

# THE TUNNEL

A SHORT FILM BY SCOTT PICKUP  
PRODUCED BY ERIN STEVENSON





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**DUCK THUNDER**





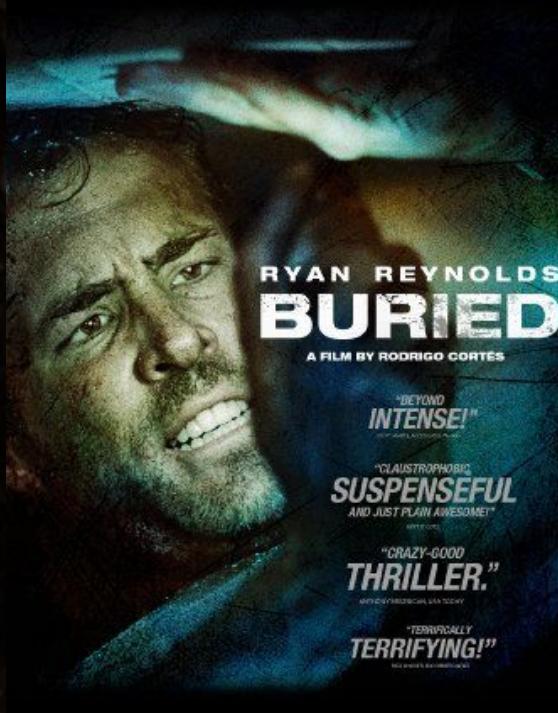
*A young woman has to desperately crawl her way out of a dangerous tunnel - in order to escape to freedom.*

*Short film: 90 sec  
Drama / Thriller- with a touch of horror*

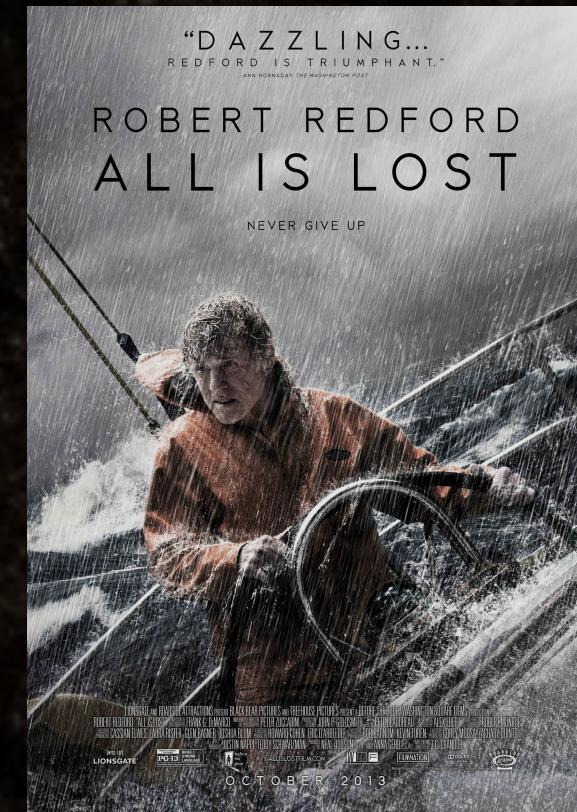
**LOGLINE**



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We start in **DARKNESS**. Panicked & alone.

**EVE** awakes in a dark & malevolent tunnel. Barely enough room for her body to fit, only a rickety flashlight for company. It's thick with wet mud & some kind of red slime. She has no idea where she, how she got there or how to get out. She's petrified.

A deep & disturbing **RUMBLE** from behind her sets her in motion- she has to **CRAWL FOR HER LIFE**.

Driven by mind boggling fear she ploughs on, desperate to outrun whatever's coming. She reaches a tighter bit of tunnel, one she cannot pass. The walls seem to give a little though, move even, as though they'll alive. Eve claws & forces her way through the tighter gap. Risking it all.

She's **STUCK**. What now? The rumble from behind her becomes a **RUSH**. No escape. Eve's overtaken by a flood of water- the powerful stream releases her from the clamp of the walls & she tumbles to safety. Up above she can hear noises, see a light. **SALVATION**.

Eve climbs, climbs with everything she has, dragging herself up step by step. She reaches out to touch the **LIGHT**.

The room is blindingly bright, sun streaming in from the windows. A newborn baby is urgently squashed against its **MOTHER'S** chest. The Mother looks down at her baby, we see now that the mother is **EVE**.

Eve desperately wants to be instantly filled with love. In a moment she realises it won't be that simple for her. She's going to have to fight for it.



## SYNOPSIS



At the end, this story feels like a child's fight to join the world but it's not, the perspective changes- it's the **PARENT** who's deep in the tunnel. They're the ones that have to fight & crawl out.

Society teaches us that we should instantaneously feel overwhelmed with **LOVE** the very moment we see our children. This unfortunately sets new parents up for a terrible feeling of **GUILT, SHAME & LOSS**.

If you scratch the surface of the fairytale birth then you'll find a whole range of **OTHER STORIES**. A lot of pregnancies & births are extremely difficult. Women are often fighting for their own lives, as well as the lives of their unborn children. I've spent a lot of time talking to women about their experiences when giving birth, the blood, the tears, the vomiting, the pressure, the conflicting advice, the bias of medical institutions, the days without sleep... How can you expect any parent to have the strength to meet their child with an unequivocal & uncomplicated love under these circumstances?

This story is very much about my own & my wife's journey as parents. Now I've had some time to process what happened (my child is now 7yrs) I can see we were both traumatised by our son's birth. Our story wasn't anywhere near as terrifying as some i've listened to but nonetheless- going in for routine check up, being told out of the blue that we weren't allowed to leave, 5 whole days of labour, a whole new set of advice & demands every few hours when the staff changed, many days without real sleep, not being fed properly, being moved to different wards every day, being kept in the dark, being constantly pressured by staff to let them medically intervene in the birth... I could go on but what it boils down to is **SHAKEN & BROKEN** people being expected to become the happiest people on earth in an instant.

It's really not that easy & this film is my way of exploring & ultimately accepting the feelings we went through. The guilt at finding it all a bit too much & the realisation that it's ok to let the love grow naturally. Learn each other first & then find the value in the amazing little moments of joy that **PIERCE THROUGH THE DARK**.

# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Paramount to this brief is how to use **PERSPECTIVE**, how to show our worldview evolving.

Our story takes the audience on an emotional ride through this landscape but we also want to do it **CINEMATICALLY**.

There's an obvious way to approach such a massive widescreen canvas- awe inspiring vistas. But instead of that, we want to take a different approach- to fill our space with **DARKNESS**.

For the most part we'll stay **UNCOMFORTABLY CLOSE** to Eve. We'll be in the grime with her, trapped in the tunnel, no way out. We'll see the dirt under her fingernails, the tears staining her cheeks, the flashes of panic as a beam of torchlight catches her eye.

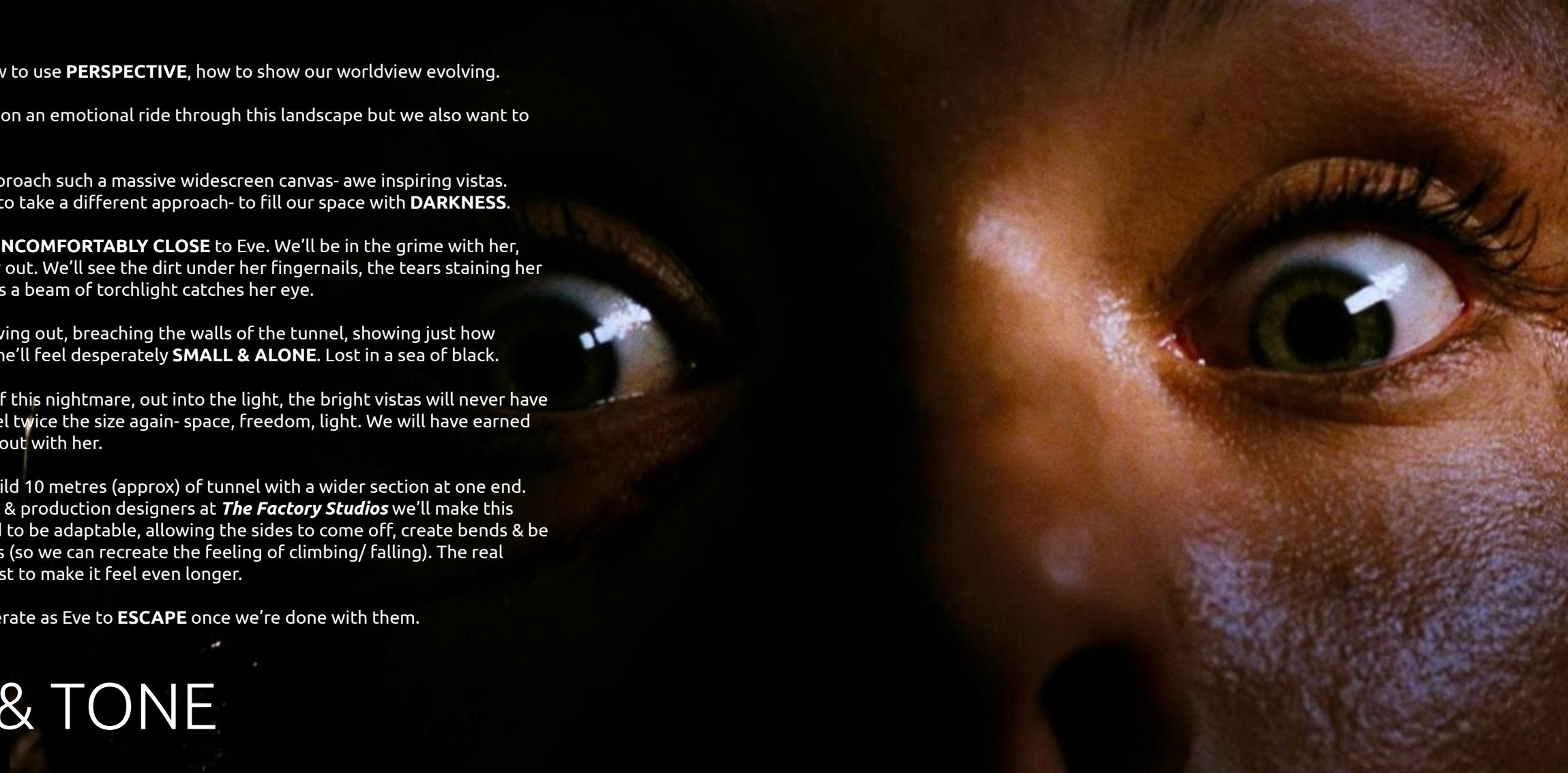
Then at key moments we'll swing out, breaching the walls of the tunnel, showing just how insurmountable her task is. She'll feel desperately **SMALL & ALONE**. Lost in a sea of black.

When she drags herself out of this nightmare, out into the light, the bright vistas will never have felt so big. The screen will feel twice the size again- space, freedom, light. We will have earned these sensations by crawling out with her.

Logistically we're going to build 10 metres (approx) of tunnel with a wider section at one end. Using the ample studio space & production designers at **The Factory Studios** we'll make this from scratch. It'll be designed to be adaptable, allowing the sides to come off, create bends & be positioned at different angles (so we can recreate the feeling of climbing/ falling). The real tunnel will be extended in post to make it feel even longer.

The audience will be as desperate as Eve to **ESCAPE** once we're done with them.

## STYLE & TONE



## SCOTT PICKUP- WRITER / DIRECTOR

Scott is a multi-award winning writer & director hailing from Bradford, West Yorkshire & has worked in TV & advertising for over 15 yrs.  
He currently runs a small creative agency **Duck Thunder** and has been the Lead Creative (creating thousands of pieces of short form work) for major international broadcasters including- **Sony Pictures, NBC Universal, ITV & Paramount.**

He believes in elevating working class stories from the often underrepresented regions. His multi-award winning short **Boy in the Back Seat** is currently on the festival circuit, you can see it here-

<https://vimeo.com/718352766>  
Password: Duckthunder



## ERIN STEVENSON- PRODUCER

Erin is an award winning producer who's worked in both film & tv for over 7 yrs.

Her first short film, **Fired**, screened at the **BFI Future** film festival in 2015. She has since gone on to produce over 10+ projects. Most notably she was recently awarded £10,000 to produce a short film by **Get it Made**. She also just produced the winning film for **The Sci-Fi London 48hr Challenge**- for the second year in a row. She currently runs independent film production company **Ardvale Productions**.

Showreel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTd4kD-GFXM>



# TEAM LEADS



#### JAMES OWEN- EXEC PRODUCER

James is an award winning director / producer & production designer, best known for his feature *Bite* (2022). He has 2 shorts of the festival circuit, 2 further features due for release in 2023, is the founder of *Arthofilm* (independent production company) & was producer of *Boy in the Back Seat*.

James will be our chief production designer tasked with the challenge of creating our tunnel. He's also generously offered the use of his film studio (*The Factory*) & extensive lighting/ rigging kit for free.



#### HUNTER CLINT- PRODUCTION MANAGER

Hunter recently graduated with a BA in Film, specialising in Production. She has already worked on over 30 projects including shorts, features, marketing videos & advertising campaigns, most notably *Winne the Pooh: Blood & Honey* & her thesis short film *From Beneath*.

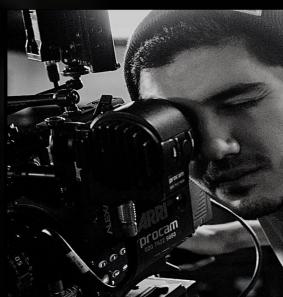
She's now an invaluable member of the Ardvale Production team.



#### LIAM ABBOTT- SCRIPT SUPERVISOR / EXEC PRODUCER

Liam has directed & produced over 10 film projects, receiving a number of awards & screening both domestically & abroad. Most notably *The Last Union* which won the *London 48hr Film Challenge* & screened at the *Palais du Festival* in Cannes.

For this project he's providing essential creative backup & graciously offered to be the Script Supervisor.



#### MIGUEL CÁRMENES- DOP

Miguel is an in demand & award winning DOP of shorts, music videos, commercials & features.

He's been working for years on international productions, creating stunning imagery & delivering innovative techniques.

He was DOP on Scott's previous award winning short film- *Boy in the Back Seat*.

# KEY COLLABORATORS

**SCHED-**

6 DAY STUDIO BUILD TIME

2 DAY SHOOT

**1.5 DAYS DAYS IN THE STUDIO-** Tunnel scenes

Unit move

**0.5 DAYS ON LOCATION-** Hospital bed (provided by Arthrofilm)**BUDGET BREAKDOWN-**

£1,054 (PERSONAL INVESTMENT) + £10,000  
 (BMW / BFI)  
**= £11,054**

<b>FILM:</b> The Tunnel	<b>PREP:</b>	XX NO. OF DAYS/WEEKS
<b>DIRECTOR:</b> Scott Pickup	<b>SHOOT:</b>	2 DAYS
<b>PRODUCER:</b> Erin Stevenson	<b>SHOOT FORMAT:</b>	DIGITAL
<b>PRODUCTION COMPANY:</b> ARDVALE / DUCK THUNDER	<b>DAY LENGTH:</b>	10 HR
<b>2</b> PRODUCER	COVERED BY ARDVALE	£ -
<b>3</b> DIRECTOR	COVERED BY DUCK THUNDER	£ -
<b>TOTAL ABOVE THE LINE:</b>		£ -
<b>4</b> CAST		£ 784.00
<b>5</b> PRODUCTION	COVERED BY ARDVALE	£ -
<b>6</b> AD's	1st AD COVERED BY ARDVALE	£ 570.00
<b>7</b> CAMERA	ALEXA MINI PLUS ALL ACCESSORIES FREE FROM ARTHROFILM	£ 1,030.00
<b>8</b> LIGHTING	EXTRA LIGHTING/ RIGGING GEAR FREE FROM ARTHROFILM	£ 880.00
<b>9</b> SOUND		£ 370.00
<b>10</b> PRODUCTION DESIGN		£ 1,550.00
<b>11</b> COSTUME		£ 150.00
<b>12</b> HAIR AND MAKE UP		£ 320.00
<b>13</b> LOCATIONS	STUDIO SPACE FREE FROM THE FACTORY	£ 1,700.00
<b>14</b> TRAVEL	WILL USE MOSTLY LOCAL CREW TO REDUCE EMISSIONS	£ 300.00
<b>15</b> ACCOMODATION		£ 600.00
<b>16</b> POST PICTURE	EDIT & CGI COVERED BY DUCK THUNDER/ GRADE FREE FROM QUALITY CONTROL TV	£ 1,400.00
<b>17</b> POST SOUND		£ 400.00
<b>18</b> MUSIC		£ 400.00
<b>19</b> PUBLICITY		£ -
<b>20</b> MISCELLANEOUS		£ -
<b>TOTAL BELOW THE LINE:</b>		£ 10,454.00
<b>21</b> ACCESS SUPPORT		£ 100.00
<b>22</b> INSURANCE	COVERED BY ARDVALE	£ -
<b>23</b> CONTINGENCY @10%		£ 500.00
<b>TOTAL OTHER:</b>		£ 600.00
<b>GRAND TOTAL:</b>		£ 11,054.00

**BUDGET / SCHED**



## ARDVALE PRODUCTIONS

**Ardvale** is an independent production company based in South East London, co-founded by Erin Stevenson & Liam Abbott. Although at the beginning of its journey, Ardvale has already screened work at the *Palais du Festival*, won back to back 48hr challenges for *Sci-Fi London + London 48hr* & placed 3rd at *Filmapalooza* 2022.

As a company, Ardvale is passionate about furthering the representation of women & underrepresented voices in the industry. The company is led by women, have a team made up from **underrepresented backgrounds** (LGBT / Syrian) & all of the team identify as **neurodiverse**, bringing different mindsets to the film industry that aren't often highlighted.

[ardvale.co.uk](http://ardvale.co.uk) // Showreel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTd4kD-GFXM>



## DUCK THUNDER

**Duck Thunder** is an award winning & independently owned creative studio. With over 20 years of experience in creating advertising campaigns for major broadcasters (and anyone else who really likes videos/ pictures/ noises) Duck has won multiple international **Promax Awards**.

More recently they produced the award winning short ***Boy in the Back Seat*** and are committed to bringing more original, complex & cinematic stories to the screen- highlighting **regional voices** from an often forgotten **working class perspective**.

r.com

duckthunde

Both companies are committed to environmentally sustainable production- in keeping with the *Green Screen Project* principles. Reducing our carbon footprint through conscientious use of fossil fuels, energy efficient equipment & using reusable / recyclable materials wherever possible.

# PRODUCTION



We are committed to upholding the values of the **BFI Diversity Statement**.

We are dedicated to progressing the opportunities for under represented groups in front of & behind the camera. Our production team is already made up of diverse backgrounds (Syrian / LGBT / Neurodiverse Regional voices / Primary caregivers & led by women) but we want to go much further.

We will cast a woman from a Pakistani/ Bangladeshi or Indian background as our lead character **EVE**. Scott grew up in Bradford (West Yorkshire) & doesn't see representation of the diverse communities that make up the area displayed on screen anywhere near enough. Even when they do appear on screen it's unusual to see a woman from that background undertake a role outside the life of the home.

Eve is not like that. Her role is physical, action led, heroic (Scott based the character on his friend & fellow Bradfordian- Asha). It is incredibly rare to see a woman from this background appear like this in mainstream western media. We think that it's time for that to change- we want to show a young, strong & resourceful South Asian woman fight against the odds (both physically & mentally) & come out the other side. Be our **HERO**.

We're also dedicated to bringing together a diverse crew that more than meets the diversity standards. We will ensure as many of the production roles as possible will go to women & people from underrepresented backgrounds. We especially want to recruit other South Asian women in key creative or production roles. This will only strengthen the connection & passion poured into telling our story.

Our production base will be well away from the usual industry hotspots too. The studio we intend to use is on the edge of the East Midlands. We intend to offer people local to that area the chance to work on our film & will ensure a large proportion of our budget is spent on services outside of Greater London.

# DIVERSITY STATEMENT



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