FIVE STAR

PRESS NOTES

The following talent and filmmaker are available for interviews:

**Talent:** James “Primo” Grant and John Diaz

**Writer/Director:** Keith Miller

**Produced by:** Keith Miller, Daryl Freimark, Luisa Conlon

**Executive Producer:** Russell Miller

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

**Co-Producer:** Landon Van Soest

**Cinematographers:** Ed David, Alexander Mallis

**Composer:** Michael Rosen

**Unit Production Manager:** Doree Simon

**Assistant Directors:** Ted Schafer, Lily Henderson, Jeremy Levine

**Line Producer:** Isaac Wilkins

**Starring:** James ‘Primo’ Grant and John Diaz

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XYZ Films

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Mette-Marie Katz – mettemarie@xyzfilms.com – 310-956-1550

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 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 Rassan
Benjamin Belotte
John Bonaparte Jr.

Primo's daughter
Primo's son
Tamara's son
Tamara's daughter
Nevaeh Grant
Sincere Grant
Elijah Dixon
E'niyah 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
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)
“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

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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  
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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
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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