

Mongrel Media
Presents

**A MOTOCINEMA
HARMS/COOPER
Production**

LAMBERT & STAMP

A film by
James D. Cooper

(117 min., USA, 2015)
Language: French

Distribution



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High res stills may be downloaded from <http://www.mongrelmedia.com/>

Starring

Chris Stamp

Kit Lambert

Featuring

Pete Townshend

Roger Daltrey

Terence Stamp

Heather Daltrey

Richard Barnes

John Hemming

Irish Jack

Robert Fearnley-Whittingstall

Edited by Christopher Tellefsen, A.C.E.

Director of Photography - James D. Cooper

Associate Producers - W. Wilder Knight II, Elizabeth Negrotto Sapnar

Executive Producers - Loretta Harms, Mark Mullen

Produced by Loretta Harms, Douglas Graves

Produced and Directed by James D. Cooper

LAMBERT & STAMP

Director's Statement

Throughout time Youth has always struggled to find a place in a pre-existing world in which they feel they have little place. By risking new relations and creating a sense of identity which better reflects them, they can have the power to impact a changing world by what they bring into it, -through fearless self discovery.

"Lambert & Stamp" tells this story. It's universal theme of self discovery through connection with others, along with an extraordinary (and highly entertaining) set of circumstances, is what I wanted to portray in the film.

In postwar London, two men seeking to transcend the constraints of their respective circumstances: one, the bleak reality of the East End working class, the other, a daunting aristocratic legacy, -embrace the dynamics of an unlikely relationship to pursue a shared artistic dream. The objective, as articulated by Chris Stamp in my film, was "to make life a little more REAL FEELING"! Those feelings were to take form in the creation of the iconic rock band The Who: A phenomenon they transformed into an extension of themselves and their own manic view of life. Making a film that would put the audience at the center of this catharsis was a formal challenge that I embraced, and I feel honored to have had the support of an outstanding production team along with Chris Stamp and remaining members of The Who - Pete Townshend and Roger Daltrey.

Essentially a love story, "Lambert & Stamp" examines the complexity of a creative relationship. I made every attempt to pour into it all the noise, love, rebellion, sex, art and chaos that take form in the sensitive and frightening places we go when we risk relationships to create something much larger and more powerful than ourselves.

- James D. Cooper

LAMBERT & STAMP

Synopsis

“I see no hope for the future of our people if they are dependent on the frivolous youth of today, for certainly all youth are reckless beyond words...”

When I was young we were taught to be discreet and respectful of elders, but the present youth are exceedingly disrespectful and impatient of restraint.”

- Hesiod, 8th Century BC

Early 1960s London: the postwar generation who grew up playing in air raid shelters and bomb sites is detonating a youth rebellion that brings Hesiod’s words back to life. At London’s Shepperton Studios, two young 2nd assistant directors compare notes on film, music, and frustrated ambitions, forging an unlikely friendship and collaboration that leaves an indelible mark on pop music and culture of the ‘60s and beyond.

KIT LAMBERT and CHRIS STAMP, aspiring filmmakers, set out to make a cinema vérité documentary about the mod world of rock and roll, but sidetracked instead into managing and developing the sonic powerhouse that came to be called THE WHO. Their gorgeously propulsive footage—the rock documentary that was never completed—lays a foundation for director JAMES D. COOPER’s kaleidoscopic study of an era and a rare friendship’s creative bond. Present-day interviews with the surviving principals, now grown older, reflect thoughtfully on their relationships and life trajectories.

Lambert and Stamp were “chalk and cheese:” Chris Stamp, the son of a tugboat captain, was a Cockney East Ender and “rough tough fighting spiv,” as described by his elder brother, actor TERENCE STAMP. Lambert, the son of a celebrated symphony orchestra conductor, was Oxford-educated, multilingual, impeccably dressed, and possessed of an unmistakably highbrow accent and manner.

Chris Stamp came to his interest in performing arts and cinema via the roundabout route of a backstage job at the ballet (an occupation suggested by his brother Terence because Chris’s only real interest till then seemed to be girls, and the ballet theater was a good place to find them). Kit was as open a homosexual as one could be in an era when homosexuality was still illegal and the closet was the norm.

As young would-be cineastes, however, the two Shepperton assistants shared a love of jazz, literature, and the French New Wave films that reflected their own restless impatience with the dreary grey of postwar society. Kit had seen the world as an Army officer and as cameraman on a perilous and grueling expedition into the Amazon. Recognizing Kit's fundamental courage, Chris credits him with "widening my angle of awareness on possibilities."

"They complemented each other, like two and two make six," says Terence Stamp. Realizing that they'd never break out as directors at Shepperton, they hatched the plan to find their rock and rollers and film the very process of creating a hit group, thus providing their own directorial calling card.

Chris Stamp—still handsome as an elder gentleman as he was in his rakish youth—recalls that "Kit and I looked everywhere at these bands to put in our so-called movie... we didn't know what we wanted, but we absolutely knew what we didn't want: if we found the people doing the music to be smart and neat and jumping up and down, they weren't what we wanted. What we wanted—it was really about us. It was going to be some mad fucking concoction of stuff that looked like Lambert and Stamp."

They finally struck gold in 1964 when Lambert spotted a long line of mods and scooters outside the "sordid and grotty" Railway Hotel, where the jam-packed dance crowd was mesmerized by a distinctly un-smart and un-neat foursome, the High Numbers: streetfighter ROGER DALTREY on lead vocals, art-school nihilist PETE TOWNSHEND on lead guitar, surly genius JOHN ENTWISTLE on bass, and mad yob KEITH MOON on drums.

"I fell in love literally with both of them immediately and they completely and utterly and totally changed my life," says Pete Townshend, whose songwriting, composition, and musicianship flourished under Lambert's erudite tutelage.

"Kit was the only posh guy I'd ever spoken to who was actually interested in me and wasn't talking down to me," says Roger Daltrey. "Chris was always off working on a film set to make the money to pay for the guitars we were smashing."

“We didn’t come to the group as professional managers,” says Stamp. “We came as these two guys who had some ideas as filmmakers and we wanted to manage. We never said we knew how to do it.”

The duo’s outside perspective brought canny ideas; for example, where conventional management might have formed a fan club of adoring cleancut teenagers, Stamp and Lambert wanted sharp faces with visual impact in their documentary footage. Members of the “100 Faces” club such as IRISH JACK, seen as a scrappy young mod and as a snaggletoothed elder, had mugs to match those on stage.

Somehow, the alchemy of personalities, talent, energy, time and place yielded spectacular success for a time, as The Who became world-famous and Stamp and Lambert created a thriving record label, Track Records, producing JIMI HENDRIX, among others. Bank accounts grew fatter and ambitions loftier. Townshend and Lambert set their sights on making history by creating the first “rock opera”—which eventually became *TOMMY*.

But Lambert and Stamp never fulfilled their original goal of vérité-filmmaking, and Lambert felt excluded and rejected when the film version of *TOMMY* bypassed him. Ironically, The Who—post-Lambert—ended up owning Shepperton Studios.

That the story ends sadly—with business conflict, estrangement, addiction, and an early death for Kit Lambert—does not detract from its resonance. As Chris Stamp remembers of the early, seat-of-the-pants days: “I’m gasping for breath, I’m doing the usual mirrors work, balls in the air, but underneath all that I had—purpose. Meaning. Kit and I. Relationship. All those things. There was an undercurrent in our personalities that was real.”

KIT LAMBERT, born May 11, 1935, died April 7, 1981, age 45, at Middlesex Hospital in Acton. He had struggled with alcohol and heroin addiction, and died of a cerebral hemorrhage caused by a fall.

CHRIS STAMP, born July 7, 1942, died of cancer on November 24, 2012, age 70. In the latter part of his life, after going through his own recovery from substance abuse, Stamp developed a new career as a practitioner of psychodrama therapy, helping others work through addiction and psychic distress. He lived in New York City with his wife of 33 years, Calixte. He had two daughters and several grandchildren.

LAMBERT & STAMP

Production Notes

One of the legendary stories in rock and roll history is not just a story about rock and roll.

“Chris told me at one point that he and Kit weren’t really interested in the music” says JAMES D. COOPER, writer, producer, and director of *LAMBERT & STAMP*, speaking of his principal subject and longtime friend, Chris Stamp. “Chris said, “We were after the audience, this audience that didn’t have a voice,” because Chris and Kit both felt alienated and marginalized in their own way. So the phenomenon that Kit Lambert and Chris Stamp built into The Who really arose from the way they saw society and the people around them.”

How would-be filmmakers with no music business experience became the visionary managers of The Who is a grand tale of raw talent, moxie, and ‘60s zeitgeist, told with brio in *LAMBERT & STAMP*, but the film also seeks out something more elusive: the psychic chemistry beneath the surface of Chris and Kit’s partnership and their relationships with the four complicated and volatile personalities that made up The Who.

“I had known Chris for many years,” says Cooper, whose background as a cinematographer and fashion photographer is evident in the visual panache of his first feature film. “He took an interest in my filmmaking, and we had become close friends. When I went to Chris with my idea for *LAMBERT & STAMP*, it wasn't only because he was involved with The Who, it was because I knew he had this incredible relationship story. As much as I love music, I wouldn't want to make a straight-up rock documentary. What's intriguing is the complexity of the relationship and the directness and complexity of the man that I knew.”

Once Cooper gained Stamp’s approval and participation, he gained access not only to Stamp’s documentary footage of The Who’s early days—capturing the feel of a hot, crowded, loud, mesmerizing club gig with fabulous imagery and immediacy—but also to his striking memories and perceptions of the Lambert & Stamp partnership.

“The whole story would never have happened if Chris Stamp hadn’t had a lot of guts and nerve and some really, really deep personal insight, even at that young age. He took what could have been catastrophic risks in forming this relationship. Remember, as a kid he was a street hustler, a criminal. He hung out with very tough, very straight, survival-focused individuals, and befriending a gay man from the West End of London meant being ostracized from everything he knew.”

The cocky young Chris we see in *LAMBERT & STAMP* was never expected to venture beyond those East End confines; his father taught him to box and be a tough guy, but didn’t support any further aspirations. Without the encouragement of his elder brother Terence, who had already broken through those strictures by becoming an actor, Chris might never have seen Shepperton Studios, let alone shared an apartment with the likes of Kit Lambert. “I had to bridge a lot of water that had come between us,” recalls Terence Stamp in the film.

Lambert’s childhood and youth, for all his upper-class privilege and education, seem to have been marked by loneliness, set apart by his homosexuality and overshadowed by a distant, preoccupied father who died young at 45—Kit’s age at his own death.

“Interesting family dynamics,” notes Cooper, “So when they found each other, and then found The Who, they created their ideal dysfunctional family for the purposes of working out those identity complexities with one another, and kind of played it out through the creative help of the band.”

And how they played it out! Pete Townshend and Roger Daltrey, eloquent, thoughtful, and sincere as elder statesmen in the present-day interviews, were two-fourths of an onstage convulsion of defiance and nihilism that presaged heavy metal and punk.

“There’s nothing rational,” says Cooper, “about Chris growing up in the East End, engaging a gay man where that could get you beaten up where you lived, finding a band, going off to some frozen hellhole to earn all the money to finance a rock band that destroys all their equipment, and paying for it all when you come from not having a toothbrush.”

While Chris played the breadwinner to keep the band supplied with guitars and drum kits to smash, Kit brought musicianship and showmanship that took the band to a higher level—but it was understood both onstage and backstage that the true power generator was the audience itself. As Pete Townshend remarks in the film, “The audience thinks I write songs about me. No—I write songs about you. We mirrored the audience. You don’t give

them what they want—you just allow them to be. You don't market to them—you market them.”

As a filmmaker, Cooper's challenge was to capture this dynamic swirl of loud and brash, hidden and subsurface, jubilant and tragic, past and present. “We didn't want a conventional, linear sense of time and fact and narrative,” he explains. “We wanted to create portals into these experiences.” To that end, a boisterously dense montage of period footage and multilayered sound melds with present-day recollections that are almost serene in the spare elegance of their composition and lighting, some shot in black and white, and some in color.

“In the interviews, I really worked hard on having no tense, no past or present. The photography tried to reinforce that, even though these people might have been talking about something in the past, they still live with the emotional reality in their present. Even though it's about rock stars, it's also about universal risks in life. It's an unusual look into the vulnerability of men and powerful, creative situations. When Pete Townshend talks about never again working with Kit Lambert, that's not just factual information, that's living pain. I want the viewer to feel it.”

The high-energy counterpoint of period footage drew upon copious archival research by Cooper and his co-producers, Loretta Harms and Douglas Graves. “It took a lot to find the right footage, that would have its own voice and be a character, as opposed to a representation as you would have in a standard documentary. Our editor, Christopher Tellefsen, comes from fiction films, not from documentary nonfiction. That was a conscious choice. We were after an almost cubistic, fragmentary style. Of course, we were aware of the French New Wave aesthetic that had inspired Lambert and Stamp, but we weren't trying to emulate that...we really, really tried to emulate the emotional and timeless essence of what we felt viscerally. It was romantic, it was exciting, it was grounded in realism but went more towards the inside.”

A rock lover's dream of a music soundtrack subverts expectations in a similar way; there are no extended clips, no polished production values. “We wanted to use more of the demos. A lot of the unfinished music. A lot of the underground live recording. As a viewer, you are internalizing through the music that this isn't a completed thing. That was very, very intentional—the fragments of music mimic the way that the mind works. When you're in a working, creative process, you're carrying around fragments of things. A thousand different ideas. Some of them are working. Some of them are not. They're being digested by other people. The feedback's coming to you, and eventually you get

completed pieces. But once it's finished it's in the public domain, and what interested me was the private domain.”

Remarkably, *LAMBERT & STAMP* was nearly ten years in the off-and-on making. “I like to say we had challenges, but no problems,” says Cooper. “The challenges were things like money and scheduling, and they could be formidable. But I have top-grade production around me. I knew exactly what I needed to do and how I needed to do it. I didn't have to waffle around very much. I was able to be my own DP, shooting Super 16, and set things up according to my own experience, and be clear and direct so I didn't waste money.”

The production's long evolutionary span meant that encounters with Stamp, Townshend, Daltrey and the other interview subjects were not simply film sessions—they were sessions spread out over years. Chris Stamp initially solicited the participation of Townshend and Daltrey, but it was up to Cooper, Harms, and Graves to keep those conversations alive and avenues smooth over long periods.

“I went to them very honestly and openly with a strong idea that hadn't been done. They weren't interested in yet another Who documentary. They wanted to talk about Kit and Chris. This was important to them, so they supported it and were willing to stick it out. This is a very difficult thing for them, that relationship. It was everything and at the same time was hugely tragic. They carry that with them.”

Throughout those years of making *LAMBERT & STAMP*—and for decades preceding—there was one key participant missing. “You're making a film on a relationship, and one of them is long dead. How do you do that? Instead of an obstacle, we made Kit's absence an opportunity. Kit is an unseen alter-ego. He's so vivid in the past footage, that his absence in the present is like negative and positive space. We reinforced that with the editing and photography. If he were sitting there in an interview telling his side of the story, it would be more linear. But he's this other part of Chris' cosmology, a third thing between presence and non-presence. He's still an enigma.”

It's easy to think of *LAMBERT & STAMP* as the idea Chris and Kit had fifty years ago, finally come to fruition. “Obviously, I didn't know Kit Lambert, but it takes a remarkable individual to be able to perceive what's around him and take the risks to be available to it,” says Cooper. “I've been inspired by Chris' tenacity and resilience. He was willing to let this film get inside the essence of a really caulked up, messy, nondirect, elating, disparaging, messy, creative process. That's a privilege.”

LAMBERT & STAMP
Filmmaker Biographies

JAMES D. COOPER

DIRECTOR, PRODUCER AND DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

JAMES D COOPER makes his directorial debut with LAMBERT & STAMP which he also photographed and produced. Long known as a cinematographer, his eclectic career has spanned cinéma vérité, fashion, and feature films along with countless commercials and music videos. As a Director of Photography he has worked with a diverse number of stars and celebrities including Sidney Poitier, Robert Mitchum, Allison Janney, Celine Dion, Steven Segal, Luciano Pavarotti, and Barbara Streisand. In the transition from Cinematographer to Director he formed his independent company MOTOCINEMA with partner/producer Loretta Harms for the production of LAMBERT & STAMP now being distributed by Sony Pictures Classics. MOTOCINEMA is currently in development on a select number feature films. When not working on film James devotes himself to photography and music as well as martial arts, surfing, and racing motorcycles to feed his artistic lifestyle.

LORETTA HARMS

PRODUCER AND EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Loretta is Executive Producer and Producer of LAMBERT & STAMP through her independent film company Motocinema, Inc., formed with James D. Cooper. In addition to her role as producer, her supervisory role on music track for this film is one of the largest music deals of its kind, with 44 Who songs and a total of 58 classics tracks. With a background in fine arts, Loretta continues to work across disciplines. Her past films have appeared on broadcast channels The Sundance Channel, IFC and PBS and have been nominated for the International Documentary Award and Silver Reel awards (GIBTOWN). Her art films and installations have appeared in international venues including The Institute of Contemporary Photography, The Boston Museum of Fine Arts, BMoCA, and The Kunsthalle, Germany. Loretta is currently developing a book of photography and soundtrack based on the film, and a special edition of artist's prints.

DOUGLAS GRAVES

PRODUCER

Douglas has worked in documentary film for the last thirty years. He's recently produced, with Susan Froemke, a trio of classical music films for the Metropolitan Opera including

WAGNER'S DREAM, JAMES LEVINE: AMERICA'S MAESTRO and THE AUDITION. He began his career at Maysles Films where he first met James D. Cooper and stayed for twenty years, eventually co-producing such films as the Oscar-nominated LALEE'S KIN: THE LEGACY OF COTTON and Grammy Award winner RECORDING THE PRODUCERS: A MUSICAL ROMP WITH MEL BROOKS.

CHRISTOPHER TELLEFSEN, A.C.E.

EDITOR

Chris was nominated for an Academy Award for his work on MONEYBALL in 2012. He began his career in the New York independent film scene in the eighties, gaining recognition with Whit Stillman's Oscar-nominated METROPOLITAN. He also edited Stillman's BARCELONA, Wayne Wang's BLUE IN THE FACE, and Larry Clark's controversial first film, KIDS. His next work, on the David O. Russell comedy FLIRTING WITH DISASTER, influenced and inspired a new generation of comedies. Chris crossed over to his first studio picture with Milos Forman's THE PEOPLE VS. LARRY FLYNT. Balancing both independent and studio films, he edited Harmony Korine's cult classic GUMMO, Wayne Wang's CHINESE BOX and Harold Ramis's ANALYZE THIS, for which he was nominated for an Eddy Award. In London, in the late nineties, he edited BIRTHDAY GIRL and CHANGING LANES. For MAN ON THE MOON, he received an additional Eddy Award nomination. His other film credits include Robert Benton's THE HUMAN STAIN, M. Night Shyamalan's THE VILLAGE, the Oscar Award winning CAPOTE, A GUIDE TO RECOGNIZING YOUR SAINTS, THE YELLOW HANDKERCHIEF and FAIR GAME. Chris' most recent work includes THE DROP, starring James Gandolfini and TRUE STORY, a drama starring Jonah Hill and James Franco.