



Presents
MENTAL TELEPATHY PICTURES AND OVERBROOK ENTERTAINMENT'S
SPRINTER



Written and Directed by Storm Saulter

Starring:

Dale Elliott, Shantol Jackson, Kadeem Wilson, Dennis Titus, Bryshere Y. Gray
with Lorraine Toussaint and David Alan Grier

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SPRINTER:

Short Synopsis

A Jamaican teen, burdened by an unstable father and an unruly older brother, hopes a meteoric rise in track-and-field can reunite him with his mother, who has lived illegally in the U.S. for over a decade.

Long Synopsis

SPRINTER tells the story of Akeem Sharp (Dale Elliott), who is set to be Jamaica's next big track-and-field sensation. Akeem hopes a rise in the track-and-field world will take him to the U.S. to reunite him with his mother (Lorraine Toussaint, ORANGE IS THE NEW BLACK), who has supported the family while living as an illegal resident for over a decade. But Akeem's rising star is weighed down by turmoil at home: a volatile father and an unruly older brother who insinuates himself into Akeem's career as a means of escaping – or perhaps enhancing – his scam artist hustle. Not only does Akeem have to prove to himself and to everyone that he can succeed, but also overcome the struggles that may ultimately bring him down. The film also stars Kadeem Wilson (GHETT' A LIFE), Dennis Titus (THE MIGHTY QUINN), Shantol Jackson (YARDIE), Bryshere Y. Gray (EMPIRE) and David Alan Grier (IN LIVING COLOR) with songs by Grammy Award winning artist NE-YO and Jamaican dancehall performer Shenseea.

The film is Executive Produced by Jada Pinkett Smith and Will Smith along with NBA Veteran and NBA Personality Richard Jefferson.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I lost my mother somewhat unexpectedly, and way younger than I thought I would have. While trying to process that loss, I got to thinking about the thousands of children growing up in Jamaica and across the Caribbean without their mothers (or fathers) not because of death, but because of the lack of economic opportunities locally and the need for at least one parent to head north in search of work, oftentimes overstaying their visas and never being able to return home without risking the livelihood of their families. In Jamaica these children are called "Barrel Pickney," because of the barrels of clothes, food, and other essentials shipped to them from relatives living overseas. Sprinter is the story of a Barrel Pickney determined to run as fast as he can to reunite his broken family.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Storm Sauter is a filmmaker and visual artist from Negril, Jamaica, on a mission to create universal stories wrapped in the complex social and cultural dynamics of the Caribbean. Storm served as writer, director and cinematographer on his award-winning feature film BETTER MUS' COME, hailed by critics as signaling a fresh new movement of independent filmmaking throughout the Caribbean.

DIRECTOR'S Q&A

What's *Sprinter* about?

SPRINTER follows Akeem, a 17-year-old Rastafarian teenager on a track team. His goal is to qualify for the national youth team and go to the World Youth Championships in Philadelphia and reunite with his mother, who's been living there illegally for 10 years. He has a dream of reuniting the family and if he can run fast enough he can make that happen. When he gets there he realizes that dream isn't necessarily shared.

What are some of the themes behind the story that interest you?

It's about living out your dreams, but this boy has to realize life isn't quite as straightforward as that. But time tests people and time tests families. I'm interested in exploring that. Families are separated because of economic opportunities elsewhere: it's not just people running across borders but leaving for professional reasons. They can't leave [their new country] and they stay. This is so common and has affected both actors who play Akeem and his older brother... They grew up without their mothers, who grew up in the US working. I was interested in exploring how that affects family.

This all touches on a red-hot topicality

I'm interested in issues of immigration – which is on top of people's minds right now – and how that affects families and the individuals, ultimately.

Is there a personal connection for you to this story?

My personal reason... I lost my mum a lot earlier than I thought would happen. It was rough to deal with and I wondered if there was anything I could do to get back to see her. It got me thinking about this.

As a Caribbean storyteller what is the opportunity here?

In the Caribbean, we're so culturally strong and in Jamaica we've always punched above our weight. But there are certain stereotypes associated with that and I'm very interested in breaking those stereotypes. I don't want to tell a story about a working-class boy from the ghetto: this is a middle-class family dealing with the real world. Those images of Rastas smoking ganja on the beach or the gunman from Kingston – it isn't who we are. I'm interested in opening up the scope of Caribbean tales.

Track and field is an important part of Jamaican pride

I'm also interested in exploring the Jamaican track and field world. This country consistently turns out the fastest people in the world with way less resources than others. I come from cinematography. I am really interested in the visuals and atmospherics. I want to do for the running film what RAGING BULL did for the boxing film.

Tell us about BETTER MUS' COME

It's set in the late 1970s and inspired by the true story of a gang leader / activist whose ideology is failing him. There were a group of guys who were trying to get jobs on a construction site on the other side of the tracks. They couldn't get work [because of where they came from] so they attacked the site and shot it down. They were lured to a military base on the pretense of getting guns and money and Jamaica Defense Force soldiers were waiting and they were massacred. This was the Green Bay Massacre in 1978.

So I wanted to make a story about the type of person who ended up there. In Jamaica we have this image of the faceless gunman who kills and that's how we rationalize our police force going into certain areas and taking people out and I wanted to show the face of one of these people. I tried to make a movie about an individual who was in that time and who was involved.

What were the repercussions of the massacre?

The Green Bay Massacre was a massive scandal which the government was blamed for. They lost the following election. Nobody ever went to jail, nobody got into trouble, but it was a proper military intelligence operation and I wanted to explore that. In school they don't teach about that. I only knew about Green Bay through a dub record. My parents told me the 70s was wild in Jamaica.

CHARACTER BIOS:

Akeem Sharp

Akeem Sharp is brimming with raw talent but no focus. He goes from being a relative nobody to maybe the next big sprinting sensation. But his lack of direction, raging hormones and unstable home life threaten to knock him off track. Played by Dale Elliott.

Germaine Sharp

A charismatic yet diminished former athlete, Germaine is now involved in the shady world of scamming. He sees Akeem's rise as a great business opportunity, or maybe even a chance at redemption. Played by Kadeem Wilson.

Garfield Sharp

Suffering from an unknown pain, Garfield tries to be the best father he can. But his demons may get the best of him. Played by Dennis Titus.

Donna Sharp

She went to America to work as a nurse, and now lives there illegally while supporting her family back home. She longs to re-unite with Akeem, the young son she left behind. Donna encourages him to make it to the World Youth Games in Los Angeles by any means necessary. Played by Lorraine Toussaint.

Kerry Hall

A goal oriented country girl who recently transferred to Akeem's high school on a track scholarship. Unlike her new friend and teammate Akeem, she is laser-focused on achieving her full potential on and off the track. Played by Shantol Jackson.

Marcus Brick

The brash American track champion and the current World Youth record holder. He claims to be "unbeatable," but Akeem is gunning for his spot. Played by Bryshere Y. Gray.

SPRINTER FINAL CAST CREDITS

Akeem Sharp

Dale Elliott

Germaine Sharp

Kadeem Wilson

Kerry Hall

Shantol Jackson

Garfield Sharp

Dennis Titus

Coach Miller

David Alan Grier

Mira

Quera South

Donna Sharp

Lorraine Toussaint

Kemar Sharp (Germaine's Son)

Aiden Moodie

Strings

David Crossgill

Marcus Brick

Bryshere Y. Gray

Rocky

Dwayne Pusey

Creeper

Ricardo Orgill (Flames)

Mira's Father

Rodney Campbell

Sister Pam

Sanneta Myrie

Bulbus

Calvin Ingram

Mira's Mother

Dahlia Harris

Precious

Sakina Deer

<i>Young Akeem Sharp</i>	Rogeeif Bignall
<i>BIG MAN / Usain Bolt</i>	Himself
<i>Young Germaine Sharp</i>	Collin Dudley
<i>Maas Joe</i>	Calvin Mitchell
<i>Detective Charles</i>	Glen Campbell
<i>Window Washer boy</i>	Sekai Smart-Macaulay
<i>Winford Williams</i>	Himself
<i>Nesha</i>	Camille Davis
<i>Cliffy</i>	Adam Cummings
<i>Paula Stewart</i>	Nadean Rawlins
<i>Speaker Guy (Race Commentator)</i>	Garth Williams
<i>Byron Williams (Track Team Captain)</i>	Howard Gordon
<i>Elder Rasta</i>	Anthony Wilmot
<i>Bossy</i>	Collin Edwards
<i>Ruku</i>	K'Vonne Legore
<i>Mira's Friend 1</i>	Isobel Whittaker
<i>Deacon</i>	Danar Royal
<i>Asst. Coach 1</i>	Brian-Ray Moore
<i>Mira Friend 2</i>	Sherraine Phillips
<i>Young Scammer</i>	Q-Wayne Lawrence
<i>Scammer 1.</i>	Kemarie Garrison
<i>Detective Stevens</i>	Stephen Gibson
<i>Principal</i>	Aston Cooke

<i>Bikini Girl 1</i>	Soleil Watts
<i>Akeem's BODY DOUBLE</i>	Damonic Alvaranga
<i>Airport Security 1</i>	Darielle Cummings (Trippple X)
<i>Chi Ching Ching</i>	HIMSELF
<i>Stadium Security</i>	Dwight Webley
<i>Arresting Officer</i>	Jeff Crossley
<i>Woman in Political Crowd.</i>	Suzette Folkes
<i>Scammer Girlfriend (Germaine Sex Scene)</i>	Kacion Collins
<i>Cindy (Old American Lady)</i>	Beth Hyde
<i>Scammer 2</i>	Odain Clarke
<i>Scammer 3</i>	Mickel Matthews
<i>Scammer 4</i>	Keanu Gordon
<i>Kerry's BODY DOUBLE</i>	Andrenette Knight
<i>Akeem's SWIMMING DOUBLE</i>	Fontain Jones
<i>Germaine Driving Double</i>	Chris McFarlane
<i>200m Runner Who Falls</i>	Allan Thompson
<i>Precision Driver</i>	Chris McFarlane
<i>Jamaica Race Announcer 1</i>	Garth Williams
<i>Champs Race Announcer</i>	Sean Grant
<i>US Race Announcer JA Newscaster</i>	Chris McGee Dorraine Samuels

BILLING BLOCK

MENTAL TELEPATHY PICTURES AND OVERBROOK ENTERTAINMENT PRESENT "SPRINTER"
STARRING DALE ELLIOTT SHANTOL JACKSON KADEEM WILSON DENNIS TITUS BRYSHERE Y. GRAY WITH LORRAINE TOUSSAINT AND DAVID ALAN GRIER
MUSIC BY JOSEPH TRAPANESE PRODUCTION DESIGNER SIMONE CLARKE COSTUMES BY CHARLESE ANTOINETTE JONES EDITED BY ZIMO HUANG CINEMATOGRAPHER PEDRO GOMEZ MILLAN
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JADA PINKETT SMITH WILL SMITH RICHARD JEFFERSON JOSEPH BAGDONOVICH ZACHARY HARDING FLIPP MONTGOMERY DR. LIM DONG PYO
CO-PRODUCERS MARK G. MATHIS NATALIE THOMPSON PRODUCED BY ROBERT A. MAYLOR, P.G.A. CLARENCE HAMMOND, P.G.A. AND JAMAL WATSON, P.G.A.
FILMRISE  BASED ON CHARACTERS CREATED BY STORM SAULTER AND ROBERT A. MAYLOR WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY STORM SAULTER MENTAL TELEPATHY PICTURES