

# 24Lines 24Líneas 24Rader

**A film by The Astburys**



**Written, Directed and Produced By**  
Jake Astbury, Helena Astbury

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

As filmmakers we are constantly in pursuit of creating work that can be read as cinema, but not conclusively so. In 24Lines we have intended to expand our previous cinematic worlds created in our shortform work into an endless landscape in which we have placed our figures, yet through the architecture of our screen space we have attempted to keep entirely within conventional reference.

Language is very important in our practice as makers; whether it be spoken, written or purely visual. It is the latter two that we are most known for in our work so far, rarely using sync sound, often using on screen text to subtitle or juxtapose the moving image.

In 24Lines, our figures rarely speak, but when they do, it becomes clear that they do not need to stick to one language to communicate, be it to deliver, receive or deceive.

The three spoken languages in 24Lines (English, Spanish, Swedish) we chose to work with out of a discussion of authenticity. Whilst the figures in the piece are loosely constructed around notions of the angelic and demonic, the performers themselves only ever speak a language that they themselves understand, even if others in the space (including us as makers) do not. Any words spoken or written not in English are translated, but it is not always explicit when this occurs and it is rarely at the time of the language being heard or read. This was a key device for us in constructing our piece as we wanted the figures to alienate themselves, each other and us as viewers at varying points. Our choice not to translate immediately is also taken from our experiences living in London; within the surrounding residencies of our home in the city alone, over five different languages are spoken around us and we felt very strongly about wanting to reflect this within our fictional construct, building a multi-layered aural landscape that can initiate or alienate those within it. We felt that these strange figures we have created should use language (or not) to integrate or disintegrate their surroundings. Those languages in our reality can sometimes be heard in the background of the interior scenes.

Whilst our investigations around language in 24Lines is as much based around the real as the imagined, our choices for the visual dialogue is almost exclusively informed by iconography of cinematic convention as opposed to the world as seen. We have worked to construct moments of clear reference to popular narrative cinema, with the intention of slowly undoing them at the seams. The leading roles were cast with this premise in mind; that is to say that the performers on sight personify the conventional cinematic notion of the romantic lead, yet we have worked to strip away and render useless the elements usually endowed on such a role: the words to say, the moves to make, their happy endings.

Our direction through 24Lines is reflexive; as we as makers attempt to unpick the points of cinematic convention we have created, so too does the world of our figures and their story unravel. We wanted to make strange the landscape and soundscape of London, building the mystery of who or what these figures are, as well as the mystery we have attempted to create within the narrative of the piece.

SYNOPSIS - A story of love lost, found, returned and burned.

He and She are Angelic; at least they were when they began. They fell in love, meaning banishment for She and an infinite wait for He; we join the two just as he is giving up hope of her return and She is arriving, having made it back as promised to meet halfway.

Now She has arrived, however, he can barely look at her.

The two search for a way back to each other, encountering two other figures on the way: Gabriel, whose moral nature is ambiguous, while Lucky's intentions quickly become clear as being pernicious, almost devilish.

He begins to see and hear things that previously He did not, including a story told by a faceless stranger of an encounter with a girl who somehow reminds him of She - He can no longer listen on peacefully to such things; jealousy and rage consumes him.

As She slowly begins to realise that He may never again return to how they once were, She too experiences rage that results in a fiery pursuit of trying to make him look at her as he did before.

ABOUT 24Lines

24 Lines was shot over 4 of the hottest days in London this year: Easter Weekend 2011. A mobile crew of 4 actors, 1 make up artist, an assistant and The Astburys themselves shot 24 scenes across several locations in London including Greenwich and the vibrant area of Soho. Helena & Jake took roles of directors and camera operators with Jake employing his skills in cinematography and Helena producing each shoot day.

24 Scenes, each at least 3 minutes long, contain only one line, or none.

24Lines started life as two separate concepts; A structural idea for a longform piece of 24 scenes containing one line each and an idea for a future live performance piece around angelic and demonic figures, being worked upon by Jake and Helena respectively. Working as solo makers as often as together, Helena & Jake realised that these ideas, originally intended to be entirely independent of each other, on examination transpired as being two concepts that could work fused together.

During both the casting process and the shoot The Astburys worked on scenes by asking the performers to deliver their line within a given timeframe as opposed to a fixed cue point, or if a cue existed it would be something that the performers themselves would have to initiate.

The viewer will see at intervals glimpses of a lover's scene, at first appearing as simple punctuation of their everyday life as a couple - in fact this is one single scene, shown in reverse order, from the past, a memory. These scenes were shot continuously as one long sequence and have been separated out to punctuate the piece.

Music from Netherlands Avant Garde duo Bebe Fang, German field recording Artist Mirko Uhlig and American Neo Rockers Viva L'American Death Ray Music complete the piece.

## The Astburys

Jake studied fine art film and video at Central and St.Martins, graduating in 1996, counting director Joe Wright and visual effects artist Gurel Mehmet as his contemporaries. In the 15 year span since completing his degree Jake has worked within commercial and artist film and video as a freelance Director of Photography.

Like his professional practice, Jakes personal work has straddled both commercial and artistic spaces due to the influence of his fine art background and professional disciplines as an industry practitioner.

Jake is an acclaimed international expert in Super-8 - his skills exploited in Hollywood productions, music videos and terrestrial television drama. Jake's work has been exhibited at Festivals worldwide including Edinburgh as part of the Black Box series, and Gallery spaces such as the Robert Beck Institute, New York.

Helena studied European Performance and Theatre at Rose Bruford College, and Film at Trinity College , Dublin. Helena is a prize nominated short film director, her first short 'Morning Suits' being shortlisted for the Iris Prize 2008. Helena's grounding in performance/art in a European context has heavily influenced her practice as an artist and deviser of work. Her minimalist "Nots" series, exploring female literary characters in imagined re-tellings of their stories have been shown across festivals and other spaces worldwide, including regular showings in the UK as part of Dance Film series curated by Greenwich Dance Agency.

Helena's work has also been shown world-wide at festivals and galleries including Mix Brasil, Film Festival Breda and Galleri54 Sweden. Helena works as a freelance editor, most recently working on feature documentary 'Captured By Women', an exploration of Anthropological archive footage for the University of Oxford.

Jake and Helena Astbury have been working together as makers since 2007. They have collaborated with Artists including Linda Persson, Karen Mirza and Brad Butler, worked on pieces for projects at The Serpentine Gallery and for artists such as experimental composer Michael Parsons, as well as gaining commercial work for clients including Nike, collaborating with director Darren Bartlett on a short piece showing East London past and present in anticipation of the 2012 Olympic Games. Other commissions include the 2010 Festival Delle Lettere, Milan winning film commission, visually transposing the winning letter in the children's category into an animated piece, screening in Milan in 2010. The Astburys were special guests of the festival.

# 24Lines

A Film by The Astburys

JULIET LUNDHOLM AL SMITH "24Lines"

OMAR SHAKER as Gabriel    JAMES TWEEDY as Lucky

Casting Assistant GEMMA WARING

Make-Up Artist CATT BAUM    Costume Consultant CLARE AMOS

Director of Photography JAKE ASTBURY

Music by MIRKO UHLIG, BEBE FANG,  
VIVA L'AMERICAN DEATH RAY MUSIC

Editor HELENA ASTBURY

Additional Sound Editing SARAH CORKE

Executive Producer OMAR SHAKER

Story by THE ASTBURYS

Written, Directed and Produced by JAKE ASTBURY & HELENA ASTBURY

UK 2011, Colour HD, 16:9  
Running Time 75 minutes  
English, Spanish, Swedish

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