



Artificial Eye Presents  
a film by **BARNABY SOUTHCOMBE**

# I, ANNA



Based on the novel by ELSA LEWIN

STARRING: CHARLOTTE RAMPLING, GABRIEL BYRNE, EDDIE MARSAN and  
HAYLEY ATWELL

## **I, ANNA**

Running time: 93 minutes/ Certificate: TBC/ Images: On request Sound: Dolby  
SRD /Aspect Ratio: 2.35:1

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## INTRODUCTION

*I, ANNA* is a dark and powerful tale of two lovers whose destinies collide during a murder investigation.

It has attracted an international cast including Charlotte Rampling (*SWIMMING POOL*, *NIGHT PORTER*), Gabriel Byrne (*THE USUAL SUSPECTS*, *MILLER'S CROSSING*), Hayley Atwell (*THE DUCHESS*, *CAPTAIN AMERICA*), Eddie Marsan (*SHERLOCK HOLMES*), and Honor Blackman (*GOLDFINGER*). It was filmed on location in London and in studio interiors in Hamburg.

The adapted screenplay was written by Barnaby Southcombe based on the American novel '*I, ANNA*' by Elsa Lewin. The film is also directed by Southcombe who, after a career in theatre and television drama, makes his feature debut. Southcombe is also Charlotte Rampling's son and this marks their first collaboration.

*I, ANNA* is an engrossing, visually compelling and thought-provoking thriller. It is part of an emerging breed of British films whose influences lie clearly in European cinema. The arresting soundtrack is provided by French electro-acoustic duo *K>i<D* (*Keep It Dark*) with songs by Sheffield crooner Richard Hawley.

## LOGLINE

**The darkest secrets are the ones we hide from ourselves.**

## SHORT SYNOPSIS

A brooding psychological, thriller, told from the point of view of a female murder suspect, who falls for the detective in charge of the case.

Anna, a striking and enigmatic woman, reluctantly attends a speed dating event.

A man is found bludgeoned to death in a London apartment block. DCI Bernie Reid, an insomniac dazed by the prospect of divorce, is first on the scene, but is distracted from his duties by a brief encounter with Anna.

Going through the motions of the case, Bernie's thoughts return to Anna whom he tracks down and follows. When they finally meet at a singles party, the mutual attraction is instant, although Anna has no recollection of Bernie, nor of the night they first met.

As Bernie's professional judgement battles with his desire for intimacy and love, the mystery deep within Anna's mind finally unravels, revealing a truth too painful to bear.

## LONG SYNOPSIS

London, present day.

Anna, a striking and enigmatic woman, reluctantly attends a speed dating event. At the point of giving up she is charmed by George Stone.

World-weary detective, Bernie, investigates a murder in a Barbican high-rise. A brief encounter with Anna near the building stirs his fascination.

Janet's son Stevie refuses to tell her what has happened when he comes home beaten and bruised. On learning that her estranged husband George Stone has been murdered in his apartment, Janet fears the worst and flees London with Stevie.

Anna cuts a lonely figure in her tiny apartment. She is used to the finer things in life, but her circumstances have changed. Her daughter Emmy encourages her to persevere in the dating game.

Bernie is a loner but he can't get Anna out of his mind and tracks her down. He follows her into a singles party and makes his approach. Both are out of place in this setting but feeling a connection, they open up to each other: Anna admits she found it hard to accept her divorce but talks happily about the chaos of living in her small flat with Emmy and her baby, Chiara. They end the evening with an intimate slow dance, and the anticipation of more.

Bernie's deputy, Franks, apprehends Janet and Stevie, now chief suspects in the murder investigation. Janet proclaims Stevie's innocence and that George deserved his fate.

Anna babysits Chiara, but is distant from her granddaughter as disturbing, fragmented memories of her night with George emerge: drinks at his apartment; the appearance of his stepson Stevie; George's increasingly threatening behaviour.

Bernie and Anna go on their first real date, relaxed and glowing in each other's company. On the drive home, Bernie feels bold enough to mention their first brief encounter at the Barbican. He struggles to mask his concern when Anna laughs off the fact she has no recollection of this.

Emmy's attempts to reconnect with her estranged father fuel Anna's distress and memories of her night with George become more invasive and violent.

The investigation progresses without Bernie, who pushes aside his professional obligations when evidence pulls Anna into the frame. Stevie's alibi holds up and Franks makes the connection between Anna and George, forcing Bernie to track her down before she is arrested.

In an attempt to unlock Anna's amnesia Bernie returns her to George's 19<sup>th</sup> floor apartment. There, hints of a darker tragedy involving Emmy and Chiara finally converge to reveal a terrible truth.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Something hit a nerve.

A few years ago I read a book and a woman's face leapt into my mind. She was in pain and she looked lost and scared. Was she trying to hold onto a memory that was eluding her, or was she trying to forget something terrible?

This woman was at a the most delicate and vulnerable time in her life: deserted by her husband and holding on too closely to a grown-up daughter, this woman was thrust out into the 'meet' market to find love again and left to fend for herself in a world that had changed beyond recognition.

The woman's face was my Mother's... but this story was not her own.

'*I, ANNA*' is an American novel by Elsa Lewin. It is her only published work. She is a Jewish psychoanalyst who lives in Great Neck, New York. A housewife for many years, she led a pretty sedate life but there was clearly something burning inside. It came out as a scream, a roar of outrage and injustice and it spawned '*I, ANNA*'. A violent, disparate first novel but it blazed with an anguished heart and it spoke to me.

It became clear that I had to bring these two people together on film. This face had to meet this character, this story had to find its incarnation and this would be:

*"I, ANNA"*

## BACKGROUND TO THE FILM

"You do realise who has to be in this don't you?" writer and director Barnaby Southcombe recalls saying to producer Felix Vossen on the genesis of *I, ANNA*. "Felix just smiled at me – 'I don't know? Who do you think?' Of course he knew; he knew all along I'd fall for it."

The script is adapted from the novel by Elsa Lewin, a retired psychoanalyst living in New York state, which was originally published in the US and Europe in the mid 80s.

Producer Felix Vossen explains more: "I remembered this book had been really controversial in Germany when I was growing up and it had left a lasting impression on me. I thought Barnaby might respond to it too. I didn't realise what an obsession it would become for both of us."

Southcombe picks up the story: "I knew what he [Felix] had done. Producers, they're all the same! There was only one person to play this. Charlotte, of course. But what was I going to do? I couldn't pitch this to her. She would only respond to a script, especially from me- she is instinctive, impulsive and totally unpredictable with her choices at the best of times. Her agent of 30 years can attest to that. So we needed a script... But we didn't have the rights, we couldn't hire a writer, so I just started. I had no choice, there was no other Anna. After a year, we still didn't have the rights but we had a script and then she just said 'yes'."

Vossen explains more about the background ideas behind *I, ANNA*: "We wanted to make the kind of film we grew up watching in France and Germany and would still watch now. Wonderfully ambiguous and intimate crime films with great *comédiennes*."

Christopher Simon, the film's other producer, came on board at this time: "I met Barnaby and Felix at the Dinard Film Festival. I was finishing the rounds with a satire (*BOOGIE WOOGIE*) I'd produced and I was in the mood for something darker. They told me about *I, ANNA* and I loved their ambitions for it. What really interested me is the way it deals with protagonists who are older than in the typical thriller. The fact that the story is told from the point of view of the femme fatale and not the detective is an interesting reversal too."

Next step was to secure the lead to play opposite Rampling. Southcombe explains "I wrote with Gabriel in my mind, I heard his voice through every scene. Films are all about cinematic pairings. Who do you want to see in this world, in this particular story? It's always about chemistry and the meeting of great actors. For me, Charlotte and Gabriel were the only people I could see in these roles."

Gabriel Byrne was very moved on his first reading of the script. "I had never done a thriller like this before and it was gripping and a page turner. Usually I find scripts really hard to read but this was very exciting. The film is very much about the world of memory, mistaken identity, reality and what's presented as reality not being that. And it's a character piece. As an actor, I like working on characters that have internal conflicts. Anna is also a very well-rounded character, she is complicated - ultimately it's a good story."

## THE INFLUENCE OF NOIR

Southcombe explains his creative influences: "This film feeds into my love of French cinema of the late 70's and early 80's, growing up outside Paris. An illicit taste developed watching TV from behind the sitting room door where these weird and morally complex characters thrashed out their lives and fell for their crimes – *MAX ET LES FERRAILLEURS... LE CHOIX DES ARMES... LE CERCLE ROUGE*. Catherine Deneuve, Romy Schneider, Simone Signoret: Elusive women who cannot give you answers but exude this strength, mystery and emotional restraint. They call it *La Pudeur* over there."

Rampling recalls her first reactions on being sent the script: "I thought it was a wonderful example of film noir in the sense of what I always thought film noir was. The characters of Anna and Bernie are archetypes of the film genre; they are tragic heroes in a sense. You don't know where they came from and you don't know where they are going. They are carrying within them a dark past and revealing mysterious things."

Byrne admired what Southcombe was setting out to achieve. "I liked what the ambition of the director was, to try to make a non-action film; a noir with European sensibility. And that appealed to me because I love European cinema and always have."

"Noir, as opposed to a pure thriller, has a moral ambiguity that runs through it. What drives these characters is always their darker side which is fascinating to explore." Within the classic noir set-up of detective falling for femme fatale, Southcombe felt that this source material also offered a fascinating exploration of human frailties. "Here was a moving account of the complications involved in a spurned, older woman's right to find love again in today's world."

The actors too were drawn to the genre. "Film noir to me has always had an unexpressed sense of alienation, and disconnection," explains Byrne. "And all the noir films I like have the feeling that these are men and women who are struggling with life, and they inhabit this kind of world where violence can happen at any moment. There's the possibility of love, but love isn't simple. Men believe that they've found something and it turns out to be an illusion."

In one significant respect, the film moves away from the source material. "There's an added element to the novel which is a secret that Anna is burdened with and can't remember," explains Southcombe. "She is involved with the murder in some shape or form - we don't know if she has done it or not but really this is all hiding a far greater and more painful secret which is buried inside her mind."

Rampling, who plays the title character, explains the story in broad terms: "There is a murder, there is a policeman, there is a mysterious woman who passes by the murder scene - but we don't know who she is... where she is going. And the policeman follows this lady because for some reason he is strangely fascinated by something about her. And little-by-little things reveal, things open up, boxes open up, connections open up, little windows into the lives of people open up and we tell a story."



## LONDON AS A CHARACTER

Southcombe: "The novel is set in New York but I was quite keen to move everything to London. It feels like New York has had the story of a detective who falls for a woman who is a suspect in a murder investigation. I thought it would bring a different angle to a familiar premise and also I wanted to show London differently."

Continues Southcombe "The London I wanted to represent is more one of feeling than recognisable landmarks. I moved to the UK when I was eighteen and landed in London. From what I'd seen of it through films, it was something very quaint and villagey; familiar and cosy yet this conflicted with my experiences of it. What I felt was this overwhelmingly large and alienating city. Ironically, it's sometimes harder to meet people in a city of nine million than in a remote village. It's daunting to reach out to someone in a mass of humanity and even harder to find a person you're likely to connect with."

"So with the locations I went for a very 60s and 70s kind of isolated modern architecture, generally brutalist and concrete. I wanted streets devoid of any pedestrians and clear of any cars. I worked quite a lot in the Barbican, which is known for its concrete and rather foreboding, very harsh architecture. I wanted to frame these characters in a landscape drained of colour and emotion. So you have these two lost souls wandering around trying to find something or someone which turns out to be each other. I wanted London to feel anonymous."

Director of Photography Ben Smithard explains filming in London presented certain challenges, which they turned to their advantage: "We had only one day of sun out of 30 days of shooting, and it kind of suited us being moody and overcast. It actually gave me a greater latitude to grade it strongly and darker"

Southcombe talks about the pivotal scenes that were shot at the Barbican Centre. "What's interesting is that it is like the Vatican city. It has its own police council, it's very tightly run and is all private land within the City. It fitted beautifully with this sense of confusion because Anna can't remember where she was on the night of the murder, and she ended up in front of this incredibly aggressive concrete building and there's some secret locked inside it. So that was an interesting counterpoint to her very soft and tender side to have this incredible brutalist modern architecture."

Another key setting was Anna's home which from script stage was a tiny one bedroom apartment. Production Designer Tom Burton elaborates: "It started off with her being in a modern council type apartment and I suggested we move her to a mansion block. What this conveyed was a woman keeping up appearances all the while living in a tiny flat behind this grand exterior. As I designed the apartment, I made it such that no two walls were parallel, all the lines are always pulling away from Anna, as she can't grasp onto anything solid."

## THE LOOK OF THE FILM

Southcombe outlines the ideas he had for composition. "I was very keen to shoot in widescreen format, as for me, it is the purest form of film aesthetic and I wanted the lighting to be subtle - I didn't want that 30s and 40s hard, deeply-shadowed, noir lighting. Instead I wanted a formal and deliberate approach to framing but with a naturalism in the lighting. That also came through in the choice of colours for the sets and costumes."

Smithard explains: "The story didn't call out for complexity and I find simplicity is the way forward anyway. It's about giving as much time as possible to the actors. For me it's all about human emotion and getting those emotions on screen."

Smithard again: "We created mostly browns and greys and very dark blues, and then one thing that came into the film when shooting were these little motifs of reds, a red dress or a location that had a red in it. That was nice because there are not that many primary colours in this film. We have used very strong tonality but it's mainly been brown and greys."

Burton concurs: "It is absence of colours: we wanted to keep a lot of it concrete grey and browns: this is London in winter and people trying to connect... it's not going to be bright colours, it's going to be drained, then when colour does come in, it pops."

Pam Downe, the Costume Designer, felt that the blood red dress that Anna wears was crucial: "The film has darkened undertones to it - it's got a lot more darkness in it than light and so I wanted the red. I thought it would be really important because we bleached colour out for much of the film. But for times of high emotion in the film I wanted to use strong colour."

The other key aspect to the look of the film was that Southcombe wanted to imbue it with a 1970s feel: "We had a very retro feel to all the locations, to the costumes, to the sets." Burton also felt this was critical to the aesthetic: "There is the history of thriller which immediately brings to mind very black and white period thrillers, like from the 1940s and then a certain amount of 1970s. There are elements of this like going into phone boxes, using old fashion technology, which give it a slightly timeless feel."

Downe explains a sartorial element she kept from the novel, the Mackintosh Anna wears in almost every scene. "In the book it's bright red but we loved the idea of a detective's mac for Anna. We decided she wouldn't be too up to date, she wouldn't be too fashionable, but she would have a classic look and be very chic." Downe was absolutely delighted to have the opportunity to dress Charlotte Rampling: "She is such an icon. Everybody knows her across the generations which is such an achievement for an actress. She has got an amazing shape - she looks really good when you dress her."

Elaborating Southcombe adds "I think Charlotte's wardrobe was me having a bit of fun with the genre. It's a little role reversal having her wearing the classic detective's mac. So we're not seeing the female protagonist through the detective's eyes, we're seeing it the other way round and spending objective time with her."

## CASTING

Southcombe discusses approaching Charlotte Rampling for the role: "It was done in a very formal way. I had worked on the script for about a year before I even told her about it. We're very direct as far as work is concerned and have a pact of honesty in the creative things we undertake. It can be quite brutal sometimes! So I sent the script to her agent as I couldn't bring myself to give it to her directly. She was on holiday and took it to read. She phoned me and we discussed it at length, in very dispassionate terms. After an hour or so there was still no indication of what she thought of it for herself. We were just talking about the merits of the script, as we often do about other films. So finally I said "Well are you going to tell me? Are you going to do this part or not?" And she said, "Yes. I can't not, actually".

On her style of acting Southcombe says "She's very present, always in the moment, very instinctive. She doesn't research performance, it's very much developed from where she is at that moment and relies heavily on instinct and reaction. She has this ability to be so incredibly expressive and transparent. A whole life can pass in the flicker of an eye and you can read her every thought, but then suddenly she shuts you out and she's impossible to read. She is at once engaging and you can empathise with her and then oddly elusive. It is a fascinating cocktail and a quality I particularly wanted for Anna. You get a sense of this woman who has experienced these very difficult things in life and is clearly looking for some relief from that, looking for somebody, looking for love. And then on the other hand you have got quite a serious psychological unravelling and a mystery locked deep within a troubled mind."

"Taking on a film role for Charlotte is a big deal because once she has made that decision she very much puts her trust in the director. I think that's what makes her such an interesting actress, she is still prepared to take risks and be completely unguarded. It's a wonderful thing for a director too because there is no safety net, she'll just go for anything and there's real emotional honesty in that. It was a very collaborative relationship. There were no power dynamics of family or of experience or of hierarchy. I was the director and she was the actress and that was that."

From the very outset, Southcombe had only one actor in mind to play opposite Charlotte in the role of Bernie: Gabriel Byrne, with his capacity for bringing depth and compassion to a complex character.

"For me there were no others," Southcombe explains. "Cinema is as much about cinematic pairings as it is about a story that needs to be told. It's really important that beyond the film you want to see two people get together. For me it was also a meeting of those two actors. It didn't make sense to make it without them both."

Rampling shared Southcombe's conviction that Byrne should be cast as her co-star. "I so wanted Gabriel on this film," she explains. "It was Barnaby's suggestion and I was praying he would say yes, praying he would be free because he is absolutely Bernie to me. He is that very soulful, very uninhibited person that we needed for Bernie. When I met him I knew our relationship on screen would work."

Rampling goes on to explain how she and Byrne work together in a very intuitive way - they both approach their characters instinctively. Byrne agrees with this: "I can't say what it is chemically in the air between two actors. We don't discuss it, but I think we have an instinctive understanding of each other."

For his part, Byrne was thrilled at the casting: "She is Charlotte Rampling, you know. If anyone has any interest in cinema, you inevitably come to Charlotte Rampling. She's great for this film and she is mysterious when you meet her too. All her work is about enigmas and

mystery. She has one of the most photographed faces in modern cinema. A face you just have to look at - you are drawn to that face."

When the two actors met, Barnaby knew he had hit on the right dynamic. "What struck me was the instant connection between the two actors, their obvious mutual respect but more importantly the emotional charge that reverberated between them. Their onscreen chemistry was clear. I just had to set a path for them to pursue it."

On describing her own character, Rampling says: "Anna is a mystery, as much a mystery as I am to myself. She is a fallen femme fatale; she has been trapped by her own mistakes. She is a real femme fatale in a sense but not in the Hollywood tradition, rather in the lived tradition - a tradition we can actually identify with. We don't need to know much about Anna, except that we capture her at a point in her life when she is absolutely tragic. She holds a tragic secret which we find out about at the end, and which turns around her life."

"I haven't created a back story for Anna," Rampling continues. "I take Anna from the moment something happens in her life which completely changed her forever and that time was two years before we meet Anna in the story. The Anna before that, I don't know who she was and that is not important to me because the life changing experience she went through has made her into the Anna we know when we meet her on screen."

Rampling talks about the love story that gradually and very touchingly emerges throughout the course of the film. "Bernie and Anna come together little-by-little, like two rather damaged creatures who are seeking some form of comfort. The depths of where they have both gone in their emotional life resonate with them. There is a recognition of a soul mate."

The film deals with what Southcombe describes as "the contract of love" through Anna's contrasting, parallel storylines: "on the one hand there is George Stone, whom we discover to be the murder victim and a man Anna has met at a singles party; and then there is Bernie. One line takes her through lust and the other through a chaste and more tentative love." The two strands run alongside each other through a structure of flashbacks. Southcombe elaborates: "It's a very chaste relationship and one that I find quite beautiful. It's almost from another era of cinema, where the smallest of kisses are like the greatest expression of physical love. I find it quite touching that there is this modesty between these two characters, and an understanding that goes way beyond the physical realm. As a polar opposite, George Stone represents the modern edge of love, the lust contract you must enter into in order to access intimacy. Anna is clearly uncomfortable with this and although desperate to meet someone, needs the helping hand of Honor Blackman's character, Joan, to finally accept that she must submit to the flesh."

Byrne discusses his own character Bernie who is caught completely off guard by his attraction for the mysterious Anna. His growing obsession with her, and understanding of her, ends up calling his professional integrity into question. One of the central enigmas of the film is that Bernie is forced to change his feelings for Anna as the plot develops, as Byrne outlines: "Bernie goes on that journey unexpectedly and has no idea where it's going to end up. I would like to preserve that as one of the reasons of why you should see the film, you should buy into and embrace the notion of mystery."

So too, Byrne says, the audience is led into a world they are not sure of. "Hopefully the film will be about a journey that is not expected. This is a film primarily about enigma and mystery. You don't quite know what's going on. You don't quite know what people are."

Byrne goes on to discuss how the film turns traditional notions of the police detective on their head: "One of the things that interested me was we're used to a certain kind of depiction of 'the cop' in films. In my research I went to visit and hang out with detectives. What struck me

about them was the job they did was different to who they actually were. So when it came time to go into action and put on the blue light in the car and possibly go into an area of danger, that's what their job was. But when they weren't doing the job, I was struck by their humanity, and the ordinariness of their concerns outside their roles of cops. I thought, wow, I'd like to play with the idea of a cop not being a door-kicking hard nose but actually somebody who is capable of, in a story, going through a real internal conflict... connected with their work."

## SUPPORTING ROLES

"I was looking for people who would have a different take on the material," explains Southcombe in terms of assembling the rest of the cast. "What's interesting to me about supporting actors is that there is a certain amount of function they have to perform; they have to service the story and the main characters. So it's really important for the supporting actors to have a world they can bring to it."

This proved particularly pertinent with Eddie Marsan who plays Franks, Bernie's deputy detective. Southcombe elaborates: "Eddie Marsan is somebody I've always admired; he's such a chameleon, such a versatile actor and what's interesting is he brings such different worlds to each of his characters. What was fascinating about Eddie was his take on the material. I was looking for somebody to bring something different to what was written on the page and from the very first day he completely changed the face of the character, came at it from a completely different angle which was really surprising and refreshing and brought a depth and a humanity to it. Franks originally had a chip on his shoulder and was quite aggressive or a bit of an upstart and Eddie's take on it was completely the reverse. It's one filled with empathy and humour which was just such an unlikely take on this character but one which made it so much more interesting."

Hayley Atwell also proved an important piece of casting in the role of Anna's daughter, Emmy. "I'd seen her in TV series *THE LINE OF BEAUTY*," adds Southcombe, "And I was really impressed by her. There is an earthiness and a realism to her which is quite important to balance Anna's slight distance and detachment from the real world. It was very important to have someone incredibly present and who was this life force that Anna gets drawn to and wants to return to. So what was really important for me was to have someone very grounded, very real and very sincere and I knew she would be able to bring that to the part."

Unexpectedly, Atwell and Rampling turned out to be physically well matched. "What was a surprise to me," says Southcombe, "was the two of them spending time together and going through makeup and wardrobe ended up looking so similar, which was something I hadn't anticipated. There's a great scene where we first meet them and they are both in profile and suddenly, she was her daughter."

For her part, Atwell was thrilled to have another opportunity to work with Rampling after their first film together, *THE DUCHESS*. "Working with Charlotte, someone so beautiful and elegant and glamorous, after being brought up with all these iconic images of her... And in a role like this. It is, in parts, a very harrowing film and it just shows her range and depth as an actor."

The mother/daughter relationship portrayed in the film strikes Atwell as true to life: "I think it's quite authentic. At times they can be best friends, and at times she is annoyed by her mother and equally her mother doesn't approve of certain things that she does or says. And that's very real and there are some touching moments to it and lots of different feelings and tensions that happen between a mother and daughter." Southcombe agrees, "I needed someone who could stand up to Charlotte because those traditional roles are reversed - Emmy ends up being a mother figure. So I needed someone who could really hold their own - somebody strong."

"Jodhi May was one of the first people I met after we cast Charlotte and Gabriel. She had a very firm take on the character of Janet. I was curious to see how the very intense few moments that she has would develop months later when we came to shoot. What was interesting was just how anchored that part was for her in that when we came back to revisiting it on set it was almost identical, I mean still as fresh and vibrant and exciting but

exactly what we'd explored the first time we'd met two or three months prior. Some actors just really have this incredible mnemonic of performance and this was once she'd found it there was no changing it."

Southcombe is also keen to highlight the pivotal cameo role played by Honor Blackman: "She was the one and only person we offered it to. I wanted somebody who had stature and poise. Her scene is very important for Anna; it is one where she is given her home truths. We see what she is trying to project to the world, and that someone sees through it and it is hollow. Honor Blackman is such a formidable and classy 'gal'. You can't get better than Pussy Galore!"

## DEBUT FEATURE FILM-MAKING

Southcombe's experiences of making his first film have been very positive, as he explains: "I've done a lot of TV, so in a way it was familiar and yet it was rewarding in a different way. Working on a feature, the level of attention to detail throughout, with yourself down to all the creative departments is like nothing I'd experienced before. Every prop has a history, a meaning, a journey whether you see it on screen or not. The costumes are the same; they have a life, they have meaning for when they were worn, why they were worn. If we went to existing locations, we would entirely re-configure the interiors. Your range of expression becomes so much more broader."

As for his first piece of script writing he says "This is my first feature film screenplay and I had wanted to use existing material as a guide to help me through the process. It was slightly more problematic than I expected as it turns out most of the novel is told through internal monologue and I had made a conscious decision not to use voice-over as a dramatic device! So the challenge was to find ways to turn what were rather esoteric feelings into action and find dramatic ways to adapt this. The writing process was about eighteen months and in between I was also working on television dramas as well. So from start to finish, the process from writing to completing post-production is four years, which I guess in film terms is relatively quick.

TRIVIA: "A week before we started shooting Charlotte came to London for her final costume fittings and hair and make up tests. She came to see me in the production office rather sheepishly and said she had something to tell me. She pulled up her sleeve and revealed a giant, white plaster cast having fractured her wrist two days before and having been so mortified and embarrassed she hadn't told me. This was five days before the shoot was to begin and we could only push back by a week because then we'd lose Gabriel to another film and having already moved the production by about six months it was quite likely the entire production would collapse. I then had to go away and think about whether I should call the whole film off. Over the weekend I realised that this could be a blessing in disguise and so turned her broken arm into the physical manifestation of what was locked inside Anna's mind and bursting to get out. The pain and the irritation that was coming back became a very simple and effective filmic device, in fact one I was surprised I hadn't thought of before!"

Byrne appreciated Southcombe's approach to working with actors: "I have worked with many, many directors over the years and what strikes me always is the vision that each director brings to their script and their film. There is an unpredictable chemistry between actors and an unpredictable chemistry between directors and actors. The relationship between them all involves trust. Part of the relationship between director and actor is about surrender, but it's also about trust and co-operation. And being free. Barnaby has developed and nurtured this film and it's his vision." He concludes, "My job is to be there to help to fulfil his vision of the film. But he has been really good in allowing me to be free and I hope I have allowed him to be free."

For his part, Southcombe was very proud to work with a production team that combined some highly experienced crew members and some new talent, including French electronic duo K>i<D , who scored the film. The film features an eclectic mix of electronica and existing music courtesy of the UK's Richard Hawley: "I had toyed with a classically arranged score for a while until I realised the film was calling out for a stranger sound to mirror the discomfort I was seeing on screen. The moments between Anna and Bernie though were pulling me towards something different, with a warmer heart, and as their relationship is so sparsely dialogued, I felt that vocals might work. I have been a fan of Richard Hawley's music for a long time and when I tried some of his stuff on the film, it felt like I had arrived.



Using existing music, especially on smaller budgeted films, is risky business" continues Southcombe "but I sent the film to Richard and he got back to me the same night saying that it had touched a chord with him, bringing back memories of his own mother's experiences with singles parties! Some things are just meant to be I guess."

Other members of the team brought a wealth of knowledge and skill to the film. "A lot of them had substantial film experience starting with Peter Boyle, the editor who was an Academy Award nominee and Ben Smithard, the cinematographer. It was a different level of experience, attention to detail and talent you could really feel." Southcombe concludes: "Time is a big bonus for me and certainly in the post production phase, you realise there are so many more levels you can bring to your film that weren't even there at script stage. That's been an equally fascinating process, mining the hidden depths of the film."

Byrne shares these thoughts: "I want it to be intriguing, provocative, and to touch something deep. Because at the end of the day that is what stays with you. If you are touched deeply by it then you remember it."

Southcombe concludes: "Yes there is an intrigue, yes there are some aspects of noir, but ultimately it's a very human story. It is by no means a happy ending but hopefully one that touches the very core of humanity. It is also very much a film about compassion and redemption."

## THE CAST

### CHARLOTTE RAMPLING (Anna)

Charlotte Rampling began her career in films in 1964 with Richard Lester in *THE KNACK*. In 1966 she appeared as Meredith in the film *GEORGY GIRL* and after this her acting career blossomed in British, French and Italian cinema, often performing controversial roles. In 1969 she starred in Luchino Visconti's *THE DAMNED* (*LA CADUTA DEGLI DEI*) and in Liliana Cavani's 1974 film *THE NIGHT PORTER*, playing alongside Dirk Bogarde. She gained recognition from American audiences in a remake of Raymond Chandler's detective story *FAREWELL, MY LOVELY* (1975) and later with Woody Allen's *STARDUST MEMORIES* (1980) and particularly in *THE VERDICT* (1982), an acclaimed drama directed by Sidney Lumet starring Paul Newman.

Her long list of films also includes Alan Parker's *ANGEL HEART*, Iain Softley's *THE WINGS OF THE DOVE*, Mikhalis Kakogianni's *THE CHERRY ORCHARD*, Julio Medem's *CAOTICA ANA* and Dominik Moll's *LEMMING*. Rampling has collaborated extensively with the director François Ozon appearing in *UNDER THE SAND* (2001), *SWIMMING POOL* (2003) and more recently *ANGEL* (2006). She also starred in Laurent Cantet's *HEADING SOUTH* (*VERS LE SUD*), a 2005 film about female sex tourism. Recent films include *MELANCHOLIA* directed by Lars von Trier, *THE EYE OF THE STORM*, *STREETDANCE 3D*, *NEVER LET ME GO*, *LIFE DURING WARTIME*, *BOOGIE WOOGIE*, *BABYLON AD*, and *THE DUCHESS*.

### GABRIEL BYRNE (Bernie)

Gabriel Byrne started his acting career with Ireland's renowned Abbey Theatre, later joining the Royal Court Theatre and the National Theatre, where he played leading roles before moving to the United States.

On Broadway, he received a Tony nomination for his performance in Eugene O'Neill's *A MOON FOR THE MISBEGOTTEN* and won the Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Actor for his performance in another O'Neill play, *A TOUCH OF THE POET*.

Byrne has worked with some of cinema's leading directors, including Joel and Ethan Coen, Wim Wenders, Jim Jarmusch, Ken Loach, John Boorman, David Cronenberg and Bryan Singer. He has starred in more than 35 feature films including *EXCALIBUR*, *MILLER'S CROSSING*, *INTO THE WEST*, *POINT OF NO RETURN*, *LITTLE WOMEN*, *THE USUAL SUSPECTS*, *DEAD MAN*, *THE END OF VIOLENCE*, *THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK*, *VANITY FAIR*, *JINDABYNE* and *WAH-WAH*.

His television credits include HBO's *WEAPONS OF MASS DISTRACTION* and *IN TREATMENT*. For his work on *IN TREATMENT*, Gabriel has been nominated twice for an Emmy and received a Golden Globe. His producing credits include the Academy Award nominated *IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER* and *INTO THE WEST*.

### EDDIE MARSAN (Franks)

Eddie Marsan was born and raised in East London. He served an apprenticeship as a printer before turning to acting, attending the Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts. He has become a prolific and popular character actor on stage, television and especially film. His notable film credits include work by Martin Scorsese, Alejandro González Iñárritu, Mike Leigh, Richard Linklater, Bryan Singer and Terrence Malick. His feature film credits include *GANGS OF NEW YORK*, *21 GRAMS*, *VERA DRAKE*, for which he won a British Independent Film Award as Best Supporting Actor, *PIERREPOINT*, *V FOR VENDETTA*, *THE NEW WORLD*, *MIAMI VICE*, *ME AND ORSON WELLES*, *HAPPY-GO-LUCKY*, *SHERLOCK HOLMES*, *THE DISAPPEARANCE OF ALICE CREED* and the forthcoming *JACK AND THE GIANT KILLER*.

On television he has appeared in acclaimed BBC dramas *GOD ON TRIAL*, *LITTLE DORRIT*, *CRIMINAL JUSTICE* and *THE 39 STEPS* as well as in Channel 4's acclaimed *RED RIDING* trilogy.

## JODHI MAY (Janet)

Jodhi May made her debut in Chris Menges' film *A WORLD APART*, Winner of the Prix du Jury at Cannes for which she won the Cannes Best Actress Award. Her films have included Michael Mann's *THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS* in which she co-starred alongside Daniel Day Lewis, *SISTER MY SISTER* with Julie Walters, Terrence Davies' *THE HOUSE OF MIRTH* with Gillian Anderson, *ON A CLEAR DAY* with Peter Mullan, Peter Greenaway's *NIGHTWATCHING* and Ed Zwick's *DEFIANCE* alongside Daniel Craig.

She has worked extensively in theatre including the French premier of Caryl Churchill's *FAR AWAY* directed by Peter Brook at Les Bouffes Du Nord, *THE SEAGULL* and *BLACKBIRD*, both directed by Peter Stein, *PLATONOV* at the Almeida, and Christopher Hampton's *THE TALKING CURE* directed by Howard Davies, in which she starred opposite Ralph Fiennes at the National Theatre. Her numerous television productions include *THE TURN OF THE SCREW*, *THE MAYOR OF CASTERBRIDGE*, *TIPPING THE VELVET*, *THE OTHER BOLEYN GIRL*, Tom Hooper's *DANIEL DERONDA* and Steven Poliakoff's *FRIENDS AND CROCODILES*. Most recently, she starred in *BLOOD AND OIL*, *EMMA*, and Peter Morgan's *THE JURY*.

## HAYLEY ATWELL (Emmy)

Hayley Atwell stars in the comic book feature *CAPTAIN AMERICA: THE FIRST AVENGER*, in which she plays the female lead alongside Samuel L Jackson, Stanley Tucci and Tommy Lee Jones. In 2008 Hayley starred alongside Keira Knightley as well as Rampling in *THE DUCHESS*, directed by Saul Dibb. The same year she was in *BRIDESHEAD REVISITED* with Matthew Goode. She also appeared in Woody Allen's 2007 *CASSANDRA'S DREAM* with Colin Farrell and Ewan McGregor, and *HOW ABOUT YOU* alongside Vanessa Redgrave and Joss Ackland.

In 2010, Hayley starred in the ITV remake of the 1960s cult classic *THE PRISONER* alongside Ian McKellen, James Caviezel and Ruth Wilson. Hayley received a Golden Globe nomination for her performance in the Channel 4 drama *PILLARS OF THE EARTH* based on Ken Follett's novel. She went on to star again on Channel 4 in *ANY HUMAN HEART* alongside Kim Cattrall and Gillian Anderson. Atwell won critical acclaim for her performance in the BBC's *THE LINE OF BEAUTY*, directed by Saul Dibb, with Dan Stevens and Tim McInnerny. Other television credits include *MANSFIELD PARK* in which she co-starred with Billie Piper, *RUBY IN THE SMOKE* and *FEAR OF FANNY* directed by Coky Giedroyc.

Alongside her film and television work, Atwell has appeared in many theatre roles including the National Theatre's *MAJOR BARBARA* and *MAN OF MODE* directed by Nicholas Hytner as well as *WOMEN BEWARE WOMEN* at the Royal Shakespeare Company. Hayley achieved rave reviews and an Olivier Award nomination in the West End production of Arthur Miller's *A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE* alongside Ken Stott and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio.

## THE FILMMAKERS

### BARNABY SOUTHCOMBE (Writer/Director)

Barnaby Southcombe began his directing career in theatre with a French adaptation of Harold Pinter's *BETRAYAL* at the Studio des Champs-Élysées in Paris. He then segued into music promo and commercials production in London before being brought in to revamp Channel 4's cult TV drama series, *TEACHERS*. He subsequently directed teen show *AS IF*, also for Channel Four, launched MTV's first ever drama series *TOP BUZZER*, and directed the pilot episode for *WATERLOO ROAD*, the award winning peak time drama for BBC1.

*I, ANNA* is Barnaby's feature debut which he developed through Embargo Films, the company he set up with Felix Vossen and Christopher Simon.

### CHRISTOPHER SIMON (Producer)

Christopher Simon has gone from producing Embargo's debut feature, *I, ANNA* straight into the company's first collaboration with Vertigo Films, the English remake of Danish hit *PUSHER*, starring Richard Coyle and Agyness Deyn.

Prior to joining Embargo, Christopher produced *BOOGIE WOOGIE*, starring Stellan Skarsgård, Gillian Anderson and Amanda Seyfried, and was a producer on *THE PROPOSITION* for director John Hillcoat, written by Nick Cave and starring Guy Pearce, Danny Huston and John Hurt.

Simon is also producing *THE SWEENEY*, Embargo's second collaboration with Vertigo, which went into production in November 2011, and stars Ray Winstone and Ben Drew.

### FELIX VOSSEN (Producer)

Felix Vossen established Embargo with over ten years of experience in the alternative investment sector. He has been instrumental in securing seed funding for the company and negotiating its slate financing deal.

Under his stewardship, Embargo has produced three feature films in 2011. The first is, *I, ANNA*, the second, *PUSHER* an English remake of the cult Danish film by Nicolas Winding Refn, is a co-production with Vertigo Films and stars Richard Coyle and Agyness Deyn.

*THE SWEENEY*, Embargo's follow-up collaboration with Vertigo Films, stars Ray Winstone and Ben Drew, and is currently in post-production.

### MICHAEL ECKELT (Producer)

Michael Eckelt is the founder of *Riva Filmproduktion GmbH* in Hamburg, Germany, which maintains a strong focus on premium quality, international co-productions. Among Michael's many acclaimed productions is *THE SYRIAN BRIDE* starring Hiam Abbass and directed by Eran Riklis, which received the Audience Award at the Locarno International Film Festival in 2004 and was nominated for two European Film Awards. He paired Abbass with director Riklis once more for *LEMON TREE*, which won the Panorama Audience Award at the 2008 Berlin Film Festival. Michael has also produced *EYES WIDE OPEN* (Un Certain Regard, Cannes 2009). The film has gone on to win the Best Film Award at the 2009 Ghent International Film Festival and the John Schlesinger Award for director Haim Tabakman at the 2010 Palm Springs International Film Festival.

## ILANN GIRARD (Producer)

Former senior vice president of Germany's Pandora Cinema (the company that financed and launched more than sixty feature films, including *DONNIE DARKO*, *SHINE*, *LIKE WATER FOR CHOCOLATE*, *KOLYA*, Carlos Saura's *TANGO* and *MAYBE BABY*), Ilann Girard, launched Arsam International in 2004 to co-produce international feature films. Ilann executive produced the animated feature film *RENAISSANCE* (2005) and Academy Award® winning documentary *MARCH OF THE PENGUINS* (2007). In 2007 he produced Bille August's *GOODBYE BAFANA*, a \$15M biopic about Nelson Mandela's prison warden, starring Joseph Fiennes and Dennis Haysbert, which won the Peace Award at the 2007 Berlinale. In 2008 he produced *LEBANON* by Samuel Maoz, which won the Golden Lion at the 2009 Mostra in Venice.

## GAIL STEVENS (Casting)

Gail began her career at the Royal Court as Casting Director from 1981 to 1984 before setting up Gail Stevens Casting. Since then she has worked on numerous critically acclaimed and commercially successful films and television programmes including, *SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE*, *THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA (1&2)*, *MATCHPOINT*, *CALENDAR GIRLS*, *DEFIANCE*, *GNOMEO & JULIET*, *YOUR HIGHNESS*, *YOU WILL MEET A TALL DARK STRANGER*, *TRAINSPOTTING*, *28 DAYS LATER*, *OUR FRIENDS IN THE NORTH* and the first two series of *MI-5 (SPOOKS)* and *CRACKER*.

More recent work includes Roger Michell's *HYDE PARK ON HUDSON* starring Bill Murray and Andrew Stanton's *JOHN CARTER* as well as *GHOST RIDER: SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE* and Angelina Jolie's directorial debut *IN THE LAND OF BLOOD AND HONEY*. She is currently casting Danny Boyle's *TRANCE* and the animated feature film *JUSTIN AND THE KNIGHTS OF VALOUR*.

## PETER BOYLE (Editor)

Peter Boyle has had an illustrious editing career spanning more than three decades. His earlier titles include *CLOCKWISE*, starring John Cleese, *MORONS FROM OUTER SPACE* and *A PRAYER FOR THE DYING* with Mickey Rourke, the latter two directed by Mike Hodges. In the 1990s, Boyle worked on Hollywood blockbusters including three films starring Kevin Costner: *ROBIN HOOD: PRINCE OF THIEVES*, *WATERWORLD* and *THE POSTMAN*, which Costner also directed. He also edited *SOMMERSBY*, with Richard Gere and Jodie Foster, *INTO THE WEST*, starring Gabriel Byrne and Trevor Nunn's *TWELFTH NIGHT* with Helena Bonham Carter.

Boyle was nominated for an Academy Award and a BAFTA for *THE HOURS*, Stephen Daldry's highly acclaimed, Academy Award winning picture. Most recently Boyle has edited *THE THING*, as well as *1408* and *SHANGHAI* both starring John Cusack.

## K>i<D (Composer)

K>i<D stands for Keep It Dark. This French electronic duo is comprised of J.M. Derain and David Braud who bring their respective talents in sound design and live musicianship to create a new form of musical collaboration. Their musical repertoire has extended through theatre, art installation, fashion and film music supervision. *I, ANNA* marks their first fully composed film score.

## RICHARD HAWLEY (SONGS BY)

Richard Hawley is an English [guitarist](#), [singer-songwriter](#) and [producer](#). After his first band Treebound Story broke up, Hawley found success as a member of [Britpop](#) band [Longpigs](#) in the 1990s. He later

joined the band [Pulp](#), led by his friend [Jarvis Cocker](#). As a solo musician, Hawley has released six studio albums and has been nominated for the prestigious Mercury Prize.

#### BEN SMITHARD B.S.C. (Director of Photography)

Ben Smithard has worked prolifically across film, TV and commercials. His first feature film credits were two documentaries for Julien Temple in 1994: *Glastonbury* and *BREAKING THE FIFTH*. He has worked on TV series including *WALLENDER* series 3, *DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS*, *MONEY* and *CRANFORD* for which he was Emmy nominated and won a BAFTA award.

His recent film work includes Tom Hooper's *THE DAMNED UNITED* with Michael Sheen, the feature film and TV spin off, *THE TRIP*, directed by Michael Winterbottom, starring Steve Coogan and Rob Brydon, and most recently *MY WEEK WITH MARILYN*, starring Michelle Williams, Eddie Redmayne and Kenneth Branagh.

#### TOM BURTON (Production Designer)

Tom Burton's recent production designer credits include *TOAST*, for the BBC, starring Helena Bonham Carter and Freddy Highmore and Channel 4's *RED RIDING: IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1980*, with Warren Clarke, Paddy Considine and James Fox.

His feature film credits include *THE WEDDING DATE* with Debra Messing, Dermot Mulroney and Amy Adams, *CHURCHILL: THE HOLLYWOOD YEARS* with Christian Slater and Neve Campbell, and *DOT THE I*, starring Gael Garcia Bernal.

#### PAM DOWNE (Costume Designer)

Pam Downe has worked extensively in film and television. Her film credits include *THE BAKER* starring Damian Lewis, Michael Gambon and Kate Ashfield, *MODIGLIANI* with Andy Garcia, *SILENT CRY* starring Douglas Henshaw and Emily Woof and *GUEST HOUSE PARADISO*, directed by and starring Adrian Edmondson. Earlier film work includes *THE MATCH* with Max Beesley, *THE TICHBORNE CLAIMANT* with Sir John Gielgud, *HOLLOW REED* with Martin Donovan and *MIDNIGHT FLIGHT* with Giovanni Ribisi.

Pam's television work includes the last three series of *LARKRISE TO CANDLEFORD* for the BBC, *EPISODES*, the BBC comedy series starring Matt LeBlanc, Stephen Mangan and Tamsin Greig, *BONEKICKERS* with Adrian Lester and Hugh Bonneville, *MY UNCLE SILAS* with Albert Finney, *FORTYSOMETHING* directed by and starring Hugh Laurie, *SOLD* starring Anthony Head and Kris Marshall, *ANGEL CAKE* with Sarah Lancashire and children's classic *THE TREASURE SEEKERS*.