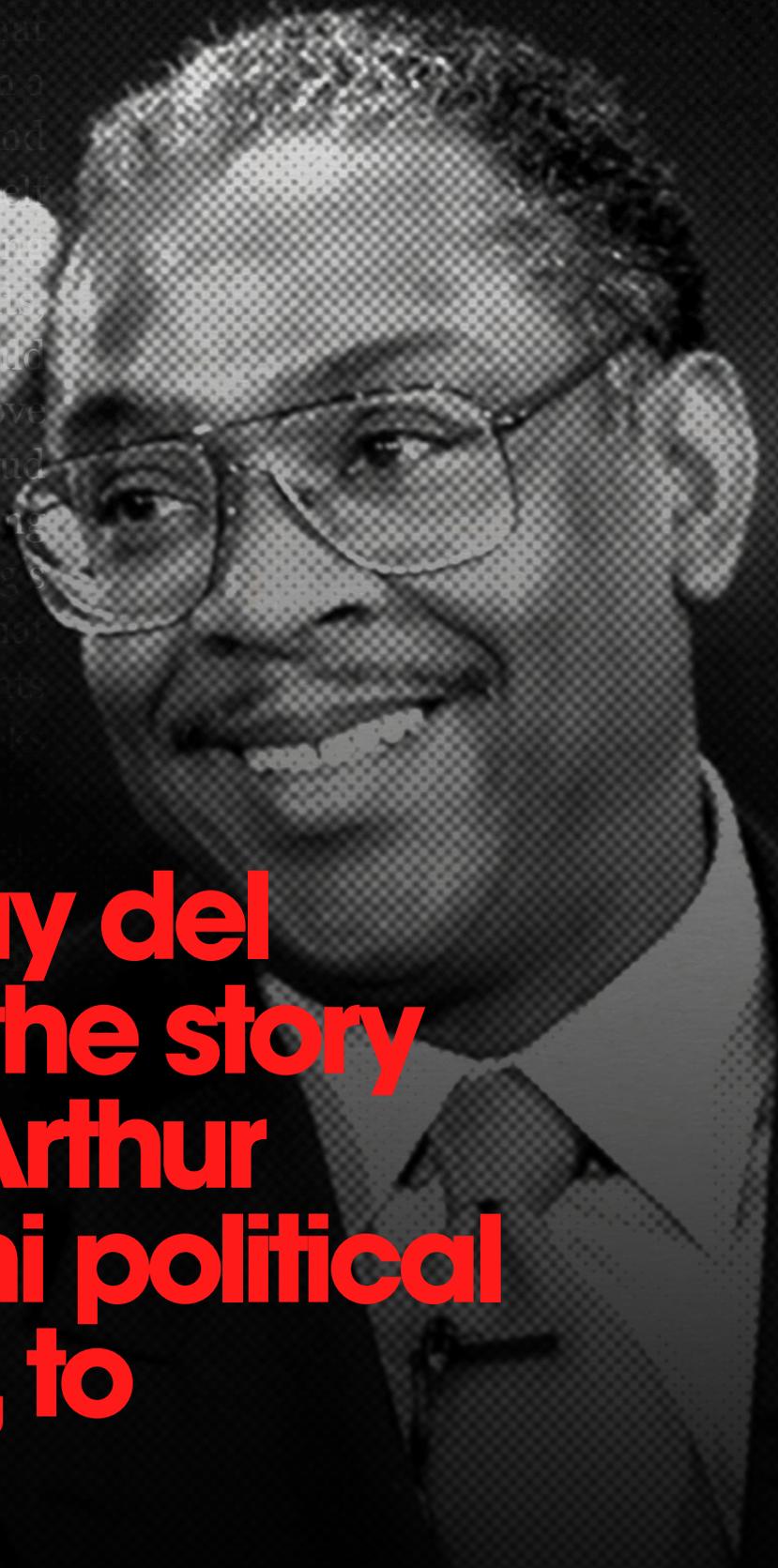


STICKS AND STONES

of records found previously seized in a suitcase and documents that Arthur E. Teele Jr. had with him in a car was tragically when the former city and county commissioner killed himself in the lobby of The Herald building Wednesday. One of the documents, prepared by a Teele aide, could help federal prosecutors prove that Teele conspired to defraud Miami-Dade County, according to a source familiar with the bag's contents. The same source says that subpoenaed e-mails and documents also indicated Teele had conspired with a former aide to defraud the county. The source says the information was part of a criminal prosecution case against Arthur

Reporter Ray del Toro writes the story that leads Arthur Teele, Miami political juggernaut, to suicide.



At A Glance

Logline

When an ambitious reporter gets access to classified documents, he writes a career changing story with catastrophic results and unwittingly turns the spotlight onto the press.

Target Audience

Sticks and Stones is a universal story that is relatable to audiences all over the world. Political corruption and journalistic integrity are topics that affect anyone living in any civilized nation.

Genres

Crime Drama, Political Thriller, True Story

Time Period

Mid 2000's

Story Location

Miami, FL

Target Runtime

90-120 minutes

Shooting Format

Camera: Arri LF or RED Monstro

Delivery Format

Delivery: 4k, color, 5.1 audio

Shooting Schedule

28 days

Shooting Location

Miami, FL

Project Status

Script completed. Casting in progress. Searching for financing.



Act 1

Ray Del Toro, father of a young girl and journalist at a fledgling local newspaper, gets news that he'll be part of a massive layoff unless he can prove himself to be a financially viable asset. His luck changes when a mysterious political operative gives him classified documents regarding Arthur Teele, a local politician that is under investigation and has recently become a hot topic in the news.



Act 2

Armed with what is essentially a cheat sheet to a potentially career-changing story, Ray sets out to verify the claims in the documents in time for his deadline. After many roadblocks, including a total dis-allowance of the story by his associate editor, he manages to get the story printed. The resulting article includes unverified claims about Arthur Teele, including sex scandals and drug-use allegations. This results in Teele's suicide in the newspaper's lobby.



Act 3

Forced to face the unexpected consequence of his story, Ray unravels as the press turns onto him and his newspaper which puts further strain on his relationship with his daughter. His morals are ultimately tested when the head of the newspaper presents him with a Faustian bargain that could set him up for life and save his relationship with his daughter.



Film Synopsis

Ray Del Toro is an ambitious writer for Wave Media, a local Miami rag that dabbles in investigative journalism, but is better known as the publication 20-somethings use to figure out what they're doing this weekend. Nonetheless, Ray's mission is to reach the upper echelon of journalism the likes of Woodward and Bernstein. His opportunity comes in the form of classified documents given to him by a mysterious political operative regarding Arthur Teele, a local politician that is under investigation and has recently become a hot topic on the news. Adam, his editor, allows Ray a couple of weeks to work on the story, instead of the 4 months he needs.

Ray tracks down sources to corroborate the story, but hits major pitfalls. Through interviews with politicians, the local pastor, the town barber shop, and others, we learn more about who Arthur Teele is, but not one person will corroborate Ray's story. His deadline is further constrained when news breaks that Teele has been removed from office. Feeling the pressure

to publish the in-depth story before competing publications, he decides to put ethics aside and print the document as is.

The resulting article includes stories of political corruption and colorful characters not the least of which is a jailed transvestite that claims to have had sexual relations with Teele.

Saudia, the assistant editor at the paper and Ray's love interest, rallies against the story, calling it tabloid journalism, but Ray eventually wins Adam over and gets the article printed.

Ray's success is turned into his nightmare when he learns that the story he "wrote" has resulted in Teele's suicide. News of the event makes national headlines but results negatively on the press.

Ultimately Ray... he gets a promotion.



Police at the Miami Herald lobby after Arthur Teele committed suicide.

Characters

Images show a look and feel reference of each character.



Ray Del Toro

Ray is a Cuban-American single Dad who's about to lose his job at a Miami newspaper. He's desperate to write a story that will elevate his status at the paper in order to provide a better life for himself and his daughter.



Saudia

Saudia Bentley is a bi-racial, confident editor at a changing Miami newspaper. She fights tooth and nail to keep the paper's moral integrity. Her on/off love affair with Ray is put to the test when she challenges his journalistic integrity.



Arthur Teele

Based on a real person, Arthur Teele is a Miami politician, beloved by the local African American community, who is under investigation for fraud. He is the subject of our story and the obsession of our lead character.



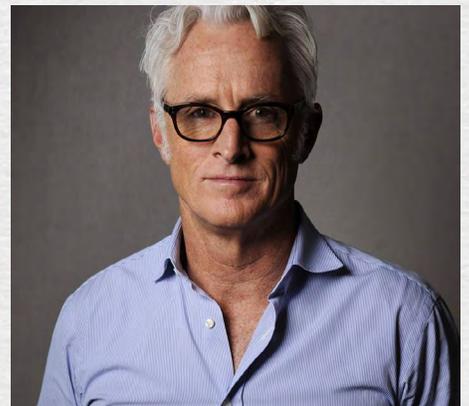
Nagib

Nagib, a young gay African American hoping to learn the ropes of journalism, is Ray's partner in his investigation on Arthur Teele. He becomes the moral compass of the story when he gets entwined in Ray's mess.



Seth

Seth is a slick businessman who works in politics. He is the source of Ray's documents on the Arthur Teele story. His trustworthiness is questionable, but he is definitely a man that makes things happen.



Adam

Adam is the editor of the fledgling newspaper and is tasked with cutting costs and modernizing. Like Ray, he is torn between his ethics as a journalist and losing his job.



Arthur Teele wins Miami-Dade County commissioner election.

Who is Arthur Teele?

Remembered by his peers as **“the smartest man in the room”**, Arthur Teele was a juggernaut in the Miami political scene. He began his career serving in the US Army as a Judge Advocate General. After an honorable discharge, he worked as a civilian lawyer, and was part of the legal team that helped drop charges against the Wilmington Ten, **the most prominent civil rights case in America** during the 70’s. In 1980, President Ronald Reagan appointed Teele to the post of Assistant Secretary of Transportation. From 1981–83, Teele was the head of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration. In those years, he **moved \$220 million of federal funds into Miami’s transportation system**, which led to a political career in Miami, FL. including a close mayoral run against a Cuban-American and becoming an elected commissioner for both the City of Miami and Miami-Dade county. He was known to fight for the underprivileged neighborhoods of Overtown and Liberty City and **against Big Sugar** and other environmental causes.

In 2003, a Miami Herald article suspects Teele took kickbacks from construction contracts granted by the Community Redevelopment Agency, which he runs.

Shortly after, the State Attorney’s office begins an investigation.

Showdown on the Causeway

“I am armed. The next time anybody follows my wife they better be prepared to start shooting”

Teele, a former U.S. Army Ranger, discovered someone in a silver SUV was following his wife. The commissioner, who was driving a black Hyundai sedan, chased MDPD Det. Mark “Bull” Bullard through Overtown, onto I-95, and finally to the eastbound shoulder of the Julia Tuttle Causeway, where the pursuit ended. Last week Teele was acquitted of aggravated assault but found guilty of threatening police officers involved in an investigation; his suspension now becomes permanent removal from office.

(Kirk Nielsen, New Times - 3/10/05)

Media Focus on Teele's personal life upset him

Reporters and law-enforcement officials have tracked Teele for years, especially since his 2001 reelection to the Miami City Commission. Reports on his politics, business and personal life have surfaced regularly. What troubled him most, friends and confidants said Thursday, was the increasingly titillating coverage of his personal life. A local television station, WSVN-Fox 7, aired an interview with a jailed self-described transvestite prostitute who claimed that Teele regularly hired him for cocaine-and-sex parties. Herald stories detailed reports that Teele passed cash to mistresses and knowingly took bribes — shopping bags filled with

cash — from drug dealers. Finally, on the day Teele killed himself, the Miami New Times printed a 14-page series of police reports on various Teele investigations and accessorized it with video game-style graphics made to resemble the controversial violence, drug and sex-soaked game Grand Theft Auto. "The allegations had gotten so personal," said attorney Richard Sharpstein, "It wasn't just about public corruption anymore."

(Matthew I Pinzer, Miami Herald)

The Miami Herald

FRIDAY, JULY 29, 2005 | 102ND YEAR, NO. 318 | ©2005 THE MIAMI HERALD | FINAL | 35 CENTS

THE DEATH OF ARTHUR E. TEELE JR.

CLUES FROM FINA



REFLECTION: Miami Commissioner Joe Sanchez, left, and Mayor Manny Diaz

CORRUPTION CHARGES

Case disclosed unsavor

■ Unproven allegations about Arthur E. Teele Jr.'s personal life became public when prosecutors turned them over to Teele's defense lawyer as part of the discovery process.

BY RONNIE GREENE, JACK DOLAN AND JAY WEAVER
jweaver@herald.com

In the state's public-corruption case against Arthur E. Teele Jr., the most explosive and most embarrassing allegations were the ones that were

male prostitute allegedly hired by Teele, the other an alleged Teele mistress from the Bahamas — became public when they were turned over to Teele's defense lawyer as part of Florida's liberal discovery process.

Some suggest the revelations, along with pending criminal charges, may have contributed to Teele's decision on Wednesday to take his life.

The prostitute, Frederick "Mercedes" Davis, who is in jail, is one of the men that

Herald.com
FOR BREAKING NEWS, 24 HOURS

SPORTS, 10
COACH RILEY AGAIN?
RUMORS ARE HEATING UP THAT HEAT PRESIDENT PAT RILEY WILL ONCE AGAIN BECOME THE TEAM'S COACH

TELEVISION, 4A
EMMA

UP FRONT PUBLISHING

COMING SATURDAY: The new in 'Harry Potter'

'HARRY POTTER' SUCCESS

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

TEELE'S NEW TRO

MIAMI **New Times**

tales of Teele

REMEMBERING TEELE SUICIDE



Look and Feel

This is a genuine Miami story, and therefore will not look like Hollywood's representation of our beautifully multi-layered city.

Imbued with heat and seediness, our version of Miami will showcase dark interiors with sun-blown windows. The nights will be lit by neon and street lamps. We'll show Miami as we locals see it, flawed in its most beautiful way.

STICKS AND STONES will be a cross between neo-realism and neo-noir films, with the movement and pacing of a Scorsese crime drama. The serious subject matter will be balanced with touches of comic relief that serve to deepen the valleys that come from such a story.

Reference films include **All the President's Men**, **Zodiac**, **The Wolf of Wall Street**, and **Moonlight**.

Director's Statement

My mission with this film is to shed light on what opportunistic journalism looks like. I hope that by showing how these stories are made, the audience will learn to question what they hear and read, ultimately being able to better discern fact from fiction, in whatever form it may come.

“Journalism is under attack”

We hear the term “Fake News” get thrown around all the time. On the other hand, there is this constant need for content and we as consumers are attracted to it like moths to a flame. 24 hour news, sports-style debate politics, we can't get enough. This creates a situation where it's sometimes difficult to discern the signal from the noise and we end up believing and sharing some of the slanted news we're fed. As Americans, we have the right and obligation to question everything, but by being sidetracked, or out of pure laziness, we stopped asking our own questions.

“Fame as a value”

In a time where everyone wants to be in the limelight, our main character takes a Faustian bargain to move ahead. The same can be said about competition between news outlets and politicians. How much of their truth and soul are they willing to give up to win ratings and votes?

“Racism is on the rise, everywhere”

Black, White, Latino. Racism is constantly bubbling up in our story, which is unavoidable in our melting pot city. The Miami Cuban population is such a majority that many consider themselves “white”, which creates a divide between Cubans and African-Americans that is unique to our city but speaks a universal truth. Teele had an uphill battle in Miami from day one, and like any election today, racism played its part.

Teele's story is a microcosm of what's going on in our world today. I'm very excited to see it come to light. I hope you are too.

The Team



Pete Capó
Director / Writer / Producer

A commercial director and editor by trade, Pete's projects number in the hundreds. These include works for Burger King, ADT, and Virgin, as well as political races for Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos Gimenez and City of Miami Mayor Francis Suarez. Some of his works have won awards, including one for Burger King and another for a King Bee music video.

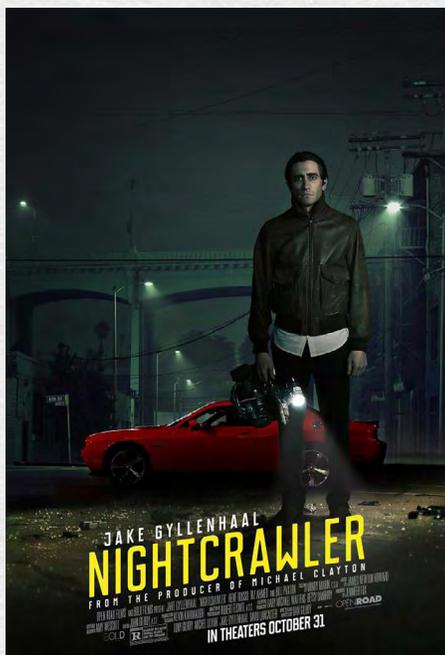
His short film *Oleander*, based on a true story, was an official selection of the Sarasota Film Festival, IndieBo in Colombia, and Orlando Film Festival. It was selected by Fandor as part of their curated streaming lineup and is also available on Amazon Prime. *STICKS AND STONES* will be his feature film debut.



Juan F. Cejas
Writer / Producer

Juan began his professional career in 1986 as the founder and Artistic Director of the Acme Theater Company, which grew to become one of the most critically acclaimed theater ensembles in South Florida and eventually became the resident company at the historic 465 seat Colony Theater on Lincoln Road. Juan later became the Producing Artistic Director of Florida Shakespeare Theater at the Historic Biltmore Hotel. During his tenure, he collaborated with numerous guest artists including Sam Shepard, Burt Young, and Lewis Allen, just to name a few. His productions have earned more than 50 South Florida Theater Critics Award Nominations in nearly every category including Best Director, Best Production, and Best New Play.

Comparables



NIGHTCRAWLER

2014
Drama/Thriller
1h 57m

Budget
\$8,500,000

Worldwide Box Office
\$50,334,418

Est. Domestic Video Sales
\$5,607,279

Description

Los Angeles denizen Louis Bloom (Jake Gyllenhaal) survives by scavenging and petty theft. He stumbles into a new career as a cameraman and -- armed with a camcorder and police scanner -- begins nocturnal forays across the city in search of shocking and grisly crimes. When he catches the eye of a shopworn news director (Rene Russo) who welcomes the chance to raise her station's ratings, Louis goes to increasingly greater lengths to catch the "money shot."



SPOTLIGHT

2015
Drama/Crime
2h 9m

Budget
\$20,000,000

Worldwide Box Office
\$92,108,847

Est. Domestic Video Sales
\$4,951,306

Description

In 2001, editor Marty Baron of The Boston Globe assigns a team of journalists to investigate allegations against John Geoghan, an unfrocked priest accused of molesting more than 80 boys. Led by editor Walter "Robby" Robinson (Michael Keaton), reporters Michael Rezendes (Mark Ruffalo), Matt Carroll and Sacha Pfeiffer interview victims and try to unseal sensitive documents. The reporters make it their mission to provide proof of a cover-up of sexual abuse within the Roman Catholic Church.



THE POST

2017
Drama/Historical Period Drama
1h 57m

Budget
\$50,000,000

Worldwide Box Office
\$179,769,457

Est. Domestic Video Sales
\$5,696,298

Description

Katharine Graham is the first female publisher of a major American newspaper -- The Washington Post. With help from editor Ben Bradlee, Graham races to catch up with The New York Times to expose a massive cover-up of government secrets that spans three decades and four U.S. presidents. Together, they must overcome their differences as they risk their careers -- and very freedom -- to help bring long-buried truths to light.

STICKS AND STONES

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305-984-0730