

Indie Film ^{Online}

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MAGAZINE

FEATURING
THE REAL LIFE
JAMES BOND

TONY SCHIENA

AND HIS NEWEST FILM
THE WEAPON
WITH OSCAR WINNER
CUBA GOODING JR

POPE FRANCESCO
ANDREA BOCELLI
ISABELLA ROSSELLINI &
FRAN DRESCHER

WERE AMONG THE HONOREES OF THE AWARDS
FOR "VALUE AND COURAGE" IN ROME, ITALY

ITALY'S NEWEST
FILM FESTIVAL

THE 1st ANNUAL 2023

ITALIAN CULTURAL
CAPITAL FESTIVAL

"THE WORLDS BEST FOOD & CULTURE FESTIVAL"

TONY SCHIENA



HE CHOSE TO BE JAMES BOND, NOT PLAY JAMES BOND

As a child, I wanted to be the actual characters in the action movies I watched. That is the beauty of film, escapism, aspiring to be the hero's that we would watch over and over. It's a powerful thing.

BY KATHRINA MICCIO

KM First, I want to thank you for taking time out of your super busy schedule.

TS My pleasure. Thank you.

KM Tony, you exemplify the “Renaissance Man”, with one foot steeped deep in reality and the other in make-belief. Could you explain how you manage to balance two extreme worlds?

TS I started out in the intelligence and security world, it has been my focus for most of my life. Some people get very confused by it. As it seems there is a

desperate need to label or pigeon hole. How can someone in a “covert” business be so overt? I laugh at that, since my days of being covert are long gone. I founded and built MOSAIC.

(www.mosaicsec.com) and I'm proud when important leaders in far away lands and conflict areas recognize my company's name and acknowledge that we carry an excellent reputation. I enjoy my security career very much and it excites me when I can push the needle and make a real difference. I counter-



balance that with what I call “Tony-time”, I get to make movies, I get to play, and it’s wonderful.

KM You had great success with *DARC* which premiered on Netflix and is currently running on Amazon Prime. It seemed like “Tony-time” was more like the “Tony Show”.

TS I am proud of *DARC*. I starred, produced and wrote it. I feel like the movie is becoming “cult-ish”. At least, it seems so.

KM It seems like your play-time hobby is becoming quite busy. You’ve wrapped various projects. What do you have coming out next?



Tony Schiena in a scene from Darc.

TS: I have a new franchise coming out called *The Weapon*. The first one is slated for release on February 17th 2023. I

star along side Cuba Gooding Jr, and Bruce Dern. We go into production on the sequel the first quarter of 2023. I also filmed a romantic comedy in Sicily last year called *Sicilian Holiday*. I star opposite Italy’s greatest star, Claudia Gerini. It’s also slated for a 2023 release. I’m also finishing the third season of *Paper Empire*, in which I play an FBI agent. I star alongside Kelsey Grammer, Wesley Snipes, and John Lovitz.

KM: As your hobby gets busier, has it been affecting your primary business?



Tony Schiena with Armand Assante in Darc.

TS: We have a finite amount of time on our hands everyday, so we need to carefully allocate the time we have. My company consists of some of the worlds top former Intelligence and police officials. For example, my COO was Deputy Director of counter terrorism of the CIA, and my operations director started the Intelligence unit of the NYPD. My head of cyber was former NSA and my previous CEO was head of counter terrorism of the FBI in NY. My company also consists of senior intelligence analysts, lawyers and special forces operators. In other words, my company is in good hands at all times.

KM: Which element of the filming process do you prefer, since you seem to wear so many hats? You act, produce, write, and direct.

TS: By default, I added directing to my resume due to extenuating circumstances while filming an action film. It’s more like I helped finish the movie rather than direct it. But yes, the first movie I executive produced was Al Pacino’s *Wilde Salome*. I was the first executive producer of the film. I then went on to produce *DARC* and

KM: Do you have a company that makes films, or is it your own production company?

TS: I have a company called Backbone Pictures which co-produced *The Weapon*. My partner in the franchise, Michael Tadross Jr is a friend for decades with a

Tony Schiena Kills Em All ! Lets God Sort Em Out

In The Hard Hitting **THE WEAPON** Lionsgate Release Feb17th 2023



#oscarwinner
Cuba Gooding Jr
#Pegasus World
Cup race.
#ActionFilm
#Lionsgate

legacy of film experience dating back to his father who was head of Paramount studios. Michael was able to get this movie the best shot possible, and we are both very proud of having a theatrical release in the US.

KM: You mentioned Al Pacino earlier. How did that relationship start?.

TS: I first met Al on *Merchant of Venice*. It was my debut film (first movie to come out. I played Leonardo. A small role but thats where I started. Later I went on to executive produce *Wilde Salome*, Al's pet project. There's a clip in *Wilde Salome*

of Al, producer Barry Navidi and I walking the streets of London looking for Oscar Wildes home.

KM: Anything in pre-production?

TS: We are currently setting up an action movie to be filmed in Rome, the first half of next year, it was written by and will be helmed by the Italian director, Francesco Cinquemani. I also have a thriller that I will produce with Bobby Moresco (Oscar winner for the film *Crash*, called *Beach Break* and a few other projects that are not yet announced.



KM Did you always want to act?

TS No I didn't. As a child, I wanted to be the actual characters in the action movies I watched. That is the beauty of film, escapism, aspiring to be the hero's that we would watch over and over. It's a powerful thing.

KM What movies inspired you as a child?

TS Karate kid, late Pat "Miyagi" Morita and I became close friends, we made a movie together and I'm actually thanked in the documentary about his life. *Bloodsport* (my first action movie was with Van Damme, *Wake of Death*. I think it's one of his best movies), *Enter the Ninja* starring Franco Nero, (my dad bought me a BETA cassette in Rome. I must have wore out the original film because of the amount of times I watched it). Jackie Chan's *Wheels on Meals*, I had a copy, which means I watched it over-and-over again.

KM Have you ever considered writing a book or an autobiography?

TS A biography was being written about me, but I managed to put a stop to it. I am currently collaborating with an award



winning writer on my biography. My company is also collaborating on a book regarding our industry.

KM You do so much. Do you have time for other activities?

TS Actually, I flew from Rome to NYC yesterday, on Christmas Day, in order to collect my climbing gear and make my flight for today, the 26th of December to Santiago, Chile, to then take a charter plane to Punta Arenas, and on to Antarctica to attempt to climb its highest mountain, Vinson Massif. By utilizing technology, I'm able to go on expeditions. I'm always reachable and in contact with my offices.

KM That's quite the bold "James Bond" move. Very adventurous. What's next? Climbing MT Everest? (*half joking*)

(*He looks at me totally serious*)

TS Actually yes, if filming permits, end of April.

KM Of course, silly me. Tony, if there was ever a true life "Bond",.. it would definitely be you. ●

