

THE LIFE & DEATH ORCHESTRA PRESENTS...
THIS WAY FOR THE GAS, LADIES & GENTLEMEN

Why I want to write this and visual references:

As a lifelong musician – writer, I wanted to write a modern musical that mattered as much as Cabaret. A musical which did not deal with genocide as a boring history lesson but was about life (and death) today and difficult though it is a film which is also life enhancing. I wanted to deal with why genocide is still happening in 2009 no matter how often we say or sing never again! I wanted to ask why does the world still look on and look away as they did at Auschwitz.

I wanted to make this film after the success of the album (enclosed), which I wrote and produced with a little help from the greatest bass player ever Herbie Flowers , a man who has played on hundreds of hit records. Most of the musicians are available for the film. This led to me meeting writer and poet Adam Zych and an invitation to visit the Auschwitz Museum in which he is closely involved. I was inspired by this to write and direct the stage show, which was equally successful (all reviews enclosed).

A part of the film will revolve around the pictures of Arnold Daghani, some of which I also enclose. I like the pictures of the artist Hans Baluschek and his Berlin contemporaries who painted bustling urban city life landscapes – trains, bridges , scaffolding, scenes of squalour and injustice where man lives in reconciled companionship with factory and machine which is how I'd like to shoot the Warsaw exteriors. For the club interiors – about half the film - I have permission to film at The Musicbar in Brighton . It was the Joogleberry Playhouse and was designed as an Eastern European 1930s café. So is near perfect.

I want to make this a contemporary film – a film that has resonance today and is not a boring history lesson. So that is why the story is also set in Africa today. I have worked with many African musicians from Hugh Masekela to The Real Sounds Of Africa - see cv – and that is another reason for making *this* film .

I have been further encouraged to make this film after the faith some illustrious film people have shown in me. Michelle Da Costa (who has produced a number of successful films usually with the director Nick Broomfield) has offered to produce this film. Also, noted producers Robert Sidaway, Alison Owen (Elisabeth, Hot Fuzz and Shaun of the Dead) both offered to produce another screenplay of mine, based on the life of Robert Burns, and Willy Russell (Blood Brothers, Educating Rita, Shirley Valentine) helped me with my screenwriting and was very complimentary about my work.

I have an ensemble repertory cast and orchestra ready to make this film. It would be in the tradition of budget British filmmaking like Gregory's Girl and Oh What A Lovely War (also shot in Brighton). I also have one or two reasonably famous names, who I hope and expect to attach to the project.

Finally of course there is a moral aspect to why I want to make this film. It could be argued that the Nazi aim to turn Warsaw and Krakow from thriving cities for Jews to vanished Jewish cities worked. So in the words of Darfur writer Daoud Hari -

"Hundreds of thousands of my people have been killed....two and a half million others are in refugee camps or in solitary hiding places in desert valleys.....the only way the world can say no to genocide is to make sure that the people of Darfur are returned to their homes and given protection.....if the world allows the people of Darfur to be removed forever from their land and their way of life then genocide will happen elsewhere because it will be seen as something that works.....it must not be allowed to work"

Hitler's aim to turn Warsaw and Krakow from thriving Jewish cities to vanished cities sadly worked, will "Never Again" mean anything? I wish to make a film that adds to the voices shouting Never Again and this is why.

Visually I enclose some pictures which will give an idea of the colouring and mood of the outdoor Warsaw and Polish scenes, these will contrast with the warm candlelit cabaret seating scenes shot at the club. I also enclose a few pictures by Arnold Daghani.