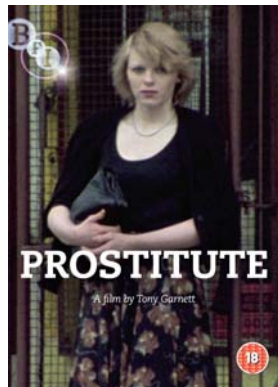


DVD press release



Prostitute

A film by Tony Garnett

Eleanor Forsythe, Kate Crutchley

Mastered from original film materials and presented fully uncut for the very first time, Tony Garnett's groundbreaking and controversial exposé of the lives of a group of Birmingham sex workers is finally released on DVD.

One of British television's most critically acclaimed figures, Tony Garnett has been responsible for producing some of the UK's most radical dramas. In the 1960s and 1970s he collaborated with director Ken Loach, beginning with the groundbreaking *Up the Junction* (1965) and *Cathy Come Home* (1966). After spending most of the 1980s in America, he returned to work on series and serial drama with a range of credits, including *Between the Lines* (1992-1994), *This Life* (1996-1997) and *The Cops* (1998-2001).

His cinematic directorial debut, *Prostitute* (1980), which he also wrote and produced, is the story of two women – Sandra (Eleanor Forsythe), an ambitious but naïve Birmingham working girl who moves to London with the hope of securing wealthier patrons, and Louise (Kate Crutchley), her social worker friend, who is fighting to change the antiquated and hypocritical prostitution laws. As both strive to achieve their goals, a cold dose of reality dashes their hopes and the built-in biases against women in society are unmasked.

Tony Garnett researched and developed the film over several years, working closely with PROS, the Programme for Reform of the Law on Soliciting, for the decriminalisation of prostitution in Britain.

Recalling the film in 2011, Tony Garnett writes in his essay for the BFI DVD booklet:

'I wanted to make a film from the prostitute's point of view. It would not be sexy, turning the audience into punters. No prostitute would turn out to have a heart of gold or fall in love and marry a kind, millionaire punter. It would be about money, buying and selling, and the stress that particular trade imposes. It would show how class distinctions altered the transactions. I hoped for insights and debate. Often when dealing with a world the public does not know but thinks it knows, it is useful to dispel the prejudice by just carefully revealing its day to day character in a matter-of-fact way. I was not interested in making a genre film, whether thriller, romance or morality tale.'

Special features

- *Taking a Part* (1979, 45 mins): Documentary by Jan Worth about the experiences of two young women involved in prostitution
- Illustrated booklet featuring essays by Tony Garnett, Russell Campbell (author of *Marked Women: Prostitutes and Prostitution in the Cinema*) and filmmaker Jan Worth

Release date: 25 April 2011

RRP: £19.99 / cat. no. BFIV893 / Cert 18

UK / 1980 / colour / English with optional subtitles for the hard-of-hearing /
98 mins / DVD-9 / aspect ratio 1.78:1

Available from all DVD retailers & the BFI Filmstore Tel: 020 7815 1350

www.bfi.org.uk/filmstore

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