

SECTION B: UNDERSTANDING MEDIA INDUSTRIES AND AUDIENCES

I, Daniel Blake (Dir, Ken Loach)

"“We said that every crisis means more demands on the working class, more exploitation, but we were saying it in the abstract. People weren’t imagining zero-hours contracts, agency work, food banks. Who would have thought in the 60s that it would be acceptable and normal to starve unless you got charity food? It’s grotesque that we now accept this.”

Loach’s thoughts on capitalism.



Media Industry:

Power and media industries - Curran and Seaton

The idea that the media is controlled by a small number of companies primarily driven by the logic of profit and power.

The idea that media concentration generally limits or inhibits variety, creativity and quality.

The idea that more socially diverse patterns of ownership help to create the conditions for more varied and adventurous media productions.

Regulation - Sonia Livingstone and Peter Lunt

The idea that there is an underlying struggle in recent UK regulation policy between the need to further the interests of citizens (by offering protection from harmful or offensive material), and the need to further the interests of consumers (by ensuring choice, value for money, and market competition).

The idea that the increasing power of global media corporations, together with the rise of convergent media technologies and transformations in the production, distribution and marketing of digital media, have placed traditional approaches to media regulation at risk.

Cultural industries - David Hesmondhalgh

The idea that cultural industry companies try to minimise risk and maximise audiences through vertical and horizontal integration, and by formatting their cultural products (e.g. through the use of stars, genres, and serials).

The idea that the largest companies or conglomerates now operate across a number of different cultural industries.

The idea that the radical potential of the internet has been contained to some extent by its partial incorporation into a large, profit-orientated set of cultural industries.

PRODUCT CONTEXT

I, Daniel Blake is an **independent social realist film** directed by renowned british filmmaker **Ken Loach**

A **UK/French** co-production, it received funding from the **BFI** and **BBC Films**.

It became Ken Loach's **largest grossing film** at the box office (taking over **\$8 Million**), it was **highly critically acclaimed** and generated **much debate** due to the contemporary **social and political issues**

I, Daniel Blake was exhibited at many **film festivals**, won the **Palme d'Or at Cannes**, and was nominated for many awards including several **BAFTAs**.

Q. What is the benefit of film festivals for more lower budget/niche films?

Producer Influence:

I, Daniel Blake Director Ken Loach has great significance as a **practitioner** in British and Global cinema to this films on-going success (as well as its initial creation) – Loach has been able to repeatedly secure **funding** for social realist films and to an extent the **genre** itself in its current form due to his continuing work.

Consider the extent to which I, Daniel Blake can be described as a **mainstream** product. Loach is a well-known and successful figure in the UK and Europe but is his work considered mainstream? Does the fact he is **challenging** government policy mean he is also challenging mainstream opinions, and therefore his films are more independent/niche in nature?

Consider whether there exists a pre-solid **audience** of Loach fans who are eager to watch his films to the extent that this gives him independent licence to make films that might not otherwise secure finance.



Kes (1969)



Sorry We Missed You (2019)

Q. What qualifies a film as mainstream or independent?

BBC Films

BBC Films is the feature filmmaking arm of the BBC. At the forefront of British independent film, BBC Films **commissions around 15 films a year**. BBC Films aims to make bold, distinctive and fearless films with range and ambition. We find, nurture and develop **new talent** and collaborate with world-class writers, directors and producers.

The BFI

"The BFI's job is to champion the future success of film in the UK and this plan is designed to do that – we want to back the brave, the new and the experimental."

JOSH BERGER — BFI CHAIR

"There is one word at the heart of this strategy: future. We will open doors for a diverse generation to find their voice and expand decision-making so the energy of film radiates across the whole of the UK."

AMANDA NEVILL — CEO, BFI

You can read the full 5 five year (up to 2022) plan on the BFI website - [Link](#)

HOMEWORK: Look at the plan and find reasons as to why the BFI might have supported I, Daniel Blake.

SOCIAL & POLITICAL CONTEXT

I, Daniel Blake addresses contemporary British social issues such as **poverty, the welfare system** and the **Work Capability Assessment**.

The film portrays a group of **traditionally underrepresented characters** in **Newcastle** struggling in poverty to gain benefits and support.

Q. What effect does it have having no recognisable stars in a movie?

I, Daniel Blake conveys a **clear left-wing political message** and **criticises specific government policies**. Consider the wider economic context and concept of "**austerity**" in how the current government (as a counterpoint) have attempted to **justify** some of these economic cuts and a stricter approach to benefits supplied via the welfare system.

Q. What effects from production to exhibition including audience reception might a clear left wing political message have?

Much of **Ken Loach's work** has addressed similar issues (*Cathy Come Home, Raining Stones etc.*) of class inequality and he is a social campaigner, known for his **socialist political views**.

This is important to consider in terms of **film production** and **maintaining audiences** (arguably the intended audience for this film is **educated, media literate and socially aware of political policies**).

The film was **funded by the BBC and the BFI** (through the national lottery funding)

Q. Can you name any reasons as to why funding would have come from these two sources?

THE FILM PROCESS

Production: The process of making a film including: **Pre-production** - planning, scripting, storyboarding **Production** - the actual shooting/filming **Post-production** – editing

Distribution: This stage is a very important part of the film industry as it is the **link** between the **producer** and the **audience**; it refers to all the **strategies** used in the release, **marketing** and **promotion** of the product.

Exhibition: All the opportunities available to an audience to **view** a film, including **multiplex** and **independent art house cinemas**, at **film festivals** and **online**.



I, Daniel Blake is a **low budget social realist film**, funded by the **BFI** and **BBC**. It adheres to the codes and conventions of **British social realism** film as it:

- *Was filmed largely on location in existing regional (in Newcastle) buildings (hospital, job centre etc.) to exhibit a sense of verisimilitude.*
- *Features lesser known actors.*
- *Produced on a small budget (£3.5 million).*
- *Contains semi improvised dialogue*
- *Contains dark humour.*
- *Has a lack of non diegetic music*
- *Has a linear narrative.*
- *Does not rely on special effects.*

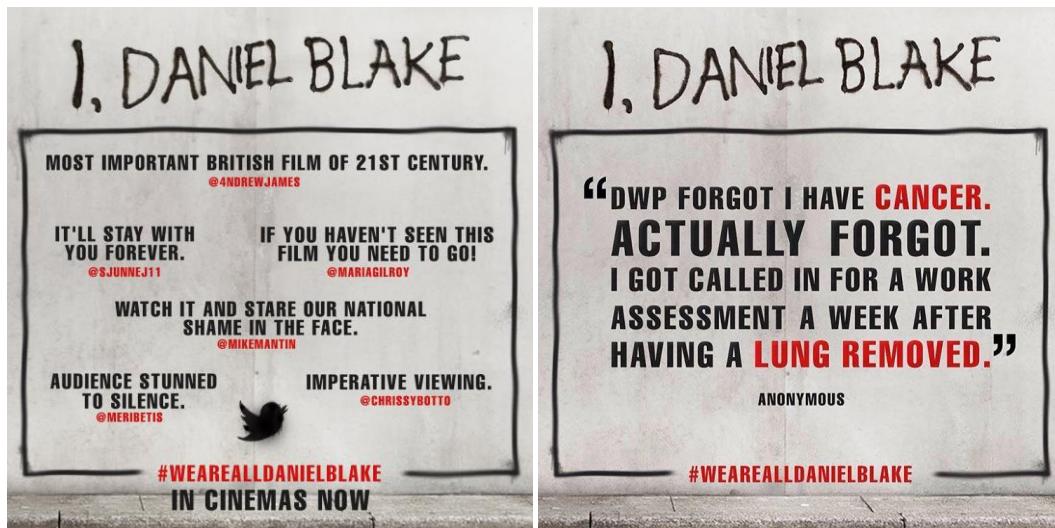
In its opening weekend in the UK, the film **started off in 94 cinemas**, before growing to **273 cinemas**, due to early positive ‘word of mouth’ and awards recognition (in the form of the **Palm D’Or**) generating early buzz for the film

I, Daniel Blake eventually amassed **\$12.45 million worldwide** including **\$4.27 million** in the UK and **\$6.4 million** in France. A healthy **profit** for a small independent film such as this.

MARKETING

The **internet has impacted heavily on the marketing** of smaller independent budgeted films like I, Daniel Blake., allowing **active audience’s** to form debates and create forums to address equal rights within the UK.

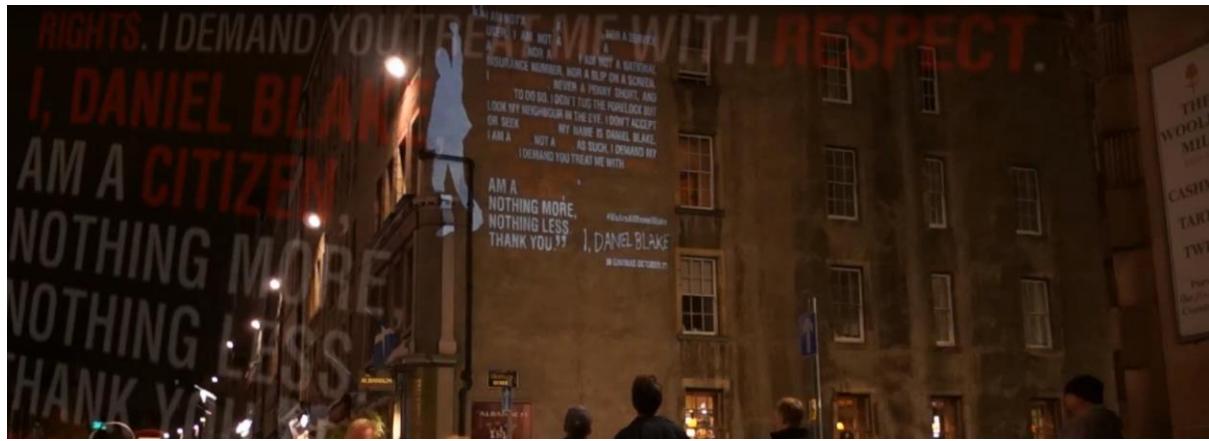
The internet and online marketing also allowed **interactive audiences** to join in with the **#WeAreAllDanielBlake** campaign, creating blogs, vlogs, YouTube videos and artwork (**all User Generated Content – UGC**) describing their similar experiences or opinions on the matter. The **prosumers** became real agents of social change in the way the media reported the impact of this film – the audience were marketing the film **FOR** the film distributor, through **viral marketing** as audiences were actively seeking out this material. **INCLUDE CLAY SHIRKEY HERE**



The *I, Daniel Blake* website includes links to **social media** and the trailer offers a **hashtag** (**#idanialblake**) suggesting links with **Twitter**, the film was still **marketed** through more traditional methods (poster campaign, trailer in cinemas etc.) as well as online.

The film was **exhibited** at various film festivals and received a **theatrical release** in Britain and various other countries (including France, Spain, Brazil and Japan – although not in the USA). It was later released on **digital download and DVD/Blue-ray**.

New **NomadX Media iProjectors** were used by **Kommando Marketing** to project images and text based questions about the issues from *I, Daniel Blake* on the side of a variety of buildings across the UK.



Daily Mirror:

The promotion of the film though eOne's (distributor) partnership with the **Mirror Trinity Group** (now **Reach PLC**). **The Mirror** ran an on-going campaign (**through print AND digital articles/editorials** – including one 'written' by film character DB) addressing the 'austerity' issue as a source of national debate; both the film (through free ticket offers and banner advertising) and the 'equality for all' issues within the film were brought to the attention of the **Mirror's** readership.

DAILY Mirror

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR
Friday, October 14, 2016 65P

I, DANIEL BLAKE,
NEED YOUR ATTENTION,
LOOK INSIDE FOR
MY COLUMN.



COSTLY Royal Surrey Hospital
Scandal of the hospital charging £4 an hour for



The Masthead 'I' changed to appear in a graffiti like style to reference the scene in which Daniel graffities a job centre as a cry for help.

In print, masthead and front cover takeovers captured the attention of readers and directed them to a one-off column 'My Britain' – based on the Mirror's weekly series 'Real Britain' – where the character Daniel Blake talked frankly about the issues raised in the film. Digital content included disruptive display advertising to continue the theme across the publisher's multi-platform portfolio.

According to Trinity Mirror's in-house Arqive reader research:

- 59% recalled seeing the feature and 57% said they wanted to see the film as a result of the campaign
- 53% said that the 'My Britain' column made them reflect on their own experiences
- 75% enjoyed the content and found it interesting, beating the industry benchmark by 22ppts
- The digital native articles saw over 18,000 page views, with audiences spending around four minutes reading the content
- Bespoke overlay format online saw over 400,000 impressions with a 10.65% CTR, succeeding the industry average

I, Daniel Blake made use of **grassroot** campaigns including **taste maker screenings, street marketing, 'takeovers of regional cinemas, I, Daniel Blake speech video, etc.**

Connections with politics and the **Labour** party in particular (including Labour Leader **Jeremy Corbyn**) supporting the main message behind the film, in response to the (Conservative) governments claims of 'saving the economy of Britain through austerity'.

The film was **Premiered** in cities in England but **not in the capital, London.** There were local premieres in Newcastle, Manchester, etc. Where areas of poverty are effected by the governments 'austerity plans' the most.

Applying Hesmondhalgh & Vertical + Horizontal Integration

Vertical Integration: When one company owns corporations operating different stages of the same process (e.g. production – distribution – exhibition)

Horizontal Integration: When one company owns various corporations which are involved in the same activities (e.g. production)

Unlike **Straight Outta Compton** who's film process was covered under the umbrella of **Fox** we know that *I, Daniel Blake* doesn't have the opportunity to make use of this same technique.

Q. Look back at the information we have gone over, what lengths did *I, Daniel Blake* have to go to without the support of company backed vertical/horizontal integration?

REGULATION



The **BBFC** (an independent, non-governmental body) age rates film and video releases in the UK. However, local councils have the power to overrule BBFC decisions and rate differently (e.g *This is England* was rated 18 by the BBFC but several councils rated it 15). The theatrical release of *I, Daniel Blake* gained a 15 certificate.

We use focus groups and surveys to consult people across the UK every four to five years and use this process to listen to what they say, think and feel about what's appropriate for children of all ages.

We believe that adults should be free to watch what they want to, so long as it's within the law. But we also have a responsibility, when absolutely necessary, to **restrict content** that could otherwise cause harm to adults and society as a whole.

Working closely with the film and digital industries, with educators and organisations dedicated to children's welfare, we are continually evolving the guidance we offer, and are increasingly able to make a bigger difference in helping everyone – children, families and adults - choose well.

Q. According to Livingstone and Lunt traditional means of regulation of media products is currently at risk with the rise of technology and convergent media. Do you think this is the case with Film regulation?

Some of the **reasons cited by the BBFC** for I, Daniel Blake 15 certificate (referring to specific scenes) were:

- *There are some verbal sexual references voiced in the film, particularly in a scene where a man pays a surprise visit to a woman who is working as a prostitute secretly, to try and dissuade her from prostituting herself.*
- *The infrequent use of stronger expletives such as “c*nt” are featured, but justified by context and not impactful.*
- *The film contains an utterance of the stronger expletive “c*nt”, as well as other expletives such as “F**k”, “wankers”, “twats”, etc, as uttered by the main characters out of anger and frustration or for emphasis.*
- *There are two notable scenes of emotional intensity. They include ‘the food bank’ scene and the ending ‘funeral’ scene*

Age ratings are important to **producers and distributors** in guaranteeing an audience – for example, a 15 rating in the UK opens the film to much wider **audience** than an 18 certificate.

Applying Curran and Seaton

Watch the film trailer and analyse the film poster for I, Daniel Blake.

Q. Does this trailer challenge ideas set by Curran and Seaton?

- Does it follow dominant british ideologies?

- Is there any recognisable stars that would reduce risk and therefore increase profit?

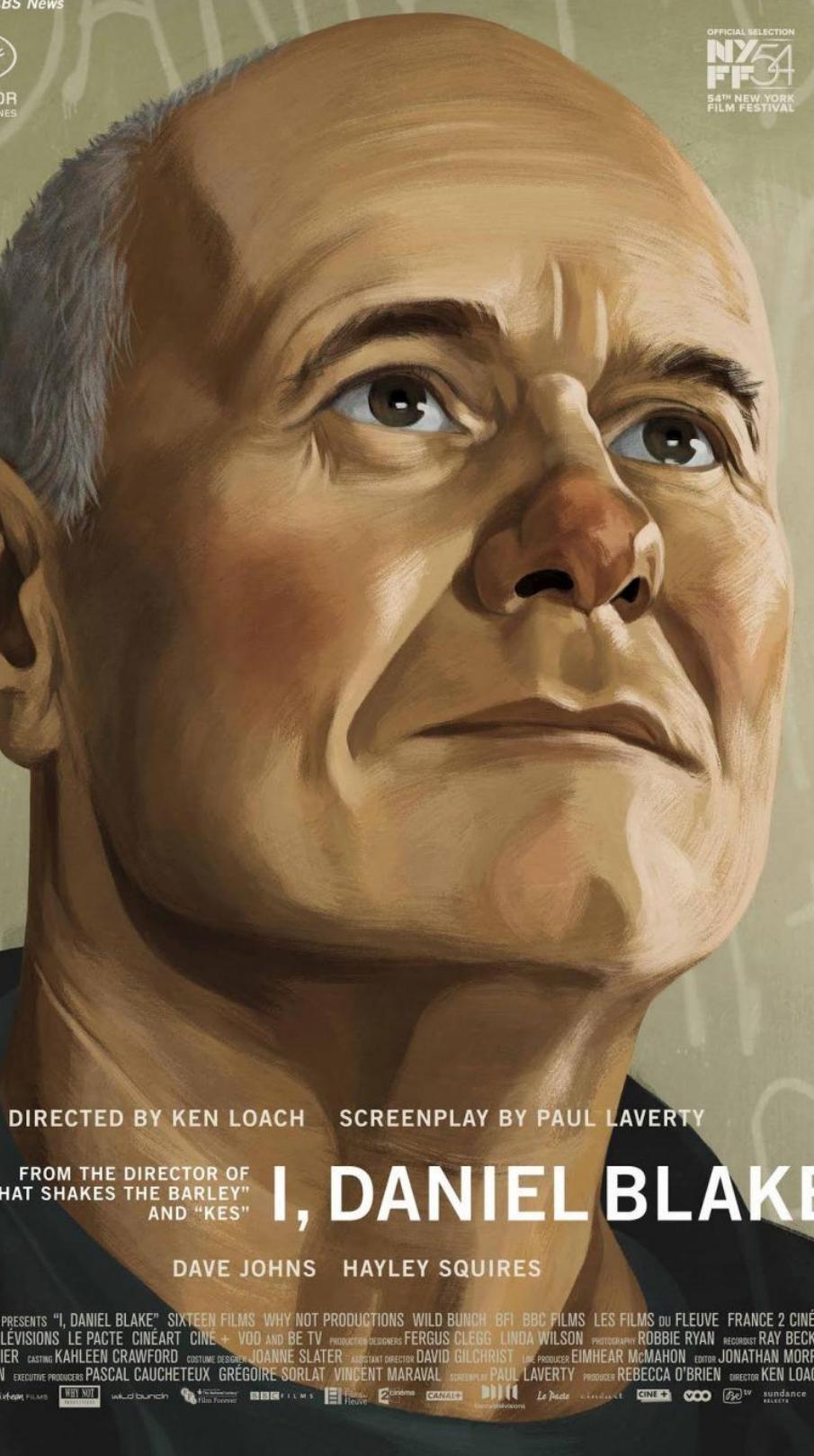
"A masterful cry
for human decency
from Ken Loach."
- David Morgan, CBS News



PALME D'OR
FESTIVAL DE CANNES
WINNER

"Magnificent. One of Loach's very best.
DEMANDS TO BE SEEN."
- Pamela Hutchinson, *Sight & Sound*

"Fearsomely moving,
fearsomely tender."
- Deborah Ross, *The Spectator*



DIRECTED BY KEN LOACH SCREENPLAY BY PAUL LAVERTY

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF
"THE WIND THAT SHAKES THE BARLEY"
AND "KES" I, DANIEL BLAKE

DAVE JOHNS HAYLEY SQUIRES

SUNDANCE SELECTS PRESENTS "I, DANIEL BLAKE" SIXTEEN FILMS WHY NOT PRODUCTIONS WILD BUNCH BBC FILMS LES FILMS DU FLEUVE FRANCE 2 CINÉMA
CANAL + FRANCE TÉLÉVISIONS LE PACTE CINÉART CINÉ + VOO AND BE TV PRODUCTION DESIGNERS FERGUS CLEGG LINDA WILSON PHOTOGRAPHY ROBBIE RYAN RECORDIST RAY BECKETT
SOUND EDITOR KEVIN BRAZIER CASTING KAHLEEN CRAWFORD COSTUME DESIGNER JOANNE SLATER ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DAVID GILCHRIST LINE PRODUCER EIMHEAR McMAHON EDITOR JONATHAN MORRIS
MUSIC GEORGE FENTON EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS PASCAL CAUCHETEURS GRÉGOIRE SORLAT VINCENT MARVAL SCREENPLAY PAUL LAVERTY PRODUCER REBECCA O'BRIEN DIRECTOR KEN LOACH



LANGUAGE



Subtitles



WBS NOT
FILM



wild bunch
filmmakers



bbc films



le pacte



cineart



cine+



voo



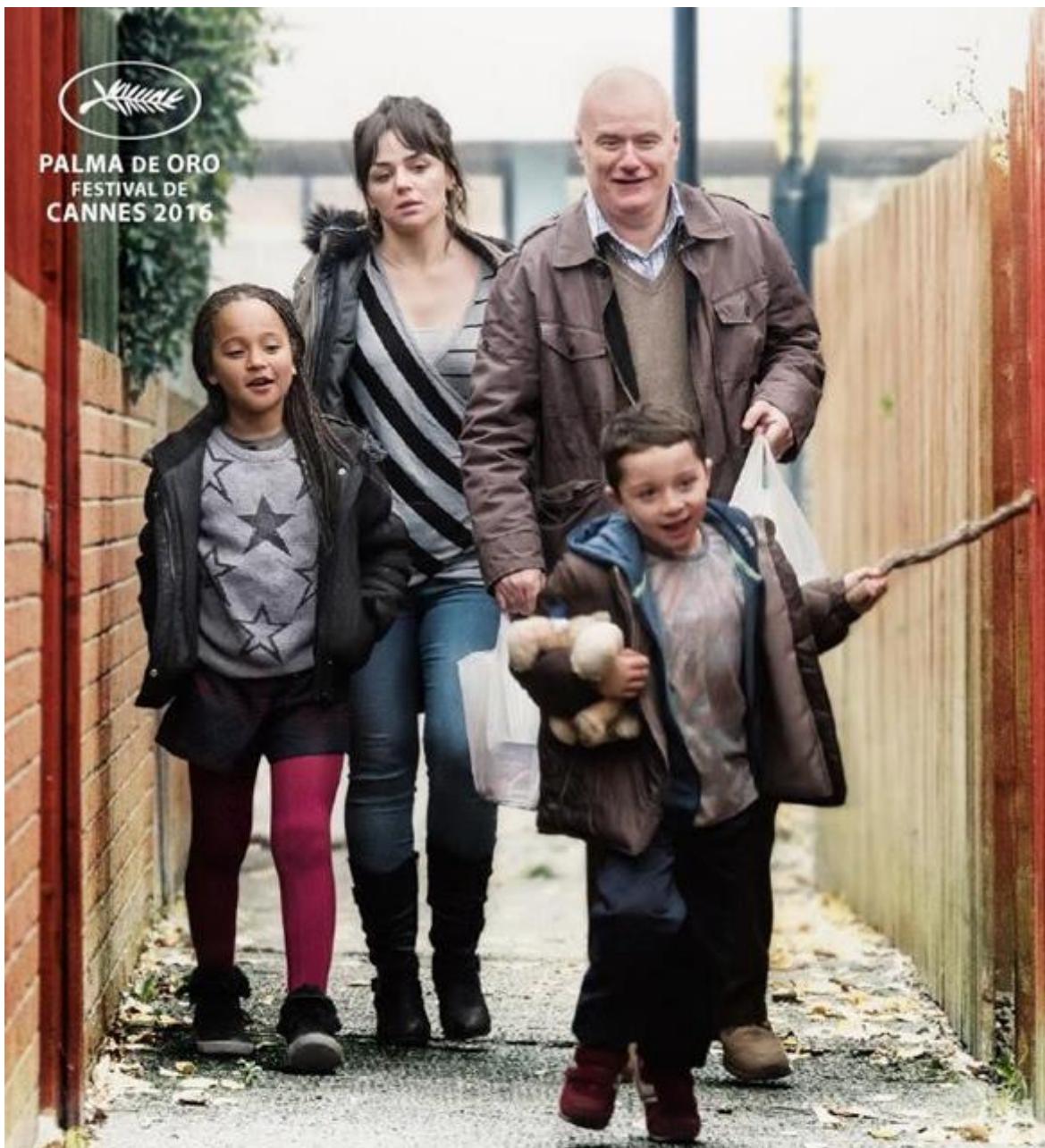
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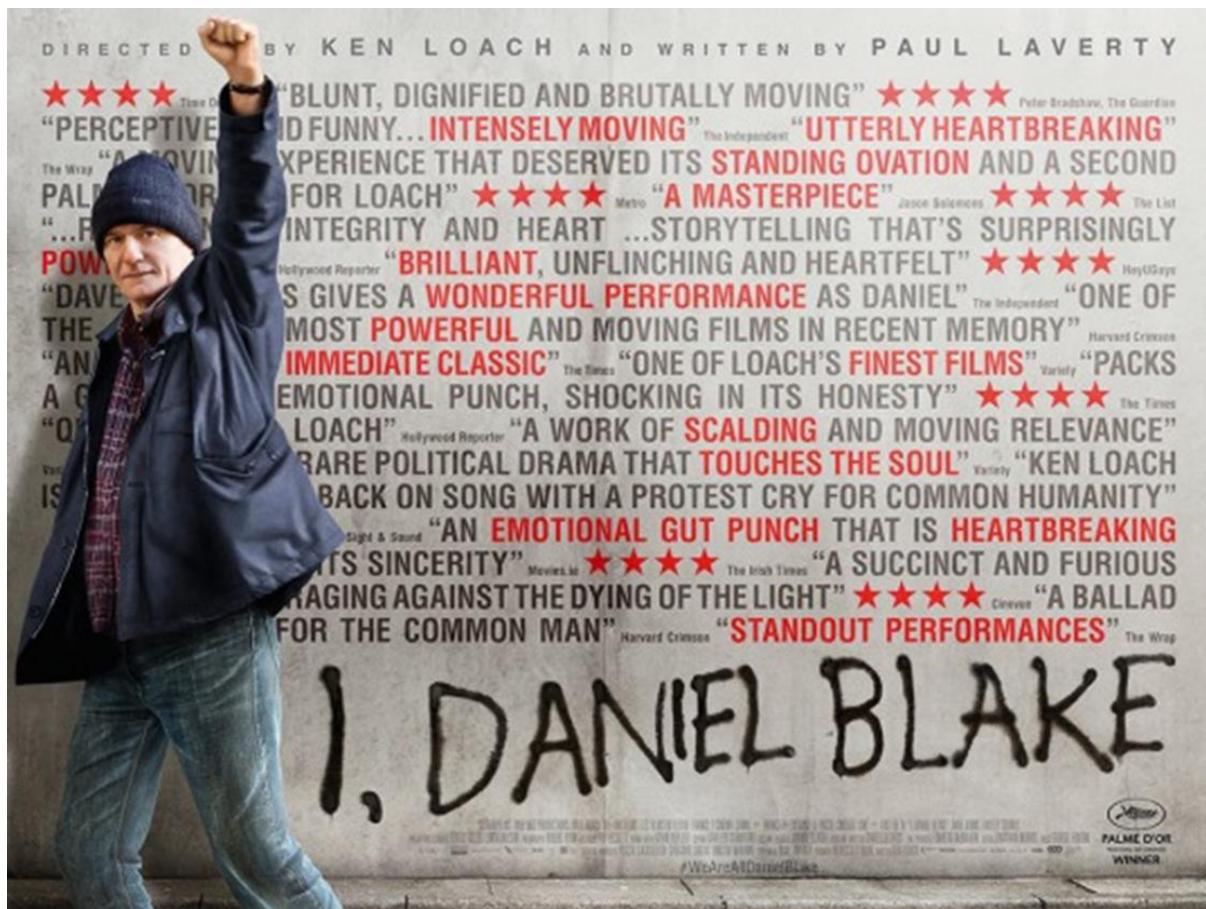
PALMA DE ORO
FESTIVAL DE
CANNES 2016



I, Daniel Blake

DIRECTED BY
KEN LOACH

SCREENPLAY BY
PAUL LAVERTY



DIRECTED BY KEN LOACH AND WRITTEN BY PAUL LAVERTY

★★★★★ Time Out "BLUNT, DIGNIFIED AND BRUTALLY MOVING" ★★★★★ Peter Bradshaw, The Guardian
"PERCEPTIVE AND FUNNY... INTENSELY MOVING" The Independent "UTTERLY HEARTBREAKING"
The Wrap "A MOVING EXPERIENCE THAT DESERVED ITS STANDING OVATION AND A SECOND
PALM D'OR FOR LOACH" ★★★★★ Metro "A MASTERPIECE" Jesse Saloman, The List
"...RAW INTEGRITY AND HEART ... STORYTELLING THAT'S SURPRISINGLY
POWERFUL" Hollywood Reporter "BRILLIANT, UNFLINCHING AND HEARTFELT" ★★★★★ HeyUGuys
"DAVE COOPER'S GIVING A WONDERFUL PERFORMANCE AS DANIEL" The Independent "ONE OF
THE MOST POWERFUL AND MOVING FILMS IN RECENT MEMORY" Harvard Crimson
"AN IMMEDIATE CLASSIC" The Times "ONE OF LOACH'S FINEST FILMS" Variety "PACKS
EMOTIONAL PUNCH, SHOCKING IN ITS HONESTY" ★★★★★ The Times
LOACH" Hollywood Reporter "A WORK OF SCALDING AND MOVING RELEVANCE"
RARE POLITICAL DRAMA THAT TOUCHES THE SOUL" Variety "KEN LOACH
IS BACK ON SONG WITH A PROTEST CRY FOR COMMON HUMANITY"
Sight & Sound "AN EMOTIONAL GUT PUNCH THAT IS HEARTBREAKING
ITS SINCERITY" Movies.ie ★★★★★ The Irish Times "A SUCCINCT AND FURIOUS
HAGGING AGAINST THE DYING OF THE LIGHT" ★★★★★ Cineplex "A BALLAD
FOR THE COMMON MAN" Harvard Crimson "STANDOUT PERFORMANCES" The Wrap

I, DANIEL BLAKE

