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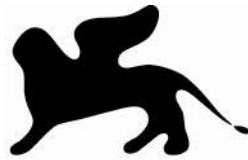
SHAME

Een film van Steve McQueen

MICHAEL FASSBENDER

CAREY MULLIGAN

Dertiger Brandon (Michael Fassbender) leidt in New York City een routinematig dubbelleven. Overdag is hij succesvol in zijn werk. Na kantoor tijd gaat hij op vrouwenjacht en bevredigt zijn seksverslaving. Hij heeft zijn leven onder controle. Tot zijn eigenzinnige zusje Cissy (Carey Mulligan) komt logeren. Brandons zorgvuldig afgeschermd privéleven raakt ontregeld. Hij wordt geconfronteerd met zijn eenzaamheid, zijn verleden en zijn schaamte.



FILMFESTIVAL VAN VENETIË 2011
BESTE MANNELIJKE HOOFDROL
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If Steve McQueen's first film, *Hunger*, was about a man with no freedom, *Shame* is an examination of a character who has all the western freedoms and who uses his body to create his own prison.

Brandon (Michael Fassbender) is a young successful thirty-something living comfortably in his apartment in New York. As a distraction from day-to-day cubicle life, he seduces women, juggling a string of doomed romances and one-night stands.

The tightly controlled rhythm of Brandon's life begins to collapse, however, when his wayward, unruly sister Sissy (Carey Mulligan) arrives for an unannounced visit. Her disruptive presence in his life propels Brandon further into New York's dark underbelly as he tries to escape her need for connection and the memories she stands for.

Shame is a compelling and timely examination of the nature of need, how we live our lives and the experiences that shape us.



ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

Shame was filmed in New York City in February and March of 2011. The film is the second collaboration to involve director Steve McQueen (*Hunger*) and actor Michael Fassbender (*Inglourious Basterds*, *X-Men: First Class*). In *Shame*, Fassbender plays Brandon, a young New York executive who escapes from his secure existence by seeking out sexual encounters. His routine is turned on its head by the unexpected arrival of his younger sister Sissy, an up-and-coming singer, played by Academy Award nominee Carey Mulligan (*An Education*, the upcoming *The Great Gatsby*).

The film continues in the visceral and intimate vein McQueen established in *Hunger*, his 2008 directorial debut, while broadening its scope from just one central character to explore the challenges of contemporary human connections. After the critical success of *Hunger*, which won McQueen the *Caméra d'Or* (first-time director) award when it premiered at Cannes, McQueen and Fassbender were eager to work together once again. "Michael is a genius, really," says McQueen. "I want to work with the best actor there is, and I think he is, basically."

Fassbender was likewise drawn to work with McQueen again out of his admiration for the director's tendency to push actors to their limits. "Steve really sets the tone, so everybody is kind of terrified and excited at the same time," Fassbender says. "It's sort of like letting go and getting rid of the safety net and free-falling." "Working with Steve is kind of like stepping up to a cliff," says James Badge Dale, who plays the role of David, Brandon's philandering boss. "You can't see what's at the bottom of that cliff, and he says, just go, just jump, and you don't know what's going to happen. ... And Steve is jumping also, by taking a chance with you." The opportunity to work with McQueen and his cast inspired Carey Mulligan to pursue the role even before being approached. "When the script came along and I found out it was Steve and Michael, I knew it was such a dream job," Mulligan says of the duo. "I met with Steve for coffee in London and he basically kept trying to leave, and I had to keep stopping him and say, 'No no! You haven't given me the job yet!' I basically bossed him into giving me the role." The need to capture Sissy's emotional and unpredictable nature made new demands on Mulligan as an actress, although this was the central reason for her passion to take it on.

Shame is the first film from See-Saw Films since the Academy Award winning *The King's Speech*. Producer Iain Canning notes that both *Hunger* and *Shame* share a preoccupation with the body. "Hunger was about a man who has no freedom; he uses his body to create the only freedom he can," Canning says. "We're telling the opposite story in *Shame*—the story of a man who has every freedom, and yet he uses his body to create his own prison."

Co-writer Abi Morgan, an admirer of both Fassbender and Mulligan, says the chance to work with the pair on *Shame* was "a bit of a dream come true." "I knew that the two of them would be very exciting," she says. Morgan recently wrote *The Iron Lady*, the biopic of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher featuring Meryl Streep in the title role.

On working in New York City, producer Emile Sherman notes, "It was a really exciting prospect for us as producers to be filming in New York. I've never made a film in New York before; I'm based in Sydney, Iain Canning is based in London. New York is one of the greatest cities of world. We were just so welcomed by the filmmaking community there and we had a wonderful line producer and co-producer, Bergen Swanson. It's a great place to make movies and we'd love to make a film there again."

CAST

Brandon	MICHAEL FASSBENDER
Sissy	CAREY MULLIGAN
David	JAMES BADGE DALE
Marianne	NICOLE BEHARIE
Girl in the subway	LUCY WALTERS
Elizabeth	ELIZABETH MASUCCI
Carly	ANNA ROSE HOPKINS
Cool friend	CHAZZ MENENDEZ
Last Night Girl #1	CALAMITY CHANG
Last Night Girl #2	DEEDEE LUXE

MICHAEL FASSBENDER (BRANDON)

Michael Fassbender previously starred as the late hunger striker Bobby Sands in Steve McQueen's *Hunger*. The performance earned him the British Independent Film Award (BIFA) and Irish Film and Television Award (IFTA) for Best Actor; a London Film Critics Circle Award; and Best Actor honors from the 2008 Stockholm and Chicago International Film Festivals. He was honored at the latter festival the following year as Best Supporting Actor for his performance in Andrea Arnold's *Fish Tank*. The portrayal brought him BIFA and IFTA nominations as well as his second London Film Critics Circle Award. He was also an IFTA nominee for his performance in Marc Munden's miniseries *The Devil's Whore*.

Michael's upcoming films include Matthew Vaughn's highly anticipated origins story *X-Men: First Class* as Erik Lehnsherr, better known as Magneto; David Cronenberg's drama *A Dangerous Method* as Carl Jung opposite Keira Knightley and Viggo Mortensen; Steven Soderbergh's ensemble action thriller *Haywire*, with Ewan McGregor and Antonio Banderas; and, in a reteaming with Steve McQueen, the drama *Shame* opposite Carey Mulligan.

Born in Germany and raised in Ireland, Michael is a graduate of London's prestigious Drama Centre. His breakthrough role came as Sgt. Burton "Pat" Christenson in the award-winning epic miniseries *Band of Brothers*. After making his feature-film debut in Zack Snyder's blockbuster *300*, his subsequent movies included Joel Schumacher's *Blood Creek*; James Watkins' *Eden Lake*; Jimmy Hayward's *Jonah Hex*; François Ozon's *Angel* with Romola Garai; Neil Marshall's *Centurion*; and Focus Features' *Jane Eyre*.

CAREY MULLIGAN (SISSY)

Mulligan can next be seen in FilmDistrict's action thriller *Drive*, opposite Ryan Gosling, Bryan Cranston and Oscar Isaac. Directed by Nicolas Winding Refn and based on the James Sallis novel, the film follows a nameless Hollywood stuntman (Gosling) who moonlights as a freelance getaway driver during robberies. *Drive* will be released by FilmDistrict on September 16, 2011.

This summer, Mulligan started production on director Baz Luhrmann's feature adaptation of *The Great Gatsby*, based on the F. Scott Fitzgerald novel. Mulligan plays Daisy Buchanan, the love of Jay Gatsby, played by Leonardo DiCaprio. The film will be released by Warner Brothers in 2012. In September 2010, Mulligan starred in Fox Searchlight's *Never Let Me Go*, based on the award winning novel by Kazuo Ishiguro. The film was featured at the Telluride Film Festival and Toronto International Film Festival. Mulligan also won a 2010 British Independent Film Award in the category of Best Actress for her performance in the film.

Also in September 2010, Mulligan appeared in Oliver Stone's *Wall Street 2: Money Never Sleeps*. She received an Academy Award nomination, a Golden Globe nomination, and a Screen Actors Guild Award nomination and garnered critical acclaim for her starring role in the Sony Classics film *An Education*, written by Nick Hornby and directed by Lone Scherfig. *An Education* debuted at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival to rave reviews. Mulligan won a Best Actress British Independent Film Award and was named Best Actress by the National Board of Review and the Orange British Academy of Film (BAFTA). Multiple critics' associations also recognized her performance.

JAMES BADGE DALE (DAVID)

James Badge Dale was born in New York City to actor/choreographer Grover Dale and actress Anita Morris. At 10, he was picked out of his fifth-grade class at Wonderland Elementary School in Laurel Canyon to test for the role of Simon in a remake of *Lord Of The Flies*. Later in life, while enrolled at Manhattanville College, he suffered an injury that forced him to stop playing hockey, a break that reignited his passion for acting. After getting the most he could from the college's drama department, he decided to move to New York and train as an actor. He is cast as the lead in AMC's *Rubicon*, a political thriller from Jason Horwitch and Warner Horizon. Directed by Allen Coulter, the series focuses on a secret society that pulls strings on the world political stage in the style of the Illuminati and the Council on Foreign Relations. It centers on James's character Will Travers, a brilliant analyst at a national think tank who discovers that his employers are not who they seem to be.

James played the role of Chase Edmunds on the Fox TV series *24* and reprised the role in the video game of the same title. He also had a supporting role in the Oscarwinning movie *The Departed* alongside Jack Nicholson, Matt Damon, and Leonardo DiCaprio. James stars as one of the three leads in the big-budget HBO miniseries *The Pacific*, from executive producers Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg.

CREW

Director	STEVE McQUEEN
Script	STEVE McQUEEN ABI MORGAN
Cinematography	SEAN BOBBITT, BSC
Editing	JOE WALKER
Set Design	JUDY BECKER
Costumes	DAVID ROBINSON
Original music	HARRY ESCOTT
Casting	AVY KAUFMAN
Art director	CHARLES KULSZISKI
Producers	IAIN CANNING EMILE SHERMAN
Line producers	TESSA ROSS ROBERT WALAK PETER HAMPDEN TIM HASLAM

STEVE McQUEEN DIRECTOR & CO-WRITER

British video artist Steve McQueen distinguished himself by working in diverse media; though he began with film-related projects, he quickly branched out to include sculpture and still photography. He began his formal training by studying at the Chelsea School of Art and at Goldsmith College in London, where he began making student films. His early short-subject works were almost exclusively silent and black-and-white. They included the short *Bear* (1993), which depicted a brief and unusual encounter between two naked men; the 1997 *Deadpan*, in which a gentleman stood in the middle of a building as it repeatedly collapsed around him; and *Drumroll* (1998), for which McQueen affixed cameras to a barrel and rolled the barrel through the streets of Manhattan.

McQueen shot and released *Hunger*, his debut mainstream feature, in 2008. Starring Michael Fassbender, it dramatizes the last painful months of Bobby Sands, a famous Irish Republican Army activist who protested his brutal treatment by guards in Belfast's Maze Prison by undergoing a debilitating hunger strike and ultimately starving himself to death.

ABI MORGAN CO-WRITER

Abi Morgan's plays include *Skinned* and *Sleeping Around* (Paines Plough); *Tiny Dynamite* (Traverse); *Tender* (Hampstead); *Splendour* – which won a Fringe First at the Edinburgh Festival in 2000, and *Fugee* (National Theatre). Her television work includes *My Fragile Heart*, *Murder*, *Sex Traffic* - the multi award-winning drama for Channel 4, *Tsunami – The Aftermath*, *White Girl* and *Royal Wedding*. Her new series for Kudos and the BBC called *The Hour* is currently airing on BBC 1.

Her film writing credits include *Brick Lane*, an adaptation of Monica Ali's bestseller. She also has a number of films in development including *The Invisible Woman* for BBC films, *Suffragettes* for Film Four, *Focus* and *Ruby Films*, *Little Mermaid* for Working Title and her script *Iron Lady*, for DJ Films and Pathe is currently in post-production.

MICHAEL FASSBENDER Q&A

Michael Fassbender is arguably the man of the moment. One of the most in-demand actors working right now, the 35 year-old Irish-German actor has a host of projects on the way, beginning with *Shame*. Reuniting him with Steve McQueen, the director who gave him his breakthrough on *Hunger*, the biopic of IRA hunger striker Bobby Sands, *Shame* is a searing study of sex addiction that has already seen Fassbender claim Best Actor at the Venice Film Festival in September 2010. In the film, he plays Brandon, a New York office worker with an uncontrollable libido whose life is disrupted by the unexpected arrival of his sister Sissy (Carey Mulligan).

Following *Shame*, Fassbender can be seen in David Cronenberg's *A Dangerous Method*. The film deals with the complex relationship between Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung (played by Fassbender) and the Father of Psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud (Viggo Mortensen). With the actor also set to appear in Ridley Scott's *Prometheus*, a sci-fi thriller set in the Alien universe, Fassbender talks candidly below about how he feels towards all the temptations that are now on offer to a rising star such as he. He also tells us about his feelings towards screen nudity and why he thinks Brandon is a sign of the times.

Q: Did it help making *Shame*, given you'd worked with Steve McQueen before?

A: Yes, you know when you start off, obviously that was the first experience that we were having together. You're feeling each other out, you're testing each other. And just because you're getting along and you're having an enjoyable experience doesn't mean they're aren't going to be discussions and sometimes differences of opinion. The important thing is at the end of the day you don't sit in a room and fester. That's work, y'know. Luckily enough I've been part of other jobs where people yell at you. That's happening under the pressure of the moment – and you've got to get on with it. At the end of the night, you sit down and you have a drink together, it's no big deal. But definitely on this one, it was like we picked up where we left.

Q: You must know each other well now...

A: We've developed a great shorthand. Sometimes, one word is enough. Also, Steve gives me an awful lot of freedom to do different things. Nothing is set in stone. We rehearse, we discuss and then when we come to put it on the floor, we change it. And you can do anything you want. And Sean Bobbitt, I've got to say I love him. He's amazing behind the camera. Obviously you see how beautiful he shoots. But to work with him at all...he might say 'Surprise me' and that's brilliant. That's the thing. You're all dancing together, and hopefully surprising each other. If I can surprise him in the room, and the crew in the room, that might translate then to the audience later on. And that's the one thing. Steve creates this fantastic energy in the room, where everybody is on the top of their game. The focus is relentless. It's really tight when you're working. Then in between takes, we joke around a lot and have a lot of fun. It might not seem like that from the material on there but I like that way of working as well, to step in and out. If you can have fun in between takes – not always, of course – you can go into the scene with a fresher outlook.

Q: What else have you learned?

A: Something I've learned through working with Steve, and directors of a high calibre, is that it's important for me not to pre-empt and go 'I did that really well, so I'll make a note of that and I'll do that again'. Rather than allowing things to take place and being very relaxed and aware of what's going on around you.

Q: What is your acting process?

A: My process is pretty simple, really. It's mainly the script. I work on the script a lot. I read the script maybe 250 times or so. And then through this process with the script, you're constantly thinking about the character and then after a while it sinks into your enamel. It's like putting on another layer of skin, and then I'll ask myself questions like, 'What have I in common with the character?' And I will list the characteristics. And then I'll go, 'That characteristic, I have that. I know that. This one, I need to work on.' And so forth. And then the biography. What does the character like to eat for breakfast in the morning? What does he drink? What do his parents do? Was he sporty at school? Academic? Does he have a lot of friends?

Q: What is the most challenging thing about approaching a part like this?

A: The challenge is to not let Steve down and not let the story down, and Abi [Morgan], who wrote such a beautiful story with Steve. I just didn't want to let him down. I wanted to make sure that I wasn't the weak link. That's usually the same feeling I have for most jobs, but especially for Steve, because he changed my life.

Q: How comfortable were you with the nudity?

A: I insist on it in my films! No, it's embarrassing and it's uncomfortable. But we didn't ever discuss it. I said to Steve, 'You do what you have to do.' I know that he's going to deal with that sort of thing in a correct manner, according to the story. I guess the toughest thing is doing sexual scenes with partners. For me, you don't want the other person to feel like you're taking advantage of the situation or you're exploiting them in any way. So you try and put a lot of energy into making them feel comfortable and so you can just get on with the thing, when you're doing the scene. That I find to be stressful.

Q: Was the role painful to do? Did you feel similar to Brandon?

A: For sure. That was what struck me when I first read the script. There's similarities and things that I can identify with, through Brandon. Then you go on a journey with him, and go to these places mentally. Plus the fact it's a five-week shoot. It's very intense, very concentrated. And again that focus is something that puts a lot of stress on your mental capacity. Even the more obvious thing – you come to set and it's 23 pages to do in the evening, in the one scene. So the work is intense at all times. And you never want to drop the ball because each morsel is so important.

Q: Is Brandon a sign of the times?

A: For sure. I think it's a very relevant film for today. It's definitely a film of this time. I think the way that things are going in the porn department...when I was 14, you had to reach up to the top shelf and check and see who was in the shop and wait for everyone to clear out. And then of course, you have to go up to the desk and buy it. And there is somebody behind the counter...so that sort of shame or embarrassment is present at the point of purchase. Nowadays, you go onto the Internet, and it's two buttons, and there's a million different choices. So everything is very accessible and easy to access. I think that's across the board with everything we had, it's not only in the sexual realm. We also have that with food. If you're hungry, you grab something, it's easy, you can take it. There's a whole different choice of what you can have. If you want to buy a magazine, there's a hundred different options. There's so much information being thrown at us at all times, in some ways we're quite overwhelmed. It creates an anxiety. We're encouraged to look a certain way, dress with certain clothes, obtain these objects that will bring us happiness. And dealing with this idea of communication – it's so easy to communicate with people in the world, through Facebook or Twitter or e-mail without ever leaving your room. So that physical interaction, that essence of the one-to-one, is also being changed.

Q: This does create loneliness, too, though right?

A: It does. Look, this is happening. I don't think it's necessarily a criticism. It's more, what sort of world is Brandon living in. I also think he is for sure a lonely character. But there is also other stuff that has happened to Brandon, in his biography that leads him to this place as well. But I do think we're a bit confused at the moment, by this overload of information and so many options. Steve said that there is access to excess – it's everywhere. And putting it in a city like New York, where that's 24/7 is the perfect habitat to show that for this character, Brandon.

Q: His sister seems more able to have emotions...

A: Yeah, well her condition is the exact flip side of his. It's great that they're brother and sister. She wants to feel good about herself, just like Brandon does. They don't really like themselves very much. She will emotionally anchor herself onto anybody that she meets. She's a very effusive person with her emotions, whereas Brandon is terrified of committing emotionally to anybody. That sort of intimacy...he's not comfortable with that, it terrifies him. He wants to wriggle out of that embrace. That's why he gets involved in very physical activity – with strangers, with prostitutes that he can pay. And then they come in, and take their baggage out of his life. So when she comes into his world, which is very controlled, and he likes everything so-so, it's too much for him. She's also bringing a history and a past in that he doesn't want to be reminded of. In the biography we put together, Brandon's actually a really good piano player, but he doesn't have that in his life anymore. I found that to be so tragic. So when he's doing a song, he goes to see her play – and he doesn't want to be brought back to these memories or that place.

Q: Of course, you also just did X-Men. Was it easy to come to Shame after that?

A: I didn't have much time to think about it to be honest. I was off the set of X-Men and straight into New York to prepare this. Essentially my work and preparation is usually the same thing. The only difference to something like Prometheus or X-Men is that there are a lot more people involved. It's just a bigger production. There's more money and more opinions. On a set like Shame, it's a very intimate set. Less numbers.

Q: How do you compare Steve McQueen to working with David Cronenberg on A Dangerous Method?

A: I always think...it's better for me to say what the similarities are between them. With the great directors that I have worked with, it's always a common thread, that they're so passionate about what they do. Both men really love coming to work every day and they're obviously extremely intelligent as well. Very well read. And also just very supportive. They both seem to really enjoy actors and people, human beings. And they're very interested by human beings, and relate to human beings, and try to ask questions and understand what we're all doing here, and how we try and relate to each other. Both films are about relationships with one's self and others around them.

Q: Both your characters, in Shame and A Dangerous Method, struggle with repression and desire. Can you talk about that?

A: Yeah, it's so different in both cases. But what's interesting in both cases is that there's the outer face and what's going on inside. And Brandon, that's the likeable thing about him, I hope. Well for me. He's not like an Otto Gross character, where he's just 'Go for it, hang the consequences, follow your impulses'. The problem with that is that a lot of people get effected along the way, and it can be damaging for other people. Brandon realises that he's got an illness, and he's desperately trying to combat it. At the beginning, he seems pretty content with his routine, and until Sissy comes into his place, and disorganises it...I mean, he's trying to contain these impulses. He cleans the whole flat up, throws the computer out, and then goes on this very intense, downward spiral, and almost pushes himself to that point where he needs to go and sort himself out and seek help. So the struggle is going on with all times with him.

Q: So how about Jung?

A: At the beginning when we see Jung, he's very much in control, he's a doctor and he's very ambitious and feels like he has to prove himself. It's only slowly that he gets drawn into this obsession and fascination with this patient. And he's also left vulnerable by the fact that they're both exploring this journey together. He's testing out this 'talking cure' and seeing if it's effective. So he's drawn into this world. When we meet Brandon right at the beginning, that's what I love about Steve, you walk into the theatre and you think the film has maybe already been going on for an hour. You're arriving, and something's happened beforehand. And again when you leave the film, it's continual. Brandon still goes on his journey. But we meet him and he's definitely in his depths from the get-go. He doesn't want to have to get up from his office, and go and relieve himself in the bathroom. He's leading a very secretive life, and Jung is also living a secretive life, when he has this transference with this patient. But Brandon's whole existence is secretive. He doesn't have any relationships that we see in the film that are healthy. None. With his boss, it's an unhealthy relationship, with his sister, with all his sexual partners throughout the film. So he's very much a man on his own. And also he doesn't like himself. Jung liked himself, and thought quite highly of himself.

Q: At the end of Shame, do you think the journey is over for him?

A: No, I think the journey is only beginning. For me, it's very important to have hope, otherwise what's the point? We're trying to ask questions and we're trying to evolve. That's important for me as an audience member and for someone who is working in this medium. Otherwise, what's the point?

Q: You went on a European bike trip recently with your Dad. Was that because you've had so little time to see family and friends?

A: Exactly. Absolutely, yeah. My parents had a restaurant for many years, and last year they retired from that. Like I say, this friend of mine from school, and we've known each other since we were 13, 14. And I haven't seen him for a long time either, properly. He's based out in San Diego, so it was a good chance to reconnect. Also, I like road trips. I like travelling by motorcycle on the road. There's something quite cleansing about it. It's like you leave everything in the road behind you – hopefully not your skin!

Q: So you have a good relationship with your father?

A: Yeah, we do. When I was 16, my parents bought the restaurant, and if you've got a family business, you're all trying to make it work together. So I would work with them in the restaurant, and a different relationship formed from that. So I have to say I'm very blessed and very lucky to have that.

Q: If you run a restaurant, you have to be an entertainer of sorts. Did your father pass that on?

A: He was in the kitchen, so it's a different deal! But yeah, it's a good place to study people. Everyone goes out to eat at some point or other, so you get a nice wide range of people. You definitely have to smile out the front, even if it's all going crazy in the kitchen. The world of catering I've always found to be really fascinating. All the characters you get in the kitchen, and the characters you get in the front of house, and then the relationships between front of house and kitchen...there's a lot of drama going on there.

Q: Are you worried that all your success recently could lead to temptations?

A: I'm sure it's the same as any business where things are offered on a buffet – sex, drugs, alcohol, attention, adoration. And if you don't have a handle on it, or if you're not aware of it, and the seduction of that, and the fantasy element of that, then sure you can get sucked into it, I imagine. The fact that you're travelling a lot, and away from home, and spend a lot of time in hotels, then

you're alone. I don't mind being on my own. I enjoy it, but then I enjoy the company of my friends and family, when the time is available for that.

Q: Are you a workaholic?

A: I like working. I spent a lot of time waiting to get the opportunity to work. So I don't know. I don't know if I'm a workaholic. I definitely enjoy my work, for sure it's my first passion. I've been in it, quite intensely, for the last 20 months.

