



Ridley Scott: Building Cinematic Worlds

Someone to Watch Over Me

Someone to Watch Over Me

Director: Ridley Scott

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Production Company:

Columbia Pictures Corporation

Executive Producer: Ridley Scott

Producers: Thierry de Ganay, Harold Schneider

Associate Producer: Mimi Polk

Production Manager: Max Stein

Production Manager (NY): William C. Gerrity

Production Co-ordinator: Jane Prosnit

Production Co-ordinator (NY): Blair Bellis Mohr

Location Manager: Clifford T.E. Roseman

Location Manager (NY): Celia Costas

Assistant Directors: Joseph Reidy, Robert Yannetti

Assistant Director (NY): Amy Sayre

Casting: Joy Todd

Screenplay: Howard Franklin

Screenplay: Danilo Bach *, David Seltzer *

Director of Photography: Steven Poster

Camera Operator: John Koester

Video Operator: Aaron Katz

Editor: Claire Simpson

Associate Editor: Brian Peachey

Production Designer: James D. Bissell

Art Director: Chris Burian-Mohr

Art Director (NY): Jay Moore

Set Designers: William James Teegarden,

Ann Harris

Set Decorator: Linda Descenna

Set Decorator (NY): Steve Jordan

Set Dresser (NY): Sabrina Wright-Basile

Production Illustrator: Tom Cranham

Scenic Artist (NY): Patricia Walker

Costume Designer: Colleen Atwood

Women's Costume Supervisor: Linda Serijan

Men's Costume Supervisor: Michael J. Long

Make-up: Rick Sharp

Makeup for Ms Rogers and Ms Bracco:

Anthony Clavet

Make-up (NY): Alan Weisinger

Title Design: Plume Design

Music: Michael Kamen

Sound Recording: Gene Cantamessa

Sound Re-recording: Gerry Humphreys

Sound Editor: James Shields

ADR Editor: John Poyner

Stunt Co-ordinators: Glenn R. Wilder,

Ronnie Rondell

Cast:

Tom Berenger (Mike Keegan)

Mimi Rogers (Claire Gregory)

Lorraine Bracco (Ellie Keegan)

Jerry Orbach (Lt. Garber)

John Rubinstein (Neil Steinhart)

Andreas Katsulas (Joey Venza)

Tony Di Benedetto (T.J.)

James Moriarty (Koontz)

Mark Moses (Win Hockings)

Daniel Hugh-Kelly (Scotty)

Harley Cross (Tommy)

Joanne Baron (Helen Greening)

Anthony Bishop (waiter)

David Berman (1st cop)

Sharon K. Brecke (bimbo)

Peter Carew (doorman)

Christopher Cass (rookie cop)

Jim Paul Eilers (Sparks)

Susi Gilder (pretty young thing)

Mary Gillis (Mary the Maid)

Bill Kane (Brooklyn)

Helen Lambros (Met benefactress)

Jack McGee (bartender)

Director Ridley Scott established himself as a filmmaker with an extraordinary eye for beauty in his first film *The Duellists*. With each subsequent film he has enhanced his reputation as one of the industry's premier visual stylists.

'Ridley's different,' says producer Harold Schneider. 'No one can do what he does. The Queen Mary has been photographed hundreds of times, but never the way Ridley photographed it for this film. His vision is awe-inspiring.'

While *Someone to Watch Over Me* does indeed boast the rich visual style for which Scott has become known it also marks something of a departure for the director.

'In the past, I've either done period films or science fiction,' says Scott. 'I was looking for a change of pace – for material which would take me into a contemporary world of contemporary people dealing with contemporary problems. My initial attraction to *Someone* was the simplicity of the plot – three characters drawn together, yet two of them never meet. I love the tight encapsulation of two worlds seen through the eyes of the central character, who is played by Tom Berenger, and how he fares in a world he's not used to.'

The project began in 1982 when Ridley Scott met writer Howard Franklin at a social gathering and listened to the screenwriter describe an idea for a screenplay called *Someone to Watch Over Me*. 'He described it in length and in great detail,' recalls the director. 'It sounded like a great idea of exactly the scale and focus that I was looking for. It was a very personal story, and I think I gravitated to it because of that.'

At the time, Scott was working with a Frenchman named Thierry de Ganay. The two had been collaborators on advertising projects for a number of years, and the director invited de Ganay aboard as producer.

'I liked the subject very much,' says de Ganay, 'and felt that it completely corresponded with the tastes and special sensitivities of Ridley Scott. Howard Franklin manages to illustrate the persistence of the class system in the United States, but his interest and his intentions are timeless.'

'Howard Franklin delivered the script in the winter of 1982,' continues Scott. 'For various reasons, I was already into my next project – *Legend* – which took me to England for two years. The film really stayed on the shelf without much movement on it until I finished in England.'

In the summer of 1986, Scott began casting. 'I go on instinct,' he explains, 'and frankly, I'd been casting for months and couldn't quite place the individual to portray the central character of Mike Keegan.'

'I had seen Tom Berenger's work in *The Big Chill* and was very impressed by it. In a funny kind of way, the role he played was a tough one because the character he was portraying was a cliché – an actor playing an actor. However, he completely pulled it off and managed to make the character both sympathetic and vulnerable.'

'At the same time, I had started to look for an editor,' he continues. 'I had really liked Claire Simpson's work on *Salvador* and persuaded Oliver Stone to let me see a rough cut of *Platoon* to see more of her work. As soon as I saw Tom, I thought "Bingo!" Sergeant Barnes is the antithesis of Mike Keegan, but after seeing him play Barnes and knowing what he did in *The Big Chill*, I just said, "I've got to have this guy."'

Known for portraying varying and wide-ranging roles, Tom Berenger's interest in *Someone to Watch Over Me* was in keeping with his reputation of an ever-changing screen persona. 'I've never played a cop before,' says Berenger.

Meg Mundy (*Antonia*)
Jeff Neilsen (*tie salesman*)
Harlan Cary Poe (*killer*)
Marilyn Rockafellow (*Marge*)
Helen Tran (*Vietnamese girl*)
Harvey Vernon (*Giddings*)
Mark Voland (*1st plainclothesman*)
USA 1987
106 mins
35mm

* Uncredited

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Someone to Watch Over Me

Tue 9 Sep 18:10; Wed 17 Sep 20:50

Thelma & Louise

Wed 10 Sep 20:30; Sun 5 Oct 17:20 (+ intro by
director Ridley Scott)

Black Rain

Fri 12 Sep 20:35; Fri 19 Sep 17:50
Gladiator

Sat 13 Sep 13:10; Sun 14 Sep 11:00 BFI IMAX;
Sat 20 Sep 17:30; Tue 23 Sep 19:50

Kingdom of Heaven: Director's Cut

Sat 13 Sep 19:20; Sun 28 Sep 17:20

Alien

Sat 13 Sep 20:30 BFI IMAX; Tue 16 Sep 20:40;
Fri 26 Sep 20:40; Sat 4 Oct 20:45

Gladiator II

Sun 14 Sep 14:30 BFI IMAX

White Squall

Sun 14 Sep 14:50; Fri 19 Sep 20:30

Black Hawk Down

Sun 14 Sep 18:00; Wed 24 Sep 20:15

Matchstick Men

Tue 16 Sep 18:05; Thu 25 Sep 20:45

Blade Runner: The Final Cut

Thu 18 Sep 18:15; Mon 22 Sep 20:45;

Sat 4 Oct 18:00 (+ intro by director Ridley Scott)

Hannibal

Sat 20 Sep 14:50; Mon 6 Oct 20:30

Body of Lies

Sat 20 Sep 20:30; Wed 8 Oct 18:10

American Gangster

Sun 21 Sep 17:50

Legend

Sat 27 Sep 12:00

Prometheus

Sat 27 Sep 20:35; Fri 3 Oct 18:05

The Last Duel

Mon 29 Sep 20:00; Tue 7 Oct 17:50

The Martian

Tue 30 Sep 20:10

A Good Year

Wed 1 Oct 18:05

The Counsellor

Wed 1 Oct 20:40; Sun 5 Oct 12:00

The Duellists + Boy and Bicycle

Sat 4 Oct 14:30 (+ Q&A with director Ridley Scott)

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'I liked the character because even though he is the hero of the story, he has negative qualities and makes some big mistakes. I always find that interesting – a character with a dilemma to face, confronting his personal morality.'

For the part of Claire, director Scott made it a priority to cast a sympathetic, contemporary woman. 'I found Mimi Rogers in the best possible way – by looking at a lot of people and then seeing her three times to be absolutely sure. I didn't want the character to be unreachable or so separated from reality because she lives in a \$3-million apartment in New York. That, in itself, can be thought of as being pretty unsympathetic. It's a very delicate role to play. The character has everything, yet she has to show vulnerability and, at the same time, demonstrate sensibility and normalcy within her rarefied environment. I found that in Mimi.'

The role of Ellie Keegan is portrayed by newcomer Lorraine Bracco. 'Again, it was a hunting process trying to cast Ellie,' explains Scott. 'I wanted somebody who was fiercely independent and an interesting, humorous character. It had to be someone who was the antithesis of Claire and yet someone who was equivalent to her. I think Lorraine fulfils those requirements very well.'

'There's a very delicate balance of sympathy between the society woman and the wife,' continues Scott. 'If Berenger's character is simply attracted to a beautiful woman, sympathy starts to weigh against him. I wanted to create that dilemma in the central character's mind by giving him a very strong home life and a very strong wife. I wanted his attraction to Claire to be more than sexual. I wanted it to be cerebral – to be everything. Keegan is facing a very difficult question that has nothing to do with bank balance or other external forces. It's a choice between women. Proper casting was crucial to creating this balance and making it work.'

The locations that Scott chose for the opening of *Someone to Watch Over Me* exemplify his strong sense of style and vision. In the opening scene, the director used New York. Los Angeles and the Queen Mary in Long Beach for a scene scripted at a Manhattan disco.

'I had looked at the Queen Mary for *Blade Runner*,' recalls Scott, 'and I remembered the architecture, the design, the detail, the veneer and the panelling of the ship. It was magnificent.'

'I wanted something glossy, unique and interesting to represent this gallery disco at the beginning of the film. As soon as I saw the swimming pool of the Queen Mary, I thought "This could easily be the basement of one of New York's art deco buildings." We covered the pool with a plexiglass floor and created an art gallery bar,' explains the director.

'So the film opens with a shot of Manhattan, then cuts to the art deco entrance of Rex in downtown Los Angeles and follows our characters as they walk through the doors and into the interior of the Queen Mary. Architecture and style hold the whole thing together.'

'Ridley Scott is the most visual director I've ever worked with,' observes Mimi Rogers. 'He doesn't neglect the actors – in fact, we're very well taken care of. But he is fascinating to watch. He actually paints with light and with lenses and with angles, and it's a very unique process.'

'It becomes an element of the story because Ridley creates such a strong mood with his visuals.'

Production notes