

FEATURE DOCUMENTARY PRESS KIT

# POSTER BOY



BECOMING ZYZZ

A STAN ORIGINAL

# POSTER BOY: BECOMING ZYZZ

A FILM BY  
SELINA MILES

PRODUCED BY  
TOM BLACKWELL & GAL GREENSPAN

**PRODUCTION COMPANY**

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## TECHNICAL DETAILS - PRORES

Country of Production	Australia
Year of Production	2026
Running Time	80 mins
Format	Pro Res 422 HQ UHD
Ratio	4:3
Sound	5.1 Surround
Language	English



## LOGLINE

POSTER BOY explores the rise, impact, and enduring mythology of Aziz Shavershian - "Zyzz" - the unlikely internet icon whose transformation from anonymous teenager to global symbol of fitness culture reshaped how a generation defines influencers, identity, and self-invention.

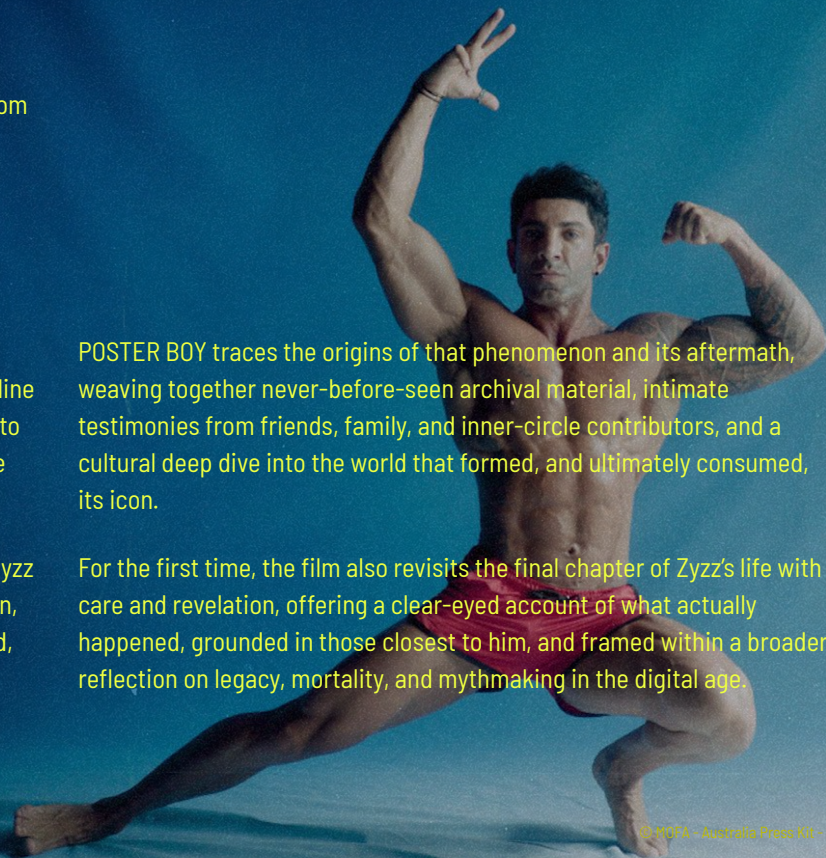
## SHORT SYNOPSIS

In the late 2000s, before influencers became industry and self-branding became currency, a young Australian named Aziz Shavershian, known online as Zyzz, began documenting his transformation from awkward teenager to sculpted, hyper-confident persona. What followed was viral fame and the creation of a cultural movement still felt to this day.

Through early internet forums, gym culture, and raw, self-made videos, Zyzz became the face of "aesthetics", a philosophy built around transformation, confidence, irony, and escape. To millions of young men around the world, he was not just a bodybuilder or entertainer; he was proof that identity could be rewritten.

POSTER BOY traces the origins of that phenomenon and its aftermath, weaving together never-before-seen archival material, intimate testimonies from friends, family, and inner-circle contributors, and a cultural deep dive into the world that formed, and ultimately consumed, its icon.

For the first time, the film also revisits the final chapter of Zyzz's life with care and revelation, offering a clear-eyed account of what actually happened, grounded in those closest to him, and framed within a broader reflection on legacy, mortality, and mythmaking in the digital age.



## LONG SYNOPSIS

POSTER BOY follows the meteoric rise of Aziz Shavershian, known globally as Zyzz, from a lone outsider in Western Sydney to one of the internet's earliest and most enduring cultural icons. Growing up as a skinny teenager in a strict immigrant household, Aziz discovers bodybuilding forums and finds something powerful – a language for transformation. For the first time, identity feels editable.

The film reconstructs this rise through a combination of archival material, private footage, and testimony from those who were closest to him at the time, including friends who witnessed the emergence of the aesthetics movement from the inside. Their recollections offer a grounded counterpoint to the mythology, revealing not only the character of Zyzz as he was seen, but Aziz as he was experienced.

What begins as self-improvement becomes something far more deliberate. Through the creation of his online alter ego, Zyzz, Aziz constructs a persona that fuses humour, confidence, irony, and physical transformation into a single, highly viral identity. The gym becomes his stage, the camera his instrument, and the internet his amplifier. In a pre-influencer era, he is not following a template, he is inventing one.

The film moves between past and present, intercutting Zyzz's ascent with the lives of those left behind. Chief among them is his brother Said Shavershian, alongside members of his early circle, who carry different versions of the same legacy: admiration, grief, contradiction, and endurance. In the present day, Said's years of professional bodybuilding reflect both continuity and cost: a living extension of the aesthetic ideal that shaped his brother's world, and a constant negotiation with its physical and psychological demands.

## LONG SYNOPSIS CONT.

As transformation photos and early viral clips circulate through forums and YouTube and Facebook, Zyzz rapidly evolves from anonymous user to unlikely cultural figure. He speaks in catchphrases, performs confidence as philosophy, and embodies a version of himself that is at once aspirational and self-aware. For a generation of young men online, he becomes something unprecedented: proof that reinvention is not only possible, but essential. But the same visibility that constructs the persona begins to consume it.

As “Zyzz” gains momentum, the boundary between performance and the young man behind it begins to dissolve. The expectation to appear larger, leaner and more extreme turns his online identity into maintenance. What was once expression becomes obligation. Behind the image is a young man navigating an entirely new form of fame: unstable, unregulated, and permanently public.

The film draws on never-before-seen archival material that reframes key moments in Zyzz’s life with new emotional and contextual depth, revealing a more complex picture beneath the surface of the persona that became widely circulated online.

As Said prepares for competition, the narrative returns to Zyzz’s final period with revelation and clarity. The film revisits the pressures of sustained visibility, the escalating intensity of maintaining a hyper-defined public image, and the gradual withdrawal from the online stage. The film situates these final chapters within a broader examination of early internet fame before there were rules, boundaries, or frameworks to understand its effects.

In the aftermath of his death, Zyzz’s legacy expands rapidly. Across platforms, generations, and subcultures, his image persists through clips, memes, and tributes, evolving into shorthand for transformation, confidence, and belonging. His catchphrases endure. His aesthetic is continually replicated. His identity becomes communal, detached from its origin but sustained by repetition. Zyzz is both subject and symbol: a young man who constructed a version of himself powerful enough to outlive him, and a cultural figure whose legacy continues to shape how a generation understands aspiration, masculinity, and reinvention in the digital era.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Social media influencing and bodybuilding might, at first glance, seem like superficial subjects. But what appeals to me most about Zyzz's story is its potential to delve deeper - into the intricacies of identity, the pursuit of perfection, and the universal search for belonging.

At its heart, this film is a meditation on connectedness, or lack thereof, through the lens of the immigrant experience in Australia. It explores what it means to be a man, to belong, and to search for oneself in a world that's always watching. Aziz, our hero, embodies a striking duality - starting as a scrawny, bullied kid lost in the wild early days of the internet, only to transform into Zyzz, a persona that both shaped and reinforced the often-toxic narratives of masculinity that ripple through our culture.

This story is marked by the tragic loss of a young life. Yet, this film offers moments of lightness and irreverence worthy of its protagonist. His humour and charisma are so potent that even through the grainy, pixelated lens of a flip phone camera, his philosophy has connected with millions around the world.

His legacy, complex as it may be, remains deeply relevant to young audiences today. For those of us who came of age during the earliest days of social media, it's staggering to realise that two decades have passed since MSN Messenger and Myspace felt like the frontier of our lives. To younger audiences, this might seem like ancient history, yet the themes we're exploring are as vital now as they've ever been.

The internet has altered our sense of self and our connections with each other in ways that are profound and often unsettling. Future generations will never know a world in which strategic self-presentation isn't only accepted, but expected, and where their social capital isn't quantified in real-time by sophisticated algorithms. Tracing the roots of this phenomenon and uncovering where it all began offers us crucial insight into the world we inhabit now.

While Zyzz undoubtedly inspired many with his extreme dedication to self-improvement, it came at a terrible cost. It shows the value of self-acceptance over self-improvement, and that mastering one's body is not the same as mastering one's fate. Until we develop analytics for empathy, until we can measure kindness as easily as we count clicks, the story of Zyzz will continue to resonate.



# KEY CONTRIBUTORS

## SAID SHAVERSHIAN (CHESTBRAH)

Said Shavershian, known globally as Chestbrah, is Zyzz's older brother and the living continuation of one of internet culture's most enduring legacies. Rising to prominence in the wake of Zyzz's death, Chestbrah inherited a movement that had already become mythic, carrying its legacy into a new era while navigating the personal cost of losing the brother who inspired millions. In the documentary, Said provides an intimate perspective of someone who knew Zyzz both as a global icon and simply as Aziz: a brother. His contribution explores grief, legacy and the enduring emotional pull of a phenomenon he is forever intertwined with.

## PAOLO CIANCI

One of Zyzz's closest friends, Paolo Cianci was there from the beginning, when Aziz was a goofy yet ambitious outsider continually reinventing himself. Paolo witnessed the nights out, the internet rise, the self-creation and the relentless pursuit of becoming someone larger than life. His contribution provides an unfiltered portrait of the highs and lows of Zyzz's life and a candid reflection of the warning signals before it was too late.

## SHAHIDA KNEZ

Shahida was one of the few people to know Aziz before, during and beyond the creation of Zyzz. She provides an intimate perspective on the person behind the performance and the motivation behind it. Having watched him evolve from an awkward, skinny teenager into a hyper-visible cultural figure, she speaks candidly about the emotional drivers behind the body transformation, the hunger for reinvention, the pressures of identity and the cost of becoming an icon. Her contribution provides one of the documentary's most revealing and deeply personal accounts of who Aziz Shavershian really was.

## SHAUN HUNT (BABO)

Known to friends as Babo, Shaun Hunt represents a different chapter of the story: the years before Zyzz became Zyzz. A close friend of both Aziz and Said from their teenage years, Shaun saw the insecurities, humour and growing ambition that fuelled the transformation from skinny suburban kid to internet icon. Bringing the perspective of someone who knew the Shavershian brothers before fame, Shaun charts the emotional and psychological evolution behind the persona, and the friendship that endured through every reinvention.

## PHILLIP RAYMOND HOST (PHILRAY)

Phillip provides perspective on the world that gave rise to Zyzz, not as mythology, but as lived experience. A contemporary of the movement and one of its most articulate voices, Phillip reflects on a moment in time when a group of young men, still boys in many ways, were navigating identity, masculinity, insecurity and belonging in the earliest days of internet culture. Through personal reflection and cultural insight, he helps unpack not only what the aesthetics movement felt like from the inside, but why its message of transformation, confidence and self-invention continues to resonate so deeply with young men today. His contribution bridges the emotional truth of the era with the lasting legacy Zyzz left behind.

## GEORGE MOURGALAKIS

George was among the last of Zyzz's inner circle to see him alive, dropping Aziz at the airport before his final trip to Thailand. Equal parts protector, co-conspirator and trusted friend, George occupied a unique place inside the day-to-day reality of Zyzz's world. Present not only for the viral moments and public spectacle, but for the quieter spaces in between. Part of Zyzz's close friendship circle during his final years, George witnessed the humour, rituals, late-night conversations and unguarded moments that rarely made it online. Behind the larger-than-life persona, he came to know Aziz as a young man navigating friendship, pressure, ambition and identity in real time.

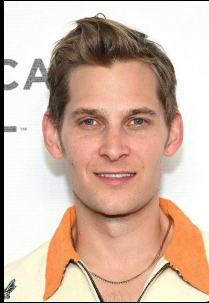


## **SELINA MILES**

Writer, Director

Selina Miles is an acclaimed Australian director with a global reach, having worked in over 20 countries. Her feature debut, *Martha: A Picture Story*, premiered at the Tribeca Film

Festival in 2019 and won multiple awards, including the Audience Award for Best Documentary at the Sydney Film Festival. Her second feature, *Harley & Katya*, produced by Stranger Than Fiction Films, premiered on ABC in 2022, became the highest-rated film on iView, and won the 2023 International Emmy Award for Best Sports Documentary. In 2026, Selina's third feature documentary, *Silenced*, premiered at the Sundance Film Festival. The film examines the growing weaponisation of defamation laws against survivors, journalists, and advocates in cases of gender-based violence. *Poster Boy* is her fourth feature documentary.



## **TOM BLACKWELL**

Writer, Producer

Tom Blackwell is an award-winning producer and screenwriter responsible for several commercially successful and critically acclaimed feature films and documentaries. Tom is in post-production on Julius Avery's new horror film, and *KA MATE*, the true story of the Māori haka. Tom is in pre-production on Tereapa Kahi's new survival thriller *JUMP*. His recent releases include *ASH*, the No. 1 movie on Amazon Worldwide and SXSW headliner, directed by multi-hyphenate Flying Lotus and starring Aaron Paul and Eiza González, as well as *MOSS & FREUD*, the Kate Moss biopic. Past works include *A MISTAKE*, starring Elizabeth Banks and premiering at the Tribeca Film Festival, *THE LIE*, the No. 1 movie on Netflix and nominated for the 2025 Best Documentary Feature Award at the New Zealand Screen Awards, and *NEVER LOOK AWAY*, directed by Lucy Lawless, a Sundance and SXSW finalist nominated for the Cinema for Peace Dove for Women's Empowerment, and which won Best Documentary Feature at the 2025 New Zealand Screen Awards. Tom also produced and wrote *STYLEBENDER*, a feature documentary about UFC world champion Israel Adesanya, which was a finalist at Tribeca and nominated for the 2025 Best Documentary Feature Award at the New Zealand Screen Awards. Tom was a writer on *THE SUBTLE ART OF NOT GIVING A #@%*, adapted from the New York Times #1 Best Selling phenomenon, which became the #1 Documentary on iTunes globally. Tom was also a writer on *BILLION DOLLAR HEIST*, a feature documentary on the largest cyber-heist in history.



## **GAL GREENSPAN**

Producer

Gal Greenspan is an Australian-Israeli producer and founder of Green Productions (Israel) and co-founder of Sweetshop & Green, which later evolved into MOFA, a production company dedicated to internationally focused premium scripted and documentary storytelling.

Originally from Israel and now based in Australia, Greenspan has extensive experience developing and producing films across Australia, New Zealand, Israel and the international marketplace. Over the past decade, he has produced more than 20 acclaimed films and series, building a reputation for ambitious international co-productions and distinctive stories with global appeal. His work has premiered at many of the world's leading festivals, including Cannes, Berlinale, Sundance, Tribeca and TIFF.

Greenspan has produced a diverse slate of internationally recognised projects, including the award-winning features *Menashe* (Sundance and Berlinale 2017, distributed internationally by A24), *Scaffolding* (Cannes ACID 2017, TIFF 2017), Ari Folman's animated feature *Where Is Anne Frank?* (Cannes 2021), *Moja Vesna* and *Datsun* (Berlinale 2022), and the Amazon Original documentary series *The Defenders* (2023).

More recent credits include *Prisoner X* (ABC, 2024), *Second to None* (MAX 2024), *Left Write Hook* (Netflix, 2025), winner of the MIFF Audience Award and Best Documentary at AIDC, and *Floodland* (2025), recipient of the Sustainable Future Award at the Sydney Film Festival.

In 2025 and 2026, Greenspan produced *Dead Language*, which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival, *A Letter to David*, which premiered at the Berlinale, and *Tell Me Everything*, which premiered at Sundance 2026. Greenspan is highly specialised in international co-productions, forging successful creative and financing partnerships between Australia, New Zealand, Israel, North America, Europe and beyond.

## JULIAN PERTOUT - Cinematographer

Julian Pertout is an Australian cinematographer based in Sydney. Working across documentary, narrative and commercial productions, he has collaborated on projects throughout Australia and internationally.

Having worked extensively across both the camera and lighting departments, he brings a broad understanding of the craft to his work as a cinematographer.

Alongside filmmaking, he pursues long-term photographic projects driven by a fascination with light, people and place. His work has screened at the Melbourne International Film Festival and Sydney Film Festival.

## PETE WARD - Editor

Pete is an award-winning documentary editor who has a particular love for the messy, complicated, human stuff that doesn't fit neatly into a three-act structure. He works closely with directors and producers to build narratives that feel both truthful and compelling, thinks fast and thrives under a deadline.

Before specialising in documentary, he spent years cutting commercials and experiential work for some of the world's biggest brands, a background that sharpened his instinct for pace, impact, and visual storytelling.

A two-time ASE Ellie Award winner for Best Editing in Documentary (2024) and Best Editing in Factual Programming (2025).

## DECLAN HARSENT - Composer

Declan Harsent is a Sydney-based Australian composer for film and television. A self-taught composer, Declan is known for his evocative and versatile scores across both film and television. His approach is defined by a fusion of genres and textures, combining traditional instrumentation with electronic production techniques and drawing from a diverse palette of musical influences to create scores that feel both original and emotionally authentic.

His credits include the Australian productions *Saya Sakakibara: Ride to Redemption*, *Corners of the Earth* and *Finally Me*. Declan also contributed additional music to *Unbreakable: The Jelena Dokic Story*, which was nominated for Best Original Score in a Documentary at the 2026 AACTA Awards, and *Nemesis (ABC)*, which was nominated for Best Factual or Documentary Program at the 2024 Logie Awards.

## PRODUCTION STILLS

A selection of production stills can be downloaded for press use here.

## KEY CREDITS

Directed by	Selina Miles
Produced by	Tom Blackwell Gal Greenspan
Producers	Anu Hasbold Claire Perkins
Co-Producer	Laura Apelt
Executive Producers	Nic Butler Dane Butler Llew Griffiths Roi Kurland Tina Diaz Adrian Swift Malinda Wink
Edited by	Pete Ward
Director of Photography	Julian Pertout
Original Score	Declan Harsent

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A MOFA AND OLYMPIA PICTURES PRODUCTION  
A FILM BY SELINA MILES

“POSTER BOY”

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY JULIAN PERTOUT EDITOR PETE WARD ORIGINAL SCORE DECLAN HARSENT  
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS NIC BUTLER DANE BUTLER LLEW GRIFFITHS ROI KURLAND  
TINA DIAZ ADRIAN SWIFT AND MALINDA WINK  
WRITTEN BY TOM BLACKWELL SELINA MILES HARRY WYNN  
CO-PRODUCER LAURA APELT PRODUCERS ANU HASBOLD CLAIRE PERKINS  
PRODUCED BY TOM BLACKWELL GAL GREENSPAN DIRECTED BY SELINA MILES