

PROMOTIONAL FEATURE



34

CHASING THE DREAM

SCOTT AND SID | How two successful entrepreneurs became filmmakers...

We were spurred on by people in our lives who had said in one shape or form, 'You can't do this,' or 'You have to be realistic,' and we just thought, 'Steven Spielberg once made his first movie; he started somewhere. So why can't we do it?'" If you think Sid Sadowskyj sounds ambitious when referring to his first filmmaking venture with best friend and business partner Scott Elliott, you'd be right.

For Scott and Sid, the filmmaking partnership behind a new semi-autobiographical movie titled – you guessed it – *Scott And Sid*, ambition is in no short supply. The pair met at school when they were 15 and immediately

began inspiring each other to defy expectations and overcome the limitations they saw around them.

They embarked on a series of successful businesses together, from cleaning ovens to establishing a

REEL LIFE

Scott And Sid is the fictionalised story of the filmmakers and how they came to make a film...

full-time events management company while still in their teens, before going on to set up their own media company, which they eventually sold in order to travel the world... at the age of 25. And all of this was planned with one ultimate aspiration in mind: to one day make a film.

Now they have made it. Literally. *Scott And Sid* is the realisation of that whole journey, telling the fictionalised story of their adventures along the way to achieving their aim of becoming filmmakers, fulfilling the list of goals they first wrote together – both on the screen and in real life – while at school. Examining the friendship between the withdrawn, reflective Sid and the rebellious, risk-taking Scott, the film sees them pitted as much against their own self-doubt as the gangsters and loan sharks they encounter along the way. And it's all based on real events.

Don't imagine that the film was just some sort of vanity project for the duo,

SCOTT AND SID



Scott And Sid is unashamedly 'Northern'.



Braveheart-style face paint inspires a Yorkshire office...

however. No, there was a very clear reason for looking to their own life experiences in their first film. The entrepreneurial pair want to encourage others to take up their self-proclaimed 'Dreamchaser' ethos and get people to push themselves to accomplish their own goals.

"It was important to me and Scott to create something that really unearths what goes on behind the scenes to make something that's worthy," Sid explains. "To make anything that's ambitious, you have to go through a lot of shit along the way and we really wanted to highlight that, to help inspire more people."

them to set their sights on filmmaking in the first place?

"Me and Scott had both grown up watching movies like *E.T.* and *The Goonies* and *Back To The Future*. It's such a rich vein of moviemaking that just took me off into a different world, and I just always felt the need to tell stories," Sid reveals. "It's such a powerful medium that, if you can create something of real substance, you can make a difference."

All of which is obviously a good deal easier said than done. Even for "two normal Yorkshire lads" who had launched their own successful businesses, earned millions and

'IT WAS IMPORTANT TO SHOW HOW HARD IT IS TO MAKE SOMETHING WORTHY'

SID SADOWSKYJ

This idea of inspiration is a key theme surrounding the project, whether it is Scott and Sid inspiring each other, or the two filmmakers now planning to take the finished film on a tour to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, trying to spark a new generation of dreamchasers. But what inspired

travelled the world, taking the first step into filmmaking wasn't a simple process, particularly when it came to securing investment.

"A lot of people we found were pathological liars; they would literally just lie constantly," Scott explains. "That and the rejection. It took us 18 months to raise the funds and you're

Tom Blyth and Richard Mason in *Scott And Sid*.



PROMOTIONAL FEATURE



constantly being told, 'No, you're shit.' I think that's the hardest thing."

Rather shrewdly, the pair managed to get financing by reaching out to kindred spirits, finding self-made investors who could see the spirit of what the film was about and relate to the message in it.

Sid explains: "A lot of our investors had this similar battle – whether it was with a teacher or a parent or a peer, who told them that they couldn't be who they could be – and they stuck up the proverbial middle finger to them and said, 'I'm going to do it anyway' to prove them wrong."

With funding secured, the film in the can and seemingly their ultimate goal reached, surely there are no more dreams left for Scott and Sid to chase?

"Actually," Scott says, "the aim was to always be in the industry. This was just the first film. Me and Sid have got a detailed six-year plan and we've got some really exciting things happening. To us, *Scott And Sid* is really just the beginning."

It seems unlikely that even Steven Spielberg had a detailed six-year plan when he first started out...



Q&A

THE DREAMERS

Scott and Sid on friendship, filmmaking and casting yourself...

Why do you think you work so well together as friends and business partners?

SID SADOWSKYJ: The thing about me and Scott is that we're like two guys in a pitch black room and one of us has got the torch and the other one has got the map. Without one another, we'd be screwed. I was very lucky that I met someone who has a different mindset to me, but also my strengths were his weaknesses, and vice versa.

SCOTT ELLIOTT: How me and Sid work is that, if he finds a pound, he'd ring me up to say he has 50p for me. Everything's 50/50.

Why was it so important to you both to make a film?

SS: From a young age, Scott and I were just obsessed with films. To make one just seemed like the impossible dream. We thought let's just go for it, and if we fail, we fail,

but we're going to fail at something that we really want to do.

When did you decide to make it about your own experiences as entrepreneurs?

SS: We sold our business and we ended up travelling the world and started meeting new people, and people are just naturally inquisitive, asking what we've been up to, etc. Me and Scott never thought that what we did was that remarkable, but when you see people's faces, they just couldn't... They were mesmerised and inspired by our journey.

How did you learn to make a film with no experience?

SS: In terms of our approach, we'd look at YouTube videos and we'd watch movies. We had realised that we had so much experience from seeing so many films.



SCOTT AND SID



childlike – when he saw a table he wouldn't sit at the table, he'd either jump on top of it or crawl underneath it. So I was kind of looking for that in the auditions. For Sid, it was more the rigidity, and the stature and just this feeling.

SS: Tom [Blyth, who plays Sid] and Richard [Mason, who plays Scott] worked with us for about 7–8 months before the film got greenlit, and then about 4–5 weeks before we started filming we actually got them in for rehearsals and I think that was really important, because they got to live with me and Scott and it really solidified their friendship off-screen.

'I NEVER SAW THEM AS ME OR SID. TO THIS DAY, I DON'T. THEY'RE TWO CHARACTERS'
SCOTT ELLIOTT

37



The real Scott and Sid, filmmakers Scott Elliott and Sid Sadowskyj.

SE: We were influenced by loads of films. When you first see Scott and Sid in the film I remember thinking, “How do I get across these two different characters very quickly?” and I looked to *Thelma And Louise*. And *Forrest Gump* too. I liked the top scene where he's on the bench and I tried to do something similar where Scott and Sid are in a taxi. Once you're in the process, you're pulling bits from all sorts of places.

How did you split the filmmaking process between you?

SE: I was responsible for the creative side – the writing, casting and the directing. Sid's responsibility was more laying the tracks ahead, the producing and getting everybody together. But in the writing process, I would say “What about this?” and he would say if he didn't like it, and make an alternative suggestion. So he had the easy part by just telling me, and I would have to do all the hard bloody work in typing it up!

What was it like to cast yourselves?

SE: I never saw them as me or Sid. To this day, I don't. They're two characters. When I was writing the film, the character Scott was very

The film starts with a very powerful and emotional scene, which kind of wrongfoots the audience...

SE: Yeah, I wanted it to feel like a freight train, and the audience had to get on-board quick. The dialogue is very fast-paced, which matures as the film develops. The filming style also reflects the way the characters grow. At the start, I wanted it to feel kind of clumsy at times, and then to tighten up. So if you rewatch it, you'll get that we're learning the filmmaking process as the film is being made.

What advice would you give to other aspiring filmmakers?

SS: Whatever story you decide to do, it has to be something that you're totally passionate about. One that you're willing to run through a wall for. I think that our story was one that we felt needed to be told. And, although we make it sound simple, it really is just a case of a lot of hard work. It's blood, sweat and tears. You need to be willing to take the hits and face the rejection because you believe in it so strongly.

TOTAL FILM REVIEW

A can-do attitude and cheeky-chancer spirit buoy this almost-meta indie film. It tells the fictionalised tale of how writer/directors Scott Elliott and Sid Sadowskyj went from school friends to entrepreneurs on the path to their dream of becoming filmmakers. Strong performances by Richard Mason and Tom Blyth elevate the script beyond self-indulgence for a good-natured comedy-drama.

★★★★

SCOTT AND SID IS AVAILABLE NOW ON DVD, BLU-RAY AND DIGITAL DOWNLOAD. SCOTTANDSID.COM