

**South Australian Film Corporation  
and Adelaide Film Festival  
present a  
Smoking Gun Production**



**Press Kit**



*“Big fleas have little fleas upon their backs to bite them,  
and little fleas have lesser fleas and so on ad infinitum.”*

**Jonathan Swift (1732)**

#### **SYNOPSIS**

Thirteen year old Jonathan Turner is overweight, has no friends and is the current victim of the school bully. The principal and teachers can't seem to do anything to protect Jonathan. So he turns to his father for help. But his father's advice makes matters worse. Much, much worse...

#### **THE BULLY BY JASON STARR**

*The Bully* was first published on Amazon.com (*Amazon Shorts*) in July 2007 and is available as an electronic download for US\$0.49, in PDF, HTML and text e-mail formats (USA only).

The link to the short story can be found at:

[http://www.amazon.com/TheBully/dp/B000TDNLQ8/ref=pd\\_bbs\\_8?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1206944141&sr=8-8](http://www.amazon.com/TheBully/dp/B000TDNLQ8/ref=pd_bbs_8?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1206944141&sr=8-8)

#### **CREW**

Writer/Director	Shane McNeil
Based on a short story by	Jason Starr
Producers	Kristian Moliere
Director of Photography	Tony Clark ACS
Production Designer	Tony Cronin
Sound	James Currie
Editor	Dale Roberts
Post Production	Oasis Post
Sound Post Production	Best FX

#### **CAST**

Jonathan Turner	Henri Phillips
Jonathan's Father	Ben Anderson
Jonathan's Mother	Martha Lott
Billy Owens	Kyron Weetra

#### **TECHNICAL SPECS**

Running Time:	23 min, 13 sec
Language:	English
Format:	Digital Betacam (25 psf)
Colour System	PAL Colour
Screen Ration	16.9 Anamorphic (1.85:1 crop)
Sound:	Stereo Surround (Lt Rt)
IMDb:	<a href="http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1368055">http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1368055</a>



## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Several years ago my producer, Kristian Moliere, and I successfully obtained the rights to one of our favourite cult novels, **Cold Caller** - written by award-winning, New York crime novelist Jason Starr - with the hope of one day adapting it to the screen. With Jason attached as writer adapting his own novel, we received development funds from the South Australian Film Corporation to adapt **Cold Caller** into a feature film.

Enthused by Jason's writing and mutual affection for *film noir* and pulp fiction, I inquired while we were working on the last draft of **Cold Caller**, if he had any short stories which might similarly lend themselves to adaptation. Jason directed me to *The Bully*, a recent short e-story he had just published online at Amazon.com, which has since gone on to become one of the most downloaded e-shorts on their site.

What immediately attracted me to **The Bully** was that it had a lean, spare narrative, was tightly plotted with moments of real suspense and shock, and centred upon a complex and complicated protagonist – all of which I felt could form a strong foundation for cinematic adaptation. Told entirely from the child's point of view, it also had powerful dramatic turning points that built to a series of emotional climaxes at the end of the story – something I had not seen attempted in a short film for a long time.

**The Bully** is a "suburban noir". It is meant to provoke, challenge and disturb. Bullying is a complex problem and there are no simple solutions. I hope the film raises more questions than it answers...



## FILM SALES

**Contact: Kristian Moliere**  
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#### SHANE MCNEIL BIOGRAPHY

Shane was a writer on the Australian children's TV series **Chuck Finn** (2000-01) before directing the AFC short feature, **The 13th House** (2003). He undertook an internship with Rolf de Heer at Vertigo Productions, working on **The Tracker** (2002) and **Alexandra's Project** (2003), before writing & producing **Kafkamêsto** (2004) - an online game for the ABC inspired by the life and work of Franz Kafka. He then produced & directed two one hour documentary specials - **SA PoliceFile** (2005) & **The Ice Factor** (2006) - for Channel 7.

Shane shot & directed an episode of the 'reality business' series **Risking It All** (2007) for SBS and was the series co-producer on **mY Generation** (2008) - a six part SBS documentary series examining all things Gen Y. Shane was co-producer & assistant director on the critically acclaimed, low budget feature film **Boxing Day** (2007) - directed by Kriv Stenders - and was associate producer on **Lucky Country** (2009), a period western - also directed by Kriv.

Most recently, Shane wrote & directed the SAFC short film **The Bully** (2009), which successfully premiered at the 2009 Adelaide Film Festival, and was selected to participate in Screen Australia's 2009 IndiVision Script Lab with his thriller, **The Last Day**.

He still maintains that **Escape From the Planet of the Apes** is the best one in the series.



#### JASON STARR BIOGRAPHY

Born and raised in Brooklyn, New York-based Jason Starr first began writing in college, at Binghamton University. After graduation, Jason moved to Manhattan and had several plays produced Off Broadway before pursuing his passion for fiction, particularly crime fiction.

Jason's debut novel was **Cold Caller**, about an unemployed ad-exec who'll do anything to get his career back on track. Since then, Jason has written over a dozen novels including **Nothing Personal**, **Fake I.D.**, **Hard Feelings** (the first ever original novel published by the prestigious American publisher, Vintage Crime/Black Lizard), **Tough Luck** (Anthony Award finalist and winner of the Barry Award), **Twisted City** (Barry Award finalist and an Anthony Award winner), **Lights Out** and most recently **The Follower** (soon to be a HBO series, adapted by Bret Easton Ellis (**American Psycho**, **The Rules of Attraction**) and **Panic Attack**.

Currently, three of Jason's novels are in development as films. A screenplay for **Twisted City** has been co-written by John David Coles (director of Sex and The City, Desperate Housewives, Gray's Anatomy) with Coles set to direct. **The Follower** has just been optioned for US television and Jason is adapting his debut novel, **Cold Caller**, to the screen for Smoking Gun Productions, developed through the South Australian Film Corporation.

# THE Bully

## CRITICAL PRAISE FOR JASON STARR

*"(Jason Starr) is the first writer of his generation to convincingly update the modern crime novel"*

**BRETT EASTON ELLIS** (Author *American Psycho*, *The Rules of Attraction*)

*"At the cutting edge of the revival of classic American noir fiction."*  
**THE DAILY TELEGRAPH**

*"Tough, composed, and about as noir as you can go. Starr is a worthy successor to Charles Willeford."*  
**THE LITERARY REVIEW**

*"He is the closest thing you'll ever get to Tarantino in text. Good doesn't begin to describe just how damn good he is."*  
**PAUL BLEZARD**, Oneword Radio (U.K.)

*"Jason Starr is one of the new voices of noir fiction, a writer capable of taking noir from what it has always been toward whatever it can become. He's got his own slant, his own slashing style and the moral honesty true noir requires"*  
**DANIEL WOODRELL** (Author *Ride with the Devil*, *The Death Trip of Sweet Mister*)

*"Jason Starr is terrific...His stuff is tough and real and brilliant"*  
**ANDREW KLAVAN** (Author *True Crime*, *Don't Say a Word*)

*"Jason Starr is the real deal in a world where a lot of people are faking it, a fearless, pitiless writer."*  
**LAURA LIPPMAN**

*"Jason Starr is hypnotically good - if you miss him, you're missing some of the best new writing there is."*  
**LEE CHILD** (Author *Killing Floor*, *Nothing To Lose*)

*"Jason Starr is a leader of the new noir movement."*  
**GEORGE P. PELECANOS** (Writer/Producer HBO's *The Wire*)

*“Jason Starr is such a polished writer that once you start reading it’s hard to tear yourself away.”*

**TIME OUT**

*“Starr’s writing is slick and his plotting is second to none.”*

**THE LONDON GUARDIAN**

*“Jason Starr has...a hard-edged style that is clean, cold and extremely chilling.”*

**THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW**