


poster

KNEECAP – Rich Peppiatt

PROJECT SUMMARY

Director	RICH PEPIATT
Cast	NAOISE Ó CAIREALLÁIN “MÓGLAÍ BAP”, LIAM ÓG Ó HANNAIDH “MO CHARA”, JJ Ó DOCHARTAIGH “DJ PROVAÍ”, JOSIE WALKER, FIONNUALA FLAHERTY, JESSICA REYNOLDS, ADAM BEST, SIMONE KIRBY, MICHAEL FASSBENDER
Produced by	BFI, FÍS ÉIREANN/SCREEN IRELAND, COIMISIÚN NA MEÁN, TG4, NORTHERN IRELAND SCREEN’S IRISH LANGUAGE BROADCAST FUND AND SCREEN FUND
Country of origin	IRELAND, UNITED KINGDOM
Language	IRISH, ENGLISH
Running time	105 MIN
Genre	COMEDY, DRAMA
Release date	20 NOVEMBER 2024
Festivals & awards	SUNDANCE - OFFICIAL SELECTION, BERLINALE - OFFICIAL SELECTION
Kijkwijzer	

SYNOPSIS NL

Als het lot de verveelde muzikleraar JJ samenbrengt met de vrienden Naoise en Liam Óg, blijkt dit het begin van een ongekende Ierse hiphopact. Rappend in hun moedertaal breekt het rebelse raptrio Kneecap in Belfast door en worden ze al snel het boegbeeld van een burgerrechtenbeweging die als doel heeft de Ierse taal te redden. Terwijl de discussie hierover in de publieke arena losbarst, doen politie en politici hun uiterste best het anarchistische trio de mond te snoeren. In deze razend originele seks-, drugs- en hiphopbiopic speelt KNEECAP zichzelf en laten ze een wereldwijde strijdkreet horen ter verdediging van hun cultureel erfgoed.

SYNOPSIS FR

Lorsque le destin réunit JJ, un professeur de musique qui s'ennuie, et ses amis Naoise et Liam Óg, c'est le début d'un mouvement hip-hop irlandais sans précédent. Rappant dans leur langue maternelle, le trio rebelle Kneecap perce et devient bientôt la figure de proue d'un mouvement de défense des droits civiques visant à sauver la langue irlandaise. Alors que le débat éclate dans l'arène publique, la police et les politiciens font tout leur possible pour faire taire le trio anarchique. Dans ce biopic original sur le sexe, la drogue et le hip-hop, KNEECAP joue son propre rôle et lance un cri de guerre mondial pour défendre son héritage culturel.

KNEECAP – Rich Peppiatt

CAST

Móglai Bap or Naoise	NAOISE Ó CAIREALLÁIN
Mo Chara or Liam Óg	LIAM ÓG Ó HANNAIDH
DJ Próvai or JJ	JJ Ó DOCHARTAIGH
Detective Ellis	JOSIE WALKER
Caitlin	FIONNUALA FLAHERTY
Georgia	JESSICA REYNOLDS
Doyle	ADAM BEST
Dolores	SIMONE KIRBY
Arló ó Cairealláin	MICHAEL FASSBENDER

CREW

Writer & Director	RICH PEPIATT
STORY BY	RICH PEPIATT, NAOISE Ó CAIREALLÁIN, LIAM ÓG Ó HANNAIDH, JJ Ó DOCHARTAIGH
PRODUCERS	TREVOR BIRNEY, JACK TARLING
CO-PRODUCER	PATRICK O'NEILL
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS	BFI (LOUISE ORTEGA), CURZON FILM (LOUISA DENT, PHILIP KNATCHBULL), CHARADES (CAROLE BARATON, YOHANN COMTE, PIERRE MAZARS), MOTHER TONGUES (MANON ARDISSON, CHIARA VENTURA), NORTHERN IRELAND SCREEN (URSULA DEVINE), SCREEN IRELAND (NIAMH FAGAN), IRISH LANGUAGE BROADCAST FUND (PART OF NIS, ÁINE WALSH), TG4 (PROINSIAS NÍ GHRÁINNE), FINE POINT FILMS (MÁIRE BHREATHNACH), GREAT POINT MEDIA (KEITH KEHOE, AUGUSTA CHARLTON, PETE BOYLE, DIAS FELD, KAMILA SERKEBAEVA)
Director of Photography	RYAN KERNAGHAN
Editors	JULIAN ULRICHS, CHRIS GILL
Original Score by	MICHAEL 'MIKEY J' ASANTE
Casting Director	CARLA STRONGE CSA
Production Designer	NICOLA MORONEY
Costume Designer	ZJENA GLAMOCANIN
Hair & Makeup Designer	LIZ BOSTON
2 nd Unit Director	PEADAR Ó GOILL

KNEECAP – Rich Peppiatt

Director's Statement

This project started back in October 2019, when, on a whim, I went out in Belfast to see an up-and-coming hip hop act called *Kneecap*. I understood nothing of the Irish language they were rapping in, but it was clear many in the sold-out crowd knew every word. The raw energy and authenticity this band possessed was undeniable.

After a few months of failing miserably to entice them to have a drink with me, they finally caved. That drink lasted until some ungodly time the following morning. But the gauntlet had been laid down – we would make a film. It was going to be as bold, raw and unrelenting as Kneecap's music. I needed to learn Irish pronto.

It is often said the best films parachute their audience into a time and place uniquely of its own. *Mo Chara*, *Mógláí Bap* and *DJ Provaí* encapsulated a vision of Belfast and modern Ireland arrestingly different to the one we all called home. A country still suffering PTSD after decades of conflict. One without a functioning government over Unionist politician's refusal to grant Ireland's native language equal status to English. From the outset this language and its relationship with identity felt central to the story we wanted to tell. Liam Óg, Naoise and JJ spoke with passion and nuance about the Irish language movement which had been growing alongside their ascent as artists. As a big fan of old-school hip hop, for me the parallels between Kneecap's relationship with language echoed the controversy African American rappers once created in reinventing the English tongue to reflect their own urban, oppressed social reality.

When the script was written and the business of getting the film made began in earnest one question kept arising – great story, but can the boys act? The answer from me, obviously, was a resounding yes. The reality was, I had no idea. My confidence was based on the belief that a transition from playing personas on music stages to on-screen would be a skip and jump. Six months out from production the trio arrived for their first acting class. It didn't go well. Forget skips and jumps, this was to be a transatlantic flight...

To be fair, it wasn't that the band couldn't act, it was that they didn't know *how* to act and under the tutelage of our amazing acting coach Kieran Lagan that soon changed. But standing on set with my now brothers-in-arms about to do a scene opposite one of the greatest character actors of our generation in Michael Fassbender, the concern resurfaced – are they gonna look like they won their film roles in a raffle?

The answer is not for me to say, but from the moment Kneecap burst onto the music scene their unique talent and magnetism has belied their ostensibly niche output. We are all so proud & excited to bring that same spirit to Sundance, and in doing so break new ground for Irish language cinema.

— **Rich Peppiatt**

KNEECAP – Rich Peppiatt

FILMMAKER BIOGRAPHIES

RICH PEPPIATT | WRITER, DIRECTOR

Rich Peppiatt is a writer & director working across film, TV and commercials.

His debut feature, documentary *One Rogue Reporter*, was adapted from his critically-lauded comedy stage show of the same name, which debuted in 2012 at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, before embarking on a national tour. The film premiered at Sheffield Doc/Fest and was nominated for Best Independent Feature at the 2014 National Film Awards. It was acquired by Netflix in a multi-territory deal.

Rich has gone on to write over 25 hours of prime time television, which have won awards including a Scottish RTS & BAFTA.

He has written and directed a number of short films which have screened at leading International film festivals. His last short, *Grounded*, was long-listed for the 2020 Academy Awards.

As a former journalist, who became a prominent critic of the tabloid newspaper industry during the Leveson Inquiry, Rich has spoken about his work on the likes of BBC Radio 4, Channel 4 News, Newsnight, Sky News and PBS, as well as writing op-eds for the Guardian, Independent, The Big Issue and Total Politics.

He lives in Belfast.

TREVOR BIRNEY | PRODUCER

TREVOR BIRNEY is an Emmy-nominated producer, award-winning director, author and the founder of Fine Point Films. He most recently produced the Cyndi Lauper documentary, “Let The Canary Sing” which premiered at Tribeca Film Festival. Previously, he produced the Critics’ Choice Award-winning and Sundance hit film *The Go-Go’s* directed by Alison Ellwood. He directed the RTÉ television documentary series, “Quinn Country” which aired in 2022. His slate also includes Emmy-nominated film *No Stone Unturned* directed by Oscar-winner Alex Gibney, Sundance World Competition film *Gaza*, Emmy-nominated *Elián* for CNN Films, Netflix Originals Documentary *Mercury 13*, *George Best: All By Himself* for ESPN and BBC, *Wave Goodbye To Dinosaurs* in collaboration with Abigail Disney’s Fork Films, *Bobby Sands: 66 Days* and HBO’s Emmy-winning *Mea Maxima Culpa: Silence in the House of God* directed by Alex Gibney. In 2020, he directed *The Dakota Entrapment Tapes* which premiered at Hot Docs and was released on Sundance Now. He is also the founder of the television production company Below the Radar and the multi-award-winning investigative journalism website The Detail.

JACK TARLING | PRODUCER

Jack has produced two feature films prior to *Kneecap*, *God’s Own Country*, which won prizes in 2017 at Sundance, Berlin, Edinburgh, Galway, Chicago, Dinard and 4 British Independent Film Awards including Best Film, and a BAFTA nomination for Outstanding British Film, and *Await Further Instructions*, which won the Audience Award for Best Film at Cinepocalypse in 2018, was Critics Pick in the New York Times and sold to Netflix in a multi-territory deal.

Jack has produced content for Disney/Hulu and worked for a year with Sony Interactive Entertainment in 2019. Jack previously supported development and business affairs across the film and TV slate for Ridley Scott’s company Scott Free. Jack is the co-founder of the Mother Tongues Development Award (run in partnership with Curzon and Charades) which supports the development of UK-set films, by UK-based talent, in which the story dialogue is in a language other than English.

KNEECAP – Rich Peppiatt

Prior to this his background in short films included exec producing a slate of ten short films for regional screen agency Northern Film + Media and producing *Assessment* which was short listed for a BAFTA and won the Film London Best of Boroughs jury prize in 2010. Jack has also line produced several other films for BBC and BFI including two which premiered at Venice.

Jack is a graduate of Berlinale Talents, Torino Filmlab Extended, Rotterdam Cinemart, Think. Shoot. Distribute. Save Our Scripts (with The Bureau) Film London Micro Market and many other labs and holds a First Class BA (Hons.) Degree in Media Production from Northumbria University.

PATRICK O'NEILL | CO-PRODUCER

Patrick is Founder and Managing Director of Wildcard, an independent film distributor working across Theatrical, Video on Demand, and TV in the UK and Ireland for the last 10 years. Wildcard projects include *Wolfwalkers*, *The Hole In The Ground*, *The Young Offenders*, and *Black 47*. Wildcard also regularly manage Irish distribution campaigns on behalf of UK Distributors and Platforms, with clients including Amazon, Altitude, Apple, Netflix, and Vertigo.

In 2023, Wildcard moved into film production, with upcoming feature films *Kneecap* and *Fréwaka* set for release in 2024, and a slate of active development projects supported through slate funding by Screen Ireland and Northern Ireland Screen.

Patrick's Executive Producer film credits include *The Hole in the Ground*, *Black 47*, *Extra Ordinary*, *Redemption of a Rogue*, *Lakelands*, and *KATIE*. He is also Co-Producer on *Crock of Gold: A Few Rounds with Shane MacGowan*.

Patrick sits on the Board of the Irish Film Institute and the Cork Film Festival, is a member of the WRAP Fund Investment Committee, and the Arts Council Peer Panel.

Patrick has 25 years experience in the film industry across a variety of roles, including seven years as an Executive at Screen Ireland and positions in International sales and film Production.

Qualifications include an MA in Audio-Visual Management, MSC in Cyberpsychology, and a BA in Business Studies.

KNEECAP – Rich Peppiatt

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

KNEECAP (NAOISE Ó CAIREALLÁIN “MÓGLAÍ BAP,” JJ Ó DOCHARTAIGH “DJ PROVAÍ,” & LIAM ÓG Ó HANNAIDH “MO CHARA”) | “NAOISE,” “JJ,” and “LIAM ÓG”

Kneecap are part rap group, part Irish cultural phenomenon. Banned by Irish State Broadcaster RTE. Kicked out of their own headline show in Dublin. Publicly condemned by the political party the DUP. These musicians provoke column inches, from the Sunday Times to Channel 4 News, as well as a host of front pages back home. In a few short years the artistry and offstage antics of Mo Chara, Móglái Bap and DJ Próvaí have built them a notoriety never before seen in Irish music.

What’s more, Irish music has never heard Irish music like it. Kneecap’s poetic blending of Irish and English in their lyrics has inspired a whole generation of Ireland’s youth to rediscover their mother tongue for the modern world.

MICHAEL FASSBENDER | “ARLO Ó’CAIREALLÁIN”

Michael Fassbender is a leading actor of his generation, known for his deep immersion into characters across both independent and blockbuster films. Born in Germany and raised in Ireland, he graduated from the prestigious Drama Centre and has received numerous accolades, including Oscar, Golden Globe, SAG, and BAFTA nominations. Fassbender also runs a production company, DMC Films, through which he develops and produces various projects.

In 2023, Fassbender starred in David Fincher’s Netflix film, *The Killer*, receiving critical acclaim for his performance. He also appeared in Taika Waititi’s *Next Goal Wins*, a feature adaptation of the 2014 British football documentary, and is set to star in *Kneecap*, premiering at the 2024 Sundance Film Festival, as well as the Korean thriller *Hope* directed by Na Hong-jin.

Fassbender's notable recent roles include reprising 'Magneto' in *X-Men: Dark Phoenix* (2019) and starring in *The Snowman* (2017) and *Alien: Covenant* (2017). His performances in films such as *Assassin’s Creed* (2016), *The Light Between Oceans* (2016), and *Steve Jobs* (2015) have further solidified his reputation, with critics praising his ability to portray complex and multifaceted characters.

Collaborations with acclaimed directors, such as Steve McQueen in *12 Years a Slave*, *Hunger*, and *Shame*, have marked Fassbender's career with significant critical success. He has also starred in *X-Men: First Class*, *A Dangerous Method*, and *Jane Eyre*, earning numerous international awards and nominations. Other notable projects include *Slow West*, *Frank*, *Fish Tank*, *300*, *Inglourious Basterds*, and the HBO series *Band of Brothers*.

SIMONE KIRBY | “DOLORES”

Simone Kirby is an Irish television, film and stage actress, most recently playing Mary Malone, a leading role, in the BBC/HBO series *His Dark Materials*, and Bibi in *Hidden Assets* (RTE).

Upcoming work includes new Apple TV series *The Buccaneers*.

Simone’s film credits include BAFTA nominated feature *Notes On Blindness* (Archers Mark), and Ken Loach's feature *Jimmys Hall*, playing the female lead, Oonagh.

Other film credits are: *Dating Amber* (Tilted Pictures), *The Hole In The Ground* (Savage Productions), *Calm With Horses* (DMC), *Mothers Day* (BBC), *Alice Through The Looking Glass* (Disney), *Artemis Fowl* (Disney), *The Truth Commissioner* (BBC), *The Flag* (Treasure Ent.), *England Is Mine* (Honlodge), and *Season Of The Witch* (Lionsgate).

KNEECAP – Rich Peppiatt

Television credits include *The One* (Netflix), *Resistance* (REBELLION 2) for RTE/ Netflix, *Peaky Blinders* (BBC), *Silent Witness* (BBC), *Houdini & Doyle* (ITV), *Dark Heart* (ITV), *Clean Break* (RTE), *Love Hate* (RTE), *Pure Mule* (RTE), *Single Handed* (RTE/ITV), and as writer and performer in *Meet Your Neighbours* with PJ Gallagher.

For theatre Simone has performed extensively with The Old Vic, Shakespeare's Globe, The Irish Rep in New York, The Abbey Theatre and The Gate Theatre in Dublin, and with Rough Magic, Druid, and Corn Exchange theatre companies, amongst many others.

Awards and nominations include Best Supporting Actress Drama Nomination (IFTA 2022), Best Supporting Actress Film Nomination (IFTA 2017), Best Actress Film nomination (IFTA 2015), Best actress nomination (Irish Theatre Awards 2004) and winner of The Jayne Snow Award, (Dublin Fringe Festival 2005).

JOSIE WALKER | “DETECTIVE ELLIS”

Born in Belfast.

Josie played Northern Irish midwife NRT in the recent BAFTA winning BBC series *This Is Going To Hurt*. Tv work also includes the exciting upcoming second series of Disney's *Andor*, *White House Farm*, *Vera*, *Call The Midwife*, *Waterloo Road* and *Psychoville*.

Josie has played leading and supporting roles in the upcoming BBC/BFI feature films *In Camera* and *Edge of Summer*, Netflix hit *The Wonder* directed by Chilean Director Sebastian Lelio, playing Sister Michael alongside Florence Pugh, and Kenneth Branagh's Oscar winning *Belfast* where she played opposite Catriona Balfe as her sister, Aunt Violet.

Josie has worked extensively in theatre for the last 3 decades creating original roles in West End musicals such as Andrew Lloyd Webber and Ben Elton's *The Beautiful Game* where she played Belfast heroine Mary Maguire which earned her her first Olivier Award nomination for Best actress in a Musical 2001. Then creating the role of the audacious Mrs Wormwood in the RSC's multi award winning production of Roald Dahl's *Matilda the Musical* in Stratford upon Avon in 2010 and a West End Run in 2011. Next up was the smash hit *Everybody's Talking About Jamie* taking the show from Sheffield to the West End where she created the role of Margaret New, earning her second Olivier Award nomination for best actress in a Musical in 2018.

Josie has also starred in many plays at the National Theatre London, including two wonderful Sean O'Casey revivals *The Silver Tassie* and *The Plough and the Stars*. 2020 saw her third Olivier nomination, Best supporting actress in a play for Neil Gaiman's *Ocean at the end of the Lane* where she created the role of Old Mrs Hempstock, again at the National Theatre.

She completed filming on *Kneecap* this year as Detective Ellis and loved working with the band alongside the brilliant director/writer Rich Peppiatt.