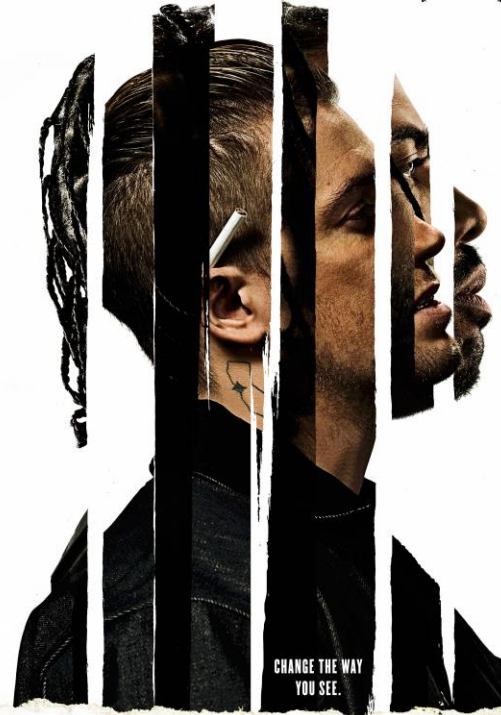


# LIONSGATE®

"IF EVER THERE WAS A FILM TO OPEN AMERICA'S EYES, THIS IS IT."  
-VARIETY



## BLINDSPOTTING

SUMMIT ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH CODEBLACK FILMS AND SNOOT ENTERTAINMENT "BLINDSPOTTING"  
DAVEED DIGGS RAFAEL CASAL JANINA GAWANKAR JASMINE CEPHAS JONES ETHAN EMBRY TISHA CAMPBELL-MARTIN UTKARSH ANBUDOKAR AND WAYNE KNIGHT  
COPRODUCED BY KIMBERLY R. HARDIN, CSA AND NINA HEININGER, CSA EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS EMILY BATSON PRODUCED BY MICHAEL YEZERSKI EDITED BY JONATHAN McHUGH DIRECTED BY GABRIEL FLEMING  
PRODUCED BY TOM HAMMOCK DIRECTED BY ROBBY BAUMGARTNER WRITTEN BY CHRIS HARDING GEOFFREY OJAN PRODUCED BY KEITH CALDER JESS CALDER RAFAEL CASAL DAVEED DIGGS  
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### PRODUCTION NOTES

For additional publicity materials and artwork, please visit:  
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Rating: R for language throughout, some brutal violence, sexual references and drug use  
Run time: 95 minutes  
U.S. Release Date: July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018 [Limited], July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018 [Wide]

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## **BLINDSPOTTING**

SUMMIT ENTERTAINMENT/CODEBLACK FILMS

Official Site: [www.Blindspotting.movie](http://www.Blindspotting.movie)  
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Hashtag: #Blindspotting

Genre: Dramatic Comedy  
Rating: R for language throughout, some brutal violence, sexual references and drug use

U.S. Release Date: July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018 [Limited], July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018 [Wide]  
Running Time: 95 minutes

Cast: Daveed Diggs, Rafael Casal, Janina Gavankar, Jasmine Cephas Jones, Ethan Embry, Tisha Campbell-Martin, Utkarsh Ambudkar, and Wayne Knight

Directed by: Carlos López Estrada  
Written by: Rafael Casal & Daveed Diggs  
Produced by: Keith Calder, Jess Calder, Rafael Casal, Daveed Diggs

## **LOGLINE**

Lifelong friends Daveed Diggs and Rafael Casal co-wrote and star in this timely and wildly entertaining story about the intersection of race and class set against the backdrop of a rapidly gentrifying Oakland.

## **SYNOPSIS**

Collin (Daveed Diggs) must make it through his final three days of probation for a chance at a new beginning. He and his troublemaking childhood best friend, Miles (Rafael Casal), work as movers, and when Collin witnesses a police shooting, the two men's friendship is tested as they grapple with identity and their changed realities in the rapidly-gentrifying neighborhood they grew up in.

Longtime friends and collaborators, Daveed Diggs and Rafael Casal co-wrote and star in this timely and wildly entertaining story about friendship and the intersection of race and class set against the backdrop of Oakland. Bursting with energy, style, and humor, and infused with the spirit of rap, hip hop, and spoken word, *Blindspotting*, boldly directed by Carlos López Estrada in his feature film debut, is a provocative hometown love letter that glistens with humanity.

A Summit Entertainment presentation, in association with Codeblack Films and Snoot Entertainment.

## ABOUT THE FILM

### *A Tale of Two Oaklands: Daveed Diggs and Rafael Casal Collide*

A story about a man trying to stay out of trouble for just three days in a rapidly changing, and charged, Oakland, BLINDSPOTTING walks a tightrope. From its hilarious but hellaciously tense opening moments, the film pulses to the vibrant beat and energy of Oakland, yet bristles with urban fury and fears that can explode at any moment. From that incendiary mix of opposites comes something unexpected. The film is an excavation of race, class and manhood, and a rap-fueled story that at times busts out into its own rhymes. But more than all of that, BLINDSPOTTING is a reminder of what we miss when we look at one another without seeing the full picture.

BLINDSPOTTING made a splash as the Opening Night film at this year's Sundance Film Festival. But the origins go way back, to a life-long friendship as potent as the one between the two trash-talking, tag-teaming Oakland movers in the film. Rafael Casal, a white-Hispanic spoken-word artist, educator and playwright, and Daveed Diggs, a black rapper and actor who came to the fore in Lin Manuel Miranda's Broadway phenomenon *Hamilton*, first met as two Bay Area kids with a lot to say at Berkeley High School. Growing up freestyling with their friends, they cut their creative teeth in the Youth Speaks program, a non-profit focused on youth education, civic engagement and encouraging kids to spit their truth in slam poetry performances.

The program not only bonded the two tightly as friends, it also sparked the direction of their futures, making art, expression and a passion for community an everyday way of life for both.

Diggs went on to study theatre at Brown University, to start the experimental hip-hop group Clipping, to become an early collaborator with Miranda on *Hamilton* (ultimately spending 18 months on Broadway and winning a Tony) and to star on television's *Black-ish* while also teaching and running workshops.

Casal became a two-time National Slam Poetry Champion, then got recruited by HBO's *Def Poetry Jam*, emerging as a rare teenaged standout on the show with his fearlessly candid work. Through his spoken-word performances, he became an early YouTube star and began touring nationwide, often on college campuses ("I couldn't get into those colleges but I could do shows there," he quips.) Casal also released several rap albums, served as Creative Director for the University of Wisconsin-Madison's First Wave undergraduate arts program, staged dozens of productions and all along was developing his own contemporary take on the marriage of theatre and verse.

As each of their careers took off in their own ways, Diggs and Casal continued collaborating whenever they could. "We both had this huge passion for verse-driven work," says Casal. "But when met up again, we found we had this immediate, natural chemistry because we both love theatre, we both love poetry, we both love music and we just started putting all of those things together."

Their other mutual love was Oakland, the city affectionately known to locals simply as "The Town." But the Oakland they'd grown up with, a place of equal parts defiant grit and revelatory grace, was changing so fast it made their heads spin. Hipsters had invaded the boulevards, healthy foods (and prices) had hit the bodegas, and business was booming ... but what was being erased in the process?

Coming 17 years into their friendship, BLINDSPOTTING would become a tale of the two Oaklands—the old Oakland and the new Oakland, the white, working-class Oakland and the black Oakland, the slangy, arty, spirited Oakland and the violent, angry, rebellious Oakland—by exposing the hidden divides between two thick-

as-thieves friends. Collin and Miles are not directly modeled after Diggs and Casal, but they are as close. “These are guys we know from our community, guys people probably know from their communities,” says Casal. “We knew their voices because it’s a part of Oakland, so we knew how to inhabit them.”

BLINDSPOTTING would also become Diggs and Casal’s chance to experiment with a fresh form that is an offshoot of their prior experiments meshing theatre, verse and rap: cinema-in-verse. Putting their own stamp on the idea, they set out to forge a world that feels viscerally real, but where the most private thoughts and intense feelings can suddenly spill over into lyrical poetic meter. Following in the slam poetry tradition, the film is unflinching when it becomes confrontational. Yet that shift is also part of the point. Collin and Miles are laughing and ribbing with each other right up until the moment they hit a nerve of unspoken truth that has to be reckoned with.

At bottom, Casal suggests, the film is about putting our preconceived notions about other people—friends as much as foes—up for interrogation.

“The movie isn’t about the *wide* divide between black and white—it’s about the incredibly *narrow* divide between two people who grew up in the same circumstances with the same hostilities, attitudes and ideologies surrounding them, but one is black and one is white and they have to walk through the world differently,” points out Casal. “It’s not a canyon between them, it’s a hair splinter between them. But what’s a minor distance for Miles is cavernous for Collin. On the surface they’ve had a lot of the same experiences growing up in Oakland but inside they’ve learned very, very different things about the world.”

### **Enter Snoot: The Beginning of Blindspotting**

Much as BLINDSPOTTING feels immediately urgent in 2018, it began with a series of accidental encounters that started 9 years ago.

It was producer and co-founder of Snoot Entertainment, Jess Calder, then Jess Wu, whose instincts would set things in motion. In her early days of developing films with fellow producer Keith Calder, she’d been struck by Casal’s charisma while watching him on *Def Poetry Jam*. “Rafa was able to convey truth and honesty in a way I had never experienced,” recalls Calder. Casal’s skills compelled Calder to start following him on the internet, and then to reach out. “I said to him, ‘This will sound crazy, but I feel like you might have a really great film idea in you, and I’d love to be a part of the process.’”

Casal had never seriously entertained writing for film before that but was up for exploring the idea. He sent Calder a poem he’d recently written called “Monster.” “It’s a piece about how he was growing numb to the fact that so many of his friends were dying violent deaths at a young age,” Jess Calder explains. “I’ve always traced the origin of BLINDSPOTTING back to that one poem.”

Not long after, the Calders had occasion to call upon their new friend Casal. They were screening the documentary *Thunder Soul* for the Congressional Black Caucus in Washington DC and looking for a compelling spoken-word performer. But Casal couldn’t make it so instead he sent an equally gifted friend — Diggs. “Daveed did 20 minutes of freestyle at the event and it blew our minds,” Keith Calder remembers. “We said to Daveed and Rafael, ‘What we want is to make a movie that reflects the two of you and your relationship.’”

## **Screenwriting In Verse**

Casal and Diggs began to move forward with a comic-tinged story about two dead-loyal childhood friends: Collin, the parolee aiming at starting again as a free man if he can just hold it together for 3 more days ... and mischief-making Miles, a wild card whose unpredictability threatens to blow up Collin's chances.

They had something specific in mind for the characters. They wanted the duo to be brash, rollicking and deeply Oakland in their lingo. They wanted to create a natural comic tension between an unrepentant hothead and a former felon trying to make amends. But they also wanted to carve out detailed portraits of two imperfect, very real men facing up to how race, masculinity and identity plays a role in what society expects of them, and what they expect of each other and themselves.

That Collin is black and Miles is working-class white allowed them to dig deeper into the oft-unseen reality of *everyday* racial tensions. These tensions, which often go unremarked upon in daily life, become the underpinning of a story that also tackles more visible divides between police and African-American communities, between wealthy and blue-collar, between the way things were and the way things could potentially be.

Underlining the differing stakes for the two friends, the story kicks off with Collin witnessing a police shooting just when he's doing all he can to avoid the police —an even that not only imperils his parole but also haunts him. Collin drives away, but he can't let it go. The guilt, confusion and anger at the disproportionate impact on the black community set off a slow-burning fuse inside Collin that will ultimately lead to a reckoning both with Miles and with his own bottled fury. "There's been ongoing police brutality in Oakland since before the 60s," notes Casal. "It was something we always felt had to be central to this story."

Casal continues: "Before Collin even sees a man get killed, he's so used to the idea of police violence it feels normal to him. The fact of it doesn't surprise him—it's the personal way it hits him that surprises him. But he knows the history. And while Miles, as a white kid who grew up in a black and brown neighborhood is just as in tune with those hostilities, at the end of the day it just doesn't affect him in the same way."

Early on, they made another key decision that would stick — to ground the story deep in the Oakland soil. "When you talk about race in a movie it's best to recognize that you're not an authority on the subject," says Diggs. "But the thing that Rafa and I do know well is Oakland and so that was the way in."

Set on the sunny, Eastern side of the San Francisco Bay, Oakland is a city that is right now experiencing seismic shifts. In the '40s and '50s it was renowned as "the Harlem of the West," a hotspot of booming African-American businesses and culture. But historical patterns of segregation and cycles of poverty took their toll. Amid the turbulence and civil rights movement of the '60s, Oakland became the epicenter of the Black Power movement and Black Panther Party, and forged a progressive community spirit that would set the city on its own course, unique in the United States. Today it is one of the most diverse places in America, with a mosaic of white, black, Hispanic and Asian residents. Yet the "new Oakland" — the increasingly gentrified, high-rent Oakland, with its hipster hangouts, vegan food trucks and high-toned art galleries — has not come without controversy or a high cost on long-established neighborhoods, traditions and social life.

So is Oakland losing its beautiful soul or finding new ways of bringing people together? That's one of several core questions Diggs and Casal raise for audiences to debate.

"From the start our story was always these two characters telling the story of a changing Oakland," Diggs says. "And we made Miles and Collin movers because it was a good way to have them directly interacting with the

Oakland landscape as it is changing. I've never seen Oakland portrayed on screen before the way that I know it, so we had a chance to do that."

Casal notes that Miles and Collin have different, and disproportionate, stakes on the table in regards to Oakland's changes. "Collin has grown up in a community of color so the idea of lots of white people moving into his neighborhood feels colonizing to him in a way it wouldn't for Miles," he says. "Miles feels like his identity is being stripped from him, but Collin feels like his *whole world* is being undone. Miles is a poor white person and the system is not particularly sympathetic towards him either. But Collin has to fear a bigger monster and has always had to keep himself in line in a different way."

The Oakland that Diggs and Casal depict feels exhilaratingly specific and local, forging the film's transporting sense of place. But also, it is a microcosm of what many American cities face in 2018: marked by youthful vitality, innovation and style to spare, but also reeling from the effects of inequity, unaffordable housing, gangs, crime, racial profiling, underemployment, police violence, structural injustice...and parents of color having to have "the talk" with their kids. The unusual thing about BLINDSPOTTING is that Diggs and Casal traverse both sides of the morphing city, as some thrive and others scramble to stay afloat.

The Oakland setting also seemed to demand the script's fresh form. The urban flows and word-play that are so woven into the fabric of Oakland culture had to be infused into the core of the script. The question was how to do that in the most potent way? The answer for Casal and Diggs was to look to cinematic history—to the upbeat tradition of the movie musical. As in a traditional musical, their script would break away from flat reality at the most heightened moments—but instead of bursting into classical songs it would bust out into spellbinding rhymes. And unlike the romantic language of the musical, the language here would mirror that of the most unflinching rappers and slam poets—ribald, dexterous, assertive and heated.

Says Diggs: "Just as you crank the colors and the sound effects in a film we do the same with the language to make it more exaggerated, so you really get a flavor of how it works in Oakland. The trick was to make it feel like it's organically coming out of the drama."

The pair carefully let the mechanism of inserting rhymes evolve in the film, so that the audience would go with the flow. "The first time we hear Collin rap, it's very literal," notes Diggs. "But as it goes on, it gets more subtle and you're not entirely sure how much of it is in his head and how much is real, which was purposeful."

Meanwhile when Miles gets his hustle on by selling junk left behind in for-sale houses, he displays his own talent for bombastic rhymes. Casal loved the chance to explore Oakland's linguistic roots. "Miles speaks in a slang-driven speech pattern that has dominated street culture in Oakland since the '70s, derived from pimp culture," Casal explains. "This same braggadocious demeanor made its way into music and trickled down into the basic vernacular of the region."

Casal and Diggs continued honing the script whenever they could. But by 2017, the film felt so urgent that the motivation was intense to get it made. "We've had different reasons for this script's urgency at different moments," Casal says. "But I think the country has never been more polarized than it is right now. So when someone gives you the opportunity to have a big stage at a phenomenally heightened moment of public discourse — and at that same moment you and your best friend feel you have something that may warrant people sitting in a seat for 90 minutes — that's a dream cocktail for art that has a purpose and an urgency of story."

There was one obstacle to moving fast. Diggs had only 25 days off in 2017, less than a month's window. That felt to Casal like a now or never challenge. "Daveed said we could wait until later," Casal recalls. "But there's

something about 'later' that always feels like the enthusiasm could just pass. If there's an open window, you jump through the window."

Because Diggs wasn't available to write some of the more verse-heavy scenes, Casal wrote the majority. He took it as a challenge. He'd attempt to write Diggs' rhymes in Diggs' voice, seeing how well he knew his friend. "I got to ghostwrite raps for my best friend who is also an amazing rapper," he muses.

Casal looked to his roots as a slam poet, creating something quite different from say what Miranda did meshing rap cadence into Broadway tunes. "I wrote all the raps in the film as poems in bar form," Casal explains. "They're not really freestyle raps because that's a specific term for a certain improvisational form. It's just written as super-heightened poetic verse that is perhaps all in the character's head."

Casal knew Diggs would fully make it his own in the final performance. "I was thinking it's going to have to feel as good as Daveed's raps, or he'll change them," Casal says. "But in the end, we only changed eight bars in the final moment."

The pressure was great for them all, and not just because of the timeline. Even though Diggs was heart-first into the project, Casal knew his friend had reached a new level of success as he finalized their script. Suddenly, Diggs was a GRAMMY® and Tony Award® winner under pressure to live up to his reputation in his first major film lead. When Casal delivered the final draft to Diggs and it was something special — raw, gripping and exuberant. "Oh shit," Diggs recalls thinking. "This might happen."

### **A First-Time Director Goes Bold**

Even as Casal was pushing to finish the script, the search was on for a director who could combine a high-flying sense of fun and style with the depth and passion the story's subject matter demanded. Diggs and Casal had another upstart creative friend and collaborator in mind — Carlos López Estrada, an up-and-coming young director who had worked with them on music videos and made some short films showcasing the #BARS project at New York's Public Theater.

Estrada had yet to direct a feature. But the pair felt convinced his creative flair and feel for urban life was a dead-on match for the material. Casal says he "pounced" on Estrada while Estrada was sitting unsuspectingly in café. "I have a long history of coaxing my friends into doing difficult things that have a big payoff," Casal laughs. "I cashed in on that reputation."

Casal was upfront with Estrada, telling him that he and Diggs wanted to make a big visual statement with the film and that's why they came to him. "Rafa even continued pitching the story to me on the way to the subway," Estrada recalls.

No more pitching was needed, and Estrada joined the effort full force. While Casal was writing downstairs, the Calders and Estrada were now upstairs in full pre-production mode, refining the approach to the visuals and casting, so they could move as quickly as possible.

They talked a lot about how to orchestrate the script's wide-ranging mix of elements — balancing the funny with the provocative, the angry with the sweet, while still keeping the film a little rough around the edges, like Oakland itself.

Estrada was also intrigued by making a film that he saw as a fresh twist on the American musical tradition — that erupts into rhyme at emotional climaxes just as other films break out into song. “The challenge,” says Estrada, “was to know when to use and when to not use verse so that it felt integrated into the story.”

Most exciting to Diggs and Casal was that Estrada loves to think outside the cinematic box, bringing in techniques from music video, from theater and from his own imagination that give the movie a kinetic, immersive feel. “Carlos is super unconventional in his approach, and that was important to us,” says Diggs. We knew he would just figure out how to make each shot tell the story and not be hung up on what was *supposed* to work.”

As the script was completed, Estrada’s ideas were non-stop. He brought in split-screens and tracking shots—and decided he would shoot the 9-minute climactic confrontation scene with two cameras in a single take all the way through, capturing the explosive back-and-forth between Collin and Miles in real time. And he decided to shoot Collin’s dream sequence to look like a modern music video, replete with flashing colors, choreography, and dollying cameras, while employing theater tech to time everything perfectly. “It was really fun to figure out how to do all these things and incorporate ideas that we’d been using with the theater project and music videos and apply them to traditional, character-driven storytelling,” Estrada says.

The director worked closely with a team including cinematographer Robbie Baumgartner, production designer Tom Hammock, costume designer Emily Batson and sound designer Jeffrey A. Pitts.

Estrada was especially gratified to be give audiences a chance to get to know Casal and Diggs, knowing that both might be relatively new but are not likely to stay that way. “You see such incredible range from these two actors,” the director notes.

Before casting began, the team staged a full reading in Los Angeles, bringing in actor friends to help put a final polish on the script. The upside was some of those friends ended up making their way into the film as well. Meanwhile, casting director Kimberly R. Harden was also on the hunt to fill out the dynamic ensemble that supports Diggs and Casal. The filmmakers were looking especially for a strong roster of women who surround Collin and Miles, women whose freewheeling, jazzy performances could both counter-point and harmonize with what Diggs and Casal bring.

They include Janina Gavankar (*The League*, *True Blood*) as Collin’s skeptical ex-girlfriend and co-worker Val, who wants Collin to demonstrate that he’s really changed since he returned home from prison; Jasmine Cephas Jones (who originated the role of Margarita “Peggy” Schuyler in *Hamilton*) as Miles’ sharp girlfriend Ashley, who pushes him to be a better role model for their son; and Tisha Campbell-Martin (*Martin*, *My Wife and Kids*) as Collin’s mother and long-time Oakland advocate Mama Liz.

Also joining the cast are Ethan Embry (most recently seen as Coyote Bergstein on *Grace and Frankie*) as the police officer Collin witnesses shoot an unarmed man; Utkarsh Ambudkar (*The Mindy Project*) as a local who has a riveting story to tell about Collin’s past; and young Ziggy Baitanger as Miles and Ashley’s son, who absorbs so much of his environment.

It was Harden who suggested Campbell-Martin for the role of Mama Liz. “She’s phenomenal, and she steals the scene,” Keith Calder says.

Gavankar won the role with a standout audition. “Janina was a discovery for me,” Jess Calder says. “In her interview, she made a compelling, gut-punch of a case for how she related to Val, and she really thought about what her role *could* be.”



The hardest role to cast was the cop who upends Colin's whole world just as he's getting his life back together. "The officer is by most accounts the villain, but he also needed to be empathetic," Jess Calder points out, "and since it is a mostly non-speaking role the physicality had to be right. We were lucky that Ethan Embry fell in love with the script."

Baitanger was cast because of his ability to calmly tackle one of the film's most wrenching scenes. "We were looking for an adorable 6 year-old who could also do a really intense scene," Jess Calder explains, noting that she also felt a strong responsibility to protect Ziggy on set from too much of the film's reality.

As the roster of exciting actors grew, excitement began to mount. But it was when cast and crew got to Oakland that the characters came electrifyingly to life. There, the spirit of the local community got under everyone's skin and became one with their performances.

### ***Out of Oakland: The Black Panther Movement***

BLINDSPOTTING sees two Oaklands—one city steeped in a long, complicated history of oppression and defiance and another city of young newcomers forming atop the old one. For those who have long called it home, the fear is that if The Town's history is buried or ignored by the changes, it could cut off a community from its most sustaining roots.

An essential branch of those roots is the story of the Black Panther Party (BPP), a group that emerged out of Oakland in 1966 to become a flashpoint in the national fight for civil rights. Though renown for their black leather jackets, dark berets and Black Power ideology, the group's impact went much further. They also helped to forge and nurture a sense of unbreakable community in Oakland that impacts every native for several generations.

"Everybody coming of age now in Oakland was raised on a well-balanced diet of historical context and that includes what the Black Panthers did for the community and what happened to the Black Panthers, which led to a lot of distrust of the government but also an inclination towards progressivism, protest and community action," explains Casal.

It might have been half a century ago, but the circumstances of the BPP's founding remain hauntingly familiar. Two young students at Oakland's Merritt College, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, formed the group for one reason: to help protect the black community from the police brutality and unequal treatment they saw devastating Oakland families. They chose the name Black Panther because, as Newton said, it was an animal that doesn't strike first but will aggressively protect itself from attack.

The BPP embraced the incendiary idea of armed self-defense, which would soon bring them into violent conflict with the law. But that was just part of what they did. They also campaigned for full black employment, fair housing and access to healthcare and education. The BPP became famed for their free breakfast program, which provided meals for impoverished Oakland youth. They ran free health education and sickle cell anemia testing programs, provided transportation for the elderly, conducted voter drives, sponsored candidates for office and monitored police stops long before the advent of video, let alone smart phones.

Spreading across the nation, the BPP was visible everywhere in the early 70s. But targeted by the FBI (which had been directed to disrupt the group through surveillance, intimidation and covert tactics) and riven by shootouts with the police, controversial criminal charges as well as internal power struggles the BPP began to collapse.

More than 50 years after its inception, debate still rages over the Black Panther Party as a force in American history. But in Oakland, its impact on the culture is undeniable. Former party members remain some of the city's most influential and beloved artists, teachers and community advocates. Tupac Shakur's mother was a member of the Black Panther Party, as were the parents and grandparents of many younger artists in the city. The history of the Black Panther Party is now literally painted on Oakland's surface, with a mural on 14<sup>th</sup> and Peralta by artists Refa Senay and Batsh Lo.

Being raised on utopian dreams, notes Casal, is what makes some Oaklanders so defiant in the face of gentrification. They want to make sure the past isn't ignored as Oakland hurtles into the future. "When you're raised on radical ideas it makes it that more jarring to have this sudden influx of wealthy outsiders—and especially when you see that the police force's history of violence and corruption against black people is ongoing even as richer people are moving in. So that's the tension in which our story takes place."

### ***This Moment In Oakland***

There was zero question that *BLINDSPOTTING* had to shoot on Oakland's streets, both in the city's rundown, vanishing neighborhoods and its skyrocketing new developments. After all, Oakland's many paradoxes, as a city that can be sometimes playful, sometimes tragic, where ecstatic late-night dance parties and bloodshed are both part of the rolling cultural landscape, are a huge chunk of what make Collin and Miles who they are.

It was important to everyone involved that a visceral sense of the city — the city as it is in this moment, still hanging onto the legacies of its historic past, while on the precipice of being remade—emanates from every frame of the film.

"The film is truly a love letter to the Oakland where we grew up," says Diggs. "There's a spirit there that we —and it's not just us but also most artists who are from there — want to preserve for posterity. Because it feels like it's changing."

Adds Casal: "The central hub of Oakland has just gone into this massive overhaul with an influx of people. With new people comes new perspectives, and with that, new commerce. But that turnover has felt violent, both economically and physically, to people who've lived there their whole lives, because they are suddenly treated very differently."

At one time, Diggs' whole family lived in Oakland, but they've all gone, even his father, who was priced out and relocated north to Richmond (which is now facing its own gentrification woes). Each time Diggs visited, he notes, he felt part of the city was "slipping away."

This was not just a metaphor but a physical reality. As Diggs and Casal wrote, they had to confront the fact that places they were writing about were quite literally being razed from the scene. "There were a lot of places and buildings in the original script that we had to cut because they didn't exist anymore as locations, or even as social references," Casal explains.

Diggs describes the loss of places that have become a part of your own internal landscape as a "scary feeling," one that can uproot your whole identity. "Knowing where you're from is so foundational for who you are as a human, and if that disappears, it might mean that you have no context anymore. Artists who are from Oakland are hell-bent on preserving our context, making sure there is an origin story," Diggs continues.

For Diggs, that meant embracing Oakland's weirdness and mythology as well. "People marvel at how eccentric Oakland feels. But the weird things, the extraordinary things, are the commonplace stuff for us. For example,

the history of the Black Panther party is woven through every single piece of concrete in Oakland, but it's not commented on. It just is," he describes.

Estrada has never lived in Oakland, but he'd felt the city come alive in his mind when Diggs and Casal talked of it, and he submerged himself into the city before production. "We visited as many neighborhoods and met as many people as we could," Estrada explains. "On a scouting trip early on, we hung out with Rafael's family and friends the first week and Daveed's friends the second week. From May to July, we were there every week."

The scouting process at times became unexpectedly emotional, as Casal and Diggs encountered the ghosts of a past still fresh in their minds. "We'd show up to places Rafa and Daveed wanted to show us, and they'd been closed, or turned into something else, a pizza shop had become condos, that kind of thing," Estrada recalls. Casal adds: "We were driving around counting what was gone. It's like counting the number of people you know who've died in your lifetime. Thinking or reading about it is one thing. Seeing the enormity of that loss is another—realizing I can't sit in the shadow of those memories of that diner anymore, because it doesn't exist."

The one place they knew would still be there was the Chapel of the Chimes, a historical landmark that has been part of the city since 1909, and its surrounding St. Mary Cemetery, two enduring pieces of Oakland's storied past. A serene and solemn location, Diggs always felt the cemetery would be the place Collin jogs each morning to clear his head—the place where, amid the presence of the dead, he tries to find his own life after prison.

While the film takes spirited, humorous digs at gentrification, it also finds some upsides in change. Even as prices shoot up and offerings go vegan at the local Kwik Way, Collin comes to appreciate the availability of healthier food in a neighborhood that was previously a "food desert."

At the same time, there are elements of Oakland — and American life in general — that the two knew they could not offer any easy ways past. The effects of toxic masculinity and aggression are very real in the city and in the film. That especially comes to the fore in the way Casal inhabits Miles, who can be a fun, loyal friend like no other but also a dangerous live wire who won't back down. "Until recently, Miles was a minority in his neighborhood," Casal points out. "Violence has been his agent of salvation. He's been fighting his whole life and making sure he can claim his space."

Casal notes that both friends have reasons for their flammability — but also that both have had trouble moving forward because of it. He continues: "Violence plays a different role as a black male for Collin. It's constantly chasing you in a different way and from a different authority. So violence is a complicated thing for both of them. It's in the culture all around them: American culture, police culture, Oakland culture. And that violence and aggression is driven by a pervasive machismo."

Casal summarizes: "Hopefully, we show how hilarious and brutal life can be at the same time in Oakland."

### **Oakland & Music**

In Oakland, music is life and life is music. Walk down Telegraph or San Pablo any day or night, and you'll hear the sounds of rhyme spitters Mac Dre, E-40, Dru Down, Spice 1, Too \$hort and Richie Rich drifting from passing cars and open apartment windows. The syntax and rhythm of Oakland's decades-long tradition of street poetry and verse mastery is infused into the very fabric of BLINDSPOTTING — as are local recording artists.

While New York usually takes center stage in rap history, Oakland has long been a rap capital in its own right, befitting the city's history of urban artistry and social engagement. In fact a separate rap culture to the one on

the East Coast developed simultaneously in the city, drawing on a rich brew from Oakland's jazz, soul and funk scenes of the past.

It was in 1981 that Oakland officially put its stamp on rap when Motorcycle Mike's politically-charged single "Super Rat" dropped. Following soon after came Too\$hort's single "Girl." As rap boomed as a subculture, Oakland-based artists continued to be at the forefront. The most famed of all was of course the late Tupac Shakur, who was born in New York but later moved to California, and made his name with the Oakland-based group Digital Underground, ultimately claiming Oakland as his true home. Shakur would go on to be a household name whose work defined the epitome of socially conscious gangsta rap. Yet also coming out of the same scene was MC Hammer whose creative dance styles and energy spoke to another side of Oakland.

By the 90s, a slew of Bay Area labels—including Sick Wid It, Get Low, Young Black Brotha, In-A-Minute Records and Master P—started to break out. By 1992, Oakland had commandeered a new word for its rap culture: hyphy—local slang for hyperactive, first coined by local rapper Keak De Sneak. Seen as an alternative to increasingly commercialized rap, hyphy was gritty but witty, loud but layered, often with a socially conscious storytelling bent. For the next two decades, Oakland produced a crop of essential stars including Mac Dre, E-40, G-Eazy, The Hieroglyphics and the Living Legends, to name just a few.

Today, Oakland is home to a fittingly vast variety of styles, from alternative "backpack" rap to conscious rap, but much of it pays homage one way or another to the city's long history of boldness and activism.

Given all that history, the music in BLINDSPOTTING—the wall-to-wall rap soundtrack and the score by Michael Yezerki—had to get it right. The most essential thing for all the filmmakers was authenticity.

"There's so much original music and needle-drop music in the film," Keith Calder says. "We felt the vast majority had to be from Oakland, but we had so many different types of music and another style with the score that it took time to match it all tonally."

Yezerki even endeavored to make sure that every musician who plays on the score had some connection to Oakland. That same idea extended to the soundtrack.

"We were pretty obsessive about getting the right music," Diggs confesses. "When you talk about Bay Area hip-hop there's nothing else that sounds like that so it was important for us to be precise and specific. We've got Tower of Power in there, we've got Mac Dre. We run the gamut of kinds of music that are for real, *for real* from the Bay Area."

In Oakland, music has always been a primary means for citizens, from all walks of life, to share their stories and express their realities. "Back when we were living there, I knew people who were hustlers but were also beautiful poets, speakers and thinkers, and things like that aren't at odds with each other in Oakland," muses Diggs.

One of the things music can do at its best is slip past our defenses, sometimes even shift perceptions. And with BLINDSPOTTING, Diggs, Casal, Estrada and the Calders would be gratified to see that kind of below-the-surface effect. "We wanted to push some boundaries, and that's what good rap verse does," says Casal.

The film's very title refers back to a scene in the film involving a common illusion: a picture that, at first, looks like a vase, but on second glance can instead look like two faces ... if you shift your eyes in just the right way. Janina Gavankar's character calls the effect "blindspotting," because you see only one thing while missing something else that is very much a part of the picture.

Blindspotting is a potent metaphor not just for race relations but for all human communication. For all its timely themes, and lens on how we perceive and sometimes blindly miss one another, **BLINDSPOTTING** is at its heart a hometown adventure told through the friendship of two inseparable underdogs.

**# # # # #**

## ABOUT THE CAST

**Daveed Diggs (Collin/Co-Writer/Producer)** is a Tony Award®, GRAMMY®, and Lucille Lortel Award-winning actor and rapper who is widely known for originating the dual roles of Thomas Jefferson and Marquis de Lafayette in the Broadway sensation, *Hamilton*.

Diggs most recently appeared in the hit Lionsgate feature *Wonder*, opposite Julia Roberts and Jacob Tremblay, in a performance heralded as “irresistibly charming” and “deeply sympathetic.” He’s also recognizable as the voice of Dos in Fox’s Academy Award®-nominated animated feature, *Ferdinand*. He is currently in production for Netflix’s untitled Dan Gilroy project alongside Jake Gyllenhaal, Natalia Dyer, Tom Sturridge, Toni Collette, and John Malkovich.

On television, Diggs will next star in TNT’s *Snowpiercer* and lend his voice to Fox’s *Bob’s Burgers*, Netflix’s *Bojack Horseman*, and Josh Gad’s new animated musical comedy for Apple TV, *Central Park*. Most recently he was seen on ABC’s Emmy®-nominated series, *Black-ish*, and Netflix’s hit comedy, *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*. He also starred in HBO’s *Tour de Pharmacy*, alongside Andy Samberg and Orlando Bloom. Diggs executive produced ABC’s *The Mayor* and is creating original content for ESPN. Previous television includes NBC’s *Law & Order: SVU* and Netflix’s *The Get Down*, created by visionary director Baz Luhrmann.

Before *Hamilton*, Diggs was already well respected in the underground hip-hop scene as a member of the West Coast-based experimental trio clipping. Diggs has toured nationally and internationally, both as a solo artist and with clipping, playing venues including Sonar Festival in Barcelona, Off Festival in Krakow, ATP Iceland in Keflavic, and Brooklyn’s AfroPunk Fest. Special engagement bookings include the Red Bull Music Academy and Moog Electronics. The group was also nominated for a Hugo Award for their sophomore album, *Splendor & Misery*.

**Rafael Casal (Miles/Co-Writer/Producer)** is a writer, performer and producer originally from the Bay Area, CA. Rafael got his start as a national youth poetry champion at Brave New Voices, and performing on three seasons of HBO’s *Def Poetry*. He is a long-time content creator online with over 4 million views across YouTube and Facebook, celebrated for his poetry, music, web shorts and political commentary. Rafael served as Creative Director for the University of Wisconsin-Madison’s First Wave Undergraduate arts program from 2008 to 2010, where he directed nearly 24 stage productions while curator for the LINE BREAKS Theater Festival. Under Casal’s creative direction in 2009, the First Wave program received the Governor’s Arts Award for arts programming.

As a writer, and vocal activist, his theater-in-verse works have been presented at hundreds of colleges and venues (Lincoln Center, San Francisco Opera House, NYU, Kennedy Center, etc.) He has three music releases, which had records placed on shows with MTV and Showtime, and were featured at SXSW & Sundance Film Festival. His most recent theater piece, *The Limp*, was presented as a solo production at IATI Theater in New York, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco, the Hollywood Fringe Festival, and is now being developed into a musical.

Casal is the co-founder and artistic director of the #BARS workshop at NYC’s The Public Theater, which received high praise from *Elle*, *TIME*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *Teen Vogue*, *Slate* & more. He just completed a new music project with Daveed Diggs to be released Spring 2018. [getrafael.com](http://getrafael.com)

**Janina Gavankar (Val)**, an Indian/Dutch Actress, musician, producer, and geek, is a modern-day renaissance woman, transitioning effortlessly between film, television shows, and video games. Gavankar shares the screen with renowned actors while simultaneously forging her path in the tech and music with tremendous success.

Most recently, Gavankar starred as Imperial soldier Iden Versio in *Star Wars Battlefront 2*, which was released November 14, 2017. With a single-player campaign in *Battlefront 2* that spans three decades of *Star Wars* — the campaign takes place between the events of *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* and *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* — there's a lot riding on her elite TIE Fighter-pilot character. Not only will she represent what has happened within those three decades, but as a member of the Imperial side, she'll have to get people to understand her character

In television, Gavankar most recently starred as Diana Thomas, female lead of FOX's *Sleepy Hollow*. Gavankar is known for playing diverse characters most prominently as Luna, the shapeshifter on HBO's *True Blood*; Shiva, the namesake of the sought after trophy on FX's *The League*; Papi, the swashbuckling Latina lothario on Lifetime's *The L-Word*; and Meredith, the whip cracking NY cop in NBC's *Mysteries of Laura*. Additional roles include a series regular role on ABC's *The Gates*, and recurring roles on CW's *The Vampire Diaries* and *Arrow*, and FOX's *Traffic Light* and *The Goodwin Games*.

In film, Janina most recently appeared in *Sidney Hall* alongside Logan Lerman and Elle Fanning. The film premiered at the 2017 Sundance Film Festival. In *Cortex*, she stars opposite Josh Lucas. The latter also marks the first foray into features for Janina's production company Safe Haven Productions. Previous roles include SONY's hit film *Think Like a Man Too*, independent films *Who's Afraid of Vagina Wolf?* and *Satellite of Love*, which successfully made festival rounds. Next up, Gavankar can be seen opposite Olivia Thirlby in independent noir thriller, *The White Orchid*.

Gavankar grew up studying classical piano, percussion, and voice. Her musical talents have even landed her on stage at Carnegie Hall performing a percussion duet with Questlove. Early in her career, Gavankar was signed to Cash Money Records, with girl group EnDera, and we have heard her original music licensed for film and television. Gavankar has produced three of her own critically acclaimed music videos including her 2010 reworking of the Kanye West hit "Love Lockdown," 2012's festival-winning "Waiting For Godot," and her current musical piece "Don't Look Down," featuring a drum corps, which was created to incite conversation about arts education funding in the US.

A self-proclaimed Geek, Gavankar is passionate about tech and gaming. In January, 2017, she designed and launched [altFound.com](http://altfound.com) - an online lifestyle brand for grown geeks, featuring interviews, counter-culture posts, and "Hack Packs" — curated collections of unique life hack items, apparel and tech accessories. She is a first-round investor in the hugely successful fitness start-up, ClassPass and was the first actor to join twitter (having signed up on Richard Branson's computer while on his private island). Additionally, she designs websites for friends, and is so technologically creative that she regularly participates on panels at conferences educating the entertainment industry on the practical application of multiple new digital platforms. Her efforts were awarded with the Gravity Summit Excellence in Social Media/Entertainment Award in 2011.

A very public and obsessive gamer herself, Gavankar has starred in Ubisoft's smash hit *Far Cry 4*, Halo's award-winning series "Hunt The Truth." and is currently starring in a top secret game, announcing in April, 2017.

Originally from Joliet, Illinois, Gavankar now resides in Los Angeles.

**Jasmine Cephas Jones (Ashley)** originated the roles of Peggy Schuyler and Maria Reynolds in the Tony Award®-winning Broadway hit *Hamilton: An American Musical*. Jasmine trained at Berklee College of Music for vocal performance and The Neighborhood Playhouse for theater. She is a member of the LAByrinth Theater Company. Her theater productions include *Hamilton* (Broadway) and *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* (Atlantic Theater). In film, she's appeared in *Mistress America* (Fox Searchlight) and *Titus* (Dakus Films UK), and on television, she had roles in *Blue Bloods* (CBS), *Unforgettable* (CBS), and *Odd Mom Out*

(Bravo). Jasmine will be seen in the upcoming feature, *Blood Surf* with James Franco and recently had a recurring role on season 6 of *Girls* (HBO). Jasmine sang "America The Beautiful" with her original Schuyler sisters *Hamilton* co-stars on the field before Super Bowl LI and also debuted a fashion collaboration with the Lou & Grey brand. Other upcoming features include, *Blindspotting*, *Dog Days*, and *Monsters & Men*.

**Utkarsh Ambudkar (Rin)** is known for his breakout roles in *Pitch Perfect* and on the hit series *The Mindy Project* (as Kaling's brother Rishi). He's considered one of the freshest, smartest, most relevant voices in the business right now and 2018 promises to be a big year for him.

In March, Ambudkar co-stars in the Netflix action/comedy *Game Over, Man!*, directed by Kyle Newacheck, with Adam Devine, Anders Holms and Blake Anderson. Scott Rudin and Eli Bush teamed with Seth Rogen, Evan Goldberg and James Weaver to produce the feature with the Mail Order Comedy troupe that generates the Comedy Central series *Workaholics*. The film is a completely original idea about three friends on the verge of getting their video game financed when their benefactor (Ambudkar) is taken hostage by terrorists.

In early February, Ambudkar stars opposite Brie Larson in the romantic comedy *Basmati Blues*, directed and co-written by Dan Baron.

He recently finished shooting the indie comedy *Brittany Runs a Marathon* as the romantic lead to the titular character, played by Jillian Bell. The independent feature follows an underachieving and over-partied 28-year-old woman who decides to take control of her life — one New York City block at a time — and marks the debut for director Paul Downs Colaizzo. Material Pictures' Tobey Maguire and Matthew Plouffe are producing the project with Picture Films' Margot Hand.

Late last year, Ambudkar was also featured in *The Problem with Apu*, comedian Hari Kondabolu's documentary about the character from *The Simpsons*. Ambudkar played Apu's American nephew 'Jay,' which gave him the distinction of being the first Indian-American to lend his voice to the show. Along with Whoopi Goldberg, Kal Penn, Hasan Minhaj and others, Ambudkar discusses the cultural ripple effect of Apu becoming one of the most visible "Indian" characters on TV over the last 30 years.

Born in Baltimore, Maryland, Ambudkar received his training as a graduate of NYU's Tisch School of Fine Arts. While in New York, he acted in various plays and received a Lucille Lortel Award nomination for his work in *Animals Out of Paper*, by Rajiv Joseph at the Second Stage Theatre.

Multi-hyphenate Ambudkar also discovered a love for hip-hop, performing as a part of the group The Beatards with acts such as LMFAO, Santigold, Azealia Banks, Spankrock, G-Eazy, Far East Movement, Public Enemy and Questlove. This musical ability led to his breakout role in the Universal feature *Pitch Perfect*, alongside Anna Kendrick and Elizabeth Banks.

Originating the role of Aaron Burr in the developmental readings of *Hamilton*, Ambudkar reunited with Lin-Manuel Miranda as part of the improvisational rap group Freestyle Love Supreme, performing live in New York City under the name UTK the INC. In 2016, Seeso streamed episodes of Freestyle Love Supreme, based on live performances in which the musical comedy group would turn audience cues into musical numbers. The show originally aired on Pivot in 2014.

Ambudkar's additional TV credits include Showtime's *White Famous*, produced by Jamie Foxx and created by Tom Kapinos (*Californication*) in which he stole scenes as Malcolm, Jay Pharoah's agent. His credits also include *House of Lies*, with Don Cheadle; TNT's *Legends*, opposite Sean Bean; a recurring arc on ABC's *The Muppets* and a guest role on HULU's anthology series *Dimension 404*.



On the big screen, Ambudkar appeared in Universal's *Ride Along 2* with Kevin Hart and Ice Cube, with whom he also co-starred in *Barbershop 3*.

## ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

**Carlos López Estrada (Director)** was born in Mexico City. He moved to the States at age 12 and later attended film school at Chapman University. He built his career directing commercials and music videos for artists such as clipping, Thundercat & Flying Lotus, Passion Pit, Reptar, and many others. When he was only 24, he won a Latin GRAMMY® for a stop-motion music video he filmed in his garage for the Mexican pop band Jesse & Joy. He's the youngest director to win a Latin GRAMMY® to date.

In 2015, Carlos directed his first narrative project, a short film titled "Identity Theft." It was adapted from the one-act play of the same name by Andrew Rothschild, and starred Bill Irwin and Kate Burton, both veterans of the stage. The film premiered at the Palm Springs International Festival of Short Films.

Shortly after, he created and co-directed (with Cristina Berkovitz) a Los Angeles multimedia stage show titled *Ded*, based on the Mexican Day of the Dead tradition. He later moved East to New York City to work with Rafael Casal and Daveed Diggs at the Public Theater. There, he directed tapings of the duo's #BARS verse-theater workshop, featuring Casal, Diggs, Sarah Kay, and a handful of rising-star performers. Volume 2 of the workshop, featured Jasmine Cephas Jones, Anthony Ramos, Pharoahe Monch, Lemon Andersen and Javier Muñoz.

Also premiering at Sundance this year is Estrada's award-winning digital series *High and Mighty*. *Blindspotting* is his first feature film.

**Keith Calder and Jess Calder (Producers)** co-founded Snoot Entertainment in 2004 to develop, finance, and produce films across all genres and media. In addition to having *Blindspotting* premiering at Sundance 2018, Snoot's most recent credits include Charlie Kaufman's Academy Award®-nominated animated film *Anomalisa* and Adam Wingard's *Blair Witch*. Snoot also premiered Sean Byrne's *The Devil's Candy* at the 2015 Toronto Film Festival. Other recent Snoot productions include *Faults*, the dramatic thriller starring Leland Orser and Mary Elizabeth Winstead; Adam Wingard and Simon Barrett's *The Guest*; the award-winning horror film *You're Next*, which Lionsgate released wide in August of 2013; and the NAACP Image Award-nominated documentary *Thunder Soul*. Snoot is currently in post-production on Abe Forsythe's *Little Monsters*, which stars Lupita Nyong'o, Josh Gad, and Alexander England.

**Chris Harding (Co-Producer)** is a Los Angeles-based producer at Snoot Entertainment. Most recently, he produced *Southbound* for The Orchard.

**Geoffrey Quan (Co-Producer)** is an award-winning independent filmmaker and producer. Projects include Gillian Robespierre's *Obvious Child*, Vikram Gandhi's *Barry*, Justin Tipping's *Kicks*, Ana Lily Amirpour's *The Bad Batch*, Helen Hunt's *Ride*, Chris Messina's *Alex of Venice*, Zoe Cassavetes' *Day Out of Days*, Casey Affleck's *Light of My Life*, and Carlos Lopez Estrada's *Blindspotting*, which will premiere in competition at Sundance 2018. Geoff is a recipient of the 2009 IFP Marcie Bloom Fellowship in Film, a 2011 fellow in Film Independent's Project: Involve, a 2012 producing fellow for the Center for Asian American Media, and a 2014 Sundance Creative Producing Summit Fellow. He has taught filmmaking at Columbia University and Sarah Lawrence College, and has produced videos for *New York Magazine* and *The Wall Street Journal*. He is a graduate of Columbia University's MFA film program and the University of California at Berkeley.

**Robby Baumgartner (Director of Photography)** is a veteran filmmaker who began his career as a feature film gaffer. During his career, some of the notable films Robby gaffed were *8 Mile*, *21 Gram*, *Babel*, and his last film as a gaffer, Paul Thomas Anderson's classic film *There Will Be Blood*. It was after *TWBB* won an Academy Award® for cinematography that Robby decided to finally stop gaffing and start DPing full-time. *Blindspotting*

marks the third film he's DPed for Snoot Entertainment's Keith Calder and Jess Calder and his first (but not last) collaboration with *Blindspotting's* director Carlos Estrada Lopez.

**Tom Hammock (Production Designer)** studied landscape architecture at the University of California at Berkeley and production design at the American Film Institute. Recently, he designed *The Guest*, *You're Next*, *V/H/S/2*, *Blair Witch* and the *Outcast* pilot (*The Walking Dead* creator's new show) for longtime collaborator Adam Wingard. The two just finished *Death Note* for Netflix and are currently working on *Godzilla vs. Kong* for Warner Bros.

**Gabriel Fleming's (Editor)** sordid past in editing includes major motion pictures, reality television, documentary, video installations and art film, as well as writing and directing award-winning independent feature films. Notable editing credits include *Teen Wolf*, *America's Next Top Model*, *Lone Survivor*, and *Deepwater Horizon*.

**Michael Yezerski (Composer)** is an Australian composer now based in Los Angeles. He is a four-time AACTA nominee and remains one of the most sought-after composers in his native country. With a background in both electronic music production and orchestral writing, his scores are highly evocative, original, and diverse.

*Blindspotting* is Michael's 16<sup>th</sup> feature film. He previously collaborated with Keith and Jess Calder on *The Devil's Candy*.

Other notable credits include *Wanted* (Netflix), *Wolf Creek Series 2*, *A Place To Call Home* (Acorn TV), *Only The Dead See The End of War* (HBO) and *The Lost Thing* (Academy Award®-winning animated short).

**Jonathan McHugh (Music Supervisor)** is an independent film producer and music supervisor who has held high-level corporate film and music creative positions at New Line Cinema (Warner Bros.) (VP Soundtracks), Sony/Jive Records (Sr. VP Film & TV), Universal/Def Jam Records (Sr. VP Visual Media) over the past few decades. McHugh has produced more than 30 films and music supervised more than 60, but *Blindspotting* is one of his all-time faves thus far.

**Emily Batson (Costume Designer)** was born and raised in the California Bay Area. She believes stories, actions and clothes have the power to transform and inspire. In addition to costume design for film, her most recent custom-styling work for the artist St. Vincent has been featured on billboards in Time's Square, in *Rolling Stone*, on *The Ellen Show*, and on stages around the world.

## **CREDITS**

SUMMIT ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS  
IN ASSOCIATION WITH CODEBLACK FILMS  
IN ASSOCIATION WITH SNOOT ENTERTAINMENT

DAVEED DIGGS  
RAFAEL CASAL  
JANINA GAVANKAR  
JASMINE CEPHAS JONES  
ETHAN EMBRY  
TISHA CAMPBELL-MARTIN  
UTKARSH AMBUDKAR  
KEVIN CARROLL  
NYAMBI NYAMBI / JON CHAFFIN  
AND WAYNE KNIGHT

CASTING BY KIMBERLY R. HARDIN, CSA / NINA HENNINGER, CSA  
MUSIC SUPERVISOR JONATHAN MCHUGH  
MUSIC BY MICHAEL YEZERSKI  
EDITED BY GABRIEL FLEMING  
COSTUME DESIGNER EMILY BATSON  
PRODUCTION DESIGNER TOM HAMMOCK  
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY ROBBY BAUMGARTNER  
CO-PRODUCERS CHRIS HARDING / GEOFFREY QUAN  
PRODUCED BY RAFAEL CASAL / DAVEED DIGGS  
PRODUCED BY KEITH CALDER / JESS CALDER  
WRITTEN BY RAFAEL CASAL & DAVEED DIGGS  
DIRECTED BY CARLOS LÓPEZ ESTRADA

**BLINDSPOTTING**

CAST

Collin DAVEED DIGGS  
 Miles RAFAEL CASAL  
 Val JANINA GAVANKAR  
 Ashley JASMINE CEPHAS JONES  
 Officer Molina ETHAN EMBRY  
 Mama Liz TISHA CAMPBELL-MARTIN  
 Rin UTKARSH AMBUDKAR  
 James KEVIN CARROLL  
 Yorkie NYAMBI NYAMBI  
 Dezz JON CHAFFIN  
 Patrick WAYNE KNIGHT  
 Nancy MARGO HALL  
 Sean "Ziggy" Jones ZIGGY BAITINGER  
 Judge LELAND ORSER  
 Randall Marshall TRAVIS PARKER  
 Curtis "Cuttie" Cutworth LANCE CAMERON HOLLOWAY  
 Tin JUSTIN CHU CARY  
 Chet CASEY ADAMS  
 Marty MICHAEL RHYS KAN  
 Jimmy JUSTIN LIU  
 Terry AVIEL AYOUNG  
 Nak ROLANDA D. BELL  
 Sid JOHN MOESLEIN  
 Angela SARAH KAY  
 Tanner GEORGE WATSKY  
 Rachel Molina KENDRA ANDREWS  
 Tel E. AMBRIZ DeCOLOSIO  
 Officer Farmer ZACK DUHAME  
 Tina AMANDA ENCELAN  
 Clerk RAHUL GUPTA  
 Eddie MATT McABEE  
 Tall Biker CAMERON FOXLY  
 Officer in Car LUIS CARLOS MUNOZ  
 Bunny Skylar CHRIS HARDING

Supervising Stunt Coordinator CLAYTON BARBER  
 Stunt Coordinators CASEY ADAMS  
 MATT BERBERI  
 Stunt Double (Collin) TRAVIS PARKER  
 Stunt Double (Miles) CLAYTON BARBER  
 Stunt Driver ZACK DUHAME  
 Stunt Utility EDDIE FERNANDEZ  
 JEREMY FITZGERALD

a Snoot Entertainment Production

Production Supervisor MARC KELLY

Assistant Director LA MAR STEWART

A Camera Operator REID MURPHY

A Camera 1st Assistant Camera STEVE CUEVA  
 B Camera 1st Assistant Camera PATRICK MCARDLE  
 A Camera 2nd Assistant Camera SAM LINO  
 B Camera 2nd Assistant Camera SHANNON BRINGHAM

Still Photographer ARIEL NAVA

DIT SIN COHEN

Art Director SUSIE ALEGRIA

Set Decorator ALEXANDRA BRANDENBURG  
 Assistant Set Decorator GERIN DEL CARMEN  
 Lead OLIVIA KANZ  
 On Set Dresser ELENA NOMMENSEN  
 Set Dressers MANH HAKCHAREUN  
 MELANIE LEANDRO  
 RACHEL DAGDAGAN  
 RACHEL GROAT  
 Buyer MIKI RODRIGUEZ  
 Set Dec PA JAMES KREUZER

Prop Master JESKA LAPIN  
 Additional Prop Master LUIE P. GARCIA  
 Additional Props SARA RAQUEL BECK  
 BRENDAN STEWART

Art Department Coordinator HILLARY ANDUJAR  
 Graphic Designer COURTNEY ANDUJAR  
 Storyboard Artist ANTHONY SATTER  
 Art Department Production Assistants J.D. MORAN  
 MARTELL HASLEY  
 JILLIAN PATTERSON

Costume Supervisor	ALYSSA TULL
Key Set Costumer	MIRANDA TRACZYK
Costumer	ADRIANA GUTIERREZ
Costume PA	IRINA SHAMSOTINOV
Department Head Hair	GALAXY SAN JUAN
Department Head Make Up	CHELSEA ORDUNO
Makeup Assistant	SARAH COY
Production Coordinator	MAIRA MEMMI
Assistant Production Coordinator	DAISY TENORIO
Key Office Production Assistant	ASTRID LAMPRECHT
Office Production Assistants	ADAM YOUNG
	KRISTINA THOMAS
Video Assist	JONATHAN DOFF
	JACOB NASIM
Script Supervisor	BETTY AUSTIN
Production Accountant	TANO AKIYA
Assistant Production Accountant	CHRISTINE O'MALLEY
Production Sound Mixer	BRIAN COPENHAGEN
Boom Operator	SCOTT KINZEY
	CORRYN DEEGAN
Gaffer	KIVA KNIGHT
2nd Unit Gaffer	DREW NELSON
Best Boy Electric	CLARK TODD
Set Electricians	JASON MILLER
	LAURA PEARSON
	MANUEL PEINADO
	MARC SCHATALOW
Additional Electricians	ALAN VANCE
	ALEX HERTER
	AUSTIN PECK
	CHRIS DURAN
	CHRISTA PEDERSON
	DAN JUENEMANN
	DAVID GARZA
	JEFF CARROLL
	LISA SHAFFER
	ROY ELLIS
	WILL SHORE
	YULY MIRELES
	ZAC TOWNER
Dimmer Board Operator	MICKEY FIMBRES
Key Grip	STEVE FORBES
Best Boy Grips	CHRISTOFER MOSCOSO
	DAVID LANES
Dolly Grip	JULIEN DE BENEDICTIS
Company Grips	ALEX HERTER
	ANDERS ERICSSON
	MARISSA CASTREJON
	NICHOLAS GOMEZ
Additional Grips	BEN LITTLE
	DAVID STOLLERY
	SIRAJ FOWLER
Casting Associate - Los Angeles	MARGIE VARGAS
Casting Associate - Oakland	SARAH KLIBAN
Casting Assistant - Oakland	DANIEL GONZALEZ
Extras Casting Director	THERESA BENAVIDEZ
Studio Teachers	ELISE GANZ
	SUSAN GILL
	DAWN D. MAURER
Drivers	CARLOS HERNANDEZ
	CLARK DOLAN
	DANNY NEWMAN
	JOE HYBERG
	RICH GILL
Location Manager	RYAN WYLIE
Location Co-Managers	CHRISTIAN POWELL
	DEBRA WILSON
Assistant Location Manager	TAYLOR WHITEHOUSE
Craft Service	ROBIN GAGE
	MAX KOSMA
	KERI SHEWMAKER
Set Medics	NICK STEWART

	BOB DELONG GEOFF MARTIN
Special Effects Supervisor	MATT HERON
2nd 2nd Assistant Director	DOMINIC MARTIN
Additional 2nd 2nd Assistant Director	ARMIN HOUSHMANDI
Key Set Production Assistant	BRAD SPENCER
Set Production Assistants	ALEX MAUVERNAY IAN KELLY KIWII McLAURIN MARIANA URBAN MATT THOMPSON RICH PAGAN RILEY TEMPLE SCOTT WINN TYLER COE
Catering	ROBERT MEYER'S MANGIA-NOSH CATERING SVETLANA CATERING
Script Consultant	BENDAVID GRABINSKI
Assistant Editors	TAREK KARKOUTLY LEO CHAN
Additional Assistant Editor	DANIEL RUSS
Post Production Sound Services by TECHNICOLOR	
Supervising Sound Editor	ANDY HAY, CAS
Sound Designer	JEFFREY A. PITTS
Dialogue Editor	JESSE POMEROY
Music Editor	LESLEY LANGS
ADR Mixer	JUDAH GETZ
Re-Recording Mixers	ANDY HAY, CAS DREW WEBSTER
Voice Casting	JOYCE KURTZ
Visual Effects by	PILOT LIGHT VFX
Visual Effects Executive Producer	JOHNNY HAN
Visual Effects Supervisor	TAKASHI TAKEOKA
Visual Effects Artists	ALEXANDRE PROD'HOMME ANTON TOOMERE ARUNAGIRI SHANMUGAM BABU ANAND DAVE KABIL JAPLIN C KEVIN RICHARD KHANDAM M LOGAN SPAHITZ MARIUS HATLELID MUTHU RAMALINGAM PIERS DENNIS RYAN BRETT PUCKETT
Additional Visual Effects By	DIMITRI LOGINOWSKI
Blindspotting Title Design By	BLOOD & CHOCOLATE
Additional Title Design By	PIC
Digital Intermediate By	LIGHT IRON
DI Colorist	IAN VERTOVEC
DI Producer	ZARA PARK
DI Production Coordinator	MARY OMEL
DI Editors	MATT BLACKSHEAR MANNY DUBON
DI Finishing Artist	MONIQUE EISSING
DI Executive Producer	KATIE FELLION
Data Management	KEENAN MOCK SCOTT NYE BRITTANY RINGER AHMAD STEWART
DI Assists	CHRISTOPHER ABDON HUGO SMITH BRANDON TROTTER
Engineering	RYAN McKEAGUE ZACK HOWELL VINCE PALAZZO
End Credits	THE END
Legal Services Provided By	LOEB & LOEB, LLP

Clearance Coordinator ANTHONY PIZZINI

Rights and Clearances KRISTINE A. HANSEN

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Accountant EDEN YAMZON  
Office Coordinators RACHEL BARRERA  
NICK GRAMENOS  
Personal Assistant to Producers JOEL FRANCIS

Featured Artwork By DEVON GIBBS

Patrick's Photography By KEENAN NEWMAN

Original Artwork at Nancy's House By BETTY AUSTIN  
JEREMY KIRAN FERNANDES  
MIKE JASORKA

Additional Artwork Provided By ART © CATLETEE MORA FAMILY TRUST/LICENSED BY VAGA, NEW

Additional Music By JONATHAN SNIPES

Music Recorded By JUSTIN MOSHKEVICH AT IGLOO STUDIOS  
Drums JOHN MADER  
The Regiment Horns SEAN ERICK  
LEON SILVA  
KEVIN WILLIAMS  
Bass JOSH HARI  
Guitarists DAMIAN DE BOOS-SMITH  
VIVEK MADDALA  
Mixed and Arranged By MICHAEL YEZERSKI  
Score Produced By MICHAEL YEZERSKI  
RAFAEL CASAL  
DAVEED DIGGS

Additional Score Mixed By STEVE KAPLAN  
Additional Recording By CHRISTOPHER FLEEGER  
Composer's Assistant KATIE JOST

Music Clearances JOHN GOODMAN

"Libiamo Ne' Lieti Calici Brindisi"  
Composed by Giuseppe Verdi  
Courtesy of Extreme Production Music USA  
"Born In It"  
Written by Akheem Bluit & David Teel  
Performed by Chippass  
Published by Perfect Your Craft LLC & Akheem Bluit  
Courtesy of Born In It Entertainment & Sic Wid It Records

"Feelin' Myself"  
Written by Andre Hicks & Sean Thompson  
Performed by Mac Dre  
Published by City Hall Music & Dallas Squad Music Publishing  
Courtesy of City Hall Records  
Musical Theme From "Walt"  
Written and Performed by Patrick Stump

"Running To The Sky"  
Written by Gregory Carter, Jesse I. James & David Stokes  
Published by You Know We Got Publishing, Gregory Carter, &  
Snoot Music LLC  
Performed by Moe Green  
Courtesy of Snoot Music LLC  
"Projects"  
Written by Stanley Cox & Ruwanga Samath  
Performed by Mistah F.A.B.  
Published by Faeva Afta Music & Trackbirds  
Courtesy of The Birdcall Productions

"Store Run"  
Written by Damien Satale & Justin Taylor  
Published by Damey Music SKI & JustinKase Music  
Performed by Damey  
Courtesy of Damey Music/SBI Recordings & JustinKase Music  
"Let Me Know"  
Written by Joseph Diggs Jr. & Ruwanga Samath  
Performed by Joey Diggs  
Published by H.I.M. Publishing & Trackbirds  
Courtesy of The Birdcall Productions

"Slow Down"  
Written by Nyle Kalin Parrish, Ernest Joseph Rougeau Jr,  
Shomari Wilson, & Ali Yusuf  
Performed by Clyde Carson Feat. The Team  
Published by The Administration MP o.b.o. R Ann's Son,  
Monacos Money Music Publishing,  
Mayne Mannish Music, & BMG Gold o.b.o. Cuts of Reach and  
Sho Stop Music  
Courtesy of Universal Music Group  
"Can't Be Too Careful"  
Written and Performed By Jennah Bell  
Courtesy of Jennah Bell

"Diggin on James Brown"  
Written by Emilio Castillo, Stephen Kupka & Kenneth A.  
Performed by Tower of Power  
Published by Bob-a-Lew Songs & The Bicycle Music Company  
Courtesy of Sony Music Entertainment  
"Meditate"  
Written by David A. Thompson, Jesse I. James & David Stokes  
Performed by Do D.A.T.  
Published by David Anthony Thompson and Snoot Music LLC  
Courtesy of Snoot Music LLC

"Talk to Me"  
Written by Anthony Hamilton & Kelvin Wooten  
Performed by Anthony Hamilton  
Published by Ola's Boy Music & SteyGreen Music  
Courtesy of Anthony C. Hamilton LLC  
"Go To Work"  
Written by A. L. Caldwell, T. T. Jackson, M. Perison, R. Perison,  
Marvin T. Selmon, R.Thomas, M. Cleo, K. Leary, & B. Pendergrass  
Performed by The Federation  
Published by Sony/ATV Music Publishing and Universal Music  
Courtesy of Virgin Records/Universal Music Group

"Crepe-Nuts" "In My City"



Performed by Rafael Casal  
Written by Rafael Casal  
Published by Snoot Music LLC  
Courtesy of Snoot Music LLC

Written by Stanley Cox, Jesse I. James & David Stokes  
Performed by Mistah F.A.B.  
Published by You Know We Got Publishing, Faeva Afta Music, & Snoot Music LLC  
Courtesy of Snoot Music LLC

"La Adelita" "Baby Let Me Take You in My Arms (Black Thor)

Written and Performed by Carlos Periguez  
Published by Sonoton APM & Sonoton Music GmbH Co  
Courtesy of APM Music

Written by Anthony Henderson & Abrim Tilmon  
Performed by Krazzie Bone  
Published by Westbound Records and Janyce H. Tilmon Jones  
Courtesy of Snoot Music LLC

"What is Hip" "Legs"  
Written by Emilio Castillo, David Garibaldi & Stephen Kupka  
Performed by Tower of Power  
Published by Bob-a-Lew Songs obo Stephen Kupka Songs, Arikat Music, & Giribaldi Music  
Courtesy of Warner Music Group

Written by William Daron Pulliam  
Performed by Darondo  
Published by Ubiquitones  
Courtesy of Ubiquity Records

"All Around Me" "No Hoe"  
Written by Jovan Smith, Dontrell Mayfield Sr. & Kenneth Tullis  
Performed by J. Stalin  
Published by Greasy Keys Publishing & Matters and Facts  
Courtesy of LiveWire/Empire Distribution

Written by Laurue Deangelo Porter  
Performed by D-Lo  
Published by Empire Strikes First  
Courtesy of Clear Label Media Group & Empire Distribution

"Personal" "Happy Hour"  
Written by Phalon Anton Alexander, John M. Austin, Brian Cox, Kevin Darrell Hicks, Kehlani Ashley Parrish & Jahaan Akil  
Performed by Kehlani  
Published by Kehlani Music, Warner Chappell, Noontime Tunes, Songs of Kobalt Music Publishing, & BMG Monarch obo  
Courtesy of Atlantic Records / Warner Music Group

Written by Sean P. Bowe, Rivers Cuomo & Christopher Bradley Sernel  
Performed by Weezer  
Published by Warner Tamerlane, Wixen Music, & Atlantic Songs  
Courtesy of Crush Music, Atlantic Records, and Warner Music Group

"Lights Down Low (Not Your Dope Remix)" "In the Pines (Oakland)"  
Written by Max Schneider, Nathaniel Motte & Liam O'Donnell  
Performed by MAX  
Published by Kobalt Music, B Unique Music, & EMI Blackwood  
Courtesy of Crush Music & Sony Music Entertainment

Written by Dphrepaulezz Xavier Amin & Huddie Ledbetter  
Performed by Fantastic Negrito  
Published by Angry Ant Music Publishing & T.R.O. Essex Music  
Courtesy of Cookin' Vinyl Records

"Crack the Ground" "Not A Game"  
Written by Ruwanga Samath, Denzol Cameron & Brandon Hicks  
Performed by Maxwell D  
Published by Trackbirds  
Courtesy of The Birdcall Productions

Written by Daveed Diggs, Rafael Casal, Gregory Carter, Jesse I. James, David Stokes, & Earl T. Stevens  
Performed by Daveed Diggs, Rafael Casal, Moe Green, E40  
Published by E Forty Music Publishing Company

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AMANDA GRABINSKI KEVIN PARKER AND AMERICAN STEEL  
AMANDA HYMSON KHAIRI TURNBILL  
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ANNE AKHILA RUBINS KANG KULCHA COLORING WORKS  
ANNIE CHERNECKY LARA WILSON  
ANTHONY CASSELLA LAUREN KUSHNER  
ARISTOMENIS TSIRBAS LEAH JOY TURNBILL  
ARLIE DAY LEON SYKES  
ASHIA CHUNG LEVI STRAUSS & CO  
AUTOMATIC GIN & GLASSHOUSE BRANDY LORI KILLAM  
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KAREL SMID	ZACH WECHTER
	ZIMMY

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