

A FILM BY JASON JULIEN-CONNAGE

JEFF MASH
RONDEÑO



RODEO KING

ARGONAUT PICTURES PRESENTS A FILM BY JASON JULIEN-CONNAGE 'RODEO KING'

RODEO KING

Running time.....6 min
Genre.....Western/Drama
Year.....2016
Language.....English
Country of Origin.....UK
Camera.....Red Epic Dragon 6k
Lens.....Arri Ultra Prime Carl Zeiss

Links.....Official website: argonautpictures.co.uk/project/rodeo-king/
Facebook: facebook.com/Rodeo.King.Movie
IMDB: imdb.com/title/rodeoking/
Twitter: twitter.com/rodeokingfilm



LOG LINE

A COWBOY FACES OFF AGAINST A BULL ONE LAST TIME



SYNOPSIS

A world-weary cowboy performs his ritualistic preparation for a monumental battle. He exits his barn and steps into the wilderness. A wild black bull struts in the hot summer sun with a deep sense of foreboding. The cowboy surveys the landscape instinctively sensing the presence of the giant beast he is about to face. As the bull and the cowboy meet face-to-face in the field, we have the ultimate battle upon us. It's man versus beast, who will be the victor?

DIRECTOR'S VISION

"I wanted to make an epic, one that is imbued with mythology. I wanted it to have something larger than life about it, a certain flamboyance, and tragedy often found in great opera. With that in mind and my love of the Leone Dollar trilogy it's a small leap to arrive at the story for Rodeo King. Here we have the archetypal man, an all American cowboy, the mythological hero readying himself to face and battle with nature's mythological beast. It's primal; it's dramatic but also incredibly surreal. The realism of whether this situation has or would ever occur is irrelevant. What matters is that we feel we are seeing an epic, we can all empathise with the struggles and simple pleasures of the narrator. We have all had days where we just feel weary of it all, tired of constantly fighting the rat-race, and yet completely ready to push on to tomorrow. Sometimes all it takes is for that little grey cloud to cross the sun and we're once more warmed, comforted by nature's rays. The tragedy of the piece lies in the reveal at the end. We realise that we're not so far removed from nature's beasts after all; in fact we are one and the same. I wrote the script some four to five years ago during a particularly challenging time for myself. I am the cowboy, I am the bull...so are we all."



Writer/Director Jason Julien-Connage in Ronda, Spain, April 2016

PRODUCTION NOTES: FILM FACTS

- Running time 6 minutes 25 seconds.
- Shot on a Red Epic Dragon, Lenses Arri Ultra Prime Carl Zeiss.
- Shooting over a weekend, 2 days in Ronda, South Spain.
- One of the lead protagonists in the film is a Bull. He is named Rondeño. This is also his first film. The bull was born at the same time the script was completed 5 years ago.
- The music is original and composed by brilliant Spanish composer Pascal Chahin. In order to better direct the composer for the song he had in his mind, Julien-Connage researched the London Symphony Orchestra on YouTube, listening to each individual instrument to decide what to use in the score.
- The costume is handmade by costume designer Elizabeth Glass. In order to get the worn, rugged look for the film Elizabeth took a blowtorch to it.

Rodeo King is a short film inspired by the Sergio Leone Spaghetti Westerns. It tells the story of a world-weary cowboy preparing to battle a mighty enigmatic bull. The story is an allegorical one with a unique twist at the end.

This is the debut film from actor/writer/director Jason Julien-Connage. Production was made up of a UK and Spanish based crew and it was filmed over two days in Ronda, the south of Spain in April 2016.



Makeup Artist Lena Tanevska, Grip Álvaro De Pedro

WRITER/DIRECTOR

JASON JULIEN-CONNAGE

Jason Julien-Connage is an actor, writer, and director. As an actor he has performed in theatre, TV and film. Notable stage performances include Ross in Shakespeare's Macbeth, and The Palooka in Tennessee Williams one act play of the same name. Most recently he played the role of London gangster Reni in BBC1's award-winning crime drama Luther opposite Idris Elba. As a writer/director Julien-Connage has honed his craft making several experimental short films shot guerilla style. Julien-Connage has written a feature screenplay titled Valentine Jacobs. Telling the story of two young lovers on the run in 70's rural England, Valentine Jacobs is a British Road movie. Julien-Connage's short film debut is the highly stylized spaghetti western, Rodeo King, filmed in Spain this spring.



Writer/Director Jason Julien-Connage

LEAD ACTOR "THE COWBOY"

JEFF MASH

Born and raised in America, Jeff Mash has lived in London for over a decade and should probably change the spelling of his name to "Geoff" or perhaps "Bangers N. Mash". Mash is thrilled to be doing *Rodeo King*. Why? Mash's ancestors arrived in the New World in 1635, eventually taking covered wagons out West where they were ranchers on the high plains of Colorado. Born a few generations too late, Mash has always wanted to be in a Western! Plus, he's always happy to work with longtime friend writer/director Jason Julien-Connage. Not only was Jason in Mash's very first acting class in London, they later did an intense two-hander together on the London stage.



Actor Jeff Mash

ON THE FILMMAKING EXPERIENCE

"Shooting *Rodeo King* in Spain was magical. It was the actualization of that collaboration and camaraderie we often ascribe to film productions but might not always fully experience. There was belief, there was trust, and there was something more. I'd describe it as "la buena vida."

Working with the *Rodeo King* team, working in that magical location, and living in that truly human manner was not only right for my character but inspired me to live a higher quality of life back in London. Whether I manage to do that or not, I dare say that none of us wanted the shoot to end. Sequel, anyone?"

VOICE ARTIST “THE KING”

MICHAEL J COOK

“My introduction to voiceover work came from working in radio, voicing commercials and promos. 30 years later I am still a broadcaster but voiceovers and voice acting are still my first love. Early on I was asked to provide a voiceover for a video to be shown at a trade show and I knew right then that this was the path I wanted to follow. I have voiced projects for clients all over the world from Canada to Belgium. “Rodeo King” offered me a unique opportunity to employ my style to give voice to a fascinating character. In a short film format, Jason Julien-Connage tells a grim tale about the struggle between two powerful characters and it was a challenge to capture just the right tone for my character, but one I was ready to take on. There are not many words but they all count. Thanks Jason for the opportunity!”



Voice Actor Michael J Cook

CINEMATOGRAPHER

CLAUDIO CADMAN

Claudio Cadman is a British filmmaker who has worked in the industry for almost a decade. He has worked with Director Jason Julien-Connage previously on a number of concept short film projects.



Cinematographer Claudio Cadman

ON THE FILMMAKING EXPERIENCE

“I was busy setting up the camera with Ben (Focus Puller) by the fence closest to the field the bull would enter. We were moving gear from one side of the field to another. Suddenly someone shouted out “He’s here!” I looked up to see the bull staring right at us through the fence. It couldn’t have been more than a meter away. Jason (Director) asked me what gear I needed “Everything!” I said. We managed to get the shot even though it was completely handheld.”

PRODUCTION MANAGER

ALBERTO PEREIRA

Alberto is a Spanish actor based in London. After many years in front of the camera *Rodeo King* provided him the opportunity to work behind it on different roles, production manager, set designer and 1st AD.



Alberto Pereira

ON THE FILMMAKING EXPERIENCE

“For one of the shots with Rondeño (The Bull) we had placed a carriage on a strategic spot in the field. The bull was supposed to get into the field and run to the left of the carriage, the bull handler assistants were on horses to guide the animal that way, and the handler, Rafael Tejada, and I were on the right side of the carriage to prevent the bull from running away. We had only one chance to get the shot. It took us a long time to prepare it. Claudio (DoP) was lying down under the carriage with the Red Dragon and Jason was inside the carriage checking the monitor covered with the blanket. Suddenly Rafael next to me starts doing some strange movements with his arms and legs, I got hypnotized watching him. I got the message on my walkie-talkie: the bull is running down the alley and will enter the field any second, and I couldn't stop looking at Rafael and his fantastic movements, he seemed to be dancing! Only when the bull got into the field and ran towards us I understood he was getting ready to get in front of the 550kgs animal in case it ran the wrong way and to ensure it went where we needed it, and he got it, the bull runs the way the director wanted and you all can see it on that wonderful shot. ”

COMPOSER

PASCAL CHAHIN

Pascal Chahin is a music composer working in Madrid for film, television and radio. His compositions are very deep and with so many different styles and rhythms.



Pascal Chahin

ON THE FILMMAKING EXPERIENCE

“When Jason called me, I thought it would be such a great adventure. I really wanted to be part of this team. Working through the footage we’ve been building not only a great piece of art but also a magical working relationship. It has been such a truly, intense and deep experience. I’ve learnt so much from Jason through his direction. Exploring deep inside myself searching for new textures and intricate subtleties so that the score is imbued with beauty and power that captures the essence of the story. The result is I’ve discovered a new side of myself as a composer. That’s what I’m always looking for when I work on a Project.”

PRAISE FOR THE SCRIPT FROM PAGE AWARDS

"Both the cowboy and the bull become enigmatic characters in this piece. This is a life and death battle with a unique twist at the end (the mark of every great short)."

"The short is visual and dynamic. The dust and sweat pops off the pages and I can feel the exertion and brutality of this match between man and beast."

"The writing is lean and crisp, dynamic and packs a visual punch."

"The short moves with the speed of the bullet and has an undeniable power. There is something primal and elemental about this battle and the way it is visualized on the page. The writing is muscular and provides an unflinching look at a brutal sport."

"The premise is simple but powerful and compelling. The short is dynamic, action-packed and full of visual possibilities."



Makeup Artist Lena Tanevska, Costume Designer Elizabeth Glass, and Lead actor Jeff Mash

TEN MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS OF JASON JULIEN-CONNAGE DURING THE MAKING OF 'RODEO KING'

1. Have you made any films before?

No, I wouldn't go so far as to call them films. They were more sketches made with a camera and a pen. As an actor I wanted showreel material so I would write small scenes. Just little vignettes, you know to quickly portray a character I might be cast in. That's how I started writing. On one of these first projects I worked with Claudio (DoP) we've been friends for years. That project turned out to be a 20-minute piece shot over four days. It was almost like a TV pilot! We were so young then, young and naïve but that meant we didn't have as much fear about taking something like that on. That was film school.

2. Did you go to film school?

No. I went to university and did a degree in a completely different field...Aerospace Engineering...I wanted to be an astronaut. Once I finished I started acting training. Not at a drama school but a studio. In fact that's where I met Jeff (Cowboy) some eleven years ago. We trained together and as fate would have it we performed in a play together. I was Jimi Hendrix and he was my drill sergeant.



Writer/Director Jason Julien-Connage, Cinematographer Claudio Cadman, Focus Puller Ben Banayo, Grip Álvaro De Pedro, Lead actor Jeff Mash, Sound Recordist Antonio Sánchez Peñalba

TEN MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS OF JASON JULIEN-CONNAGE DURING THE MAKING OF 'RODEO KING'

3. What inspired you to write the story?

I was working in the city at the time, in finance...I know, again very different. But anyway unsurprisingly I wasn't having a great time. I took a pack of post-it-notes and was doodling. One of these doodles was of a cowboy with a lasso in the air and a bull running towards him. Underneath I wrote what would become the opening lines of the film. "All my life I've been fightin'." That was all it took. It troubled me for the rest of the day and I wanted to find out what it meant who said those words and why. On the way home it all poured out so fast my hand could barely keep up with the voice and writing down the words.

4. What does the story mean?

What does it mean to you? Not to deflect the question, of course it means something to me, it means a great deal to me and it's very personal but I wanted to make something beyond myself. Something universal. Of course it's rooted in my own truth but then it transcends that and goes out there. There's something so primal about this. The story of man versus beast is as old as time itself. You can almost imagine the entire film to be in an ancient cave painting somewhere. The story is too powerful, too beautiful to be confined to one person's meaning. It's a mythical tale, we created our own legend.



Cinematographer Claudio Cadman, Grip Álvaro De Pedro, Lead actor Jeff Mash, Gaffer Mario López

TEN MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS OF JASON JULIEN-CONNAGE DURING THE MAKING OF 'RODEO KING'

5. Why did you film in Spain?

When I said we were filming in Spain people always said ah yes Sergio Leone filmed out there that's why. The truth is Leone and many of the Spaghetti Westerns were filmed further south, Almeria or thereabouts and its much dryer down there. A completely different landscape. That was never the landscape I saw for Rodeo King. In fact in the original script it mentions verdant fields. A bull is not going to live in a desert. I went to Spain to find the King. It became evident once researching bulls that the only place I would find that character with that magnificent strength and beauty was Spain. I considered shooting in the UK two years before but those bulls lacked the quality I was looking for and funny enough it was actually less expensive to shoot in Spain and fly out some crew than to film in the UK! Also of course we had the best animal handler for this project Rafael Tejada. Rafael and his team worked wonders to ensure we captured the best of Rondenno.

6. Who are you're biggest influences?

Main visual influence for this was Sergio Leone. I watched those Dollar films over and over, although that was more during pre-production for research. In terms of the actual script it was Tennessee Williams. At the time the script was written, I'd just performed at the roundhouse a one-act play of his called The Palooka. It's the story of a has-been boxer. He was a real archetype of a man, masculine and childlike at the same time. I've always been a fan of Tennessee Williams; he has a wonderful way of portraying characters in heightened tragic moments whilst having a touch of poetry to the dialogue. It's like music.



Cinematographer Claudio Cadman, Focus Puller Ben Banayo with the Red Epic Dragon

TEN MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS OF JASON JULIEN-CONNAGE DURING THE MAKING OF 'RODEO KING'

7. On filmmaking

You can't make Michelangelo's Pietà with an axe. Maybe at first to free the marble from the rock but to get that beauty and that life like quality you need much more precise tools. Be careful with words, choose the right one. Don't destroy the masterpiece with crude thoughts, be patient, be gentle, treat it with respect. It needs time to grow, it all takes time.

This was an international project in every sense of the word. I'm a Londoner; half the crew were UK based the other half are based in Spain. The voice was done in LA. Editing in London, composing and sound Madrid.

I'm reluctant to call this a short film; to me it's a piece of art. There have been thousands of short films and there will be thousands more, but there's only one Rodeo King. One for all time.

8. On directing

Sir Alex Ferguson former manager of Manchester United really inspired me in terms of directing and leadership. Ferguson made it so that no one was bigger than the dream that was Manchester United. Not even himself. Any player who stepped out into a stadium wearing the famous red jersey was proud to wear it and would do whatever it takes to uphold that vision. It's all about the story and inspiring people to believe in that story. We're all servants of the story.



Writer/Director Jason Julien-Connage, Lead Actor Jeff Mash

TEN MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS OF JASON JULIEN-CONNAGE DURING THE MAKING OF 'RODEO KING'

9. What was it like making this film?

Let me paint you a picture. Imagine you have a giant rubber ball filled with water. Your task is to navigate that ball down the street to the traffic lights and then across a busy road. Only the road is uneven and potholed so as you roll it down the street, holes begin to appear; some large and some small. You have to plug them quickly and efficiently before you lose all the precious water inside. At first you use your fingers to plug the holes but very soon you run out of fingers. Then you use your toes but you run out of them too. Next your team will assist you in plugging these holes as they appear and help you roll this giant down the street. As you get closer to the traffic lights holes are appearing continually. If you're lucky and blessed with a good team you make it to the traffic lights. Only once you arrive you find out that the lights aren't working. There was meant to be a red and green stoplight allowing you safe passage across the road. Instead you find cars and lorries speeding past non-stop. You take a plunge and plough through with your giant ball filled with the water, the water that represents your original vision and energy. You hope and pray that some inconsiderate bastard won't ram into you and burst this giant miracle you've been working on for so long.

10. Most memorable moment during filming?

Looking up from the black canopy I was using to shield the monitor from the sun and seeing all the crew working so hard and passionately. I threw down the gauntlet to them, I really did. I said guys I can't afford to pay you your standard professional rates. But I invite you to participate in this wonderful once in a lifetime opportunity to make an epic. They rose to that and put in a truly epic effort, it couldn't have been done without them. I think they fell in love with the project and the atmosphere that surrounded it. It was special.

CREDITS

Written & Directed By
Jason Julien-Connage

Produced
Jason Julien-Connage

Bull
Rondeño

Cowboy
Jeff Mash

Voice of 'The King'
Michael J Cook

Cinematographer
Claudio Cadman

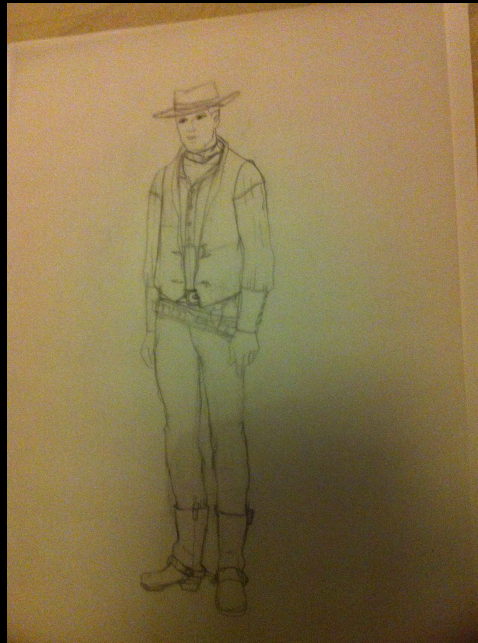
Original Music Composed
by
Pascal Chahin

Edited by
Jon Stow

Assistant Editor
Jason Julien-Connage

Colorist
Jon Stow

Production Manager
Alberto Pereira



The evolution of
Costume
Designer
Elizabeth Glass's
cowboy garments.





Production crew (left to right) Grip Álvaro De Pedro, Sound Recordist Antonio Sánchez Peñalba, Gaffer Mario López, Cinematographer Claudio Cadman, Production Manager, Alberto Pereira, Focus Puller Ben Banayo, Director Jason Julien-Connage, Actor Jeff Mash, Costume Designer Elizabeth Glass, Makeup Artist Lena Tanevska

Location Manager
Nuria Flores

Costume Designer
Elizabeth Glass

1st AD
Alberto Pereira

Makeup Artist
Lena Tanevska

Camera Assistant
Ben Banayo

Set Decorator
Alberto Pereira

Gaffer
Mario López

Props Assistants
Eloy Cañete
Fernando Calvente
Paco Navarrete

Head Animal Handler
Rafael Tejada

Sound Recordist
Antonio Sánchez Peñalba

Grip
Álvaro De Pedro

Production Designer
Jason Julien-Connage

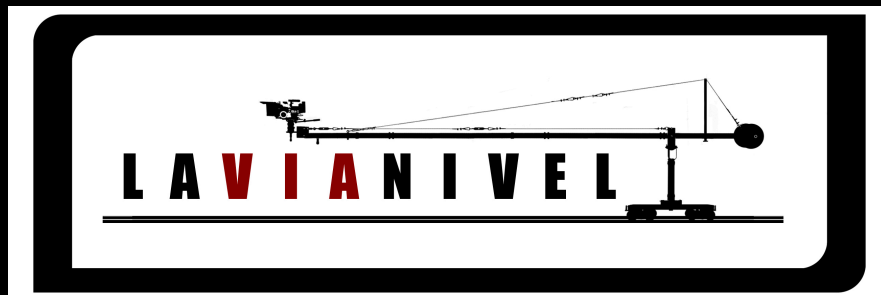
Sound Designer
Miguel Ángel Caprara

Songs
Here Comes The King
Vocals by Patricia Ferro Olmedo
Composed by Pascal Chahin

A Bulls Lullaby
Composed by Pascal Chahin

Special Thanks to
Eloy Cañete
Paco Navarrete
Fernando Calvente
Marcos Fernández
Yolanda Cañete

Ignacio Díaz Pérez
Jodyanne Richardson
Rachel Allinson
Special Thanks to



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