



Presents

TYSON

A Film by James Toback

(88 mins, USA, 2008)

Distribution



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TYSON

CREDITS

DIRECTED BY	James Toback
DP	Larry McConkey
EDITOR	Aaron Yanes
ORIGINAL MUSIC	Salaam Remi
SONG "LEGENDARY" BY	Nas
SUPERVISING SOUND EDITOR	Byron Wilson
SOUND EFFECTS EDITOR	Brad North
ASSISTANT SOUND EDITOR	Joel Dougherty
RE-RECORDING MIXERS	Skip Lievsay
	Brad North
PRODUCERS	James Toback
	Damon Bingham
CO-PRODUCERS	Warren Farnes
	Bill Newcomb
	Salaam Remi
	Nas
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS	Mike Tyson
	Harlan Werner
	Nicholas Jarecki
	Henry Jarecki
	Carmelo Anthony
	David Haines
	Bob Yari

TYSON

Director's Statement

Mike Tyson, a figure of staggering complexity and iconic impact on the world stage, has been a friend since 1985 when he came by the set of THE PICK UP ARTIST to meet Robert Downey. We spent hours talking-- about love, madness, crime, sports, sex, boxing, money, and death. I was left with a certainty that I would eventually want to use him in some future film. Fourteen years later, I offered Tyson a role in BLACK AND WHITE which involved resisting successive, aggressive sexual overtures by both Downey and Brooke Shields, and, in another scene, the providing of advice to a Wu Tang Clan gangster on murder and its possible consequences of a life in prison. Three years later, I used Tyson again in a street scene with Neve Campbell and me in WHEN WILL I BE LOVED.

For years I have been looking for a project that would allow for a new form of presentation suggested by current radically shifting and radically impatient responses to modern life and media. I wanted to make a movie that would serve the thematic complexity and multiple layers of character and behavior by splitting the screen into separate images moving in shape, size, and rhythm, complicated by overlapping sources of dialogue and music. A full portrait film with Mike Tyson as its subject not only allowed for the exercise of that technique but actually demanded it. I approached Larry McConkey, the world master of steadicam operators and asked him to try a two-camera (both the Panasonic Genesis and Vericam) Hi-Def shoot of rapid intensity. Tyson was free, willing, and--after years of vaguely planning such an enterprise---eager.

The week passed with the expected, unexpected twists from both Tyson and McConkey. I then set out on an eight month editorial journey into the unknown with Aaron Yanes, a relative newcomer to editing. Together -- and then later with Skip Lievsay and Byron Wilson, the best sound engineering team in the universe, as well as the input of producer Damon Bingham, we all forged something very close to what I had been dreaming of. It will be a blessing indeed if others share the excitement as well.

James Toback
February 24, 2009

TYSON

SYNOPSIS

Tyson is acclaimed indie director James Toback's stylistically inventive portrait of a mesmerizing Mike Tyson. Toback allows Tyson to reveal himself without inhibition and with eloquence and a pervasive vulnerability. Through a mixture of original interviews and archival footage and photographs, a startlingly complex, fully-rounded human being emerges. The film ranges from Tyson's earliest memories of growing up on the mean streets of Brooklyn through his entry into the world of boxing, to his rollercoaster ride in the funhouse of worldwide fame and fortunes won and lost. It is the story of a legendary and uniquely controversial international athletic icon, a figure conjuring radical questions of race and class. In its depiction of a man rising from the most debased circumstances to unlimited heights, destroyed by his own hubris, TYSON emerges as a modern day version of classic Greek tragedy.

TYSON

Mike Tyson Timeline

June 30, 1966	Mike Tyson is born in Brooklyn, NY.
1979	A boxing instructor at a New York State correction facility for boys brings Tyson to the attention of Cus D'Amato, who had guided Floyd Patterson to the heavyweight title.
1984	D'Amato becomes Tyson's legal guardian.
March 6, 1985	Tyson makes his professional boxing debut against Hector Mercedes, defeating Mercedes in the first round.
November 4, 1985	D'Amato dies of pneumonia.
November 22, 1986	Tyson has his first title fight against Trevor Berbick for WBC Heavyweight title. Tyson becomes the youngest heavyweight champion at 20 years old.
March 7, 1987	Tyson defends title against James 'Bonecrusher' Smith and wins the WBA.
May 30, 1987	Tyson defends title against Pinklon Thomas.
August 1, 1987	Tyson takes International Boxing Federation title from Tony Tucker. He becomes the first heavyweight to own all three major belts- WBA, WBC, and IBF- at the same time.
October 16, 1987	Tyson defends title against Tyrell Biggs, 1984 Olympics Super Heavyweight Gold Medalist.
January 22, 1988	Tyson defends title against Larry Holmes.
February 9, 1988	Tyson weds actress Robin Givens in New York.
March 21, 1988	Tyson defends title against Tony Tubbs.
June 27, 1988	Tyson defends title against Michael Spinks.
February 14, 1989	Tyson and Givens are divorced in the Dominican Republic.

February 25, 1989	Tyson defends title against Frank Bruno.
July 21, 1989	Tyson defends title against Carl 'The Truth' Williams.
February 11, 1990	Tyson loses World Heavyweight title to James 'Buster' Douglas in a stunning upset.
June 16, 1990	Tyson recovers from his loss by knocking out Henry Tillman in first round of the fight.
December 8, 1990	Tyson knocks out Alex Stewart in first round of the fight.
March 18, 1991	Tyson faces #2 contender Donovan Ruddock in a controversial fight that ends in Tyson's favor, infuriating fans.
June 28, 1991	Tyson faces Donovan Ruddock, winning a twelve round unanimous decision.
July 22, 1991	Desiree Washington, a Miss Black America Contestant who meets Tyson in Indiana, files a police complaint accusing Tyson of rape.
February 10, 1992	Tyson is found guilty on one count of rape and two counts of deviate sexual conduct.
March 26, 1992	Tyson is sentenced to 10 years in prison, suspending 4. He is ordered to serve immediately.
March 25, 1995	Tyson is released from prison.
February 14, 1996	Tyson's daughter, Rayna, is born. The mother is Monica Turner.
March 16, 1996	Tyson reemerges on the boxing scene to obtain WBC title from Frank Bruno.
September 7, 1996	Tyson claims the WBA title from Bruce Seldon in an astounding 93 seconds.
November 9, 1996	Tyson faces Evander Holyfield in a fight dubbed 'Finally.' Holyfield defeats Tyson, but is accused of headbutting Tyson, leading to a rematch.
April 19, 1997	Tyson marries Monica Turner.

June 28, 1997	Tyson faces Evander Holyfield again in a lucrative event dubbed 'The Sound and The Fury.' The fight is stopped in the third round, with Tyson disqualified for biting Holyfield on both ears.
July 9, 1997	Tyson's boxing license is revoked and he is fined \$3 million.
August 5, 1997	Tyson's son Amir, is born.
October 19, 1998	The Nevada Athletic Commission restores Tyson's boxing license.
January 16, 1999	Tyson defeats Francois Botha.
January 29, 2000	Tyson knocks out Julius Francis in round 2.
June 24, 2000	Tyson fights Lou Savarese, winning the fight in 38 seconds.
October 20, 2000	Tyson defeats Andrew Golota.
October 13, 2001	Tyson defeats Brian Nielsen.
June 8, 2002	Tyson is knocked out by Lennox Lewis, who holds the WBC, IBF, and IBO titles at the time. The fight is the highest grossing event in pay-per-view history.
January 14, 2003	Tyson and Turner divorce.
February 22, 2003	Tyson knocks out Clifford Etienne in 49 seconds.
July 30, 2004	Tyson is knocked out by Danny Williams in the fourth round, after dominating in the first two rounds. With 30 seconds left in round one, Tyson sustained ligament damage to his left knee and visibly reached for his knee in pain.
June 11, 2005	Tyson stuns the boxing world when he fails to come out for the seventh round against Kevin McBride. He says he will not fight again.

TYSON

About the Filmmakers

JAMES TOBACK - *Director*

James Toback is an American screenwriter and film director whose cinematic explorations of sports, crime, sex and the complex vagaries of human relationships have resulted in a host of provocative, seminal and celebrated films.

After graduating from Harvard, Toback intended to become a novelist but turned to journalism. Given an assignment for an article in *Esquire* on football legend Jim Brown, Toback moved into Brown's Hollywood mansion and ended up writing an autobiographical memoir *JIM: THE AUTHOR'S SELF-CENTERED MEMOIR OF THE GREAT JIM BROWN*. In 1974, his semi-autobiographical original screenplay *THE GAMBLER* was directed by British filmmaker Karel Reisz and starred James Caan as Axel Freed, an English professor and death-obsessed compulsive gambler.

Toback used the experience on the *THE GAMBLER* as preparation for his directorial debut *FINGERS*, a dark, psychological drama starring Harvey Keitel. It was remade twenty-eight years later as *THE BEAT THAT MY HEART SKIPPED* by Jacques Audiard. *FINGERS*, remains the only original American movie ever to be remade as a French film and was shown at the 2008 Cannes Film Festival.

Toback followed *FINGERS* with *LOVE AND MONEY* (1982), which marked legendary Hollywood director King Vidor's acting debut at the age of eighty. During the 1980s, Toback also wrote and directed *EXPOSED* (1983) with Nastassia Kinski, Rudolf Nureyev, Harvey Keitel, Bibi Andersen, and Pierre Clementi. The film was photographed by *New Wave* cinematographer Henri Decae and scored by *New Wave* composer Georges Delerue. He also wrote and directed *THE PICK-UP ARTIST* (1987) with Robert Downey Jr., Molly Ringwald, Harvey Keitel, and Dennis Hopper.

In 1989, Toback created *THE BIG BANG*, a documentary exploring the connections among orgasm, sex, love, madness, murder, crime, death, and the origin and fate of the cosmos. It featured a philosopher nun, an Auschwitz survivor, a gangster, a cosmologist, a jazz saxophonist, a basketball star, a concert violinist, and two six-year-old children. In 1991, Barry Levinson directed Toback's original screenplay *BUGSY*, produced by Warren Beatty who also starred as the infamous gangster. The film co-starred Harvey Keitel as Mickey Cohen, Ben Kingsley as Meyer Lansky, and Annette Bening as Virginia Hill. *BUGSY* won the Golden Globe for Best Picture and was nominated for ten Academy Awards, including Best Original Screenplay. Toback won the Los

Angeles Film Critics' Award for Best Original Screenplay and a similar award from the readers of Premiere Magazine.

More recently, Toback wrote and directed *TWO GIRLS AND A GUY*, a comic rumination on the incompatibility of romantic monogamy and sexual curiosity. It starred Robert Downey, Jr., Heather Graham and Natasha Gregson Wagner as friends and lovers. He then wrote and directed *BLACK AND WHITE* (made in collaboration with Power, Raekwan and Method Man of Wu-Tang Clan). The film also starred Robert Downey Jr., Ben Stiller, Mike Tyson, Claudia Schiffer, Brooke Shields, Jared Leto, Bijou Phillips, Elijah Wood, Toback himself, and Allan Houston. It explores the phenomenon of hip hop from the inside, and its corollary phenomena: identity, music, madness, murder, drugs, crime, race and sex. He also wrote and directed the semiautobiographical *HARVARD MAN*, starring Adrien Grenier, and *WHEN WILL I BE LOVED*, an exploration of the psyche and sexuality of a driven, curious, articulate young woman, Vera, played by Neve Campbell. Dominic Chianese and Fred Weller portray men who imagine themselves - with fatal consequences - to be capable of toying with Vera when they are in fact in well over their heads.

In 2006, documentary filmmaker Nicolas Jarecki directed *THE OUTSIDER*, a cinematic excursion into Toback's world, which includes excerpts from much of his work, visual observation of his directing *WHEN WILL I BE LOVED*, and self-revelatory as well as revelatory interviews with Norman Mailer, Robert Downey Jr, Mike Tyson, Brooke Shields, Neve Campbell, Brett Ratner, ICM chairman Jeff Berg, Bijou Phillips, Roger Ebert, former Sony chairman John Calley, Jim Brown, Woody Allen, Barry Levinson, Power of Wu-Tang Clan, and Harvey Keitel. Toback has been a subject of retrospective tributes at Deauville, Torino, San Francisco, New York among other cities.

In 2007, Toback directed *TYSON*, a documentary portrait of the unique, fascinating, and endlessly provocative former heavyweight champion. The film, to be released in 2009, has already received strong praise in *Le Monde* from its noted film critic Samuel Blumenfeld. *TYSON* was an Official Selection at the 2008 Cannes Film Festival where it was awarded the LE K.O. prize by the Un Certain Regard jury. *TYSON* was also an Official Selection at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival.

SALAAM REMI - *Original Music*

Salaam Remi is a prolific and eclectic music producer whose influences range from rap to R&B, from England to Senegal. He segued into the movies in 2004 when he executive produced the soundtrack for Brett Ratner's INTO THE SUNSET, which introduced him to the director and to composer Lalo Schifrin. He went on to become the music supervisor on Ratner's RUSH HOUR 3, starring Chris Tucker and Jackie Chan. Working alongside Schifrin, Remi designed the comedic *kung-pao* sequences, among other things.

Born in Queens, New York, Remi is part of a profoundly musical family - even his name is musical. His father, Van Gibbs, a well-regarded music industry producer and musician, named him Salaam, the Arabic word for *peace* and his middle name, Remi was derived from the second and third tones of the octave scale (*Do Re Mi...*). Remi received his first drum kit from Elvin Jones, the legendary jazz drummer who played with the John Coltrane Quartet and so began his lifelong passion for timing and rhythm.

By his teenage years, the prodigy would add bass, keyboard, guitar, and percussion to his repertoire. Remi's experience creating hip-hop remixes and productions for reggae artists Supercat, Ini Kamoze, Shabba Ranks, and Patra in the early 90s would lead to his production on The Fugees album THE SCORE, the highest selling hip-hop album of all-time, selling over 20 million copies worldwide.

He went on to remix and produce songs for The Fugees, NAS, Ludacris, Wyclef Jean, Toni Braxton, Santana, Sade, Sting (featuring Mary J. Blige), Lauren Hill, Jurassic Five, Doug E. Fresh, Biz Markie, and Chrisette Michele. He has also created tracks for Kevin Lyttle, Supercat, Ini Kamoze, Jamiroquai, Senegalese hip-hop band Positive Black Soul, and most recently, U.K. vocalist Amy Winehouse. Remi produced ten songs on Winehouse's debut, FRANK, released in 2003. The critically acclaimed single, STRONGER THAN ME, which he co-wrote with Winehouse, went on to win the coveted Ivor Novello Award for Contemporary Song Of The Year.

The work Remi did on FRANK led to songwriting and production on her second album, BACK TO BLACK (TEARS DRY ON THEIR OWN, ADDICTED, ME AND MR. JONES, JUST FRIENDS, UNHOLY WAR) and helped catapult Winehouse into the spotlight, to become one of the top music stories of 2007. To date, BACK TO BLACK has since sold more than three million copies worldwide.

The camaraderie between Salaam and NAS has resulted in their collaboration on five albums. In addition to executive producing the double CD, STREETS DISCIPLE, Salaam has also produced tracks on STILLMATIC, GOD SON, HIP-HOP IS DEAD, and NAS' forthcoming albums, the greatest hits collection and the new solo album.

AARON YANES – *Editor*

Aaron Yanes' recent credits include Sundance Grand Jury Prize winner PADRE NUESTRO directed by Christopher Zalla, and ZARIN by internationally acclaimed artist Shirin Neshat, as well as her Carnegie Hall video installation FROM A FAR OFF COUNTRY in collaboration with cellist Maya Beiser and composer Eve Beglarian.

LARRY McCONKEY - *DP*

The legendary Larry McConkey has been the Steadicam operator on many films, including IRONWEED, THE MOSQUITO COAST, MILLER'S CROSSING, GOODFELLAS, THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS, RANSOM, THREE KINGS, FINDING FORRESTER, SHALLOW HAL, VANILLA SKY, THE HOURS, and KILL BILL: VOLUMES 1 & 2.

He has worked three times with Spike Lee, on MO' BETTER BLUES, JUNGLE FEVER and THE SUMMER OF SAM, and with Brian DePalma and cinematographer Stephen H. Burum on CARLITO'S WAY, MISSION IMPOSSIBLE, SNAKE EYES and MISSION TO MARS. McConkey operated Steadicam and also served as camera operator on THE GOOD SHEPHERD and AMERICAN GANGSTER.

He moved up to second unit DP on CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN and made his debut as DP on James Toback's WHEN WILL I BE LOVED.