

# FIVE STAR



## PRESS NOTES

**The following talent and filmmaker are available for interviews:**

**Talent:** James "Primo" Grant and John Diaz

**Writer/Director:** Keith Miller

<b>Writer/Director/Editor</b>	Keith Miller
<b>Produced by:</b>	Keith Miller, Daryl Freimark, Luisa Conlon
<b>Executive Producer:</b>	Russell Miller
<b>Co-Executive Producers:</b>	Katie and Tom Hanusik
<b>Co-Producer:</b>	Landon Van Soest
<b>Cinematographers:</b>	Ed David, Alexander Mallis
<b>Composer:</b>	Michael Rosen
<b>Unit Production Manager:</b>	Doree Simon
<b>Assistant Directors:</b>	Ted Schafer, Lily Henderson, Jeremy Levine
<b>Line Producer:</b>	Isaac Wilkins
<b>Starring:</b>	James 'Primo' Grant and John Diaz

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### **SYNOPSIS:**

After John's absent father is struck by a stray bullet, Primo takes it upon himself to verse the young boy in the code of the streets—one founded on respect and upheld by fear. A member of the Bloods since the age of twelve—both in the film and in reality—the streets of Brooklyn is all Primo has ever known. While John questions whether or not to enter into this life, Primo must decide whether to leave it all behind as he vows to become a better husband and father. Set during those New York summer weeks where the stifling heat seems to encase everything, Five Star plunges into gang culture with searing intensity. Director Keith Miller observes the lives of these two men with a quiet yet pointed distance, carefully eschewing worn clichés through its unflinching focus. Distinctions between fiction and real life remain intentionally ambiguous, allowing the story of these two men to resonate beyond the streets, as they face the question of what it means to be a man.

### **DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT:**

My process bumps up against both narrative and documentary filmmaking, and I work to disregard the line between fact and fiction to create a heightened, more urgent realism. To that end, the central characters' stories and motivations are derived through conversation with them and then combined with the story. In this case, conversations with Primo lead me to look at what it means to become a man.

With FIVE STAR, as well as my first feature film, WELCOME TO PINE HILL, I aim to capture the messiness of life, in order to make the story more real and concrete. My goal is to create a world that felt present, personal and above all human. To this end, we often shot extremely long takes with multiple cameras simultaneously. Working with an agile crew, we created conditions through which the chaos of everyday life, the poetry of the quotidian, was not just permitted, but encouraged to slip into the filming and the final cut. In the process of the more traditional movies I have shot, the goal is to avoid any real chaos on the set. My goal is the opposite. The central directive to both cast and crew: Reality doesn't stop. We don't stop. I invite the chaos because that is, in this method, where much of the beauty and the intensity comes from. It is a way to invite what I call, the Blast of Reality: when a moment feels so real it is indistinguishable from reality itself. In this moment the charged ambiguity hopefully forces us to interrogate our so-called reality and the many presuppositions therein. While this may cause a moment of discomfort resembling vertigo, it also has the potential to disarm just enough to create a deeply human empathy that for me can go beyond the facticity of documentary and the magic of fiction.

### **FILMMAKER/CAST BIO'S:**

#### **KEITH MILLER, (Writer, Director, Producer)**

Keith Miller is a filmmaker, artist, professor and curator. His first feature length film, WELCOME TO PINE HILL, premiered in 2012 at the Slamdance Film Festival where it won the Grand Jury Prize. It went on to win a total of five Jury prizes in the festival circuit playing at Seattle International Film Festival 2012 receiving the FIPRESCI Jury Prize, Atlanta Film Festival 2012 where it received the Grand Jury Prize, Nashville Film Festival 2012 where it received Honorable Mention and the Sarasota Film Festival 2012 where it received the Jury Prize for Best Performance. Distribution for the film is handled by Oscilloscope in the U.S. and Sundance International for International.

Additional filmography from Miller includes his second feature length film, FIVE STAR, featured in the 2014 Narrative Feature Competition at the Tribeca Film Festival and short film PRINCE/WILLIAM.

#### **JOHN DIAZ, (John)**

John Diaz was born and raised in Manhattan's Lower East Side. He developed a love of acting while doing theater in high school including a starring role in WEST SIDE STORY. In 2010, he starred in Jeremy Engle's short film MOSQUITO. John also makes music videos, does photography and writes and performs hip hop. He is currently recording his first album, going by the name JDBanks. FIVE STAR is John's feature film debut.

#### **JAMES 'PRIMO' GRANT, (Primo)**

James 'Primo' Grant was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. He has worked as a bouncer and currently works security with BPE Entertainment, with his mentor Aaron 'A Dolla' Freeman. He also records hip hop tracks with his crew, which includes Kasey 'DJ 2Evil' Anasazi and Leon "Tank" Hearde, who are featured in FIVE STAR. At twelve Primo turned "Blood" and after years in the life he has moved on and is working to be a good father to his children, Sincere and Neveah and a good fiancé and partner to Tamara, all of whom are also featured in the film. FIVE STAR is Primo's feature film debut.

### **END CREDITS:**

Up the street films  
presents

in association with  
The Brooklyn Filmmakers Collective

A film by Keith Miller

FIVE STAR

**Written Directed and Edited by**  
Keith Miller

**Starring**  
James 'Primo' Grant  
John Diaz

**Produced by**  
Daryl Freimark

**Produced by**  
Keith Miller  
Luisa Conlon

**Executive Producer**  
Russell Miller

**Co-Executive Producers**  
Katie and Tom Hanusik

**Co-Producer**  
Landon Van Soest

**Associate Producers**  
Alexander Mallis  
Ynette and Jim Hogue  
Mindy Miller  
Lee Weinstein

**Directors of Photography**  
Ed David  
Alexander Mallis

**Camera Operators**  
Eric Phillips-Horst  
Adam Uhl

**Original Score by**  
Michael Rosen

**Line Producer**  
Isaac Wilkins

**Unit Production Manager**  
Doree Simon

**Assistant Directors**  
Lily Henderson  
Jeremy Levine  
Ted Schaefer

**With**

Primo  
John  
Primo's Wife  
John's Mom

James 'Primo' Grant  
John Diaz  
Tamara Robinson  
Wanda Nobles Colon

Bar Owner  
Jasmin  
Marvin Bernard aka Tony

Larry Bogad  
Jasmin Burgos  
Yayo Himself

#### **RayLo's Crew**

RayLo  
Biggs  
Louis  
Daniel  
Vaughn

Donell 'Blizz' Brant  
Ryan 'Burberry Biggs' Gooding  
Louis Reyes  
Daniel Willis  
Vaughn Bowman

#### **Primo's Crew**

Kasey  
Midnight  
Vito  
Benz  
Grimace

Kasey Anasazi  
Leon 'Tank' Hearde Jr.  
Vito Van Rasan  
Benjamin Belotte  
John Bonaparte Jr.

Primo's daughter  
Primo's son  
Tamara's son  
Tamara's daughter

Nevaeh Grant  
Sincere Grant  
Elijah Dixon  
E'nyiah Dixon

Dealer  
Bodega Dealer  
Bodega Dealer #2  
Titi

Karim Allen  
Jaiden Kaine  
John Reese  
Lisette Finevelvet Rivera

#### **Assistant Camera**

Adam Uhl  
Diana Eliavoz  
Michael Atkins

#### **Camera Production Assistant**

Bradford Burdock  
Kelley Van Dilla

#### **Digital Imaging Technicians**

Dioni Vazquez  
Daniel LaCosse

#### **Gaffer**

Zeynep Oguz Catal

#### **Key Grip**

Justin McCormack

#### **Swing**

Darcy Schlitt

#### **Grip and Electric Intern**

Evan Bakal

#### **Location Sound Recordists**

Eddie O'Connor  
John Cole  
Max Phillips  
Michael Moote

#### **Steadicam Operators**

Ed David  
Adam Uhl

#### **Production Designers**

Kelley Van Dilla  
Jennifer Correa

**Wardrobe Supervisors**

Mariam Naziripour  
Hannah LaCava  
Mary Monigold

**Location Scout**

K. Paisley Wilson

**Consulting Editor**

Michael Taylor  
Jay Sterrenberg

**Co-Editor**

Iva Radivojevic

**Assistant Editors**

Tonieh Kaikor Ellis

**Additional Editing**

Frederick Shanahan

**Production Assistants**

Lisa Diaz  
Molly Gillis  
Patrick Leon  
Angel Martinez  
Elizabeth Mansfield  
Tori McCarthy  
Mary Monigold  
Rowan Shalit  
Edward Wardrip

**Extras**

Andrew Lee  
Angel Martinez  
Annette Bruno  
Anthony Dickson  
Brian DeCavallas  
Cindy Lerner  
Clint Taylor  
Dasia Moitt  
Denishe Robbins  
Eugene Watson  
Hasunehana Chaudhury  
Igor Meza  
Jaleek Battle  
James Arias  
Janay Virella  
Jasmin Gibson  
Jennifer Goma  
John Wayn  
Jose Perez  
Jose Wasembect  
Josef Haiwo  
Joseph Cunningham  
Kenneth Nelson  
Kim Nelson  
Laksheem Newton  
Larry Autis  
Leonard Anglade  
Mario Briggs  
Michael Carpenter  
Millard Freeman

Nancy Narvaez  
O'Kee Wade  
Patricia Musat  
Richard Bird  
Ronique Fletcher  
Shakeem Carpenter  
Shani-Ali Williams  
Soleil Agnant  
Timothy Torres  
TyJuan 'App' Hill (RIP)  
Veena Rao  
Victoria Stewart  
Xavier Ezel

**Post Production Supervisor**

DeVoe Yates

**Supervisor Sound Editor and Re-Recording Mixer**

Michael Suarez

**ADR Mixer**

Mark Amicucci

**Colorist**

Alexander Berman

**Visual Effects**

Chad Sikora

**Titles**

Jacob Ford

**Still Photography**

Nathan Fitch

Brad DeCecco

**Production Counsel**

Gray Krauss Stratford Sandler Des Rochers LLP

Jonathan Gray

**Bookkeeper**

Henrietta Shannon

**Tax Accountant**

Erin Estes

**Insurance**

Laird Criner at Film Emporium

**"Keystone Kettle"**

Performed by Matt Walker

Matt Walker Music (ASCAP)

Courtesy of Uranus Music

**"Nov Beat"**

Written and Performed by Jas Walton

**"Hava Nagila"**

Arranged and Performed by Rick Hall

Courtesy of Bobby Morganstein Productions

**"Out of Love"**

Written by Michael Petrolawicz, Evany Ryan Arthur, Raymon Temple, Johnel Jamison

Performed by Skip Rage featuring She's Ryan & Johnny Nelson

Produced by Slimmy Neutron

Published by Suffer to Gain (ASCAP)

Courtesy of Hello Halo Records

**“Piano 2”**

Written and Composed by Joseph Stephens

**“Walking Freestyle”**

Written and Performed by John Diaz

**“5 Star”**

Written by John Diaz, Timothy Torres, Anthony Dickson, Brian J. Roberts, Marc Battaglia

Performed by Burn Room Productions

Beat Produced by DEVIZE

[www.soundclick.com/DEVIZE](http://www.soundclick.com/DEVIZE)

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**Special Thanks**

Tim and Amy Farnan

Adam Feild

Susan Freimark

Sara and David Gail

Harry and Debra Gail

Katie and Tom Hanusik

Carolyn and Howard Leemon

Ilyse Hogue and John Neffinger

Debbie and Jeff Samberg

Lisa Koenig and Sanford Plachter

Donna and Herb Weitzman

Steven Wolfe

Barry Moultrie

Casey Ruble

Dan Nuxoll

Dan Schoenbrun

David Leyden

Elisabeth Holm

Eugene Lehnert

Frederic Boyer

Genna Terranova

Hardball Entertainment

Harvey Robinson

James Cartwright

James Grant

Jonathan Gray

Joseph Rodriguez and Liberty Tax

Josh Mandell

Julie Wang

Linda Lowell

Luisa Antonio Crul

Macy Miller

Mark Elijah Rosenberg

Mark Kaufman

Norman Freimark

Meerkat Media Collective

Mo's

Nicholette Zeliadt

Ofra Bloch

Patricia Bell

Rachael Escalera

Rachel Plutzer

Stephanie LaCapra

Tamara Robinson

Taylor Miller

The Fifth Estate

The Residents of the Walt Whitman Houses

**In honor of**

Mel Michael Miller

1943-1978

This film would not have been made without the generosity, talent and constant enthusiasm of the Brooklyn Filmmakers Collective.

[LOGOS]

Jerome Foundation/Rooftop Films/BFC/Kitty Guerilla Films

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