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## JULIAN GILBEY INTERVIEW

The director/co-writer of Brit gangster pic Rise Of The Footsoldier on his battles with critics and not wanting to be stereotyped.



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### content advice

contains very strong language and violence

Appropriately enough for a man who has just directed the most violent British movie since The Football Factory, Julian Gilbey is arming those around him for an upcoming battle. Unlike in his gangster pic Rise Of The Footsoldier, however, no blood will be split and the only bruises will be to egos. That's because he's bracing himself for a kicking from some tabloids and broadsheets for his Essex, drugs and ruck'n'roll film. "You have to go and tell your mother, 'You know that this film will only get one star in The Times, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't keep reading The Times'," he notes, showing an awareness beyond some filmmakers. (You can read The Times' one star review [here](#).)

In person, Gilbey is the polar opposite of his macho and testosterone-fuelled movies. Well-spoken and decidedly middle-class in comparison to the blue collar (and language) protagonists of his films, he's most obviously comparable to Nick Love, the director of the equally muscular Football Factory and The Business. Or, more disconcertingly, a character in a Richard Curtis rom-com.



Hard case: Craig Fairbrass in Rise Of The Footsoldier

Julian received a BAFTA nomination in 2007 for his second feature Rollin' With The Nines, an urban crime pic which made a brief appearance at

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[rise of the footsoldier official site](#)

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UK cinemas in April 2006. Rise Of The Footsoldier is a step-up - both dramatically and financially - from his sophomore movie, and was again co-written with brother William. Although the reviews have, predictably, been split between lad mag raves and broadsheet revulsion, perhaps Screen International captured the film most fairly: "Luridly violent, full of macho posturing and often mired in cliché," Geoffrey Macnab wrote, "the film nonetheless has an epic sweep and relentless narrative drive that show Gilbey is more than just another lightweight Scorsese imitator."

In the video above Julian discusses what drew him to Footsoldier, how he deals with the critical brickbats, and why it's OK for British films to look sexy.

Rise Of The Footsoldier is released in UK cinemas on Friday 7th September 2007.

Adrian Hennigan | Published 06 September 07

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