity, but the sum of these elements is a far greater thing. Each of these movies is a vivid fictional world. Whenever I watch these pictures, I have a sense of a world and the lives beyond the events shown in the movie. These are the movies that turned me into a committed movie fan and works of art that will survive and make people ask questions rather than spoon feed them answers like so many didactic movies do today.

The actors' faith in my script and direction, and my dependable cinematographer Benji Bakshi helped me navigate this difficult production and create DRAGGED ACROSS CONCRETE, which I am thrilled to premiere in Venice.

About the Cast

MEL GIBSON – “Brett Ridgeman”

Mel Gibson was born in upstate New York, but moved to Australia with his family at age 12. After high school, Mel attended the Australian National Institute of Dramatic Arts, where he was trained in classical British theatre tradition and appeared in a number of plays, including *Death of a Salesman* and *Waiting for Godot*.

In 1979, Gibson caught the attention of director George Miller and was cast in *Mad Max*, the first film to bring him worldwide recognition. He then appeared in the title role of *Tim*, where Gibson’s portrayal of a handicapped young man earned him an Australian Film Institute (AFI) Best Actor Award.

Gibson’s international fame grew with the two hit sequels to *Mad Max*--*The Road Warrior* (1981) and *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome* as well as with Peter Weir's *Gallipoli*, which brought Gibson a second AFI Best Actor Award. In 1982, Weir and Gibson collaborated again on *The Year of Living Dangerously*.

In 1984, Gibson made his American film debut in *The River*, opposite Sissy Spacek. He followed this with *The Bounty* where he starred with Anthony Hopkins and Laurence Olivier. He appeared in other films such as *Mrs. Soffel*, *Tequila Sunrise*, *Bird on a Wire*, *Air America*, but it was the record breaking and genre defining, *Lethal Weapon* (1, 2, 3, and 4) franchise that would cement his status in Hollywood. Following this success, Gibson founded Icon Productions, whose first film was *Hamlet*, directed by Franco Zeffirelli. The titular role brought Gibson the William Shakespeare Award from the Folger Theatre in Washington, DC. Gibson made his directorial debut in 1993 in *The Man without a Face*, another Icon production in which he also starred. The company has produced *Immortal Beloved* and *Airborne*, among others.

In 1995, Gibson produced, directed and starred in the critical and box office success *Braveheart*, which was the recipient of five Academy Awards® including Best Picture and Best Director, after receiving a leading 10 nominations. The movie also garnered Gibson a Golden Globe® Award for Best Director, a Special Achievement in Filmmaking from the National Board of Review, the 1996 NATO/ShoWest Director of the Year and the Broadcast Film Critics Association award for Best Director.

In 1996, Gibson starred in *Ransom*, directed by Ron Howard for Disney’s Touchstone Pictures. He received a Golden Globe® nomination for Best Actor in a Motion Picture (Drama), as well as winning the People’s Choice Award for Favorite Motion Picture Actor. In August of 1997, Gibson starred in the romantic-thriller *Conspiracy Theory*, co-starring Julia Roberts and directed by Richard Donner for Warner Bros. Gibson starred in *Lethal Weapon 4* which premiered in 1998, grossing close to \$300 million worldwide and then in 1999, produced and starred in the hard-edge thriller *Payback*.

In 2000, Gibson became the first actor in history to star in three \$100 million films (domestic gross) during the same year. In the summer, Gibson starred in the emotionally charged adventure *The Patriot*, a film written by Robert Rodat (*Saving Private Ryan*) and directed by Roland Emmerich; in the fall, Mel lent his voice to the critically acclaimed DreamWorks SKG animated adventure comedy, *Chicken Run*; and lastly, he starred in the Paramount Pictures/Icon Productions, smash hit *What Women Want*. For his role in the romantic comedy, directed by Nancy Meyers and co-starring Helen Hunt, he was nominated for a Golden Globe® as “Best Actor, Motion Picture Comedy.”

STUDIOCANAL

In 2002, Gibson starred in *We Were Soldiers*, a film based on the book *We Were Soldiers Once...And Young*, telling the story of the first battle between U.S. and Viet Cong troops, in which 400 soldiers were helicoptered in and surrounded by 2000 enemy troops. Later that year, he starred in M. Night Shyamalan's thriller, *Signs*, for Disney, setting Gibson's opening weekend box office record of \$60 million and grossed an all-time individual record of over \$400 million.

In 2004, Gibson produced, co-wrote and directed *The Passion of The Christ* starring Jim Caviezel, Maia Morgenstern and Monica Bellucci. The Ash Wednesday release on February 25 had the best five-day opening ever, at that time, for a film with a Wednesday opening. *The Passion of The Christ* had a worldwide box-office gross of \$610 million, making it the highest-grossing R-rated film and highest grossing independent film in film history. The film was nominated for three Academy Awards®.

In 2006, Gibson brought to life his latest epic, visceral action thriller, *Apocalypto*. Gibson produced, co-wrote and directed the thriller that follows one man's heart-pounding race through primeval jungles to rescue his family. *Apocalypto* opened at number one in its opening weekend grossing \$15.2 million and garnered three Academy Award® nominations.

Gibson returned to acting in 2009 with GK Films' *Edge of Darkness*, and *The Beaver*, directed by Jodie Foster. In 2012, Gibson produced, co-wrote and starred in *Get the Gringo* as well as starred in Open Roads Film *Machete Kills* and *The Expendables 3*. In August of 2016, he starred in *Blood Father*, directed by Jean-François Richet and co-starring William H. Macy.

Gibson's latest directorial endeavor was *Hacksaw Ridge*, which premiered in November 2016 and starred Andrew Garfield as Desmond Doss, the conscientious objector who won the Medal of Honor for his actions in WWII. The movie won two Academy Awards® for Best Film Editing and Best Sound Mixing and it was nominated for six Academy Awards®, including Best Picture and Mel for Best Director.

Gibson was last seen in *Daddy's Home 2* with Mark Wahlberg, Will Ferrell, and John Lithgow in 2017. Gibson will next appear in *DRAGGED ACROSS CONCRETE* with Vince Vaughn. Most recently, he wrapped production on *Boss Level*. He will also star alongside Sean Penn in *The Professor and the Madman*, and is booked to star in the Benjamin Rocher-directed *Every Other Weekend*. He has also teamed with Kurt Russell and Kate Hudson on the gold rush TV series *The Barbary Coast*.

VINCE VAUGHN – "Anthony Lurasetti"

Vince Vaughn has become one of Hollywood's most highly acclaimed triple threats – as an actor, producer and screenwriter. A Chicago native, Vaughn first caught the attention of critics and audiences in Doug Liman's independent sleeper hit and cult classic *Swingers*. Most recently, Vaughn starred in S. Craig Zahler's *Brawl in Cell Block 99* which received critical acclaim worldwide with a rotten tomatoes score of 92%. He has reteamed with Zahler on *DRAGGED ACROSS CONCRETE* alongside Mel Gibson for Lionsgate which will be seen later this year. In 2016, Vince starred in Mel Gibson's WWII drama *Hacksaw Ridge*, which was nominated for 6 Academy Awards® and 3 Golden Globes®. Vaughn recently wrapped production on *Against All Enemies* as FBI agent Carl Kowalski alongside Kristen Stewart, Jean Seberg, Anthony Mackie and Jack O'Connell. The story centers on attempts by the FBI to discredit Seberg through its Cointelpro program in retaliation for her support of the Black Panther Party.

Vaughn's production company Wild West Picture Show is heading into its 6th season of the Audience Network favorite "Undeniable", a 10 episode series with new host Dan Patrick which features one-on-

STUDIOCANAL

one in-depth interviews with various sports legends. Additional WWPS credits include ESPN's "30 for 30 documentary" on the '85 Bears which Vaughn also narrated along with Audience Network's "Fear(less) with Tim Ferriss," the TBS original sitcom "Sullivan & Son" and the Netflix animated show "F is for Family" which has just been renewed for its third season on Netflix. DirecTV is also partnering with WWPS on the film Give Us This Day, which tells the stories of a year in the lives of three police officers and three residents living in East St. Louis, the city with the highest homicide rate in the United States.

Vaughn's film credits additionally include *Rudy*, *Old School*, *Dodgeball: A True Underdog Story*, *Wedding Crashers*, *The Break Up*, *Into the Wild*, *Couples Retreat*, and *The Internship*.

TORY KITTLES – "Henry Johns"

Tory Kittles will next be seen in S. Craig Zahler's DRAGGED ACROSS CONCRETE co-starring with Mel Gibson and Vince Vaughn. His previous credits include *Steel Magnolias* opposite Queen Latifah, Phylicia Rashad, and Alfre Woodard, for which he received an NAACP Image Award. He made his feature film debut opposite Colin Farrell in *Tigerland* for director Joel Schumacher. He also appeared in THE SAPPHIRES for director Wayne Blair, which premiered at the Cannes Film Festival. Other films include Jim Sheridan's *Get Rich Or Die Tryin'* opposite Curtis '50 Cent' Jackson, Kimberly Pierce's *Stop-Loss*, Lee Tamahori's *Next*, Spike Lee's *Miracle At St. Anna* and Antoine Fuqua's *Olympus Has Fallen*. He recently appeared again opposite Queen Latifah in HBO Films' critically acclaimed *Bessie*. He's just wrapped Tara Miele's film *Wander Darkly* opposite Sienna Miller and Diego Luna.

On television, he starred on the USA drama, *Colony* with Josh Holloway. He also starred as "Detective Thomas Papania" in the award winning HBO anthology series *True Detective* opposite Matthew McConaughey and Woody Harrelson. His other credits include the BBC America series *Intruders*, *Sons Of Anarchy*, *House M.D.* and *CSI: Miami*.

About the Filmmaker

S. CRAIG ZAhLER – Director, Writer

S. Craig Zahler is an award-winning screenwriter, director, novelist, cinematographer, and musician. He wrote, directed, and co-composed the score for the 2015 film *Bone Tomahawk*, an Independent Spirit Award nominated picture (Best Screenplay; Best Supporting Actor) starring Kurt Russell, Patrick Wilson, Matthew Fox, and Richard Jenkins. The film garnered praise from critics and fans alike, including the New York Times, who called *Bone Tomahawk*, “[a] witty fusion of western, horror and comedy that gallops to its own beat”. Zahler more recently wrote and directed *Brawl In Cell Block 99*, a New York Times Critic’s Pick, starring Vince Vaughn, Jennifer Carpenter, and Don Johnson, which premiered at the Venice Film Festival and also went on to critical acclaim. Both movies were added to the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City in 2017. Mel Gibson, Vince Vaughn, and Tory Kittles star in Zahler’s new crime drama DRAGGED ACROSS CONCRETE.

Zahler’s debut western novel, *A Congregation of Jackals* was nominated for the Peacemaker and the Spur awards, and his 2014 novels *Mean Business on North Ganson Street* and *Corpus Chrome, Inc.* both received starred reviews for excellence in Booklist. His newest book is *Hug Chickenpenny: The Panegyric of an Anomalous Child*, a gothic tale that he will bring to the silver screen with the help of his new creative partners, The Jim Henson Company. After reading this strange story, Clive Baker declared, “S. Craig Zahler is certain to become one of the great imaginers of our time.”

In addition to writing and directing, Zahler has founded and played in several bands, including the doomy epic metal outfit Realmbuilder, whose albums have been released by I Hate Records of Sweden. With longtime friend and songwriting partner Jeff Herriott, S. Craig Zahler co-composed the orchestral score for *Bone Tomahawk*, and the soul music for *Brawl In Cell Block 99* and DRAGGED ACROSS CONCRETE as well as the jazz compositions for the latter. Zahler and Herriott also make music as Binary Reptile, a synthesizer project that provided the music for the ear movie, *The Narrow Caves*.

STUDIOCANAL

Credits

SUMMIT ENTERTAINMENT
Presents a
UNIFIED PICTURES / CINESTATE
production

in association with
LOOK TO THE SKY FILMS
THE FYZZ FACILITY

in association with
VICTORY SQUARE TECHNOLOGIES
MOOT POINT PRODUCTIONS
ASSEMBLE MEDIA

in association with
REALMBUILDER PRODUCTIONS

Written and Directed by
S. CRAIG ZAHLER

Starring
MEL GIBSON
VINCE VAUGHN
TORY KITTLES
MICHAEL JAI WHITE
JENNIFER CARPENTER
LAURIE HOLDEN
FRED MELAMED
UDO KIER
TATTIAWNA JONES
JUSTINE WARRINGTON
JORDYN ASHLEY OLSON
MYLES TRUITT
VANESSA BELL CALLOWAY
NOEL G
PRIMO ALLON
MATTHEW MACCAULL
With THOMAS KRETSCHMANN
And DON JOHNSON

STUDIOCANAL

An S. CRAIG ZAHLER Film

Produced by
KEITH KJARVAL, p.g.a.
DALLAS SONNIER, p.g.a.
JACK HELLER
TYLER JACKSONSEFTON
FINCHAM

Co-Producer
AMANDA PRESMYK

Executive Producers
WAYNE MARC GODFREY
ROBERT JONES
SHAFIN DIAMOND TEJANI
LEVI SHECK
MIKE ROWE
DEAN BUCHANAN
BEN RUFFMAN

Director of Photography
BENJI BAKSHI

Production Designer
BRIAN DAVIE

Editor
GREG D'AURIA

Costume Designer
TANYA LIPKE

Line Producer
TARA COWELL-PLAIN

Stunt Coordinator
LAURO CHARTRAND

Casting by
MARY VERNIEU, CSA and MICHELLE WADE BYRD, CSA
CORINNE CLARK, CSA and JENNIFER PAGE, CSA

Re-Recording Mixer
DAN BRENNAN



All Songs and Additional Music Composed by
JEFF HERRIOTT & S. CRAIG ZAHLER