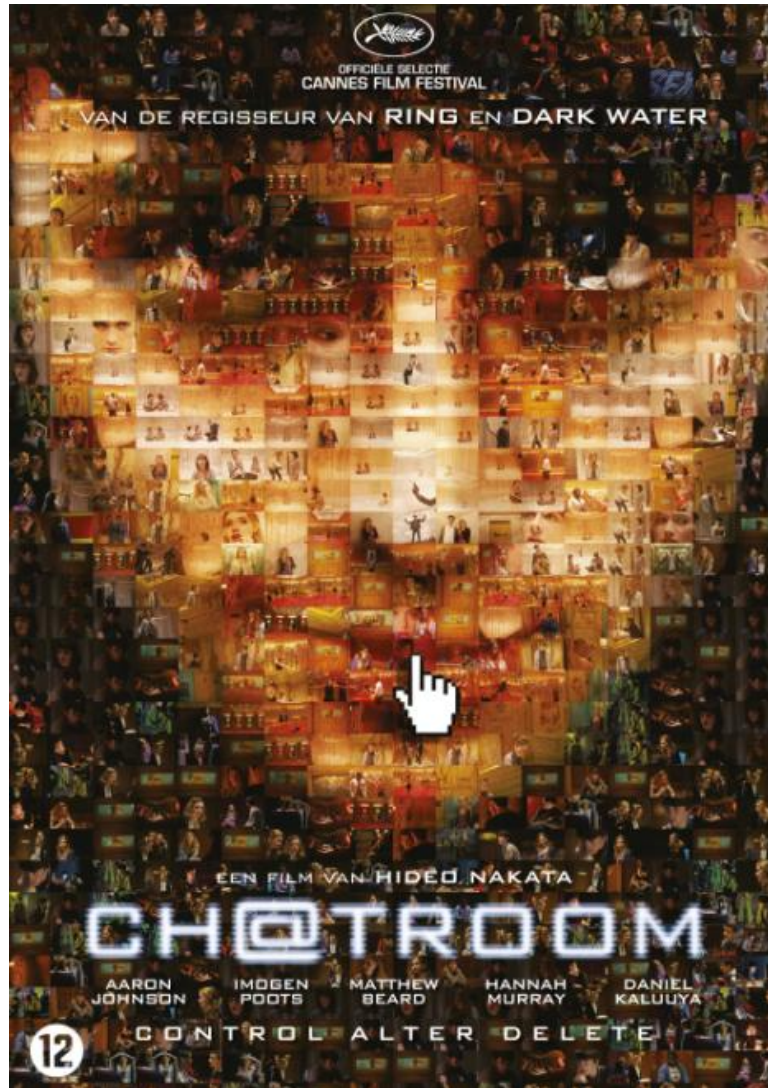


CHATROOM

EEN FILM VAN

HIDEO NAKATA



WILD BUNCH

HAARLEMMERDIJK 159 - 1013 KH – AMSTERDAM

WWW.WILDBUNCH.NL

MELISSA@WILDBUNCH.NL

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CHATROOM – HIDEO NAKATA

PROJECT SUMMARY

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| EEN PRODUCTIE VAN | RUBY FILMS PRODUCTIONS |
| IN CO-PRODUCTIE MET | FILM4, UK FILM COUNCIL, MOLINARE, UNIVERSUM |
| TAAL | ENGELS |
| LENGTE | 97 MINUTEN |
| GENRE | THRILLER |
| REGISSEUR | HIDEO NAKATA |
| HOOFDROLLEN | AARON JOHNSON IMOGEN POOTS MATTHEW BEARD HANNAH MURRAY DANIEL KALUUYA |
| DVD RELEASEDATUM | 8 DECEMBER 2011 |
| FESTIVALS | <i>OFFICIËLE SELECTIE FILM FESTIVAL CANNES – UN CERTAIN REGARD</i> |

KIJKWIJZER



SYNOPSIS

Vijf tieners ontmoeten elkaar tijdens het chatten. Ieder heeft zo zijn eigen redenen om met vreemden te willen praten, om even iemand anders te willen zijn. Onder leiding van één van hen, William, vormen ze hun eigen chatgroep. Hij moedigt ze aan om hun grenzen te verleggen, zodat ze steeds meer zichzelf durven te zijn. Behalve William zelf. Hij haat zijn werkelijke leven en compenseert dat door online een manipulatieve sociopaat te zijn. Het doelwit van zijn machtsspel: de zwakste schakel van de groep.

CAST

| | |
|-----------|--------------------|
| WILLIAM | AARON JOHNSON |
| EVA | IMOGEN POOTS |
| JIM | MATTHEW BEARD |
| EMILY | HANNAH MURRAY |
| MO | DANIEL KALUUYA |
| GRACE | MEGAN DODDS |
| ROSIE | MICHELLE FAIRLEY |
| PAUL | NICHOLAS GLEAVES |
| SI | JACOB ANDERSON |
| CANDY | TUPPENCE MIDDLETON |
| CHARLOTTE | OPHELIA LOVIBOND |
| RIPLEY | RICHARD MADDEN |

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CREW

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| DIRECTED BY | HIDEO NAKATA |
| PRODUCED BY | LAURA HASTINGS-SMITH ALISON OWEN PAUL TRIJBITS |
| WRITTEN BY | ENDA WALSH, BASED ON HIS PLAY |
| EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS | SHARON HAREL KATHERINE BUTLER EVE SCHOUKROUN |
| DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY | BENOIT DELHOMME AFC |
| PRODUCTION DESIGNER | JON HENSON |
| LINE PRODUCER | ANDREW LITVIN |
| FILM EDITOR | MASAHIRO HIRAKUBO |
| COSTUME DESIGNER | JULIAN DAY |
| HAIR & MAKE UP DESIGNER | MARESE LANGAN |
| COMPOSER | KENJI KAWAI |
| SOUND DESIGNER | PAUL DAVIES |
| CASTING DIRECTOR | NINA GOLD |
| EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS | MAYA AMSELLEM MARK FOLIGNO TANIA REICHERT-FACILIDES |
| ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS | FAYE WARD HANNAH FARRELL |



CHATROOM – HIDEO NAKATA

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

LOGGING INTO CHATROOM

Chatroom started life as a stage play, specially commissioned for and about young people. It was performed at the National Theatre and then toured the UK. Written by the highly acclaimed stage and screenwriter, Enda Walsh, the short, provocative piece explored the relationship of a group of teenagers who meet online. The dark character-driven story written by Walsh in 2005 received positive reviews when it was performed, with *The Times* calling it a “60 minute masterpiece, a computer-age *Lord of the Flies*.” It noted, “The writing is taut, vivid, cool, scary and often funny.”

The production company Ruby Films and Channel 4’s film funding arm Film4 both recognized the potential of developing the play into a feature film and commissioned Enda to write the screenplay. One of the people struck by the theatrical version of *Chatroom* was Laura Hastings-Smith, who would later join the production of the film version as lead producer. She had been aware of the project for some time as she had previously worked with Walsh on British Artist Steve McQueen’s first foray into feature filmmaking *Hunger*, starring Michael Fassbender as IRA hunger striker Bobby Sands. Walsh had co-written the screenplay with McQueen.

“I’d been to see the play and I thought it was just so powerful, so authentic; and very pertinent to young people today,” she says. The project began to come together quickly when director Hideo Nakata joined the team, an idea that came out of a meeting between *Chatroom*’s Sales Agent, Eve Schoukroun at WestEnd Films, and Nakata. Having a Japanese filmmaker renowned for changing the entire contemporary horror genre tackling a story that was dark and foreboding was of great interest to the film’s partners Ruby Films, Film4, UK Film Council and WestEnd.

The producers felt the combination of Walsh’s script and Nakata’s direction gave the production huge potential, offering a fresh and international approach to what could have essentially been a very British exercise in filmmaking. It was then that Benoit Delhomme, *Chatroom*’s Director of Photography, came aboard to strengthen the international vision of the film.

Delhomme confirms Nakata’s involvement made the project instantly appealing. “My agent called me telling me she had a script called *Chatroom* directed by Hideo Nakata. I love Japanese cinema. I was a big fan of the film *Dark Water* and his name meant I wanted to meet. I read the script and I thought this was brilliant, the concept was so modern,” says Delhomme. “So we met immediately. I could feel a connection and I said to Hideo, “the way I work, I don’t want to come with ideas. I just want to listen to you. I was very open to Hideo’s suggestions.”

Chatroom’s writer, Enda Walsh outlines where the inspiration came from to tell a story that deals with such brooding universal themes and emotions. He *CHATROOM Production Notes 4* felt that in some way people were ready for a contemporized version of films he’d revered when he was younger. “When I looked back at all the sort of films from my school days like *Heathers* and *The Breakfast Club*, I thought, well this is my opportunity to actually make something for 15-year-olds now.”

“I think what’s wonderful about the film is you have these very distinct, easily-recognizable characters from the playground that we all know but it’s set in this modern, very powerful world of the Internet,” says Hastings-Smith. “I think the film represents social networking online in a very real way; how that interacts with people’s offline lives, and how things that are going on in the real world can trigger actions and reactions online... and vice versa.”

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Nakata is intrigued by the updated study of technology's impact on young people's lives, with the Internet becoming the contemporary vehicle or device through which young people communicate. "When I directed *Ring* for example, ten years ago, young people universally started to have their own VCRs," he says. "So, at that time, the TV screen and the VCR became one of the most popular devices by which to view the world. And in *Chatroom* I think we are doing a similar thing – tapping in to young peoples' world – but using the Internet as the device. Teenage kids are using the Internet all day, every day."

Ostensibly, *Chatroom* is a film for teenagers. But Walsh argues that an underlying theme is also of parental fear and anxiety at the loss of control over the way in which our children communicate outside accepted and controlled parental parameters. "I felt strongly that it was going to resonate with adults," says Walsh. "And it is about, 'What is my 15 year old doing in there?' To me it began as an image of a mother just looking at a closed door of the bedroom thinking 'I have no idea what he's doing in there.'"

Walsh also stresses that, while the film explores the nature of online communication, *Chatroom* is ultimately driven by the interaction of the characters. "It's an age old story of manipulation. It has that sort of *Lord of the Flies* kind of feel to it: just one kid who's smarter than the other kid and contemplating the idea that he's going to get him... 'I think I'm going to make his life hell.'"

Matthew Beard who plays Jim, the victim of the online persecution in the film, offers his thoughts on the story: "On a really literal level it's about five teenagers who are all after something and they're not too sure what it is," he says. "They've all got this sort of something missing and they go online to find it, and they find each other. And this one character, William (played by Aaron Johnson), thinks he can fill in all these missing parts for everyone. It's about what happens if that kind of feedback is negative, unhealthy and therefore dangerous."

If the Internet is not the cause of malicious behaviour, it acts as a catalyst to the anxieties and the vindictiveness of people. Director, Hideo Nakata believes the Internet, although an extraordinary tool for communication, can allow freedoms of emotion that would be impossible to play out in "real" life in the same way that road rage is prevalent because motorists feel safe within the protective cocoon of their cars. "I just think that the Internet can amplify people's negative emotions: anxiety, fear, hatred, envy, anger," says Nakata.

As well as heightening emotions, the online world accelerates the trajectory of relationships. Matthew Beard: "We've no social constraints online so everything is stripped down. You start a conversation with someone online and you're friends with him or her almost within five minutes. You know everything about them: where they live, brothers and sisters, what school they go to, all that sort of stuff. You know all that so quickly, everything happens, everything's in fast forward."

"I guess that's how this film works. We all go into the Chelsea Teens! chatroom on Day One. By Day Six it's a mess. So much has happened in that time." It is the audience who benefits from gaining the privileged view in *Chatroom*.

We see what the characters interacting online cannot see. And learning the truth and seeing the danger before them is what makes the film both chilling and gripping. "Watching a child go after another child for the purpose of saying 'I really want to hurt this child' is a very horrible but exciting thing to watch," says Walsh of the storyline. "It's that cold calculated sort of feel, that strange thing of simple annihilation, of just going after someone, that makes you go – 'wow.' That makes you feel really buzzy and itchy and... scared."

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“There’s a key scene where our villain, William, is getting closer and closer to getting this boy Jim. And Jim is reaching out to him more and more. Jim and William are in Chelsea Teens! together: Jim is very trusting, watching home movies of his father from when he was a child and listening to William who appears so supportive of Jim and so disapproving of his father’s cruelty towards him. But William’s standing up at that point and because Jim can’t actually see him, he’s not actually seeing that William takes out a gun and appears to point the gun towards Jim’s head and there’s gun shot noise. But, you know, poor Jim just carries on, really sort of sweetly, and we’re thinking ‘Oh No!’.”

SITE UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Laura Hastings-Smith: “We filmed at Shepperton Studios first, shooting almost all the online scenes first. This was very challenging for the actors as they had to heighten their performances from the start and only later in the shoot were they able to ground their characters in their real world setting.

After a few weeks’ filming in the studio, cast and crew are always glad to get out on location and this production was no different. We were filming in the heat-wave of the summer ‘09 and while *Clash of the Titans* and *Robin Hood* had banks of air-conditioning – we did not! Another reason to enjoy getting out on location!”

Translating the mood boards into set designs of the ‘Internet’ and then realizing them was a huge challenge. Henson describes the sets they created as consisting of two online spaces and a corridor, over two different studios. “The two online spaces had to be identical architecturally,” he explains. “Basically, a large square room with a window in the ceiling, a window in the floor, and four doors.”

Within this space, they had to film 16 different chatrooms, often changing the rooms overnight to keep up with the intense pace of the production schedule. Henson describes how they met the hectic timeline: “My art director, Patrick Rolfe, came up with this plan to create skins on all of the walls and to layer the floors one on top of each other so that we would effectively create the chatroom that we were filming last, first; and then cover it in layers with all the preceding chatroom finishes.”

As well as being ingeniously designed, there was great attention to the detail of each set. Giving a quick behind-the-scenes tour, Henson is soon lost in the intricacies of the set: “I’m very pleased with the corridor. I think it works very well. I think we went through five different processes to achieve the look on the walls, different colours, lovely cracks... The aged down lampshades all add to the overall effect. We had to make the carpet especially for the film.”

The designers also cheated scale with mirrors, using reflection to double the size of the corridors. Despite his obvious pleasure with the final effect Henson admits, “You still look at it and think, if I had another three days, I’d do that or that or that – but I think it’s always like that.”

SOUND ON/OFF

Hideo Nakata fans often cite his expert use of sound in films to build atmosphere and tension. The composer Kenji Kawai, who has worked on all Hideo’s Japanese films, wrote and recorded the score for *Chatroom*. The UK-based sound designer, Paul Davies and re-recording mixer Richard Davey worked very closely with Hideo and Kenji’s music to achieve a rich sound-scape for the online world, contrasting to the offline realities of the different characters. Paul Davies “Hideo was very clear about what he wanted but also at the same time was unusually open to any new ideas and concepts that we presented. It was inspiring to work with a director whose films I very much admire and feel that he appreciated our work and input.

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Hideo was very good at guiding us with concepts such as using whispers and off screen voices in the online world and was very clear in his ideas about creating a difference between the online and offline worlds. Receiving Kenji's music demos early in the process, ensured that the two elements – music and sound design – could blend into each other seamlessly.” Richard Davey:- “It was a great inspiration working with a director who was so particular about what they wanted from the mix, but at the same time, really open to any suggestions that Paul and I made. The relaxed atmosphere that this situation generated meant that we felt confident to try out new ideas and techniques, for describing the ‘online world’ for example. Hideo has an incredible ear for detail, and also a great understanding of setting the correct tempo and flow of the soundtrack – so that we were able to create a gradual transition from the optimism of the early stages of the film, to the darkness of the ending.”

CLICK HERE FOR ONLINE/OFFLINE

The distinctive look and feel of *Chatroom* comes from the contrast between the offline world and the online world. Aaron Johnson, who plays William, describes how this enables the audience to see things from the point of view of the characters. “They’ve got this whole sort of parallel universe almost,” says Johnson. “You’ve got this online world, which is heightened and bright. There, you can be whoever you want to be, whatever character you want to create; in contrast, with the offline world. The offline is really sort of grey – colorless and dull. The dark side that you get from my character who’s very vulnerable, alone, is evident in the offline world so that’s why William goes online to become this confident, outgoing leader. He goes on there to create who he wants to be.”

Production Designer Jon Henson gives his approach to the set builds and his vision for the film. “It’s both a visual representation of the Internet and also of how these characters are feeling when online, rather than being a literal translation of the Internet and how it operates,” he explains. “Very early on in the film’s development, we decided that we didn’t want to do something that was modern. I mean, it felt a bit obvious to go hi-tech.”

Producer, Laura Hastings-Smith: “I think what’s different about this film, compared to a lot of films that have tried to represent the online world, is how we’ve visualized the world of the Internet. The Internet is no longer new – it’s customized, it has gone through many transformations, it’s busy, it breaks down.”

Enda Walsh agrees. “When I think about the Internet, it doesn’t exist for me in my head any more as being this clean cyberspace sort of world. It is quite dirty, and it’s used and it’s a bit broken and it’s a bit smashed up.”

Henson approached the construction by referencing used spaces in the real world - tainted and rundown environments that have had a lot of traffic. “We created a world that was like an old, beaten up hotel, something dark and sinister,” he says. “There’s a corridor, of infinity, going off in all directions like a grid. And off that are thousands and thousands of rooms. It’s seemingly endless.”

The atmosphere of the online world, while always vibrant, changes to mirror the state of the characters visiting it. The corridor that features prominently throughout the film is first seen from the point of view of William. “This corridor is about the way William is feeling when he’s passing through the Internet. So, the production design is intended to be more evocative of their emotions than it is about the mechanics of how the Internet functions. And as we get to the latter part of the film this online world starts to degenerate.”

This vision of the Internet and the desire to show the emotional state of the characters dictated the approach to filming. Director of Photography, Benoit Delhomme recalls the first conversation he had

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with Nakata. “I thought that because we were representing the online world we could shoot it on a digital format. It could be my first digital movie. Hideo said, ‘No, no, no. I want film.’” Nakata wanted the online world to feel familiar and real to the characters. He wanted it to be “very comfortable and organic.”

Delhomme says it took him by surprise. “He said, ‘we are working with a designer on the idea of making it more like a kind of old hotel, a maze of corridors, a used communal space from which an infinity of private areas or rooms can be accessed. Teenagers are more comfortable with this kind of space.’”

“We had this idea of the chatroom being like a square with windows on top and bottom. I could play with the room’s light in a kind of organic way,” says Delhomme. “I could make the room come alive. I worked on the idea, thinking: ‘OK, light could come from anywhere so there’s no logic.’ And maybe, sometimes I would just have the actor in silhouette; sometimes they would be seen against the wall; and sometimes it would be the opposite. It was exciting. It was the kind of film where the designer, the director and the director of photography, were all in the same place.”

For Delhomme, the contrast between the online and offline worlds could be manipulated to create two highly distinct looks through varying techniques of camerawork - the online world being comfortable, with smooth camerawork, almost dreamlike, in contrast to the real world which the team wanted to feel very lifelike, not enhanced. “That was the very exciting part: the idea of the two worlds,” Delhomme explains. “For me, with this contrast, I knew I could make something exciting.”

The online world becomes a very comfortable but also exciting place to be with many different moods. We tried to make it more sophisticated, with nice, smooth wide angles, dolly shots, very precise in the composition. In contrast we wanted to capture the real world as it is. We wanted the audience to see life as it is.”

In Delhomme’s view, switching between the two worlds is crucial to the success of the film: “This film works because of the contrast, I think. If you had only the online world, it would look like a fantasy. I don’t think it would have any interest to me. I love the contrast between the two worlds.”

LANGUAGE: JAPANESE | ENGLISH

For Director Hideo Nakata, one of the main differences he has found when working in the West is the approach to shooting and editing. “In the Japanese film studio we have a different kind of edit and camera style,” he says. “I can completely edit on camera in Japan. I shoot bits and pieces rather than shooting a whole scene from different angles. So I can shoot let’s say from line 1 to 5 specifically from this angle and cut there, and that’s it. Then go from line 6 – 10 from a different angle, and then cut.

All Japanese actors are accustomed to working that way. “Here, the shooting style is a bit different. The reason is mainly, I would say, the actors. The western actors are so accustomed to playing out the scene. When I first worked outside Japan, in America, I was a bit shocked to discover that. So I find the vein of the story again in the editing room. In Japan I would cut the script as much as possible before we start shooting. Then we could be really efficient. I think with *Chatroom*, what I’m doing is somewhere in the middle: half Western, half Japanese style. I actually cut the script for *Chatroom* before we started shooting: to be as efficient and economical as possible. I didn’t want to shoot unnecessary stuff.”

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ABOUT THE CAST AND CHARACTERS

The key character in the film is the damaged but charismatic William, played by Aaron Johnson. He sets the story in motion by creating 'Chelsea Teens!' online – a space to meet people and make friends. Producer, Laura Hastings-Smith explains the genesis of the casting process: "Nina Gold was our casting director and we must have seen almost every actor in the UK who could play this age. Casting began about a year before filming. We settled on the casting for Jim, Eva, Emily and Mo fairly quickly and I think this helped them bond and consolidate their parts.

The role of William was the hardest to cast as it is such a demanding role: not only is he a chameleon-like character online – his journey from charismatic friend to something much darker, more manipulative and dangerous is extremely challenging – but also the actor playing William has to show real vulnerability and pain in the offline world. There is a key moment when we also have to believe that William might be about to redeem himself – to save Jim and himself. We seriously considered a few young British actors but Aaron Johnson has the mix of youth, charisma, vulnerability and depth, with an ability to convey real darkness, that was what we were looking for in the part. Also, of course, Aaron has incredible visibility as a young British actor and we know that he is building an ever bigger following not only here but internationally."

"My character creates a chatroom to make friends, a place where he can talk to others. He's a bit of a chameleon, adapts to what other people's personalities are like, what people want to hear," says Aaron Johnson of his character. But this apparent friendliness hides a more sinister side, which develops as events unfold. The character with the most affinity with William is Eva played by Imogen Poots. Eva initially engages competitively with William for prominence in the chatroom. "William is this very vindictive boy and very malicious" explains Poots. "He really takes advantage of the weaker characters, particularly Jim. And it's a matter of how each character takes a stand."

Director, Hideo Nakata revels in the concept that he wants keep the audience guessing who or what William represents. "In a way it's kind of a game. Maybe this guy is playing with everyone, or maybe he has all of their best interests at heart, or maybe he's lying. It's kind of a guessing game."

Matthew Beard, who plays William's principal victim, Jim, explains how William exploits the Internet: "William knows exactly how to play people. He goes through their Internet history online. He'll go on their MySpace page or he'll go on their Facebook page and collect pictures of them, but he'll also collect other information and build up a profile. He's really good at psychologically working out what this person's about, and what this person's Achilles heel is."

While William exploits all the characters' vulnerabilities, Jim is most susceptible to the mind games William initiates in the Chatroom. Matthew Beard believes Jim sits outside the group online because he is effectively the most honest. "He doesn't seem able to lie very well," Beard laughs.

Furthermore, for Beard, Jim seems more dependent than most on his online relationships. "It's the only place in the world that he can go: an online chatroom," says Beard. "As he thinks it's his only chance to belong, he feels he has to be on it. He has to put himself across and to go back and back. When the action breaks out into offline, that's when you realise that all sorts of boundaries are blurred between online and offline, between William and Jim, and it's dangerous." Imogen Poots describes her character Eva as "extremely infatuated with William". "At the beginning they're very much this kind of pair," she says.

"They're on a par with each other in terms of their malicious and vindictive natures. But it transpires by the end that she's kind of seen him for what he really is. And she has to make a decision as to

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whether or not she's going to help Jim and own up to the fact that she really is this girl who cares, or keep going with this façade she's created of the person she wants to be – dismissive of others, enthralled by William." What the cast unanimously agree on is what unites the characters – their desire to create an alternative persona online, whether because it is the only way they feel they can communicate or that they want to run from who they think they are, or ultimately that they simply want to play at being someone else.

Daniel Kaluuya, who plays Mo, another teen initially taken in by William, believes that most of the cast were able to draw effectively from their own experiences of growing up in order to understand how young people could want to pursue an alternative persona online so readily.

"If you're going into that world where you're talking to strangers, you really don't know their motives. You're basically creating this character that you want to be. It's most obvious with William's character - in the contrast to his kind of bravado online, he's very damaged offline."

Producer Laura Hastings-Smith agrees. "William didn't set out to hurt people online – I think initially he shared the other characters' desire to make friends, to belong. Partly, because William is cleverer and more charismatic than the others, his power overwhelms his better motives and he begins to play with people online. The manipulation increases and turns more destructive as he continues to feel trapped by his damaged past and the fact that he cannot escape the relationships and dynamics within his own family in the real world.

He sees himself in Jim – everything he is trying to escape from. It's as if he comes to believe that if he destroys Jim, he will destroy what he hates about himself. And because it's online the cruelty and horror of what he's doing doesn't really impact on him or not until it's too late and the repercussions become real."

Daniel Kaluuya questions any notion that William is inherently evil. He believes that it is not a case of William's character necessarily being 'evil', more that he is able to pursue his emotions unchecked in the online world. "No one's really evil," he says. "I think that's what you see in this film - people just taking it a bit too far, and what it leads to, and the consequences.

It goes out of control and it just goes 'boom'." Imogen Poots shares Kaluuya's sense of the characters' desire to push the possibilities of where they can take their personalities online. "I think that the most important thing for me was that Eva's really a child; she's dealing with matters far beyond her maturity. And none of these kids who are pretending to be these other people really have the power or the wisdom to know how to deal with such things."

With such an intense script, the cast felt understandably nervous when filming began – not least because of the impending demands on them as actors. But despite, or maybe because of the intensity of rehearsals and filming, the young cast soon bonded off-screen. Time between shooting left ample time to create running jokes. A passing similarity between Matthew Beard and Ben Whishaw (who played Keats in *Bright Star*), for example, proving enough for Matthew to be 'interviewed' regularly by fellow cast members about playing the famous poet.

"There are certain things of course only the 'teenagers' can do, which I sometimes would envy," admits Nakata. But he says the age of his actors didn't affect his style of direction. "I wouldn't think like 'Oh, they are kids' because they have been working in the film business for a long time." And he sees benefits in the energy and openness to the ideas of a young cast. "The good thing about these young actors is that they are very 'soft' - by that I mean versatile, malleable. They can change. They are adaptable," he says. "I really enjoyed working with these young actors."

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ABOUT THE CAST

AARON JOHNSON – WILLIAM

Aaron Johnson was born on 13 June 1990 in High Wycombe, England and attended the Jackie Palmer Stage School. In October 2009 Aaron was nominated for 'Best Actor' at the BIFA awards for his role as a young John Lennon alongside Kristin Scott Thomas and Anne-Marie Duff in *Nowhere Boy*, directed by Sam Taylor Wood. Johnson was in the UK independent film *Dummy*, along with up and coming actors Thomas Grant and Emma Catherwood. Here, Johnson showed his more serious side in this coming of age drama about two brothers whose lives are thrown into turmoil when their mother dies, leaving them to fend for themselves. Also in 2009, he starred in *The Greatest* opposite Pierce Brosnan and Susan Sarandon, which received a screening at Sundance in 2009.

2008 saw Johnson play the hugely popular character of the teenage 'sexgod' in Paramount Pictures' coming of age comedy, *Angus, Thongs and Perfect Snogging*. Directed by Gurinder Chadha, the film was based on the hugely popular international best-selling series of books of the same title.

Still at the young age of 18, Johnson already had significant experience and success under his belt. He played a young Edward Norton in the Oscar® nominated and award-winning film *The Illusionist*, directed by Neil Burger. He also starred alongside Jackie Chan and Owen Wilson in the popular *Shanghai Nights*, as well as *The Thief Lord* with Caroline Goodall and Jasper Harris.

Johnson has also appeared in several popular UK television series, including Feather Boy, Family Business, Nearly Famous, and Talk To Me. He was nominated for the NSPCC Young Performer of the Year Award at the 2010 London Critics Circle Film Awards for his roles in both *Nowhere Boy* and *Dummy*. Johnson stars in Matthew Vaughn's adaptation of the popular Mark Millar comic book *Kick-Ass* where he takes the lead role opposite Nicholas Cage and Christopher Mintz-Plasse.

IMOGEN POOTS – EVA

Born in London in 1989, Imogen has featured in TV's *Miss Austen Regrets*, *Casualty* and most recently *A Bouquet of Barbed Wire*. Her film credits include *V for Vendetta*, *28 Weeks Later* - a role for which she was nominated for a BIFA – Most Promising Newcomer Award in 2007, *Wish, Me and Orson Welles*, *Solitary Man*, *Centurion* directed by Neil Marshall and *Cracks* directed by Jordan Scott.

MATTHEW BEARD – JIM

The British Independent Film Awards and The Evening Standard Film Awards both nominated Matthew Beard as Best Newcomer for his feature debut in Anand Tucker's *And When Did You Last See Your Father?* Having received rave reviews for his performance as the teenaged Blake Morrison, he was selected by Screen International as "A Star of Tomorrow" and was voted a "Trailblazer" at the Edinburgh International Film Festival.

Beard made his television debut at the age of five in ITV's *A Touch of Frost*. During the decade since, he has appeared in numerous television dramas and series including Lynda LaPlante's *Trial and Retribution* (ITV), *Johnny and the Bomb* (BBC), *Fat Friends* (Granada), *The Royal* (Yorkshire TV), *The Eustace Brothers* (BBC TV), *Sons and Lovers* (Company Pictures), *Where the Heart Is* (ITV), as the lead role in *An Angel for May* (The Spice Factory) and *Soldier Soldier* (ITV). On stage, Beard has appeared in *Brassed Off*, *The Railway Children* and *Everyday Heroes*. He is also a regular performer on BBC Radio's *Play for Today* with credits including *Keeping the Feast*, *Distant Whispers*, *The War Zone* and *A Winter's Tale*. Matthew Beard recently appeared in Lone Scherfig's award-winning *An Education* alongside Carey Mulligan.

HANNAH MURRAY – EMLIY

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Hannah Murray is best known for her role as Cassie in Channel 4's hit TV series *Skins*. She also played Monica in Benedek Fliegau's *Womb*. She has also starred in ITV's *Marple* and *Above Suspicion: The Red Dahlia*. Her theatre credits include *That Face* directed by Jeremy Herrin.

DANIEL KALUUYA – MO

Daniel Kaluuya's film credits include Jon Baird's *Cass*, Ngozi Onwurah's *Shoot The Messenger* for BBC Films and a short film by Richard Eyre entitled *Three Kings*. His television credits include his role as Kenneth in Channel 4's *Skins*, *Happy Finish*, *Dr Who*, *Psychoville*, *Lewis*, *Mitchell and Webb*, *Silent Witness* and *Whistleblowers*. His theatre credits include Sacha Wares' *Sucker Punch* and Dawn Walton's *Oxford Street*, both at the Royal Court and a number of plays for the Heat and Light Company including *Stuff I Buried in a Small Town* and *Doors Don't Grow on Trees*. His writing credits include *Skins* (Series 1, 2, and 3), *Two of a Kind*, performed at the Hampstead Theatre, and a number of plays for Heat and Light Company including *Manners of the Wicked*, *5 Card Deck: 5 New Plays*, which he also directed.

He has also appeared on BBC Blast Music as part of 1Xtra's presenter competition and Cap-A-Britain, also for 1Xtra.

MEGAN DODDS – GRACE

Megan Dodds was trained at the Julliard School and has an impressive list of film, television and theatre credits. Her film credits include Dominic Savage's *London*, Bruce Beresford's *The Contract*, Annie Griffin's *Festival*, Antoine Fuqua's *Bait*, Jon Matthews' *Urbania* and Andy Tennant's *Ever After* for Twentieth Century Fox. Her television credits include US smash TV series *House* starring Hugh Laurie, *Hotel Babylon*, *Viva Blackpool*, *Poirot: The Hollow*, *Spooks*, *Sword of Honour*, *Love in a Cold Climate*, directed by Tom Hooper for the BBC, *Gramercy Park* and *The Rat Pack* for HBO.

Her theatre credits include *Birth of a Nation* for director Ramin Gray at the Donmar Warehouse, *This is How it Goes*, also at the Donmar, *My Name is Rachel Corrie* directed by Alan Rickman for the Royal Court, *Up for Grabs* at the Wyndham, *Hamlet* directed by Lawrence Boswell at the Young Vic, *Popcorn*, and *School for Scandal*, directed by Gerald Freedman on Broadway.

MICHELLE FAIRLEY – ROSIE

Michelle's film credits include *Cup Cake*, *Harry Potter and The Deathly Hallows*, *The Duel*, *The Others*, *Hideous Kinky*, *A Soldier's Daughter Never Dies* and *Hidden Agenda*.

Television includes: *Misfits*, *Lark Rise To Candleford*, *Taggart*, *Best*, *A Short Stay In Switzerland*, *The Street*, *Strictly Confidential*, *Trial and Retribution*, *The Catherine Tate Show*, *Bel's Boys*, *Golden Hour*, *Ahead Of Class*, *The Clinic*, *Holby City*, *Inspector Rebus*, *In Deep*, *Mcready and Daughter*, *Births*, *Marriages and Deaths*, *Vicious Circle*, *Tom Jones*, *The Broker's Man*, *Precious Blood*, *Safe and Sound*, *A Mug's Game*, *Inspector Morse*, *Life After Life*, *Cardiac Arrest*, *Comics*, *The Long Roads*, *Force Of Duty*, *Fleabites*, *Children Of The North*, *Pentecost*, *Valentine Falls*, *Saracens*, *Hidden City* and *Cross Fire*.

Theatre credits include: *Greta Garbo Came To Donegal* at The Tricycle Theatre, *Dancing at Lughnasa* at the Old Vic, *Paradise Lost/Women Of Troy/Love* for Paines Plough, *Othello* at The Donmar Warehouse, *Lady Macbeth in Macbeth* for The West Yorkshire Playhouse, *Gates Of Gold* for The Trafalgar Studios, *The Wild Duck* for The Donmar Warehouse, *Ashes To Ashes* for The Lyric, Belfast, *Loyal Women* for The Royal Court, *Scenes From A Big Picture* for The National Theatre, *Midden* for Hampstead Theatre, *The Weir* on Broadway and for The Duke Of York's London, *Neverland* for The Royal Court, *Death And The Maiden* for the Old Museum Arts Centre, Belfast, *Oleanna* for The Duke Of York's, *Dr. Faustus* for The Tron, Glasgow, *Philadelphia*, *Here I Come* for The Tron Theatre,

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Glasgow, *The Hostage* for The Tricycle Theatre, London, *Joyriders* for Paines Plough, *Don Juan* for The Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester, *Lady From The Sea* for The Citizens, Glasgow, *By The Border* for The National Theatre Studio, Pentecost for The Tricycle, London *The Doctor Of Honour No 1 Tour* for Cheek By Jowl, *Factory Girls* for Tricycle Theatre, *Leonce and Lena* for The Crucible, Sheffield and *The Shadow of a Gunman* on tour in Ireland and the USA.

NICHOLAS GLEAVES – PAUL

Nicholas Gleaves has acted in numerous film, theatre and TV projects. His most recent film credits include Mark Collicott's *A Congregation of Ghosts*, Edward Woodward's last film, Sharon Maguire's *Incendiary* with Ewan McGregor and Michelle Williams, and Craig Rosenberg's *Half Light* alongside Demi Moore. His recent television credits include *Murderland*, *Survivors* and the BAFTA nominated *City Lights*, which won the Monte-Carlo Television Festival award. His theatre work includes the title role in *MacBeth* at the Manchester Royal Exchange for director Matthew Dunster and *On the Shore of the Wide World* at the National Theatre directed by Sarah Frankcom.

JACOB ANDERSON – SI

Jacob Anderson is soon to be seen in *4, 3, 2, 1* starring opposite Emma Roberts, for Universal. Other film work includes *Adulthood* and *Broken Lines*. His TV credits include the upcoming *Royal Wedding*, written by Abi Morgan for BBC TWO, *Spooks*, the lead in *Gunrush* opposite Timothy Spall for ITV, *Things I Haven't Told You*, and *West 10 LDN* for the BBC and Kudos. His theatre credits include *Dunsinane* at the Hampstead Theatre for the RSC, and Rupert Goold's *King Lear* at Liverpool and the *Young Vic*. Anderson is currently starring in the award winning National Theatre production *Warhorse* in the West End.

TUPPENCE MIDDLETON – CANDY

Tuppence Middleton's credits include Kate Burton's *Ever Here I Be*, Nick Whitfield's *Skeletons* and Jon Wright's *Tormented*. Her television credits include *New Tricks* by Julian Simpson and *Bones* for Twentieth Century Fox Television.

OPHELIA LOVIBOND – CHARLOTTE

Before moving into film Ophelia Lovibond's first break came on television at the age of 12 in *The Wilsons*, after which she played Alice Langdon in *Loving You* (Granada), followed by the regular role of Rachel Barton in the series *Single* (Tiger Aspect) and Jade in *Holby City* (BBC). This was followed by roles in *Nathan Barley* (Talkback TV), *Messiah* (BBC), *Lewis* (Granada) and most recently, the regular role of Daisy in the series *FM* (Granada).

Lovibond made her feature film debut as Bet in Roman Polanski's *Oliver Twist*. Over the past year, since graduating with a First at Sussex University, Lovibond has completed a number of feature films, including *Shadows In the Sun*, *London Boulevard*, and Noel Clarke's new film *4, 3, 2, 1* in which she plays 'Shannon', one of four lead roles.

RICHARD MADDEN – RIPLEY

Richard Madden's credits include feature film *Complicity*, directed by Gavin Millar, TV dramas *Worried about the Boy* for the BBC directed by Julian Jarrold, *Game of Thrones* for HBO, *Taggart* for ITV and *MY Barmy Aunt Boomerang* for the BBC. His theatre credits include *John Tiffany's Be Near Me* at the Donmar and National Theatre of Scotland, *Noughts and Crosses* directed by Dominic Cooke for the RSC, *Romeo and Juliet*, playing Romeo, directed by Ed Dick for the Globe Theatre and *Tom Fool* at the Bush Theatre.

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ABOUT THE CREW

HIDEO NAKATA – DIRECTOR

Hideo Nakata has emerged as one of the world's most influential horror film directors since directing the original *Ringu* in his native Japan. Based on a trilogy of novels by Japanese fright-master Suzuki Koji, the film went on to become the most successful horror movie in the history of Japanese cinema.

The film also inspired a trend in what is commonly referred to as “J-Horror” films, emphasizing mystery and dread over such common contemporary horror mainstays as gore and special effects. Nakata followed up in 1999 with the second film in the series, *Ringu 2*. Three years later, *Ringu* spawned DreamWorks' successful US remake, *The Ring*.

Born in Okayama, Japan in 1961, Nakata studied both applied physics and journalism at the University of Tokyo. Upon graduating he landed a job as an assistant director at Nikkatsu Studios where he worked for seven years under the mentorship of director Masaru Konuma. In 1996, he directed his first feature film, *Joyu-rei* (aka *Ghost Actress*), which incorporated many of the supernatural trademark elements for which he would become best known.

In 1999, the same year he directed *Ringu 2*, Nakata switched gears to direct the crime-drama *Kaosu* (aka *Chaos*). Returning to his roots in 2002, he directed *Honogurai mizu no soko kara* (aka *Dark Water*), based on a novel by “Ringu's” Suzuki Koji.

In 2000, between feature films, Nakata directed a documentary film on his mentor Masaru Konuma entitled *Sadistic and Masochistic*. In 2004, Hideo made his American directing debut with DreamWorks' *The Ring Two*. He returned to Japan in 2006 to direct *Kaidan* re-teaming him with producer Taka Ichise and original *Dark Water* star Hitomi Kuroki. Nakata remained in Japan to direct *L Change the World* a spin-off of the widely popular “Death Note” series, which went on to box office success in Japan.

Up next for Hideo is *The Incite Mill*, a psychological suspense movie based on Honobu Yonezawa's bestseller, which Nakata will direct for Horipro.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION COMPANY: RUBY FILMS

Ruby Films are one of the UK's foremost independent production companies, leading the way in high profile literary adaptations and challenging contemporary cinema. They have been behind some of the most critically acclaimed and award winning films and television programmes over the past few years including *Brick Lane*, *Sylvia*, *Small Island*, *Fish Tank* and *Five Minutes of Heaven*.

Currently in production is *Jane Eyre* for Focus Features and BBC Films, adapted by playwright Moira Buffini and directed by Cary Fukunaga (*Sin Nombre*) starring Michael Fassbender and Mia Wasikowska. In postproduction is Stephen Frears' *Tamara Drewe* adapted by Moira Buffini from the bestselling graphic novel by Posy Simmonds, starring Gemma Arterton, Tamsin Greig and Dominic Cooper, for WestEnd Films, BBC Films, and Sony Pictures Classics.

Upcoming films include *Good Luck Anthony Belcher*, written by George Kay, to be directed by Jim Field Smith (director of the Paramount feature, *She's Out of My League*) set to star James Corden (*Gavin and Stacey*), and *Corsica '72*, written by Robert Wade and Neal Purvis (*Casino Royale*, *Quantum of Solace*).

High profile literary adaptations in the works are: John Hodge's adaptation of Simon Sebag-Montefiore's *Young Stalin*, Danny Wallace's *Friends Like These*, Deborah Moggach's *Tulip Fever*

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adapted by Tom Stoppard, and Tim Guest's *My Life in Orange* adapted by Anders Thomas Jensen and Lone Scherfig (*An Education*).

Building on the success of *Small Island*, the acclaimed two-parter for BBC ONE, which averaged five million viewers when it aired in December 2009, Ruby Television recently struck a co-production and distribution deal with ITV Studios Global Entertainment. Currently in development on the TV slate are an adaptation of Nigel Slater's bestselling memoir *Toast* for BBC ONE, written by Lee Hall (*Billy Elliott*), to be directed by SJ Clarkson (*Life on Mars, Heroes*), adaptations of Marina Lewycka's *A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian* and Zadie Smith's *On Beauty*.

Ruby's most recent co-productions include *The Men Who Stare At Goats*, written by Peter Straughan (*How to Lose Friends and Alienate People*), directed by Grant Heslov, and starring George Clooney, Jeff Bridges, Kevin Spacey and Ewan McGregor, which had its world premiere at the Venice Film Festival; *Five Minutes of Heaven*, directed by Oliver Hirschbiegel starring Liam Neeson and James Nesbitt which won the World Cinema Directing and Screenwriting Award at the Sundance Film Festival in 2009, and the Best Single Drama Award at the RTS Awards in 2010; and *Fish Tank* by writer/director Andrea Arnold (*Red Road*) which won the Prix de Jury at last year's Cannes Film Festival, and the BAFTA for Outstanding British Film this year.

