

A Jigsaw Productions and Velvet Film Production

ORWELL

2+2=5



A film by Raoul Peck

119' - USA, France - 2025

In Association with Anonymous Content / Closer Media

A Universal Pictures Content Group Production

In Association with The Estate of the Late Sonia Brownell Orwell

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SYNOPSIS

1949. George Orwell finishes what will be his final but most important novel, *1984*.

ORWELL: *2+2=5* delves deep into his final months and visionary works to explore the roots of the vital and troubling concepts he revealed to the world in his dystopian masterpiece... Doublethink, Thoughtcrime, Newspeak, the omnipresent spectre of Big Brother... disturbing sociopolitical truths which resonate ever-more powerfully today.

LOG LINE

Interweaving archive footage from adaptations of *1984* with a tapestry of 21st century images, BAFTA-winning director Raoul Peck masterfully dissects Orwell's prescient genius and his vital lessons for our times and our future.

ORWELL'S IDEAS IN THE RECENT PRESS

- Apr. 14th, 2025* **Counterpunch**
["Is 2025 the New 1984?"](#)
- Apr. 13th, 2025* **Kyiv Post**
["Orwell's Thought Police 75 Years On"](#)
- Apr. 11th, 2025* **Variety**
["Raoul Peck on His Cannes-Bound George Orwell Documentary and the Threat of Dictatorship: 'Terror Comes Slowly'"](#)
- Apr. 7th, 2025* **The Forward**
["Following an Orwellian 'Liberation Day', is a doublethinking America on its way to becoming another Oceania?"](#)
- Apr. 3rd, 2025* **The Economist**
["How the CIA smuggled ORWELL into the eastern bloc"](#)
- Mar. 29th, 2025* **New York Times**
["We Are All Living in George Orwell's World Now"](#)
- Mar. 19th, 2025* **The Guardian**
["Orwell and Me: Richard Blair on Life with his Extraordinary Father"](#)
- Feb. 22nd, 2025* **New York Times**
["Trump's Orwellian Ban on the AP"](#)
- Jan 21st, 2025* **Literary Hub**
["Now might be a good time to re-read George Orwell"](#)
- Oct. 31st, 2024* **The Atlantic**
["What Orwell Didn't Anticipate"](#)
- Oct. 22nd, 2024* **The Washington Post**
["It isn't just about '1984': Orwell's essays powerfully resonate today"](#)
- Aug. 11th, 2024* **Vox**
["What George Orwell's 1984 Can Teach Us About 2024"](#)

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Just three years ago, as we were offered exclusive rights to George Orwell's whole body of work by Universal Pictures, we asked ourselves: why George Orwell? Why now?

Today we know.

He has seen it all. Analyzed it all. Warned us all.

It seems even ironic that all want to claim him today, especially in today's already changed world.

When at the time, I asked two of my most respected and famous writer friends about Orwell, their answers revealed both excitement and muted irritation. Which I didn't anticipate.

It made me even more curious.

Cranks on the extreme left. Angry voices on the extreme right. So many in between.

He is praised as a preacher of doom day. Vilified as a traitor to the socialist cause. Demonized as a colonizer. Used as a shield by neo-con opportunists. Followed as a prophet by those seeking blind faith.

Yet, he stands alone, prickly and defiant. A visionary. An anarchist in disguise. A hard-headed reporter with a soft heart. A fiction-maker who reveals the word as it really is.

Orwell.

His name has become a potent adjective - "Orwellian" - to signal authoritarian mechanisms and morphing aspects of our contemporary world: surveillance, censorship, political corruption, fake news, class struggles, the seductions of power, doublethink, algorithms, drones, permanent wars, distraction as the conspicuous mode of modern repression. His literary phrases and ideas are ubiquitous in new versions or their original forms: "Big Brother," "Thought Police," "Two Minutes Hate," "memory hole," "Newspeak," "doublethink," "unperson," and "thoughtcrime."

He is all around us now.

In our current times of uncertainty, it is the right time, almost a century later, to confront myth with reality, in light of today's clear and present danger, where 2+2 is definitively = 5.

Raoul Peck

DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

RAOUL PECK



Raoul Peck's complex oeuvre includes the films *The Man by the Shore* (Competition, Cannes Film Festival 1993); *Lumumba* (Directors' Fortnight, Cannes Film Festival 2000); *Sometimes in April* (Competition, Berlinale 2005); *Moloch Tropical* (TIFF 2009, Berlinale 2010) and *Murder in Pacot* (TIFF 2014, Berlinale 2015).

Raoul Peck was a member of the Berlinale jury in 2002 and of the Cannes Festival jury in 2012.

In 2001, the Human Rights Watch Association awarded him the Irene Diamond Lifetime Achievement Award for his commitment to human rights.

In 2021, he is honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award from DOC NYC and in 2024, with the Outstanding Achievement Award at the Hot Docs Festival in Toronto.

In 2017, his documentary on writer James Baldwin, *I Am Not Your Negro*, was nominated for an Oscar for Best Documentary and won the Audience Award at the Toronto Festival and the Berlinale. In 2018, it won the BAFTA and the Cesar for Best Documentary. This film was co-produced with ARTE.

His film, *The Young Karl Marx*, was presented at the Berlinale the same year.

Exterminate all the Brutes, is a groundbreaking four-part mini-series, produced for HBO with ARTE, which tells a counter-narrative to Euro-centric history. The mini-series won a Peabody Award in 2022.

His last film, *Ernest Cole, Lost and Found*, was premiered at the Cannes Festival in Séance Spéciale, and won the Oeil d'Or in May 2024.

His company Velvet Film was founded in 1989 and operates in the United States, France and Haiti.

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

Fiction

- 1988 - *Haitian Corner* - Locarno 1988, Forum – Berlinale
1993 - *The Man by the Shore*, Competition, Festival de Cannes
2000 - *Lumumba*, Director's Fortnight, Festival de Cannes
2005 – *Sometimes in April* (HBO), Competition, Berlinale
2009 - *Tropical Moloch*, Toronto International Film Festival, Berlinale, Tribeca, Dubai
2014 – *Murder in Pacot*, Toronto International Film Festival
2017 – *The Young Karl Marx*, Berlinale Gala

Documentaries

- 1991 – *Lumumba – Death of a Prophet*, Award of Best Documentary at the Fribourg Festival, New York Film Festival, Cinéma du Réel
1994 - *Desounen, Dialogue with Death* (BBC, ARTE), NAAEE Film & Vidéo Festival
1994 - *Haiti, the Silence of the Dogs* (ARTE)
2001 - *The Profit and Nothing But!* (ARTE, RTBF)
2013 - *Fatal Assistance*, Berlinale, San Francisco, Hot Docs
2016 - *I Am Not Your Negro*, Oscar®-nominee, BAFTA & César for Best Documentary, TIFF, New York Film Festival, Berlinale Panorama
2021 – *Exterminate All the Brutes* (co-produced with HBO), winner of a Peabody Award
2023 – *Silver Dollar Road*, World Premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival
2024 – *Ernest Cole, Lost and Found*, Special Screening, Cannes Festival, winner of the Oeil d'Or

Unitary TV

- 1997 - *Corps Plongés*, Festival de Montréal
2006 - *L'Affaire Villemin* (6x60', ARTE, France 3)
2008 – *L'école du Pouvoir* (4x60', CHANNEL, ARTE), Festival Européen des 4 Ecrans

PRODUCTION COMPANIES

JIGSAW PRODUCTIONS

Jigsaw Productions is helmed by Academy Award®-winning filmmaker Alex Gibney, considered one of the most prolific and provocative documentary filmmakers of our time. Jigsaw has produced a long list of high-profile documentary films, including the Emmy-winning *Going Clear: Scientology and the Prison of Belief*, the Oscar-winning *Taxi to the Dark Side*, the Oscar-nominated *Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room*, as well as *Zero Days*, *Divide and Conquer: The Story of Roger Ailes*, *The Inventor: Out for Blood in Silicon Valley*, *The Crime of the Century*, *Totally Under Control*, two-part documentary *Agents of Chaos*; and the Emmy-winning feature, *The Forever Prisoner*. Jigsaw's slate of highly visible TV series includes: on Netflix, an investigative series *Dirty Money*, two highly acclaimed food series, *Cooked*, with Michael Pollan, and *Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat*, based on the book by Samin Nosrat; and top-rated *How to Change your Mind*, based on Michael Pollen's book of the same name; on Discovery, in association with Steven Spielberg's Amblin Entertainment, *Why We Hate*; on AMC, *Hip Hop: Songs That Shook America*; on Epix, the Emmy-nominated *Laurel Canyon*; on Hulu, the scripted series *The Looming Tower*, based on Lawrence Wright's 2006 book of the same name; and on HBO, *Unveiled: Surviving La Luz del Mundo*. Jigsaw also produced the duPont-Columbia Award-winning podcast, *The Line* as well as *Search Engine*, included on the best podcasts lists in 2023 by *Vulture*, *Time*, *The Economist*, and *Vogue*.

Jigsaw's recent projects include *In Restless Dreams: The Music of Paul Simon*, *Wise Guys: David Chase & The Sopranos*, and *The Bibi Files* and HBO Original *The Dark Money Game* two-part series which investigates the shadowy world of campaign finance and the outsized influence of dark money on American politics.

VELVET FILM

Velvet Film is a film production company founded by filmmaker Raoul Peck in 1989. The company operates in New York, France, and Haiti.

Velvet Film has produced a wide range of works, including documentaries, feature films, and television series, with the aim of telling stories that address social and political issues. This includes exploring themes of colonialism, racism, and social injustice.

Raoul founded the company for this very reason, to create films that challenge the dominant narratives of history and culture.

PRODUCER

ALEX GIBNEY

Director Alex Gibney, called “the most important documentarian of our time” by Esquire Magazine has a signature cinematic style that lends itself to penetrating, gripping, and deeply insightful documentaries. His work has been the recipient of an Academy Award, multiple Emmy Awards, a Grammy Award, several Peabody Awards, DuPont-Columbia Awards, Independent Spirit Awards, Writers Guild Awards, and more. Films include *Taxi to the Dark Side* (2008 Oscar); *Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room* (Oscar-nominated 2006); triple Emmy award, Peabody award, WGA screenplay award, and Dupont Columbia award winning *Going Clear: Scientology & the Prison of Belief* (HBO), among many others. Gibney’s most recent work includes the music documentary, *In Restless Dreams: The Music of Paul Simon*, *Wise Guys: David Chase & The Sopranos*, Gibney’s two-part series on the creation of the iconic show, *The Bibi Files*, an inside look into the corruption charges against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and two-part series *Dark Money Games* which investigates the shadowy world of campaign finance and the outsized influence of dark money on American politics.

Gibney is currently in production on the documentary *Musk* about the tech giant Elon Musk and “Knife” a tentatively titled documentary inspired by Salman Rushdie’s memoir “Knife: Meditations After an Attempted Murder,” published in April. Gibney is the recipient of the 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award from the News & Documentary Emmys.

CREW

Directed by

RAOUL PECK

Producers **ALEX GIBNEY, RAOUL PECK, GEORGE CHIGNELL, NICK SHUMAKER**

Voice of George Orwell **DAMIAN LEWIS**

Editor **ALEXANDRA STRAUSS**

Composer **ALEXEÏ AÏGUI**

Executive Producers **ZHANG XIN, WILLIAM HORBERG, JOEY MARA, MAIKEN BAIRD, JESSICA GRIMSHAW, DAVID LEVINE, COURTNEY SEXTON, RICHARD PERELLO, ERIN EDEIKEN, TOM QUINN, DAN O'MEARA, JOHNNY FEWINGS**

Cinematography **JULIAN SCHWANITZ, BEN BLOODWELL, STUART LUCK, AERA, MAUNG NADI, ROMAN T**

Supervising Editor **MARIE PASCAUD**

Graphic Designer **LAURENT KINOWSKI**

Sound Designer **BENOÎT HILLEBRANT**

Archival Producer **MARIE-HÉLÈNE BARBÉRIS**

Post-Production Supervisor **FLORENCE DECHELOTTE**

Color Grader **ALINE CONAN**

Re-Recording Mixer **STEVEN GHOUTI**

Foley Engineer **QUENTIN GUIGNO**

Foley Artist **ROMAIN ANKLEWICZ**

Produced by **JIGSAW PRODUCTIONS**

Produced by **VELVET FILM**

Co-Produced by **UNIVERSAL PICTURES CONTENT GROUP**

In Association with **ANONYMOUS CONTENT CLOSER MEDIA**

In Association with

**THE ESTATE OF THE LATE SONIA
BROWNELL ORWELL**

International Sales

GOODFELLAS

French Distributor

LE PACTE