

THE
ROYAL
ARMS

COLSTON'S
LAGER

*The
Landlord*

THE
BIG DIDDLE
big egos, small shafts

The Royal Arms



When his beloved pub faces foreclosure, a washed-up darts prodigy must recapture the magic he lost twenty years earlier, and take **one last shot at glory**... winning the lawless, beer-soaked **1983 World Darts Championship**.

THE BIG DIDDLE is a stylish British underdog comedy with Hollywood movie swagger.

Think **THE FULL MONTY** meets **KINGPIN** meets **ROCKY**, all set in the ridiculous, anarchic world of British professional darts in the 1980s.

THE BIG DIDDLE is a huge-hearted, wide-screen British comedy, about second chances, old grudges, and warm pints, all set against the backdrop of the beautiful theatre of competitive darts.

The film will feel affectionate, funny and alive. The world we're creating is real, specific and lived-in. We can smell the beer, the Silk Cuts, the Aramis, the musky carpets.

This was a time when the pub was the centre of the universe. There is a great tradition of commercial, working-class British cinema that finds drama and scale in ordinary lives:

THE FULL MONTY, BILLY ELLIOT, BRASSED OFF and **PRIDE**. Those films are funny, emotional and accessible, and always hold their idiosyncratic characters in the highest of esteem. Those stories seek to understand them. They make them cinematic.

THE BIG DIDDLE will have an independent spirit, but the confidence of a big movie. It's warm, unpredictable and visually rich, a comedy where the craft is taken seriously, and the funnies are unmistakably British.





SYNOPSIS

The year is 1983. A time before political correctness and proper dental care. Boy George rules the airwaves. Maggie Thatcher has swept back into Downing Street, and Eric "The Crafty Cockney" Bristow and Alfie "The Landlord" Eggleston are the odds-on favourites to win the Embassy World Darts Championship that summer.

For the hard-drinking regulars of The Royal Arms, a time-scorned public house in Scunthorpe, in North Lincolnshire, these are the great matters of the age.

Life at the Arms is simple, sacred, and fairly repetitive: same stools, same stories and the same flat refusal to move with the times.

But change is coming.

When a ruthless brewery conglomerate moves to seize the pub over unpaid taxes, the Arms' affable owner, Tommy Buxton, must find a way to raise £9,000 (£40k in today's money) or lose his place and the only home his regulars have ever known.

But his fiancée, Maggie, discovers that Tommy was once a teenage darts prodigy, destined for greatness until a freak accident during a final against his best friend, Alfie Eggleston, ended his career and left Tommy traumatised.

With the pub on the brink of closure, Maggie encourages Tommy to return to the oche and enter the 1983 Embassy World Darts Championship, where the £9,000 prize could save the Arms.

To win, he must face the sport's biggest stars, and Alfie, now a swaggering, Thatcherite, free-market endorsement-hungry champion. A warm, unruly, irreverent underdog comedy, THE BIG DIDDLE is about second chances, old grudges and new family, set in the beer-soaked coliseum of 1980s professional darts.

MARKET COMPARISON



UNDERDOG STORY/
CROWD PLEASER



CHAOS /
LAWLESS



CRUDE
OBNOXIOUS COMEDY



WORKING CLASS STORY
SET IN THE NORTH OF UK



DRY BRITISH HUMOUR
HEARTFELT / ROMANTIC



PROPOSED CAST



PAUL MESCAL



JACK O'CONNELL



AARON
TAYLOR-JOHNSON



JACK LOWDEN



JOE COLE

Tommy Buxton was born to throw darts.

As a teenager, he was effortless, electric, cool; the kind of child prodigy people talked about before he entered the room. He was not just good. He was a future world champion.

Until one dodgy throw destroyed everything.

A freak accident cost a child an eye, and left Tommy shattered by guilt. He vanished from the sport, he changed his name, and buried his youthful brilliance, and trophies, beneath the floorboards of pub life.

Twenty years later, Tommy is a decent man living a modest life. Kind, funny, self-effacing, but behind the warmth is a wound that never healed; his misguided belief that the best part of him died the night he picked up that dart in 1963.

Now, pulled back toward the world he abandoned, Tommy must face the question that has haunted him for decades: can he win again, and move on?

Tommy's story is about redemption, glory or no glory, victory without ego, and the courage it takes to finally let the past be the past.


**TOMMY
BUXTON**

The Fallen Prodigy

PROPOSED CAST



JODIE COMER



MORFYDD CLARK



DAKOTA FANNING



SAOIRSE RONAN

Maggie Kane is a nurse, a single mother, and the intelligent, emotional heartbeat at the centre of the film.

Maggie's practical, funny, and protective of her son Nigel, wanting the best for him - she finds a balance between soft and sweet, and tough love. She also has a second man in her life now: her fiancé, Tommy.

Maggie has spent her life looking after people, but she's nobody's fool. She can smell fear and self-sabotage from a mile away.

She sees something in Tommy that he has spent twenty years trying to bury. She sees something in her son, too. And because Maggie loves them, she refuses to let either of them fail. But is she too trusting?

Yes she's a straight talker, and no she doesn't care about fame, or proving the world wrong, but she does care about the pub and its future.

Maggie's the emotionally intelligent one, who understands the truth first: the bravest thing you can do is face your fears.

A large background image of actress Saoirse Ronan as Maggie Kane, standing behind a bar with various glasses and bottles. She has long blonde hair and is wearing a dark red jacket over a white shirt. The lighting is warm and moody, typical of a pub setting.

MAGGIE KANE

The Believer



ALFIE "THE LANDLORD" EGGLESTON

The Antagonist

PROPOSED CAST



HARRY STYLES



JACK O'CONNELL



AARON
TAYLOR-JOHNSON

Alfie Eggleston is everything Tommy might have been — if the accident never happened and humility never arrived. Charismatic, narcissistic, and wildly talented, Alfie thrives in the ruthless, performative world of professional darts. He is a showman, a bully, and a corporate weapon.

Alfie is not simply an antagonist; he is Tommy's alternate timeline made flesh.



LOOK & FEEL

The Big Diddle is a warm, irreverent, wide-screen British comedy with ambition.

Yes it has its roots in traditional British cinema, but we're telling a story with scale. Think Tony Scott, think Danny Boyle and Michael Winterbottom.

Darts of the 1980s was before darts was slick and sanitised. It was smoky, boozy, and gloriously un-PC, it was played by very ordinary blokes with extraordinary personalities. It was a sport played in pubs and working men's clubs by ordinary blokes who looked like ordinary blokes.

And this is our backdrop for a genuinely emotional story about second chances, old wounds and the courage to reclaim a part of yourself you thought was lost.

The tone is affectionate, unpredictable and unmistakably British. But it's not small and intimate.

This is not a kitchen sink drama. It's funny without being broad, heart-felt without being soft, and alive to the dignity and eccentricity of ordinary lives.

Visually the film will have the scale and confidence of a big-screen movie. We'll shoot on film, anamorphic lenses, use cinematic lighting to transform pubs, dart halls and working men's clubs into arenas of drama and spectacle.

The world must remain subtly textured, tactile and lived-in: tobacco haze, worn carpets, sticky tables, faded wallpaper and the glow of old television sets. The contrast between this richly observed British environment and the heightened theatre of competitive darts will give the film its distinctive aesthetic.

We're making a film that's bold and entertaining, and grounded enough for every emotional beat to land.

On the following pages, you'll see images that we think get close to the look and feel of The Big Diddle.





BIG WIDESCREEN SPORTS ENERGY





CINEMATOGRAPHY

The cinematography of *The Big Diddle* will be unapologetically cinematic.

Shot on 35mm film with anamorphic lenses, the visual language will bring scale and depth to the locations: pubs, dart halls and working men's clubs of 1980s Britain, being on the road, and the final showdown at the Embassy World Champs.

The textured widescreen frame allows us to build scale, comedy and character through composition, while the grain and texture will bring a specialness to the film, a beauty and emotional depth.

Big, wide crowd shots, darts traveling through the frame like action cinema, and the smallest private moments will feel monumental. This will be a rich, confident visual language that treats this world not as nostalgia, but as a movie.



CLASSIC BRITISH CINEMA





tone / texture / period stylng



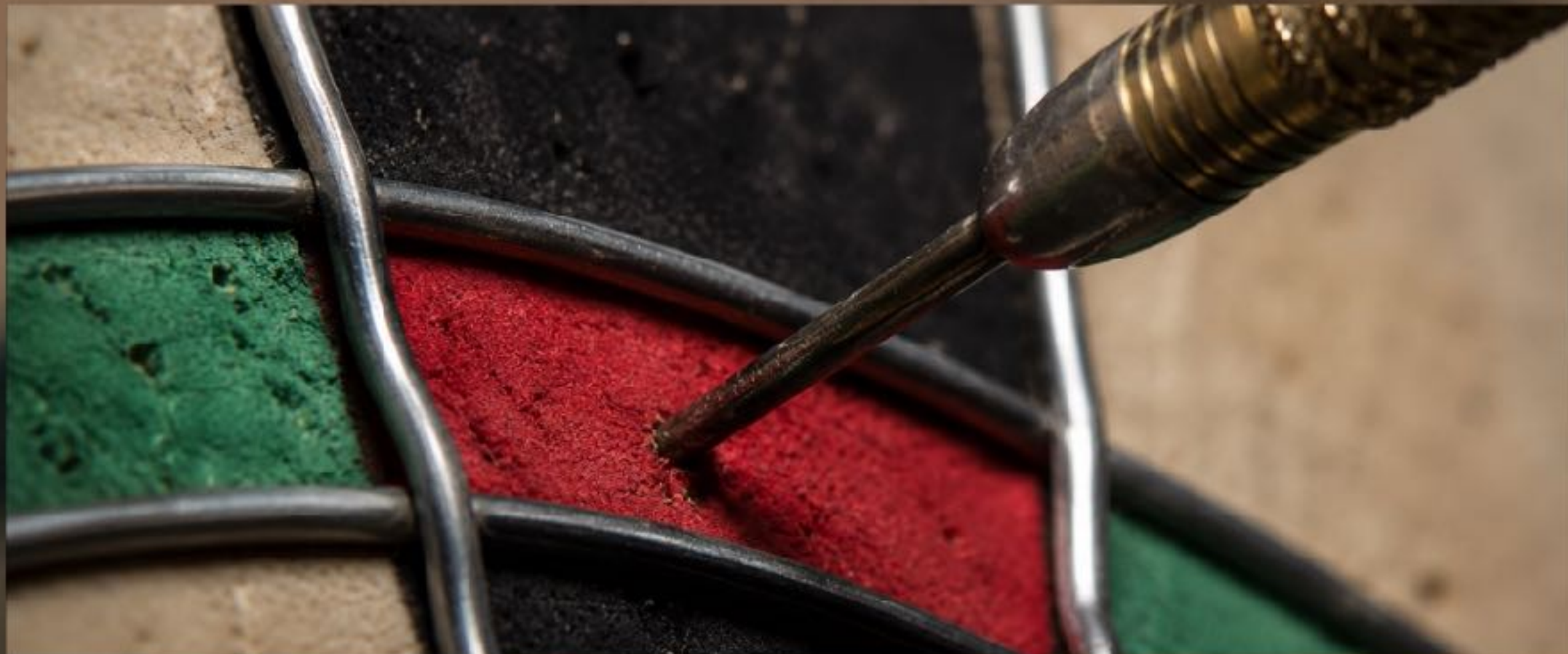


tone / texture / period stylng





MACRO / EMOTIONAL CLOSE UPS





 **CREATIVE TEAM**



JIM OWEN

Director

Jim Owen is the writer & director of **HOSTAGES**, the independent British feature film starring Charlotte Ritchie and Tanya Moodie. The film premiered at Manchester Film Festival, opened the London Comedy Film Festival as its gala film, and played Brighton Rocks and Dublin IFF. Currently screening on Sky Cinema in the UK, the film is distributed by Signature Entertainment across the UK, Ireland, US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Jim's short films have screened at Sundance, SXSW and numerous international festivals. His work has been staff picked by Vimeo, awarded Silver at the 1.4 Awards, and featured by Wholpin, Vice and Short of the Week.

His commercial include campaigns for Maltesers Buttons, BBC Radio 1, Smarty Mobile, Subway, McVitie's, The Big Issue and Denplan.



JOHNNY ROSENTHAL

Writer

Johnny Rosenthal is a screenwriter best known for **BAD SANTA 2** (starring Billy Bob Thornton & Kathy Bates) and the **BLACK LIST** script **IRON JACK** (won by Sony in a 6-studio bidding war).

He's sold screenplays to almost every major studio, as well as television pilots to Fox, FX, NBC & Paramount Television.

Over the years he has written scripts for numerous A-list actors and directors, including Matthew McConaughey, Sacha Baron Cohen, Jim Carrey, Adam McKay and Shawn Levy.

Currently, he is working on **CHRISTMAS IN PARADISE** (starring Nate Bargatze) for MGM/Amazon, and **AUNT ROXIE** for Netflix with Ryan Reynolds & Maximum Effort Producing.

PROFESSIONAL
DARTS
CHAMPIONSHIP



ERIC LEVY

Writer

Eric Levy is the Executive Producer of **THE TINDER SWINDLER**, the Emmy-nominated, global hit documentary on Netflix. He is the Executive Producer of **BALTIMORE BOYS**, a critically-acclaimed film made for ESPN's 30 for 30 series. He produced TV series **THE VATICAN**, **THROUGH THE WORMHOLE** with Morgan Freeman, **MANSON: THE LOST TAPES**.



A NOTE ON JOHNNY & ERIC

How did a story about the gloriously wild world of 1980s British darts end up being written by two comedy writers from New York?

During a dart board thrashing at the hands of a couple of over-confident Brits at their Brooklyn local, they were informed about the sport's larger than life legends of the '80s: a six-toed icon and his toothless rival, a 25-pint-drinking world champion, a bikini-chaperoned playboy with a dart-shaped mansion, and a cast of chain-smoking, over-served, gloriously profane characters who defied every idea of what a professional athlete should be.

The question wasn't, "should this be a movie?", it was, "how is this not a movie??"



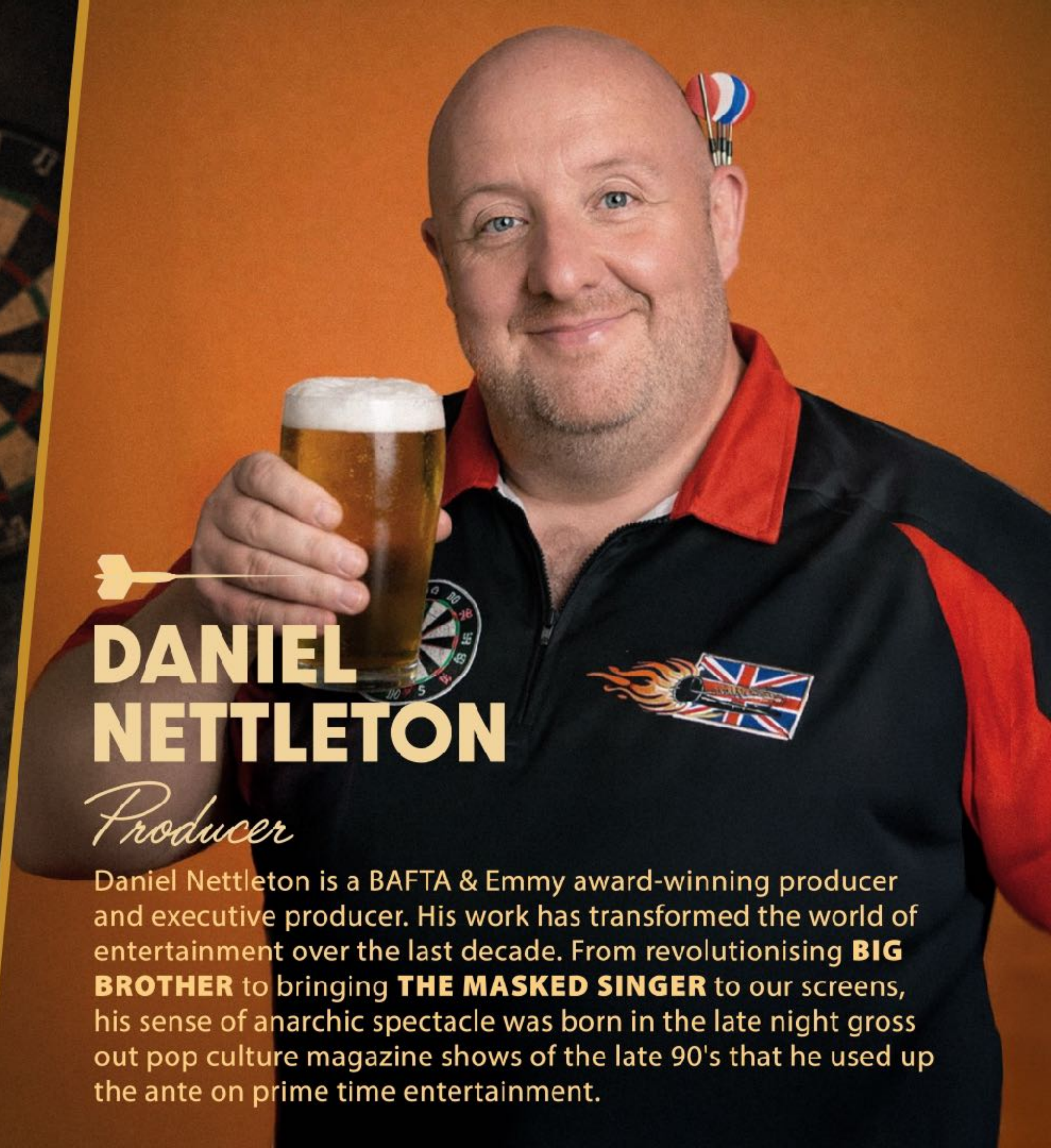


→ DYLAN HARVEY

Producer

Dylan is a UK based award-winning writer, director and producer. After several years of shooting music promos and short films and working as producer on a number of TV entertainment broadcast productions, he made the feature length documentaries **THE BANKSY JOB** and **THAT WAS A SERIOUS PARTY**.

He is currently a consultant producer for Imagine Pictures on a Ron Howard produced feature length music documentary and is developing several scripted films for various companies.



→ DANIEL NETTLETON

Producer

Daniel Nettleton is a BAFTA & Emmy award-winning producer and executive producer. His work has transformed the world of entertainment over the last decade. From revolutionising **BIG BROTHER** to bringing **THE MASKED SINGER** to our screens, his sense of anarchic spectacle was born in the late night gross out pop culture magazine shows of the late 90's that he used up the ante on prime time entertainment.



SANDRA SCHAFFNER

Producer

Sandra is an emerging producer with experience across development, production and film finance at an independent production company. Working closely with established producers on feature films, she has gained hands-on experience across the full production pipeline and most recently entirely managed an independent musical feature.



RYAN MELOY

Producer

Ryan Meloy is working class Glaswegian producer and creator of the BAFTA-winning **LAST COMMANDERS** – a horror/sci-fi series for CBBC – with credits as Producer, Writer and Studio Director. He has developed formats, documentaries and digital content for major UK and international broadcasters. Before working in television, he was the frontman of a band, touring the UK alongside acts including The Temper Trap, Twin Atlantic and The Automatic.



COLSTON'S
LAGER

EMBASSY
WORLD DARTS
CHAMPIONSHIP
1983

*The
Landlord*



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