

# THE MACHINE (James, 2013)

## Distribution and exhibition 1

As you watch the filmed interview, make notes on the following and then work on the tasks in pairs or groups:

- What the film-makers say about the significance of the premiere of their film at New York's Tribeca film festival – a festival which specialises in showcasing independent film. What does this suggest about the role festivals play in marketing films? What do the film-makers mean by talking of film festivals as 'markets'?
- What do they say about the importance of film posters to marketing *The Machine*?
- What do they consider the significance of the film's trailer in marketing the film?
- What do they feel is the importance of Toby Stephens and Caity Lotz to the film?
- What do they say about the role of social media in promoting and marketing the film?
- What do the film-makers say about the way film exhibition has changed in the last five years or so and what they say about the impact exhibitors like Netflix are having on the film industry?

### Task 1

Do some online research on some key film festivals you are familiar with. You might start with Cannes. What kinds of film do they show? Aim to give at least one example of a film which is marketed as a result of being shown at a film festival or winning an award at a film festival. (You could check to see how a Sundance screening helped *Whiplash*, the US independent film in this resource).

### Task 2

Look at the main film poster for *The Machine*. How does this poster market the film?



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- What are the main features of this poster?
- What elements of the film are being used to market it (reference to genre, stars)?
- Who do you think the main audience for this film is likely to be and how is that audience targeted?

Look for at least one example of a film poster which markets a film mainly in relation to (a) the film's genre and (b) the film's star(s).

### Task 3

Look at the trailer for *The Machine*.

- What audience(s) do you think will be attracted by the trailer? How are they targeted?
- What's the importance of a star like Toby Stephens, who featured in *Die Another Day*, to a film like *The Machine*?

### Task 4

The film-makers state that they acted as their own distributor as they couldn't find the right distributor for *The Machine*.

- Look at the [website](#) for *The Machine*. How is it being used to promote *The Machine*? Who is the main audience for this site and how does it appeal to that audience?

### Task 5 – research and presentation task

In groups of four, do some online research into the importance of **social media** in marketing films in general. Find as many examples of how social media are used to market films as you can.

Prepare jointly a blog or a presentation on the use of social media in *The Machine*, making comparisons with other films you have found out about. Use the prompts below to help with your presentation/blog.

- Look again at the [website](#) for *The Machine* to see what social media the film-makers (acting as distributors) used. Comment on whether different social media attract some audiences more than others.
- Look at their [Facebook page](#).
- Comment on what you think are the most important elements of a facebook page for (a) distributors and (b) audiences.
- Comment on the advantages of using social media for *The Machine*'s distributors/ film-makers. How far do you think that the film industry controls the impact of social media on audiences?