

INSPIRING STORYTELLER

Filmography so far: Multiple award-winning shorts including *Wale* (2018), *Dad Was* (2019), *Thousand Yesterdays* (2018), and many commercials and music videos.

When did you discover you wanted to be a DP and what inspired you to follow this career path?
I don't really remember a time when I didn't want to be a cinematographer. I think it all started with asking my dad, "When did the world stop being black and white?". Since then, over time I have sought as much knowledge and experience as I can.

Where did you learn your craft?
I camera assisted for many years, predominantly on feature films where I got the chance to watch many great cinematographers' work including John Mathieson BSC and Philippe Rousselot AFC ASC. I was then taken under the wing of several cinematographers on music videos and commercials before a mentorship with Haris Zambarloukos BSC GSC across three features - *Locke* (2013), *Jack Ryan* (2014), and *Cinderella* (2015).

What are your favourite films, and what makes them stand out to you?
Every day my list changes! But these have all left a lasting impression: *Blade Runner* (1982), Dir: Ridley Scott/DP: Jordan Cronenwerth ASC; *Heat* (1995), Dir: Michael Mann/DP: Dante Spinotti ASC AIC; *Kramer vs Kramer* (1979), Dir: Robert Benton/DP: Néstor Almendros ASC; *Klute* (1971), Dir: Alan Pakula/DP: Gordon Willis ASC; and *Come and See* (1985), Dir: Elem Klimov/DP: Aleksey Rodionov.

Who in the film world inspires you?
Angus Hudson BSC for his unwavering kindness, advice, and support. Haris Zambarloukos BSC GSC for being an incredible mentor over the years. Gordon Willis ASC and Haris Savides ASC for their approach towards cinematography.

What's the best advice you've received and from whom?
Haris Zambarloukos BSC GSC: "Joyfully participate in the sorrow of filmmaking."

What advice would you give someone considering becoming a cinematographer?
Shoot stills. Learn to pre-visualise and work with what is freely available.

Have you won any awards or received any nominations?
I've shot numerous shorts that have won awards in festivals, and I have also received a few nods. Nomination - BSC: Short Film Cinematography Competition (2020). Nomination - BSC: Emerging Cinematographer (2019), Lift Off - Cinematography Showcase (2019). Winner - European Cinematography Awards: Best Cinematographer (07/2019).

What's been your proudest moment?
Wale (2019) receiving a BAFTA nomination and shortlisting for an Academy award.

What's the worst knock-back you've received?
I developed a project with a minimal budget and big ambitions for ten months with a producer and director and then a week before the shoot I was replaced by someone they had just met at a networking event who offered them all the equipment for free. I was assured everything I contributed would still be kept, as if that would take the sting out of the situation!

What have been your greatest triumphs and disasters on set?
Triumphs: Camera operating for Haris Zambarloukos BSC GSC on *Cinderella* (2015) and at the end of the first day shooting the ballroom sequence director Kenneth Branagh generously praising my work.

Disasters: This is more a general than a particular moment but finding yourself in a position of caring more than the director about the project or inadvertently running a film school.

Tell us your most hilarious faux pas?
Whilst assisting on a feature, the grip asked me to quickly grab something from their van. I did this but inadvertently also locked their keys in the van.

What lights your fire outside of work?
I teach the martial art Ninjutsu when I'm not shooting. It's great to have a head space so far from work. Also, books - lots and lots of books.

What piece of kit could you not live without?
Pen and paper!

Which productions are you most proud of?
Wale (2018) was an incredibly challenging shoot. I only joined the production the morning before and found little in place. Somehow, we pulled it out the bag and got a BAFTA nomination and I received a BSC: Emerging Cinematographer nod. *Dad Was* (2019) was a joy to shoot and I am very proud of the result that also received a nod from the BSC.

What's the hardest shot you've had to light/frame?
A few schedule changes later and I unexpectedly found myself lighting night for day on *Thousand Yesterdays* (2019). It all worked out, but I've never been so nervous to see the rushes.

Which film would you love to have shot?
Apocalypse Now (1979), Dir: Francis Ford Coppola/DP: Vittorio Storaro ASC AIC. I dream about being on one of those '70s sets out in the jungle. No rules. No studio execs. Total madness.

What is your greatest extravagance?
I shoot wet plate collodion portraits. The process is ridiculously time consuming, difficult, and expensive. But the results are unlike anything else, and the process is delightfully meditative, if a little toxic.

Tell us your hidden talent/party trick?
I am incredibly flexible and can contort myself into a variety of shapes. This has proven very beneficial whilst operating in a tight spot.

What's the best and worst thing about your job?
Best: Taking a great script and visually telling that story with people who inspire you.
Worst: When the budget falls through after the project gets under your skin.

Describe your approach to cinematography in three words?
Considered, emotional, and textural.

What are your aspirations for the future?
In the long term, to shoot a James Bond film. In the more immediate future, to get a series or a feature under my belt. ■



Short film *Wale*



Short film *Thousand Yesterdays*