

HALAL DADDY

Production Notes

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Production Information

Described by writer-director Conor McDermottroe as a good news migrant story, HALAL DADDY is a culture clash working class comedy about a halal meat factory in the west of Ireland and a young man's attempts to escape his domineering father and regain the affection of his sweetheart.

Written and directed by **Conor McDermottroe** (*Swansong: Story of Occi Byrne*), co-written by **Mark O'Halloran** (*Viva, Adam and Paul*), who plays a supporting character in the film, and starring **Nikesh Patel** (*London Has Fallen, Indian Summers*) as the proverbial fish out of water, HALAL DADDY also features **Colm Meaney** (*Star Trek: Deep Space Nine, Hell On Wheels*) as the protagonist's suspicious in-law, **Art Malik** (*True Lies, Sex and The City 2*) as his controlling father, and **Sarah Bolger** (*In America, The Spiderwick Chronicles*) as his feisty girlfriend. The cast is joined by **Deirdre O'Kane** (*Noble, Intermission*), **Paul Tylak** (*The Secret of Kells, Father Ted*), and **David Kross** (*The Reader, War Horse*).

HALAL DADDY is produced by **Hermann Florin** (*Hanni & Nanni, I'm off Then, Swansong: The Story of Occi Byrne, Outriders*) for Germany's Florin Films, and its Irish outlet Benrae Florin Films, alongside **Ailish McElmeel** (*Can't Cope, Won't Cope, Burning Wishes, Nowhere Fast*) for Ireland's Deadpan Pictures. **Peter Rommel** (*Wetlands, Stopped on Track*), of Germany's Rommel Films, is co-producer. The production is supported by the Irish Film Board and Eurimages. Global Screen is handling world sales.

Key crew includes director of photography **Mel Griffith** (*Ricky: Three's a Crowd*), composer **Matthias Weber** (*Pearl Harbour*), costume designer **Kerry Gooding** (*Game of Thrones*), production designer **Conor Dennison** and editor **Alexander Dittner** (*The Same Sky*) and **Constantin von Seld** (*Barefoot*).

HALAL DADDY is a Florin Film, Benrae Florin Films and Deadpan Pictures production. Element Pictures Distribution has Irish and UK rights. German theatrical rights are handled by Koch Media, while Telepool has television rights in Germany.

Synopsis

Raghdan Aziz, a young man of British-Indian Muslim heritage, is happy in his new home on the west coast of Ireland. This beach-fronted retreat is the perfect getaway from his controlling father. He has escaped the burden of his legacy and discovered a new sense of community. Living with his adoring aunt and uncle, Raghdan hangs out with his surf buddies Derek and Neville and has mapped out a future with girlfriend, Maeve Logan.

On Raghdan's 21st birthday, his father Amir arrives from England with the gift of a run-down meat factory. How will Raghdan cope with this poisoned chalice of a present - a career opportunity that he never wanted?

Can he resolve differences with Maeve's uppity father, Martin? Can he heal the growing rift between himself and Maeve and overcome a potential love rival in the form of Jasper? What happens when the community, that had accepted him as one of its own, turns against him?

HALAL DADDY is a fish out of water story about a loveable outsider faced with a unique set of needs, wants and desires. This culture clash comedy explores integration in a multicultural world and the universal challenge we all face at some point in our lives. When bridges crumble between ourselves and our parents or partners, will we have the fortitude to rebuild them?

The Cast

Raghdan Aziz
Martin Logan
Amir Aziz
Maeve Logan
Jasper
Doreen Murphy
Jamal Aziz
Derek
Neville

NIKESH PATEL
COLM MEANEY
ART MALIK
SARAH BOLGER
DAVID KROSS
DEIRDRE O'KANE
PAUL TYLAK
STEPHEN CROMWELL
JERRY IWU

The Production Team

Written and Directed by	CONOR McDERMOTTROE
Co-Writer	MARK O'HALLORAN
Produced by	HERMANN FLORIN, AILISH McELMEEL,
Director of Photography	MEL GRIFFITH
Editor	ALEXANDER DITTNER CONSTANTIN VON SELD
Composer	MATTHIAS WEBER
Production Designer	CONOR DENNISON
Costume Designer	KERRY GOODING
Casting Director	LOUISE KIELY

Pleased to Meat You

The Background of HALAL DADDY

In 1974, Sher Mohammad Rafique, a Pakistani entrepreneur, opened a meat-processing plant in the west of Ireland to serve as a base for his international meat export operation. Initially known as Halal Meats, the business incorporated five slaughtering plants across the country. There was a head branch in County Mayo and additional facilities in Wexford, Cork, and Roscommon. The fifth was located in Sligo town, County Sligo.

These factories slaughtered sheep and cattle using halal practice, a special process that adheres to Islamic law, as defined in the Koran.

According to the book *Muslims in Ireland: Past and Present*, "Operations were consolidated under the name United Meat Packers Limited, and developed into a major exporter of halal meat to countries in Europe and the Middle East. The high quality of meat exports, offered at competitive prices, facilitated a rapid expansion of Irish halal meat exports through the 1980's."*

Ireland became a major exporter of halal meat to Iran and Iraq, and their neighbouring countries, when the two nations were at war between 1980 and 1988. By 1991, United Meat Packers accounted for 14.5% of cattle and 24.5% of sheep slaughtered in Ireland for export purposes. However, during the 1990's

sales dried up due to trade sanctions with Iraq and a catastrophic fire at the Mayo facility. The company was forced to close operations.

So it was, in the late 1990's, that the actor Conor McDermottroe returned to his native Sligo for a few days off while working at Dublin's Abbey Theatre, and decided to have a pint in a local pub. He picks up the story:

"Some guys that I knew were in there celebrating. One of them lifted a pint of Guinness. I asked him what they were so happy about. He said the local meat exporters were going to re-open. He turned to me and said, 'We're going halal. I looked in this guy's face and I knew he hadn't a clue what halal was'."

The incongruous notion of a halal meat factory on the west coast of Ireland planted the seed of a story in McDermottroe's head. Over the decade that followed, it flowered into a fully-fledged narrative.

"There are no good news Muslim stories," he says. "Everything seems to be disenfranchised stories about migrants, refugees, and people from other countries. I'm a huge believer in multiculturalism and I thought this was a great story."

In 2009, McDermottroe was in Berlin, working on the post-production of his debut feature, *Swansong: Story of Occi Byrne*, with producer Hermann Florin. The pair were on the terrace of Florin's home when the producer asked him if he had any ideas for another film. McDermottroe pitched various stories, but HALAL DADDY struck a chord.

The writer-director began writing the script. After three drafts, he asked the actor and writer Mark O'Halloran to refine the story. O'Halloran is the recipient of numerous awards for films such as *Adam and Paul* (2004), *Garage* (2007) and his film *Viva* was shortlisted for an Oscar nomination in 2016. McDermottroe could not wish for a better collaborator.

"I was brought onboard as a co-writer to re-imagine and rewrite certain elements of the story," explains O'Halloran. "I deepened the characters, honed the comedic set pieces, and changed the structure somewhat. I have Muslim friends, which helped the process. I come from a small town in the west of Ireland, so I'm aware of the region. I'm aware of a new population in small town Ireland too: the children of immigrants. Boys and girls of parents from Nigeria, Europe, India, are embedded in communities. When it came to my investigation of halal practice, though, I've been a vegetarian for 25 years so I avoided any videos."

McDermottroe and O'Halloran went back and forth, exchanging notes about the script and reading the dialogue to one another. "Mark's talent as a writer is

immense," said the director. "Before he started on the project, I hadn't captured the world I have now. His dialogue is second to none, as is his understanding of character, their journeys and movement through the piece. He's a real stickler for serving each character throughout the story, which is a skill that's often left for dead and not followed through properly. It takes a huge discipline."

While McDermottroe and O'Halloran were honing the screenplay, producer Hermann Florin recruited Ailish McElmeel, of Ireland's Deadpan Pictures.

"It came to us at the start of 2015 and I loved it straight away," she says. "It felt like a very natural fit for us because we only do comedy. We didn't want HALAL DADDY going anywhere else. Conor and Mark have captured something of this place. Small town Ireland is usually portrayed as a bit twee. The younger characters, like Derek, Raghdan and Neville, bring a youth and energy that we don't see in cinematic depictions of small town Ireland."

The Irish Film Board was onboard from the beginning as financiers. "Then we started talking to people in agencies, distribution companies, broadcasters, and other funding agencies," says Florin. "The idea was to put together an Irish-German co-production. After *Swansong: Story of Occi Byrne*, some people already knew us. Financing is a puzzle. You have to keep all the balls in the air and don't drop them. If one ball drops, it all falls apart. At the end, it all happens very fast. You need to close all the contracts very quickly. That's when people start negotiating."

* *Muslims in Ireland: Past and Present*. By Oliver Scharbrodt, Tuula Sakaranaho, Adil Hussain Khan, Yafa Shanneik, Vivian Ibrahim.

Cast in Iron

Finding the actors for HALAL DADDY

From early stages of script development, writer-director Conor McDermottroe had a firm idea about the actors he wanted to work with. An actor himself, he appeared in work such as Ken Loach's *Jimmy's Hall* (2014) and John Crowley's *Intermission* (2003), so he feels a strong affinity with his cast.

"The casting on this film was unique," explains Hermann Florin, producer. "Conor scripted with people in mind. He would tell me, 'Martin Logan should be someone like Colm Meaney, don't you think?' In fact, the four main actors - Nikesh Patel, Colm Meaney, Art Malik, and Sarah Bolger - were involved for more than two and half years. They loved the script from the first time they read it. We used Louise Kiely, a casting agent in Ireland, to get everyone on board."

Finding the right actor for the lead role of Raghdan Aziz was crucial. "For our lead character, we needed someone with natural charisma, talent and craft," says Florin. "He also had to be Indian."

"We worked with Louise Kiely, our casting director, and met about 20 potential Raghdans, but Conor still loved the one he initially wanted," says Ailish McElmeel, producer. "We found Nikesh Patel quite early and realised he was the only Raghdan we could see in the role. He brought the charisma that we needed. You need innocence and charisma to carry off that that lethargic attitude he has to his existence and life."

Mark O'Halloran had seen Patel in the Channel 4 series *Indian Summers* (2015-2016) and believed he was the perfect for the part of Raghdan.

"It was really important we got someone who is really charismatic, matinee idol handsome and a brilliant actor," says the writer. "Nikesh has all three qualities. He's in every scene in the film, so it's a very important part to get right. He responded to the script, so we were delighted."

McDermottroe and Patel met for coffee in London and discussed the story of HALAL DADDY. Patel recalls: "Conor had some interesting things to say about father-son relationships. I was very lucky to have worked with Art Malik before [in *Indian Summers*], so there was a shorthand that was nice because we have some quite meaty stuff together in the story."

Malik and McDermottroe already had their own shorthand. The pair acted together in *Vicious Circle*, a 1999 movie about Dublin gangsters. According to HALAL DADDY's writer-director, Malik was a perfect fit not only because of his acting credentials, having appeared in classics such as *Passage To India* (1984), but because he and Nikesh Patel resemble father and son.

Malik was sold from the word go. "It's a lovely, heart-warming script," says the actor. "It has an arc I believed in. I think it's right and proper we're making this now and in Ireland. The Irish bring a wonderful humanity and hospitality to this world. That's something that comes across in this film."

Sarah Bolger, who plays Raghdan's girlfriend, Maeve Logan, was another early recruit. "I read the script in 2014," she says. "So I've lived with this character for a while. I grew up a little bit, reading this script over the last few years. So it's amazing to finally get to play it. It's such a lovely, happy uplifting story that makes you want to read on."

Martin Logan, Maeve's father, was written with Colm Meaney in mind. This iconic Irish actor also came onboard during an early draft of the screenplay.

"I first read the script two or three years ago," says Meaney. "Like everything nowadays, it takes a long time to get a picture up and running. I re-read it again when it came back to me. I was delighted to see it held up. It was everything I remembered. It's a funny, moving, romantic comedy. It has great characters dotted all over it. The relationships are interesting. I had great pleasure reading it. It was a page turner."

Aside from the four leads, other cast members had a similar response to the screenplay. "It's a very poignant story," says Paul Tylak, who plays Raghdan's uncle Jamal Aziz. "When I first got the script, I was stuck for time. I thought, 'I'll read half today, half tomorrow'. But I wasn't able to stop turning the pages. It was good to have real Asian characters. They're not just there for colour, if you pardon the expression. They're the main people in the story."

Deirdre O'Kane, who plays Raghdan's aunt Doreen Murphy, also enjoyed the culture clash story. "I love the mix of cultures. Maybe it's why wedding movies work - putting people together that are not a natural fit, so you're bringing lots of things to the table," she says.

Casting required a leftfield approach. Jerry Iwu, who plays Raghdan's surf buddy Neville, was cast via a Facebook shout-out. It's the actor's first filmic role. Conor McDermottroe also wanted to use cast and crew from the Sligo area. "It makes sense," says the writer-director. "They know the story, they know me. They're from the area. These are people who I worked with before."

Finding a place in the world

The locations of Halal Daddy

Conor McDermottroe was on solid ground when it came to location hunting for HALAL DADDY. The writer-director is from Sligo, the town on the west coast of Ireland where the film is shot, and made his debut feature, *Swansong: Story of Occi Byrne* (2009), in the locale.

There was no studio work involved in HALAL DADDY - the entire film was shot on location - so the filmmakers set out to capture the authenticity of the local area. Kieran Hennessy, the location manager who worked on *Swansong*, began hunting for locations six months before production commenced.

Hennessy's central task? Finding somewhere to host the run-down meat factory where Raghdan and Amir establish their halal business. Over half the story takes place in this setting, so finding the right location was crucial. Sligo's

original halal meat factory was too dilapidated to use, but not far from its location was another former meat packing facility.

"It's a very derelict building; it was in disrepair," explains Ailish McElmeel, producer. "Alongside the local council, we made it workable for the production. It has given us so many of our sets. The entire meat plant is run out of here. We are using office space; other sets are built into spare areas of the factory."

During the location hunt, Conor McDermottroe suggested ideas to Kieran Hennessy: a pub that might suit the story's fictional boozier; a housing estate for a car chase; character's various homes.

Sligo is a renowned surfing destination, so the filmmakers did not have to go far for beach locations. One crucial scene was filmed at Sligo Airport.

The locals were accommodating, according to McElmeel. "The operational challenges are much more limited in rural locations. We've encountered nothing but support from the local community. Because Conor is a local guy and this is his second film, they desperately want to help. The airport, council, everyone has been really supportive. There's a really good infrastructure here. The town council worked really well with our locations team to make sure we had every facility we can acquire."

"There was talk about setting HALAL DADDY in Dublin for ease of production, but Conor pushed for it to be shot here," continues lead actor Nikesh Patel, who had never been to Ireland before. "I can see why. It's beautiful. There's a welcoming energy to the town. We're shooting while the [UEFA] European Championship is on, so it's a great atmosphere."

Although Sarah Bolger grew up in Dublin, she had never been to Sligo before. HALAL DADDY marks her creative return to Ireland after a number of years making film and television shows in the United States.

"It's so lovely to be able to come back home," she says. "The last job I did in Ireland was *The Tudors* around five years ago. So to get to go home and be around my family and colleagues, some of whom I have worked with since I was six years old, is wonderful. Yes, some of the crew members I've known for 16 years. It's the most lovely, warming set."

Bonds that shape us

The Production of HALAL DADDY

HALAL DADDY was produced in Sligo on the west coast of Ireland.

After six weeks of preparation, the filmmakers shot the film over five weeks. Strong friendships grew between cast and crew during the production. Many of the filmmakers had worked together before this movie.

"It's one of those film sets that's instantly comfortable and that's not always the case," says Deirdre O'Kane, who plays Raghdan's aunt Doreen Murphy. "You feel very welcome and at home. It was a very easy set to join."

Nikesh Patel (Raghdan Aziz) and Art Malik (Amir Aziz) already knew each other from the Channel 4 television series *Indian Summers*. Patel quickly bonded with his onscreen love interest, played by Sarah Bolger.

"Working with Sarah Bolger is a treat," says Patel. "She's very funny and has a lot of filmic experience. Raghdan and Maeve's chemistry relies on the two of us being able to work well together and I think we do."

Bolger concurs: "Thank God we've gotten along so well. It can be awkward. You start a movie, but your characters are already in the middle of an intense love. Nikesh is lovely and kind, I'm grateful to have him as a partner in crime on screen and off set."

During her time off, the actress hung out with Patel and the actors who play their laid-back surf buddies, Stephen Cromwell (Derek) and Jerry Iwu (Neville). David Kross, the German actor who plays Raghdan's potential love rival Jasper, was another off-screen ally.

"I met Sarah at the 2008 Berlin Film Festival, when we both won the Shooting Stars award," marvels Kross. "Now many years later and here we are working with each other!"

Cromwell and Iwu, who share most of their onscreen time together, met on the train to Sligo before production started. "I didn't know Jerry, but he's a black dude with braided hair, so I presumed it was him and we struck up a conversation," says Cromwell.

HALAL DADDY is Iwu's first job in a feature film. He had no idea what to expect. "I came into this not knowing how to react because we have to portray people who have been friends for God knows how many years," says the actor. "But they are really good friends of mine now outside work. We gelled and

bonded as a group. I'm constantly asking questions, which they probably get bored of, but they are supportive and understanding."

Colm Meaney kept the cast in stitches with his natural comedic sensibilities. "You have to keep everything together in a take with Colm, so you're not bursting out laughing," admits Nikesh Patel. "He's got a brilliant sense of humour. It's nice being in Sligo town and seeing him received as a local legend. He's got this vast body of work. I grew up watching *Star Trek: the Next Generation* with my mum. I'm slightly in awe of him."

On screen partners Deirdre O'Kane and Paul Tylak, who play Raghdan's aunt and uncle, were immediately comfortable in each other's presence. Both are seasoned stand-up comics and know each other from the touring circuit in Ireland. Tylak also bonded with Art Malik and spent a day with him touring Sligo's spectacular countryside.

Writer-director Conor McDermottroe was the glue that bonded this band of misfits. As the film's writer, he knew the script inside out. As an actor, he could quickly respond to his cast's needs. "I like working with writer-directors," explains Patel. "You want that line of communication with the writer, it means they are that much closer to the material. Conor has a great energy. The set rallies around his easy going charm."

O'Kane adds: "I've known Conor a long time. There's something lovely about working with a director who is also an actor. They've walked in your shoes, they know how you're feeling, and they are good at putting you at ease and telling you what you need to hear. You automatically feel very safe when the director knows your side of the character."

Safety was a priority when it came to the surfing scenes in the film. Strandhill, where this action was filmed, is considered one of the best surfing destinations in Europe. Some of the actors arrived on location a week early to learn the basics of wave riding with surf consultant Tom Hickey.

"There are several key scenes where all the characters surf," says Sarah Bolger. "I learned how to surf in one day and beat all the boys in a race, which made me very happy. It was five lads and me and I won. It helps because the kids in the story are beach dwellers. They grew up surfing, so it was a nice bonding experience to do that with the cast members."

Stephen Cromwell, who plays Derek, recalls a fateful scene on the beach. "I've been acting for 10 years and I feel this is the only thing I'm going to be remembered for," he says. "Myself and Nikesh and Sarah were doing a scene on top of a sand dune and I had to storm off with my surf board. I ran out of places to walk and fell off the edge of a sand dune... and kept falling. I was falling and

falling and thought, 'I'll just wait until I get to the bottom'. I was sliding to the bottom headfirst like a ragdoll. The crew enjoyed that."

Precipitous sand dunes were the least of the production's problems. There was also the small matter of stampeding cattle. "We had a scene where we had cows running on the street," explains Hermann Florin, producer. McDermottroe sighs: "Cows don't take direction very well."

Colm Meaney chuckles at the memory. "The cows were very well behaved, apart from a couple of very excited male members. On paper, you read about the cows stampeding. In fact, you shoot it in a very technical way. Besides, I'm used to working with animals and kids."

Conor McDermottroe had to film a number of sequences on the streets of Sligo, including a car chase in which Maeve Logan, played by Sarah Bolger, rides a moped. "I had to ride a moped in the rain, in Ireland, with another actor on the back, so I was like 'Let's really rehearse this'. If I killed Nikesh the production wouldn't be too pleased," says the actress.

Aside from car chases, surfing, and the occasional bovine encounter, the biggest challenge for Nikesh Patel was keeping up with the pace.

"It didn't hit me, until we were about to start, what it means to be in every scene," explains the film's lead actor. "It requires a level of focus and energy that I haven't experienced before. You want to keep your sense of humour, especially for a comedy. Just make sure you're at your best. Luckily, I'm working with a very supportive bunch of people."

After five weeks, the production wrapped and the cast went their separate ways, but there was work still to be done. As an Irish-German production, all the post-production was undertaken in Germany.

"It's interesting to get a European view of things," remarks Hermann Florin, producer. "If people work together from different countries, you get different perspectives on a film. We have a German composer living in Los Angeles, Matthias Weber, who has worked on iconic scores such as *Pearl Harbour*. He brings a whole new world to this movie."

Cultural Liaisons

Exploring the themes of HALAL DADDY

HALAL DADDY is a light-hearted comedy, but at its heart is an exploration of how different cultures, races and colours, can co-exist peacefully. "Halal Daddy is a good news Muslim story, a good news migrant story," explains Conor McDermottroe, the film's writer-director.

"This is what drew me to the film," says Nikesh Patel, who plays Raghdan. "It has a really positive message about how people from different backgrounds - cultural, religious, generational - might initially not see each other's point of view, or feel like they can't talk to each other. By being thrown together, and put in a position of adversity, they can come together and make something vibrant and multicultural. That's an important message and one worth celebrating."

Sarah Bolger, who plays Maeve, concurs: "There's a Jimmy Carter quote that I love about multiculturalism. 'We become not a melting pot, but a beautiful mosaic'. People ultimately want the same dreams and have the same hopes."

Alongside the theme of integration, working together, and engaging with other cultures, HALAL DADDY explores the universal narrative of young people trying to navigate life in a small community.

"Even though we grow up with the mentality that the grass is greener on the other side, and you should leave the place where you grew up," says Bolger. "Sometimes, no matter what your background, ethnicity or sexuality, where you are standing is the right place. We all go through the same amount of crap. Growing up is hard and life can be difficult, but we all go through the same things. Take a moment, look at where you are, appreciate who you are today, who you're with, and be grateful. That is what this story embodies for me."

Dressed for success

A Q&A with HALAL DADDY's costume designer Kerry Gooding

In the script, Raghdan is described as British/Pakistani but he has lived in Sligo for the last four months. "He is rangy and good looking, goofy..."

What clothes does he wear?

Raghdan goes from surf dude in all his funky colours to having to wear a suit in the meat factory. That's him restricted and he hates it. It was a lovely script to work on for all the costume ideas. I had license to be creative. Conor had strong ideas. Between us, we came up with all the different characters.

How did you dress Maeve Logan, Raghdan's partner?

She's a pizza delivery girl; naturally beautiful. She's young and in love. I went with a lot of orange colours, not too many patterns. More natural and earthy."

And Martin Logan, Maeve's father, played by Colm Meaney?

He's a meat factory man. Polo shirts. He doesn't give a damn what he's wearing. Colm was very cool about wearing hideous jackets and chequered shirts.

How did you research surf culture?

I had a great time researching it. I got a lot of inspiration from people in the street. I'd go up to people and take photographs of what they were wearing. I thought Neville [Raghdan's surf buddy] would be a Jimi Hendrix fan. He's the funkiest one because he's the most talented. He designs his own t-shirts.

The story features characters in Islamic garb. How did you source these costumes?

You can Google everything a million times, but I've found talking to people is the best thing. I visited two mosques and met Imams [religious leaders]. It's a refreshing change to Christianity: long cotton tunics, prayer caps. I was approaching Imams from a fashion perspective, going 'I love what you're wearing. Do you normally wear flip-flops with that tunic?' They'd go, 'Well, I'm actually here to pray'.

The Characters

Nikesh Patel on Raghdan Aziz:

I play a young guy from Bradford who finds himself in Sligo in a temporary arrangement living with his uncle, Jamal. You get the impression he's been a bit of a drifter, but also that he has fallen in love with this place.

There is unfinished business back home with his father, Amir. At the start of the story, Amir turns up in Sligo. He's a very serious Indian man who tells Raghdan to buck up his ideas. 'There's a disused factory that has been lying idle. You and me are going to go into business. We're setting up a halal meat factory'.

What's his relationship like with his dad? Complicated. For some time, it has just been the two of them because his mother passed away when he was young. It's that conflict between two men who can't see eye to eye. I see Amir as someone who is conservative and controlling. By the time you get to the start of Halal Daddy, relations have soured to the point where Jamal is saying 'You've got to call your dad'. But Raghdan wants nothing more to do with him.

To a certain extent, Raghdan is rebelling against tradition. What I really liked about this script is the way that Conor and Mark used traditions, culture, religion, as a springboard for exploring how generationally this relationship could have broken down, without whacking you over the head with issues. Raghdan was getting away from an arranged marriage. At the same time, when you see father and son together, you see the gap in their relationship.

In a lot of ways it could be a father and son from any faith or background that just don't see eye to eye. Religion and tradition is part of that, but it's also about either side not fully being able to see the other's point of view.

At the start of the story, Raghdan has been in a relationship with Maeve Logan who is a bit of a firecracker. There's an undeniable attraction made complicated by the fact that Maeve's father is a bafflingly old-fashioned, possibly ignorant, staunch Irish patriarch. Did the character know anything about halal practice before the film started? That's debatable.

Raghdan and Maeve recognise in each other the excitement of the world outside. Maeve has grown up in Sligo - that's all she has known her whole life. She sees in Raghdan someone who maybe didn't fit in where he was from. He wasn't made to feel welcome in Bradford. The two of them connect.

The film is a love story. He's fallen in love with a girl from Sligo. They have dreams of running away together. That's part of what attracts them to each other. They are kindred spirits. They found each other and know the world is out there. Over the course of film, there are obstacles and challenges that they have to negotiate. It's quite a fiery relationship. Maeve is no wilting flower.

Sarah Bolger on Maeve Logan:

I play a very fiery, feisty, take-no-prisoners sort of girl. She is the girlfriend of our protagonist, played by Nikesh Patel and the daughter of Colm Meaney.

She has grown up as the mother of the family, someone who has taken care of her father and the two younger siblings. When Raghdan and Maeve find each other in the story, it's a love that is connected by them wanting more: to discover the world and escape the life they are in now. The movie is a lovely romantic comedy, centred around a wacky, beautiful and zany Sligo.

The development of my character Maeve and her relationship with Raghdan is interesting. At the beginning of the movie, we see them in a lovely, blossoming, fun relationship, and it goes through these terrible up's and down's in a funny way. It's a lost in translation comedy. There are cultural differences and they meet at a different place in the end.

What's going on between her and Jasper? Maeve and Jasper have been friends for years. Confidants. Kindred spirits. But there is confusion along the way in terms of their relationship and what some third party characters perceive.

Colm Meaney on Martin Logan:

When we first meet Martin he's in a slightly frustrating position. He has lost his job. The meat packing plant where he was manager has closed. His wife has left him. He's in a frustrating place in his life. He's dealing with it as best as he can. Times are not good when we first meet him.

Martin meets Raghdan when his daughter brings him home for dinner. He's a bit surprised by it. He had no idea his daughter was seeing this guy. Later there are added complications because Raghdan's father takes over the meat packing plant. He wasn't aware his father was even in town. What's important to Martin is that he has a job and there is some validity in his life. I don't think he has a problem adapting to new circumstances, as we see over the course of the script.

Art Malik on Amir Aziz:

Amir is Raghdan's father. Raghdan has left Britain to try and find himself in Ireland. As his father, I think that's a waste of time. It's about time he realises he's grown up. So, for his 21st birthday, I present him with an old disused meat factory, an abattoir, and decide what Ireland needs is another halal abattoir.

Amir is an old fashioned, conservative Pakistani businessman. He has inherited Victorian values, which he holds dear to himself. He believes the relationship between a father and son is not about friendship. So he brings up his son in a very conservative world. Naturally, his son, being a lad of the 21st Century, decides that's not for him. There are a few generational gaps there.

He also believes Raghdan's gallivanting days are now over. He's 21 and he should be married. They found a nice Muslim girl for him, but apparently Raghdan didn't like her.

Maeve Logan's father, Martin, ends up working at the factory. As far as Amir is concerned, Martin will be able to tell Raghdan what to do.

This impacts on Raghdan's relationship with his girlfriend, which as far as Amir is concerned is just a young man's fling.

Deirdre O'Kane on Doreen Murphy:

Doreen is a nurse. That's what informed me the most. I love nurses. When you have someone very ill close to you, you realise that nurses are the most amazing people on the planet and you can't do without them. They are so brave and strong. All of that feistiness is in Doreen. She's not fazed by anything. She's comfortable in her own skin. I'd like to be Doreen in real life.

She has a great relationship with her partner, Jamal. They have a healthy sexual relationship, which is possibly led by Doreen, although Jamal happily goes along with it. I think they genuinely love each other. They're a strong, good couple. Good people.

Raghdan sees in them another way of living - a more relaxed, fun way. Even though his father is a loving man, he's quite severe. Jamal is a softer person.

Paul Tylak on Jamal Aziz:

Raghdan doesn't get on with his father, so he comes to live with his uncle Jamal, Amir's brother, who is from Bradford. I'm much more easygoing than his Dad. I'm like the Dad he never had. I let him get away with everything, live his life and be free. His Dad doesn't like that.

Jamal and his wife, Doreen Murphy, are a relaxed couple with an ex hippy vibe. They have a once monthly spice night where they do a bit of roleplay and get jiggy with it. Jamal and Doreen are almost like mentors to Raghdan.

Raghdan has not really given a chance to grow up at his own pace. Amir is always trying to turn him into a businessman, a success. He's always pressuring him. We love Raghdan unconditionally. I don't think we ever intended there to be competition between us and his father, but it just turned out that way because of the animosity he has with his father for putting so much pressure on him.

David Kross on Jasper:

Jasper is a German who moves from Leipzig to Sligo to open an organic vegetable shop. He has found a new home here and is part of the Sligo gang. There's a little misunderstanding with Raghdan and Maeve that has a funny twist. They have a very close relationship. Raghdan thinks Jasper is Maeve's ex-boyfriend and he doesn't quite know the nature of their relationship.

Raghdan is suspicious, which leads to a misunderstanding. I really liked the humour. It's a great comedy.

Mark O'Halloran on Omar O'Mara:

I'm playing a small part in the film. A character called Omar O'Mara, an Irish-Muslim convert, who works as a halal butcher. He's gone the full hog. He's got

the beard; he wears Islamic dress. People presume he's from outside the country, but he's from Galway. As for the beard, there's a guy in my local Tesco who went off on the Hajj [the annual Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca] last year and came back with an orange beard. I thought, 'If I ever get that part I'm going to have an orange beard as well'. I also have a cameo in my film *Viva*, where I play a sex tourist. In *HALAL DADDY*, I play a halal butcher. I'm certainly not writing vanity parts for myself."

Stephen Cromwell on Derek:

Derek is the local stoner. He's an easygoing guy – totally work shy. He doesn't want to work at all. He just wants to wake up, smoke a spliff, check out if there are any waves, get some pizza, have a pint or two, and then repeat. When I found out I was going to play Derek, I had a couple of people in mind. As an actor, I've mostly done crime drama, so I've been looking to get a good comedy for a while. This script was funny from the start.

Jerry Iwu on Neville:

Neville is a cheeky chappie. He's very laid back, doesn't take anything too seriously, and says whatever is on his mind. He's known Derek for a long time. Derek and him are like a double act - partners in crime. Raghdan is one of his best friends, but while Derek is a bit more chilled out and relaxed, he can wind up Raghdan and push his buttons. I think Neville is the comic release at some points. When Raghdan is taking himself too seriously, Neville can say, 'Relax and forget about everything'. He's an artist; a political graffiti artist at times. He likes to show illustrations of what is going on in people's lives.

Biographies

The Cast:

NIKESH PATEL (Raghdan Aziz)

London born, Nikesh Patel, received his training from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. His most recent film works include *Halal Daddy*, *London has Fallen*, *Jadoo* and *Honour*.

Patel's recent television projects include Channel 4 hit *Indian Summers*, *One and Two*, *Midsomer Murders*, and *Bedlam*.

His theatre works include *Man*, *Drawing the Line*, *The Djinnns of Eidgah*, *Donny's Brain*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Macbeth*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Disconnect*.

COLM MEANEY (Martin Logan)

With a career spanning over thirty years, Irish actor Colm Meaney has appeared in a wide variety of acclaimed films including *One Chance*, *Bel Ami*, *Get Him To The Greek*, *Law Abiding Citizen*, *The Damned United*, *Layer Cake*, *Con Air*, *Under Siege* and *The Commitments* amongst many others. Most recently, he played Martin McGuinness in *The Journey* as well as James Burbage in TNT pilot *Will*, which was picked up to series in May 2016. In 1993, Colm received a Golden Globe nomination for Best Actor in a Motion Picture Musical or Comedy for his role in the Stephen Frears directed film *The Snapper*.

Colm is well loved for his long-standing role as Miles O'Brien in the Star Trek TV series *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, which he starred in from 1987 to the finale in 1999. His most recent TV role is in the lead role of Thomas 'Doc' Durant in the AMC TV series *Hell on Wheels*.

As well as film and television roles, Colm has regularly appeared on stage in productions such as *A Moon for The Misbegotten* at the Old Vic and on Broadway, *Juno and the Paycock* at The Donmar Warehouse and New York based productions of *The Cider House Rules* and *Breaking the Code*.

ART MALIK (Amir Aziz)

Art Malik is a Pakistani born British Actor. Early career highlights include starring roles in David Lean's *A Passage to India* and starring opposite Arnold Schwarzenegger in James Cameron's *True Lies*. Other recent features include *Wolfman*, *John Carter*, *Diana* and *The Infiltrator* among many others.

In terms of Television roles, Art has worked on numerous shows beginning his career in the multi-award winning *The Jewel In The Crown* a fundamental role in multiple award winning, global hit *Homeland*, featured predominantly in popular ITV series *Indian Summers*, audience favorite *Cold Feet* and the highly lauded *Sherlock* to name but a few.

A regular on stage, Malik has tread the boards on a host of productions including *Romeo & Juliet*, *Great Expectations*, *Cymbeline*, *Aliens* and most recently the highly acclaimed Royal Court and Broadway production of *The Seagull*.

SARAH BOLGER (Maeve Logan)

Irish actress, Sarah Bolger screen debuted in Jim Sheridan's Academy Award Winning 'In America' as a young girl. She has a host of film work to her name: cultural clash comedy *Halal Daddy*, *My All American* opposite Aaron Eckhart and Robin Tunney, playing the title role in *Emelie*, *The Lazarus Effect*, *The Moth Diaries*, and *The Spiderwick Chronicles*. Bolger's other film works include *Stormbreaker*, *As Cool As I Am*, *Tara Road*, and *A Love Divided*.

Recent Television credits include the ABC's *Agent Carter*, global ratings hit *Into the Badlands* which is currently filming in Ireland. *The Tudors with Jonathan Rhys Meyers*, *Once Upon a Time*, *Stardust*, and *A Secret Affair* are additional TV highlights.

DEIRDRE O'KANE (Doreen Murphy)

On screen, Deirdre appeared in 2015 in the leading role of Debra Moone in her third series of *Moone Boy*, opposite Chris O Dowd (who also co-wrote the series for Steve Coogan's Baby Cow Productions and Sky TV) and for which she was nominated for an IFTA in 2014 (her fifth IFTA nomination). A six time IFTA nominee, Deirdre was awarded the Best Lead Actress, Film IFTA for 2015 for her role as Christina Noble opposite Liam Cunningham, Sarah Greene and Brendan Coyle in Stephen Bradley's feature *Noble* which was released in September 2014 and which won Jury and Audience awards at the Boston Film Festival, Santa Barbara International Film Festival, Newport Beach Festival, Nashville and Dallas Festivals. NOBLE went general release in the USA, France and numerous other territories across Europe. She also appeared opposite Robert Sheehan in David Blair's independent feature film *The Messenger*.

In theatre, Deirdre most recently appeared as Rosemary in *Outside Mullingar* by John Patrick Shanley at the Theatre Royal, Bath, directed by Sam Yates.

One of Ireland's best known stand up comedians, Deirdre hosted and co-wrote the 10 part series *The Lounge* for RTE/BBC. She also released two DVD's of her stand up performances through EMI. She is currently appearing on tour across Ireland and recently hosted the IFTA Awards 2016 on TV3.

Her many theatre credits include Mary in *Juno and the Paycock* (The Abbey Theatre), Miss Funny in *At the Black Pig's Dyke* (Druid Theatre) Daphne in *Present Laughter* (Gate Theatre), Jean in two sold-out runs of *Dandelions* at the Gaiety Theatre and in *Greener* at the same theatre, both for Landmark Productions, and her acclaimed performance in the one woman show *My Brilliant Divorce* (Druid).

Other television includes *Paths to Freedom* (RTE) in which she played Brendan Coyle's long-suffering wife Helen, *The Clinic*, *Fergus's Wedding*, *The Fitz*, *Bittersweet* and all 3 series of *Moone Boy*. Her feature film credits include the BAFTA winning *Festival* for Channel 4, *Intermission* directed by John Crowley for Parallel Fims, *Killing Bono* directed by Nick Hamm for Cinema Three and *Dollhouse*, directed by Kirsten Sheridan for Factory Films.

PAUL TYLAK (Amir Aziz)

Irish writer, actor, and comedian Paul Tylak's most recent film and television works include *Legend of Longwood*, *Moone Boy III*, *An Crises Eile*, *Roy II*, *Gift of the Magi*, *Foxes*, *Roy*, *Prosperity*, *Stew and Stew II*, *Trafficked*, *Fair City*, *Father Ted*, and *In the Name of the Father*.

His most recent theatre production was *The New York Monologues*.

DAVID KROSS (Jasper)

David Kross was born in 1990 in a small city in Northern Germany. He resides in Berlin.

At the age of 11 he started acting at an amateur theatre and had his first engagement for the TV movie *Hilfe, Ich bin ein Junge* at the age of twelve. Supporting roles for different TV-series and movies followed and after a long and intense casting process Kross got the lead in Detlev Bucks acclaimed *Knallhart*, which gave a realistic perspective of a conflict-area of Berlin: Neukölln. The award-winning *Knallhart* (Deutscher Filmpreis, FIPRESCI (2006)) made Kross a star.

Director Marco Kreuzpaintner casted David Kross in the leading role of his historical movie *Krabat*, which was a huge success at the German box-office. In *The Reader* he played 18 years old Michael Berg who has a very special relationship with 36 years old Hanna Schmitz, played by Kate Winslet. *The Reader*, directed by three-time Academy award nominee Stephen Daldry (*The Hours*, *Billy Elliot*) and two-time Academy award winner Director of Photography Chris Menges marked Kross's international breakthrough. Based on Bernhard Schlinks bestseller novel of the same name, *The Reader* was shot in Berlin, Görlitz and Cologne and Kross starred alongside Ralph Fiennes, Bruno Ganz, Hannah Herzsprung and Karoline Herfurth.

In December 2008 *The Reader* had its world premiere in New York and Kross received rave reviews. *The Reader* was also screened (out of competition) at the Berlinale (2009). For his outstanding performance in *The Reader* David Kross received the TROPHÉE CHOPARD and the DEUTSCHER HÖRFILMPREIS 2010. He was elected for the JUPITER-Award, German Movie-Magazine Cinema awarded him as 'Best national actor' 2010 and he got the ROMY (Austrian Cultural and Media award) for "Shooting Star".

In November 2008, David teamed up again with Detlev Buck for *Same Same But Different*, which was shot in Kampong Chnang, Phnom Penh und Kuala Lumpur. *Same Same But Different* tells the true story of an unconditional love between a young German and a girl from Cambodia who has the HIV virus. In Spring 2011, Kross featured in Hans Steinbichler's *Das Blaue Vom Himmel* and was cast in Steven Spielberg's *War Horse*, in the role of Gunther alongside Jeremy Irvine, Emily Watson, Peter Mullan and David Thewlis.

Other credits include Sherry Hormann's *Anleitung zum Unglücklichsein*, alongside Iris Berben, Johanna Wokalek and Richy Müller, director Petter Naess's *Into The White* with Florian Lucas and Rupert Grint and the French-German Co-production *Michael Kohlhaas*. Recently he collaborated again with Detlev Buck for *Die Vermessung der welt*.

In the international co-production *Michael Kohlhaas* (2013) he featured alongside Mads

Mikkelsen. In 2015, Kross appeared in the German-French production as Ludwig XIV in *Angelique, Marquise des Anges*.

David Kross was the German voice of 'Blue - The Parrot' in *Rio 2 – Dschungelfieber* (2014) and played in the first *Rico, Oskar und die tieferschatten* and third (*Rico, Oskar und der diebstahlstein*) part of the acclaimed *Rico & Oscar* movies, based on Andreas Steinhöfel's bestselling books. In German thriller *Boy 7* (2015) Kross played the lead role of Sam. His latest TV appearance was in *Die Akte General* (Director: Stephan Wagner) where Kross plays young, upcoming lawyer Joachim Hell.

2016 marked Kross's role in Markus Goller's *Simpel*, where he played a mentally handicapped young man who has to find his place in life. In Germany the International production *Zeit für Legenden* (RACE, Director: Stephen Hopkins) was released in July 2016, Kross played Lutz Long, a German athlete who was Jesse Owen's strongest competitor during the 1936 Olympic games.

STEPHEN CROMWELL (Derek)

Stephen graduated with distinction from Bull Alley Theatre Training Company. Film and television credits include the comedic role of 'Norbert Tilly' in *The Legend of Longwood* directed by Lisa Mulcahy, 'Jules' in Fantastic Films horror *The Hallow* directed by Corin Hardy, 'Mark' in MPI/Dark Sky Films & Workshed Films Irish horror *From the Dark* directed by Conor McMahon, Element Pictures Feature Film *A Date For Mad Mary* directed by Darren Thornton, which will premiere at this year's Galway Film Fleadh on 8th July, Tonn Films *The Sea* directed by Stephen Brown, SKY Television's Series *Moonfleet* directed by Andy De Ammony, 'Chico' in Pat McCabe's Televised play *If those lips* directed by Charlie McCarthy, 'Hugh Kelly' in *Jack Taylor – Shot Down* directed by Stuart Orme, 'Gary' in *Love/Hate 3* directed by David Caffrey and 'Young Eric' in *Loving Miss Hato* directed by Aisling Walsh for BBC Television. Stephen plays the principal and recurring role of 'Keith Kiely' in TV3's Drama *Red Rock*, which is now in its third season.

JERRY IWU (Neville)

Jerry is an actor from Newbridge, Co. Kildare. He has been acting since the age of 14 years old and realised early on that it was exactly what he wanted to pursue as a career. Jerry is part of a theatre company called "Kildare Youth Theatre" and has performed many plays with this company that have gone to The Lyric Theatre in Belfast on separate occasions, as part of the National Theatre Connections festivals. He has taken part in exchanges with European participants from Portugal, Greece, England, Scotland, Norway, France, and Austria, addressing issues, such as identity and austerity faced by young people in these countries. After performing both Shakesperian plays, *Macbeth* where he played Banquo and *Romeo and Juliet* where he played "Tybalt", Jerry took part in Castletown Festival, on a collaboratively devised and directed piece called *Soul Patrol*. Soon after he gained a job with Emerald Isle Theatre Company, touring France, Belgium, Luxembourg, doing an interactive educational project, to bring and perform English plays to French and Flemish speaking secondary schools. My contract with EITC was for 9 months, which created life-changing moments while on tour. After that Jerry did a few small film projects and then got cast by on of the students of the MFA Theatre Directing in the Lir, to do a showcase that they would later be graded on. After finishing, I

managed to get cast in the production of “Halal Daddy” playing the character of Neville. Working with a fantastic director, cast and crew. Acquiring new skills, getting surfs lessons. I am completely excited for the outcome of this film.

The Production Team:

CONOR McDERMOTTROE (Writer/Director)

Conor McDermottroe is a London-based Irish Writer and Director working across Film, television and theatre. He is currently in post-production on the feature film *Halal Daddy*. The film is a culture clash, romantic comedy and stars Nikesh Patel, Sarah Bolger, Colm Meaney and Art Malik. Conor is also adapting a television series and is in talks to stage his latest theatre piece.

Conor's last feature film, *Swansong, Story of Occi Byrne* was selected for the Munich, Montreal and Camerimage film festivals. It won best drama at the Galway film Fleadh and was nominated for six ITFAs in 2011, winning Martin McCann best actor for the role of Occi.

The film was adapted from Conor's one man theatre play *Swansong* which was critically acclaimed, played worldwide and was translated into German and Swedish. Other work has been staged in Europe and the US where he was nominated for best new play at the IRNE awards. His first two screenplays were selected for the Moonstone International Screenwriter Workshops.

Conor has written and directed many short films, the most recent of which “A Woman's Hair,” won best film at the Venice International Short Film Festival.

Before writing and directing, Conor was a successful actor for over twenty years. He has acted in film and television in the UK, Ireland and Australia where he lived for 10 years. He has worked with Warner Brothers, Working Title, Working Title, BBC, the ABC and RTE amongst others.

MARK O'HALLORAN (Co-Writer)

Mark O'Halloran is a writer/ actor from Co. Clare, Ireland. As an actor he has worked with all the major theatre companies in Ireland, most recently in the acclaimed production of *The Shadow of a Gunman* with The Abbey Theatre Dublin. On screen he has appeared in numerous films, most notably as one of the eponymous heroes in *Adam & Paul* for which he also wrote the screenplay and the lead role of MP in *History's Future* directed by Fiona Tan. He has also appears in *The Guard* and *Calvary* and in *Viva*, a film set in Havana which he also wrote.

Mark's other writing credits include the multi award winning film *Garage*, the television series *Prosperity* and *Viva*, a Spanish language feature filmed in Cuba in late 2014. For the stage he has written the play *Trade* and most recently he contributed text to the award winning theatre production *Lippy*.

Mark has been nominated for numerous awards including a European Film Award for the screenplay of *Adam & Paul*, Irish Film and Television Awards where he won for both “Best Screenplay” and “Best TV writer“ 2008. He also won the London Evening

Standard award for “Best Screenplay“ in 2005. *Trade* was named as “best play” at the Irish Theatre Awards 2012. *Lippy* was “Best Production” at 2014 Irish Theatre Awards as well as winning a Fringe First at Edinburgh and 2 Obie Awards in New York. *Viva* was shortlisted for best foreign language Oscar. Mark was also nominated as “Best Actor” in the Irish Time Theatre Awards 2016 for his performance as Donal Davoren in the Abbey Theatre’s production of *Shadow of a Gunman*. *Halal Daddy*, a feature film he co-wrote and will appear in, went into production in June 2016.

HERMANN FLORIN (Producer)

Hermann is founder and managing director of Florin Film KG and Feine Filme GmbH with offices in Berlin and Cologne, as well as Benrae Florin Films Limited in Ireland. Hermann has been in the business for 25 years and produced a broad range of critically acclaimed and economically successful feature films, TV-Drama and Series, both nationally and internationally.

Under his Florin Film shingle, Hermann produced Conor McDermottroe's award-winning feature film debut *Swansong*, which garnered a Runner Up for Best Irish film at the 2009 Galway Film Fleadh and an IFTA for Best Leading Actor 2011. Under the Feine Filme banner and together with UFA Cinema, Hermann produced successful German family fare *Hanni & Nanni 1*, *Hanni & Nanni 2* and *Hanni & Nanni 3*, based on the best-selling books “The Twins at St. Clare” by Enid Blyton. Each installment of the franchise sold more than a million tickets each in German speaking territory.

Feine Filme and UFA Cinema continued their successful cooperation with the box-office success feature adaptation of *I’m Off Then*, German comedian Hape Kerkeling’s bestselling account of his journey along the Camino de Santiago. By now the movie has reached an audience of approximately 2 million viewers. Hermann worked on this film with highly acclaimed talent, such as screenwriter Christoph Silber, writer/director Sandra Nettelbeck (*Mostly Martha*, *Mr Morgan’s Last Love*), and director Julia von Heinz (*Hanna’s Journey*). In addition to future installments in the *Hanni & Nanni* franchise, two German language comedies *So viel Zeit* and *Der Junge muss an die frische Luft* are currently in development.

For his upcoming Florin Film slate, Hermann is working with internationally recognized talents, including award-winning advertising director Sebastian Strasser, English screenwriter Malcolm Campbell (*What Richard did*) and award-winning Irish screenwriter Mark O'Halloran (*Adam & Paul*, *Viva*). In addition to “Halal Daddy”, Hermann is developing the comedy *Wanderers*, a co-production with Warp Films, and producing the award-winning script *Katte* by Johannes Reben, which tells the love story between Friedrich II (“the great Fritz”) and a Prussian officer, with plans for shooting in 2017, as a German/Luxembourg Co- production.

Herman taught at film schools in Berlin and Hamburg, is decision maker at EAVE, and a member of the German and European Film Academies. Prior to founding Florin Films, Hermann worked for some of Germany’s leading Film and TV production companies and as a freelance producer in Germany and abroad. He studied drama and worked as a director at various theatres throughout Germany, before turning his attention towards film.

AILISH McELMEEL (Producer)

Ailish is a producer and co-owner of Dublin based production company Deadpan Pictures. Ailish is currently producing *Nowhere Fast* a comedy drama series for RTE 2 written by Alison Spittle, BBC Worldwide are handling international sales. She is also in post-production on *Halal Daddy*, Conor McDermottroe's second feature, written by Conor and Mark O'Halloran and starring Nikesh Patel, Colm Meaney, Art Malik and Sarah Bolger. Global Screen are handling International sales and Element will distribute in Ireland with Koch distributing in Germany. Ailish's most recent comedy drama series for RTE2, *Can't Cope Won't Cope* screened to critical acclaim in Autumn 2016 and has recently sold to the BBC, it will air later in 2017. Content Media are handling international sales.

In 2015 she executive produced series 3 of a six part comedy series, *Hardy Bucks*, for RTE, the Irish national broadcaster. In 2014 she produced an RTE/IFB funded web series, *Burning Wishes* which has picked up over 20 awards worldwide including Best Web series at the Bilbao Webfest and Best Director prize at the San Francisco Webfest for director Vincent Gallagher among others. Prior to Deadpan, Ailish completed production on three series of the IFTA award-winning, British Comedy Award winning and International Emmy Winning comedy *Moone Boy* for Sky, acting as Head of Production for Grand Pictures. In 2012 Ailish co-produced series two of *Trivia*, series one was nominated for the Monte-Carlo TV Comedy Award in 2011. Written by Damien Owens, directed by Tom Hall and starring David Pearse and Janet Moran, *Trivia* was produced for RTÉ with the support of the BAI.

In 2009, she co-produced Grand Pictures comedy series, *Val Falvey TD* for RTE. The series starring Ardal O'Hanlon and written by Arthur Mathews (Fr. Ted) and Paul Woodful. In 2008, Ailish co-produced *Wide Open Spaces*, a feature film penned by Arthur Mathews (Fr. Ted) and directed by Tom Hall. Starring Ardal O'Hanlon and Ewen Bremner, it premiered at Edinburgh International Film Festival and was theatrically released in Ireland during the summer of 2009. Ailish also co-produced Grand Pictures Irish/German co-production *The Race*, starring Colm Meaney and Susan Lynch. In summer 2008, Ailish co-produced *School Run*, a two part drama series for TV3.

Ailish is developing a slate of projects in both TV and film, with both experienced and first time writers, including the BAFTA winner Neasa Hardiman, Screen International Star of Tomorrow 2013 Cathy Brady and a Hugh Travers comedy series for Channel 4 and BBC Worldwide.

She has previously completed Trans Atlantic Partners (2013), EAVE producers workshops 2007, Development Executive Traineeship facilitated by Screen Training Ireland and awarded by UCLA and holds a BSc. in Film and Broadcasting

PETER ROMMEL (Co-producer)

Subsequent to his collaboration with Icelandic director Fridrik Thór Fridriksson regarding the distribution and world sales of Fridriksson's Oscar-nominated feature *Children of Nature*, Peter Rommel founded Rommel Film in Berlin, initially to co-produce international cinema features, like *Movie Days*, *Sweetie Barrett* and *Devil's Island*.

The feature *Nachtgestalten* (Night Shapes) by director Andreas Dresen

constituted the first fully self-developed production. This was followed by a number of further successful collaborations with Andreas Dresen, including *Halbe Treppe* (Grill Point), *Sommer vorm Balkon* (Summer in Berlin), *Wolke 9* (Cloud 9), and *Halt auf freier Strecke* (Stopped on Track), all of which won numerous national and international awards. In 2015, Andreas Dresen's *Als wir träumten* (As we were dreaming) premiered in competition at the Berlin International Filmfestival. In 2014 Celina Murga's *La Tercera Orilla* (Third Side of the River), a co-production with Argentina, was also invited to run in competition at the Berlinale.

In 2013, the adaptation of Charlotte Roche's bestselling yet controversial novel *Feuchtgebiete* (Wetlands), premiered at the Locarno Film festival followed by a successful theatrical release, with more than 1 million admissions in German speaking countries alone. The film was also invited to the World Cinema Dramatic Competition at the Sundance Film Festival. Also in 2013 the German-Austrian co-production *Alphabet* by Erwin Wagenhofer premiered at the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam and was successfully released especially in Germany and Austria.

MEL GRIFFITH (Director of Photography)

Mel Griffith born in Cardiff, Wales in 1966 started to make his way to a professional career in the United States after finishing a degree in Bournemouth and Poole College of Arts and Design. After a decade living and working in the US, Griffith returned to Europe and moved to Berlin, Germany in 2006 where he is currently living with his family. He has many internationally recognised, award winning advertising campaigns to his credit, as Director of Photography/Cinematographer.

His talent in capturing visual and creative concepts has led him to be involved in challenging projects worldwide, ranging from feature film, broadcast shows, documentaries, short films, advertising, music videos and he's passionate about visual content working as a photographer for exclusive projects.

CONOR DENNISON (Production Designer)

Conor trained in architecture in DIT and Trinity College Dublin. After working for a number of years as a design architect, he got bitten by the film bug and has worked in the film industry since. That was 17 years ago.

Having worked as an art director and set designer with some of the best names in the film design world both at home and internationally, Conor took the plunge and started designing in 2014. He has since designed features, *The Third Wave*, *A Dark Song* and *Jack Taylor* and *Rapt* for TV

MATTHIAS WEBER (Composer)

Award winning, German born Film and TV composer Matthias Weber has been living and working in Los Angeles for more than 20 years, writing film scores for both

Hollywood and European productions.

After his classical training in Germany, he studied Composition and Film Scoring at world-renowned Berklee College of Music on a Fulbright Scholarship. He graduated "Summa Cum Laude" before moving to Los Angeles, where he pursued graduate studies in Music at USC Thornton School of Music. He also holds an MA in Media Composition from Chichester University in the UK.

Initially Weber worked on episodic television from *Baywatch* to *The Sopranos* and *The Shield*. Some of his film credits include work on *Pearl Harbor* and *Tears of the Sun* (with Hans Zimmer), *League of Extraordinary Gentleman* (with Trevor Jones) and *Expedition Bismarck* (with James Cameron). Weber's career expansion scoring European movies started in 2005 with his score for the medieval epic *Shadow Of The Sword* (Henker).

Among his awards are a German Academy Award, an Austrian Academy Award for *The Dark Valley* and a Primetime Emmy Award for James Cameron's *Expedition Bismarck*.

Weber is also an in demand lecturer on film scoring at UCLA Extension, Musicians Institute Hollywood and he conducts workshops on the topic in Austria, Germany, Holland.

KERRY GOODING (Costume Designer)

Kerry has worked in the costume department for 25 years, recently on productions such as *Game Of Thrones*, *Morgan* and *Lost City Of Z*. She has designed for films, TV and commercials and has experience in various genres, sci fi, fantasy, horror, period dramas and comedy. She has also worked as an assistant designer on productions including *Your Highness*, *Halo* and *Closing The Ring*.

ALEXANDER DITTNER (Editor)

During his career to date, Dittner has edited 25 theatrical movies, in both a German and international context; including general features and animation – with box office boasting approx. 30 million visitors, including two of the most successful German movies in the last 30 years.

Alexander also has production and directing experience and runs his own company 'Xframe GmbH'. There they have multiple Avid Editing Suites, and manage projects from conception to the full production of trailers, features and TV series.

He is a member of BFS (German Editor Association) and DFA (German Academy of Motion Picture).

Helen Murray (Line Producer)

Over the past 25 years, Helen has worked in the Television and Film industry, working as Line Producer and Head of Production on a large variety of programmes for BBC, RTE and Channel 4. She has set up many large scale productions ie LE Shows "Can't Touch This" and "The Afternoon Show". Helen is responsible for overseeing all legal, financial and managerial aspects of our productions. She worked for several London based 'indies' and has also Line Produced various major feature films including "Puckoon" and "Freeze Frame" starring Lee Evans and more recently Nic Roegs' - "Puffball" starring Donald Sutherland and Miranda Richardson.

HALAL DADDY FRONT Credits