



## D.O.A.P.

### Gabriel Range

UNITED KINGDOM, 2006  
English, Arabic

93 minutes ■ Colour/HDCAM  
Production Company: **Borough Films/  
Film Four**

Executive Producer: **Robin Gutch**  
Producer: **Gabriel Range, Simon Finch,  
Ed Guiney**

Screenplay: **Gabriel Range,  
Simon Finch**

Cinematographer: **Graham Smith**

Editor: **Brand Thumim**

Production Designer: **Gary Baugh**

Sound: **Alex Riordan**

Music: **Richard Harvey**

Principal Cast: **Hend Ayoub,  
Brian Boland, Becky-Ann Baker,  
Michael Riley-Burke, M. Neko Parham**

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An unknown gunman assassinates George W. Bush. A couple of years later, an investigative documentary is made. It features all the people involved that fateful day: the protestors outside a Chicago hotel; the suspects in the shooting and their families; the Secret Service men who failed to protect their charge; the press; and an array of experts, desperately seeking meaning in this horrible act of violence. We learn, agonizingly, what happened to America... after the death of a president.

This is easily the most dangerous and breathtakingly original film I have encountered this year. Director Gabriel Range's 2003 project *The Day Britain Stopped* – which asked what might happen if Britain's transportation grid was suddenly halted – was his first experiment with this style. He assembles a vast array of media, manipulating and subtly altering it to act as a continuous background illustration of falsified history – and then employs the conventional, after-the-fact style of History Television and its ilk as narration.

But it's a long leap from Britain's trains to a gunned-down Commander-in-Chief. Range is up to the task: collaborating with some of the finest special effects wizards in the world, he inserts his characters seamlessly into existing footage. His narrative is also airtight. Cautionary tales are too often flights of fancy; as they push the envelope of credibility, the lessons gleaned from dark speculation become somehow tarnished. Not here. Every moment is completely believable, every

comment is somehow appropriate – to the point of chilling, horrifying certainty.

As one might expect, Range is ultimately interested in addressing today's political issues through the lens of the future. Xenophobia, the hidden costs of war and the nature of civil liberties in a hyper-media age all come under the microscope. The film is never a personal attack on Bush; Range simply seeks to explore the potential consequences that might follow from the President's policies and actions.

It is the very technique of *D.O.A.P.*, finally, that poses the most haunting questions of all. Not only do we feel the authenticity of mass media imagery slipping away, but Range suggests that his manipulation is merely a more radical example of what we encounter every day.

■ **Noah Cowan**

**Gabriel Range** was born in Chester, England and studied Medicine at Bristol University and did postgraduate work in journalism at Cardiff University. He has directed drama-documentaries for British television, including *The Great Dome Robbery* (02), *The Menendez Murders* (02), *The Day Britain Stopped* (03) and *The Man Who Broke Britain* (04). *D.O.A.P.* (06) is his most recent film.

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