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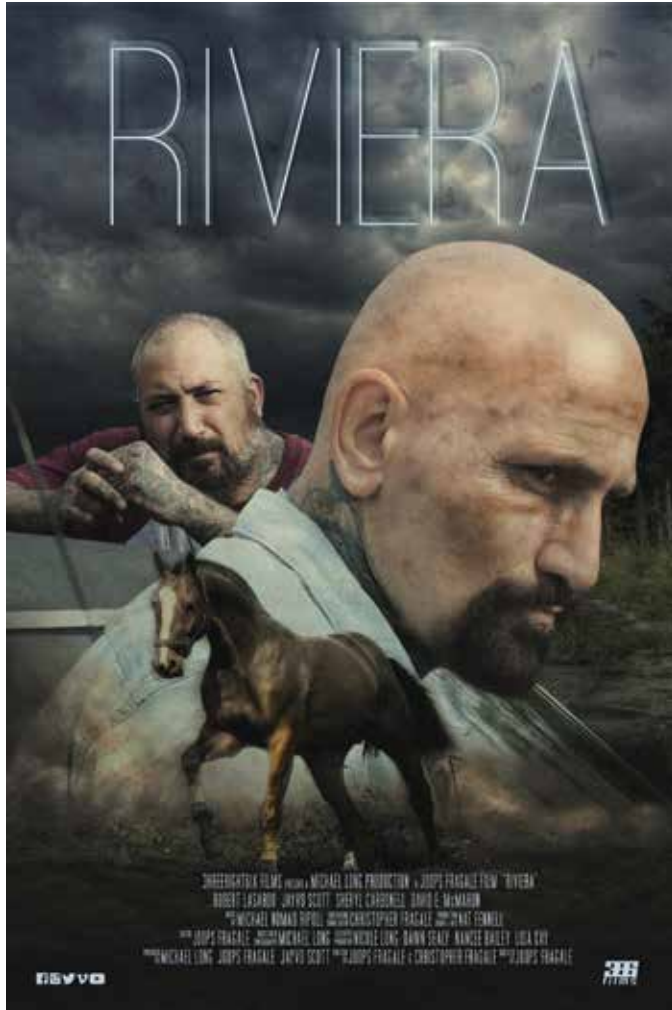


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of Life" on
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Independent Filmmaker
& Tattoo Artist

JAYVO SCOTT

By Steve Keller

Jayvo Scott leads an interesting life. As one of the many tattoo artists/shop owners in Brevard County, his artwork adorns many people, including yours truly. His shop, *True To You Tattoo*, recently made a successful move from Merrit Island to Melbourne as well as a long awaited reopening after the Covid Pandemic earlier this year. But Scott’s talents far exceed the walls of a tattoo shop.

“I’ve always wanted to be an actor,” he comments in an afternoon conversation held last month. “When I was two I used to perform for my family at dinner. I went to a performing arts magnet high school and have been training in TV and film my whole life.” Scott used his talent and colorful appearance to get in front of a camera. “About 10 years ago I answered a Craigslist ad for independent films”, he recalls. “That led to doing extra work. My networking while on set opened up a lot of doors for me, and I have built a solid rapport with many industry folks ever since.”

Soon Scott was getting acting jobs on national TV shows and movies. He was able to combine his two loves by appearing on Season 5 of the reality show *Inkmasters* along with his tattoo artist brother Robbi Ripoll. That show opened up doors for the brothers along with Cocoa Beach tattoo artist Mark Longnecker (*Endless Summer Tattoo*) to appear in promotional appearances and Tattoo Conventions across the country.

Prime Time television welcomed Scott into living rooms in 2018 with a six episode reoccurring role on NBC’s *Good Girls*. He played Dags, the muscle bodyguard of head bad guy Rio. Much like most of his roles so far, Scott’s tattoos and menacing appearance somewhat typecast him but got him work. At the same time he was broadening his resume not only with acting roles and music (his alter ego rapper pThuggie) but also as writer and producer of projects. Enter business and writing partner Jason ‘Joops’ Fragale.

“I’ve been making films from the time I was a kid with the full size VHS Cameras,” Fragale recalls. “After moving from NY to FL in 2002 I eventually met my film partner Mike Long and started *386 Films*.” Their company began making short films, music videos, commercials and other types of promotions. “In 2012 we shot a film called *The Guy Knows Everything*”, he continues. “This is where The Jayvo Scott came into my life. He auditioned for the lead tough guy, but I had him try for the scene stealer comedic role and he nailed it. The film did really well in the festival circuit and even got us an invite to Sundance to do a VIP Showcase. While in Park City, Jayvo had a germ of an idea for a story about a Tattoo artist. A few years ago we started working on that idea in series form and have gone on creating various projects with Riviera being the latest.” The movie *Riviera* is intense. Clocking in at just under 17 minutes, the story is one of complexity. The story of how the movie idea came to light, as told by Scott in a behind the scenes promo video posted online however, is a different kind of entertaining altogether. “I bought this car, a 1968 Buick Riviera with the intentions of turning into a low rid-er,” Scott begins enthusiastically. “Joops loves car so I told him about it. He comes over and takes a bunch of pictures of it. Three days later, dude’s like ‘yo I got an idea. I wrote a script. I have a story; it’s two guys and this car’.”

The plot of the movie centers around two main characters; Raffi (played by Scott) and David. A day together will test their friendship and change their lives forever. As writer and director of the project, Fragale had one question; 'Do you think we can get Rob to play David?' The 'Rob' in question was none other than Robert LaSardo, a NY born actor that has over 150 movie and TV acting credits to his name. You may not know his name but you know his characters. From big screen roles in 2018's *The Mule* starring Clint Eastwood to his role as Escobar Gallardo throughout the TV Series *Nip/Tuck* in the early 2000s, he is very recognizable. "He was always someone I looked up to," remarks Scott. "I got to meet him on the tattoo convention circuit. We became friends and I sent him the script. He said 'this is good, I want to do it'."

"I felt it was an opportunity to embrace a true character study without the usual clichés that assault the integrity of actors with real tattoos," LaSardo answers via email from his home in California. "When I read the story I realized there was an innocence present that would allow character development through vulnerability. I was able to take the mask off in this one and finally breathe within a disposition of grace."

"This came together the fastest of any project," recalls Fragale. "It went from a well-funded project with all the gear and crew to a no budget, small crew, camera on hand project a week before shooting. We changed locations, fired our cinematographer and lost all the gear. This was about as stripped down a project there is," he continues. "But then we had Robert LaSardo so we had to make it the very best we could with no excuses."

Once it was released, the viewing world more than accepted it. It won *Best Cinematography and People's Choice Award* for Best Film from the 2019 Melbourne Independent Film Festival. Local social media blew up not only because of hometown hero Scott's involvement but the quality itself of the movie and the acting of both Scott and LaSardo. "Social media is a weird beast," questions Fragale. "I find it's good for research and connecting with people. But at the same time the falsehoods that are portrayed and the comparisons to other people's "successes" can be distracting. I'm not great at playing the social media game as others who use it as a main tool. I'd rather be offline making shit."

Riviera has you hooked from the very beginning. As with many short films, everyone involved has expressed in-terest in making a feature film version of the story. "I feel that there is so much more to be explored with this story," LaSardo continues. "We merely scratched the surface to in-dicate what's possible. There needs to be an in depth version of this film, so that the audience can witness the genesis of these characters and why they appear in their circumstances as they do."

Scott's acting stock has definitely risen with this roll. "We didn't have to be gangsters, we got to play real guys. People with real emotion dealing with real time stuff," he exclaims. "We're not robbing anybody, not shooting people up. We're not doing none of that shit. It's a true friend story. As actors we can do other things other than play bad guys, even though I like to play bad guys, too." When asked what would happen if Hollywood Blockbusters came calling, Scott answers, "I would do it, but would keep my house here as well as my business and go between both places." Industry vet LaSardo offers advice to anyone ready to chase the dream. "Perseverance is a practice that encompasses a lifestyle. Your life must be totally committed to the stage and what it demands. You cannot allow doubt in any form to disgrace your faith in what you know to be true about your journey. Bottom line, show up prepared with a lifelong commitment regardless of results."

All of the people responsible for *Riviera* have new projects coming up. With all the success of the movie and the press garnered around it, Scott still marvels at its simplistic origin. "We shot this whole thing in three days. My brother, Nomad, scored the whole film," he reflects. "It was so cool to work with my brother, and Robert LaSardo and Joops on this for a real project. We had an amazing cast and crew. Our wives supported us. It was so cool that everything came together." Chalk one up for the 'Bad Boys'...

You can watch *Riviera* online on Vimeo directly or visit Jayvo Scott, *True To You Tattoo*, or *386 Films*' Social Media pages.

