

Review: 'Shifty'

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The Tale of 24 hours in the life of a small-time drug pusher and a visiting old friend, Brit micro-budgeter "Shifty" consistently rises above its tiny tab on a tech level and avoids the ghetto of miserablist Blighty dramas.

Derek Elley (<http://variety.com/author/derek-elley/>)

The Tale of 24 hours in the life of a small-time drug pusher and a visiting old friend, Brit micro-budgeter "Shifty" consistently rises above its tiny tab on a tech level and avoids the ghetto of miserablist Blighty dramas.

Second pic in the Microwave series by Film London, co-financing projects under £100,000 (\$161,000), has only modest street value but announces feature debutant Eran Creevy (from pop promos and commercials) as a name to watch.

After anklng four years ago, Chris (Daniel Mays, "Atonement") revisits his Asian Muslim friend, Shifty (lively Riz Ahmed, "The Road to Guantanamo"), in the London burb where they grew up. Unknown to his righteous brother, Rez (Nitin Ganatra), Shifty is dealing crack to the lower-middle-class neighborhood, including outwardly respectable builder Trevor (Jay Simpson) and a loony middle-aged woman, Valerie (Francesca Annis). As Chris accompanies Shifty on his rounds, his past comes back to haunt him and Shifty is screwed by a rival dealer, Glen (Jason Flemyng). Flecked with humor and strongly cast in its supporting roles (Simpson, Annis, Flemyng), pic never reaches beyond its modest grasp, though the expletive-heavy dialogue and Mays' flat perf are drawbacks.

Shifty

U.K.

Production

A Metrodome release of a Film London Microwave presentation, in association with BBC

From a network of the Eyes production (International sales: Protagonist Pictures,
London, Produced by Harry Atten, Ben Pugh. Directed, written by Eran Creevy.

VARIETY

crew

Camera (color), Ed Wild; editor, Kim Gaster; music, Molly Nyman, Harry Escott; production
designer, Erik Rehl; art director, Damien Creagh; costume designer, Rebecca Duncan.

Reviewed at London Film Festival (New British Cinema), Oct. 24, 2008. Running time: 85
MIN.

With

Riz Ahmed, Daniel Mays, Jason Flemyng, Jay Simpson, Nitin Ganatra, Dannielle Brent,
Francesca Annis, Kate Groombridge, Jason Meza, Jordan Long, Rory Jennings, Courtney
Day, Tim Plester, Jason Maza, Enoch Frost.

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