



# BORDERLINES FILM FESTIVAL

The UK's largest rural film festival

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Shell Shock (15)

Director: James Price

Starring: Robert Whitelock, Nina Fog,

UK, 2009, 1 hour 15 minutes

James Price grew up on a family farm in the small village of Leinthall Starkes on the north Herefordshire border. After gaining a BA in Applied Arts (1995-98) he moved to London to study an MA in production design for TV and Film at Kingston University (2000-2001).

After graduating, James began a career working in TV and film art departments, gaining experience on BBC and ITV dramas (*Spooks*, *Harts of Gold*, *Reversals*) before establishing himself as an art director working on projects as diverse as *Bullet Boy*, *Grow Your Own* and *Miss Austen Regrets*.

Whilst developing his career James also concentrated on writing with the intention of developing a script that would allow him the opportunity to direct. This work came to fruition when he teamed up with producer Mani Sohanpal for the feature length *Shell Shock*, the first of his scripts to be filmed. Completed in March 2009 it's a challenging look at the effects of war on soldiers returning from conflict.

"This is a project that becomes more urgent by the day in light of the UK's increasing military commitments across the world and stories of soldier's being seriously injured/killed or traumatized in combat. The story expresses emotions that resonate within Britain today." James Price stated.

The anti war film is perceived through the eyes of protagonist Tom, a veteran of an anonymous war and is set in modern day Tokyo where he now lives being unable to return to his former life as a result of the severe stress he is suffering from. The story moves between the present and the past, which includes a horrific incident that took place during his combat days as a soldier. Films such as *Audition*, *Come and See*, *Ghost in the Shell*, *Tokyo Drifter* and *Jacob's Ladder*; inspired James Price and he admired the minimal style used in Japanese films

James Price used the visual language in his film to portray the symptoms of the illness using flashbacks where the victim relives the nightmare due to real fear producing a clear memory of it; avoidance and numbing effects through various scenes where the actor is seen avoiding reality, hyper vigilance, insomnia and trancelike-states to convey his suicidal state of mind where he is not able to distinguish between fantasy and reality.

James has had a long-standing interest in the effects of PTSD on soldiers having had several family members serve in the armed forces. He brings a passionate authenticity to the film highlighting an issue in need of addressing. This is his first film and he has called in all favours as the cast and crew volunteered their services and skills, with the aim of raising awareness of this serious subject that he feels our government, the MOD, and the Health Authorities should more readily address.

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