

TY JOHNSON ANDREW VAN CAMP AIDAN SARMIENTO WYMAN WHEELER MAURICE KING



THE THRILL OF SPEED

A FILM BY MICHAEL SAYE



WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY MICHAEL SAYE.
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THE THRILL OF SPEED

Running Time:	105 minutes
Directed, Written, Produced By:	Michael Saye
Aspect Ratio:	2.39:1
Country of Origin:	United States
Language:	English
Sound Format:	Stereo 2.0
Production Company:	Conquistadore Films
Edited by:	Michael Saye
World Premiere Status:	Available



LOGLINE

After a late warehouse shift, four coworkers go out for a drink.
As the night unfolds, the group splinters into parallel journeys through
liquor stores, rail yards, and industrial wastelands,
each chasing his own vision of freedom.

SYNOPSIS

After a shift at a refinery, four coworkers decide to go out and get drinks.
After stopping at a gas station for supplies, they head to the riverfront, where they split into two journeys.
Raul and Thom descend deeper into the river's towering industrial wasteland,
while Robert and Michael slowly drink themselves stupid.
When the two pairs reunite, a final clash of priorities emerges: some want to go home,
while others cannot face returning to the routine waiting for them.

MY STORY: DIRECTOR, MICHAEL SAYE

I began developing 'The Thrill of Speed' several years before production.

The film grew out of my experiences working warehouse jobs as a young adult and spending time with the people who worked alongside me. While the story is fictional, many of its situations, conversations, and observations come from that period of my life.

The characters are not based on any one person. Instead, they are composites of people I have known throughout my professional experience. Their personalities, perspectives, and relationships were shaped by years of meeting coworkers from different backgrounds and watching how they approached work, friendship, and life outside of work.

The film was financed through my work in the Alaskan commercial fishing industry. During fishing seasons, I continued developing the screenplay and planning the production, using those earnings to fund the project independently.

'The Thrill of Speed' is my debut feature film. It was produced independently over several years of planning and development, with the goal of telling a story grounded in the people, places, and experiences that inspired it.



THE PRODUCTION

‘The Thrill of Speed’ was produced using a hybrid approach that combined a traditional screenplay with extensive improvisation. The original script was approximately 90 pages in length. During pre-production, it was reduced to roughly 50 pages, with the intention of allowing the actors greater freedom to develop their characters and interactions through improvisation. While the film follows a defined story structure, much of the dialogue, blocking, and moment-to-moment action was created during production. A significant portion of the film's final material originated from the cast. Actors frequently expanded scenes beyond what was written on the page, and several sequences were developed entirely on location to address opportunities or gaps discovered during filming.

The finished film reflects a collaborative process between the screenplay and the performers who helped shape it. All locations seen in the film are real locations in and around Kansas City. The production relied heavily on location scouting, much of which began in May 2025. Many scenes were developed directly from environments discovered during this process, with locations influencing both the visual design of the film and the events that take place within it. Principal photography took place over eight consecutive nights, with most filming occurring between 9:00 PM and 4:00 AM. The production operated with a small crew and minimal equipment. Camera work was shot entirely handheld using a Sony FX3, stabilized primarily through a neck strap and handheld rigging rather than traditional support systems. Several sequences required cast and crew to travel considerable distances on foot.

In some locations, including the parkland and river environments featured in the film, access was limited to a single parking area, requiring equipment and personnel to move through the landscape as part of the production process. The methods used on ‘The Thrill of Speed’ reflect an approach that Conquistadore Films intends to continue exploring: small crews, real locations, flexible production methods, and a willingness to allow the realities of a location and the contributions of performers to shape the finished work.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The bones of *The Thrill of Speed* can be traced back to my experiences working labor jobs in my early twenties. From warehouses to temporary construction jobs, I encountered a wide range of people from different backgrounds working miserable conditions to scrape by. The characters in this film are composites of different people I encountered in these jobs.

The story is derived from a specific group I knew while working as a package handler at FedEx in 2022. We had planned several times to go out and do something interesting after work. I was underage, and the older guy in the group would buy me beer and whatever liquor I wanted. A few years later, the story began to take form when I was fantasizing about what it would have been like if we had actually gone out drinking.

The plot originally grew from this fantasy about what could have happened, but over time the story matured into a drama that wrestled with why these people were the way they were, why they continued to work these miserable jobs and maintain self-destructive habits, and why they would always say they wanted to get out of it all, but never did.

Thom especially reflects my own personal confusion at nineteen, wanting nothing more than to escape the routine conditions that I began to blame on the city itself. The nocturnal limbo was a constant pressure at that age until it manifested in a voice that demanded I get out before it was too late. Ultimately, that propelled me toward the making of this film.

The film captures an approximation of the people trapped in that cycle. It is a very personal film because it portrays characters trapped in a condition I thoroughly empathize with, and a fear of stagnation that I recognize.

THE ENSEMBLE CAST



TY JOHNSON as Raul

Tyler Ronald Johnson is an American actor. Since making his film debut in Scott's Insomnia (2024), he has appeared in Betrayal as Detective Dakota Lyvers and taken leading roles in Tree Lights and Buried Secrets. Prior to acting, Johnson earned a bachelor's degree in kinesiology from Penn State University and founded the streetwear brand Pegasus.



ANDREW VAN CAMP as Robert

Andrew Van Camp is a Los Angeles-based actor, writer, director, and producer. He is known for his roles in Hit By Cars and the award-winning film Butterfly, and has received multiple Best Actor and screenwriting awards for his film Unraveled.



WYMAN WHEELER as Michael

Wyman Wheeler is a Kansas City based actor with a background in theatre. A graduate of Wichita State University, Wyman has a BFA in Music Theatre with a Certificate in Voice Acting.



AIDAN SARMIENTO as Thom

Aidan Sarmiento is a Kansas City-based actor, musician, and educator. A graduate of Drake University with degrees in Musical Theatre and Music, he performs as a cellist, pianist, and vocalist while teaching music to students of all ages. The Thrill of Speed marks one of his early film roles.

SECONDARY CAST: MAURICE KING as the TRAIN-HOPPER

Maurice King-Clark is a dynamic actor from Kansas City, Missouri known for great on-camera presence and compelling performances in independent cinema. Most recently awarded crowd favorite with his portrayal of both God and Satan in the same series. When not on set, Maurice is actively involved in community work and entrepreneurial endeavors.



CREW

The film was produced without a formal crew. Aside from the cast, production responsibilities including directing, cinematography, sound recording, location management, transportation, and editing were handled by writer-director Michael Saye.

WRITER-DIRECTOR: MICHAEL SAYE

Michael Saye is an American filmmaker and founder of Conquistadore Films, an independent production company based in Kansas City, Missouri. His approach to filmmaking blends scripted narrative with real-world environments, often relying on small crews, practical production methods, and extensive location-based research. In addition to filmmaking, Saye has worked in commercial fishing and pursued expedition travel, experiences that continue to inform the subjects and themes of his work.



PREMIERE STATUS

WORLD PREMIERE	OPEN
INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE	OPEN
NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE	OPEN
U.S.A. NATIONAL PREMIERE	OPEN
MIDWEST PREMIERE	OPEN
MISSOURI PREMIERE	OPEN
KANSAS PREMIERE	OPEN
KANSAS CITY PREMIERE	OPEN

CREDITS

DIRECTOR - MICHAEL SAYE
ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY BY MICHAEL SAYE
PRODUCED BY MICHAEL SAYE
EDITED BY MICHAEL SAYE

STARRING

RAUL	TY JOHNSON
ROBERT	ANDREW VAN CAMP
THOM	AIDAN SARMIENTO
MICHAEL	WYMAN WHEELER
TRAIN-HOPPER	MAURICE KING

CAMERA OPERATOR	MICHAEL SAYE
SOUND TECHNICIAN	MICHAEL SAYE
EDITOR	MICHAEL SAYE
STUNTS	TY JOHNSON
PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT	MICHAEL SAYE



**A PRODUCTION OF
CONQUISTADORE FILMS**



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CONTACT



Conquistadore Films

**4050 Pennsylvania Ave
Kansas City, MO 64111, USA**

Email: hello@conquistadorefilms.com

Phone: +1 (816) 508-7721

Instagram: [@conquistadorefilms](https://www.instagram.com/conquistadorefilms)

IMDB: [imdb.com/title/tt42222236/](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt42222236/)

YouTube: [youtube.com/@ConquistadoreFilms](https://www.youtube.com/@ConquistadoreFilms)

Website: conquistadorefilms.com









