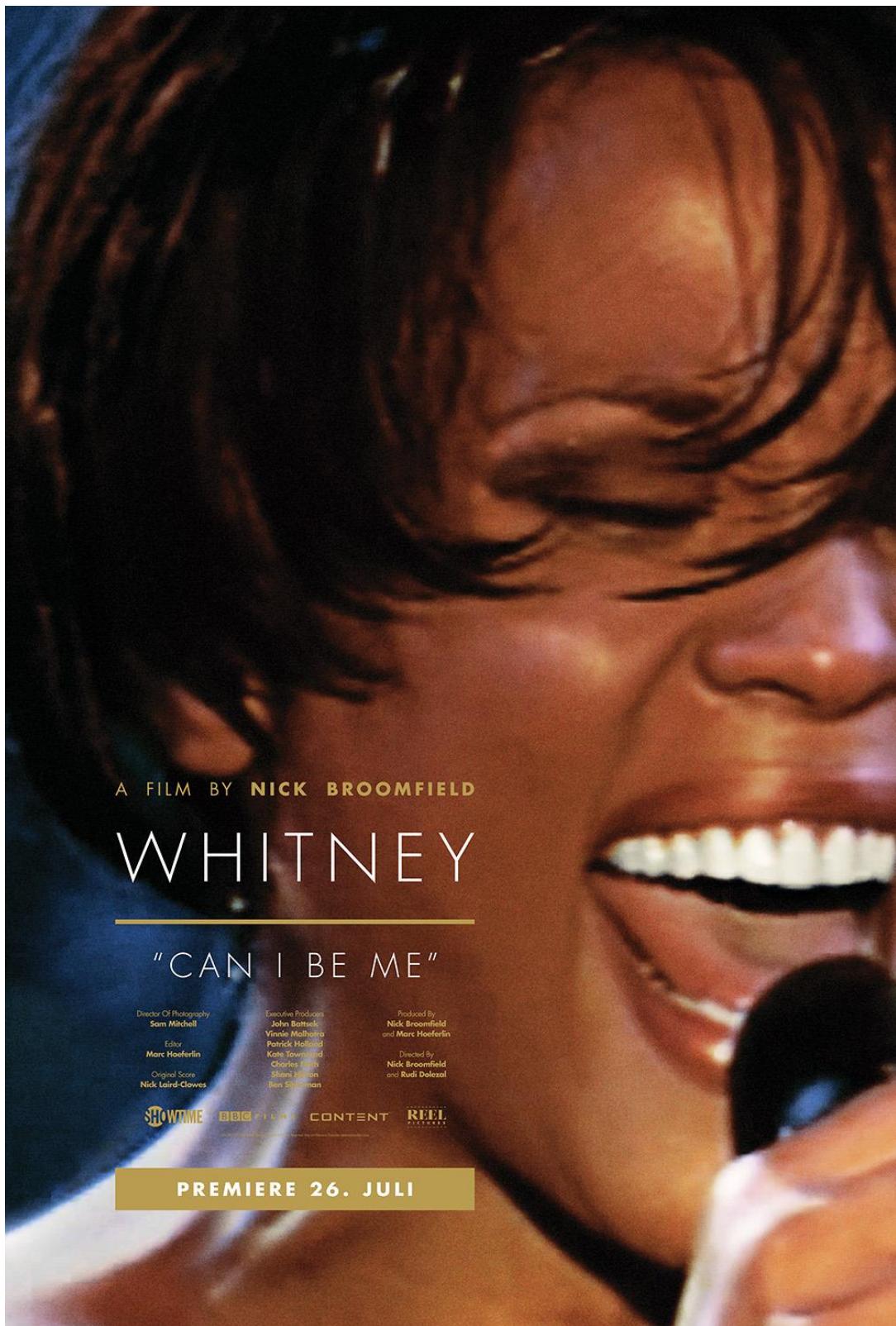


REEL Pictures præsenterer

# WHITNEY: CAN I BE ME

Premiere 26. juli 2017



## SYNOPSIS

Et portræt af popmusikkens første kvindelige sorte megastjerne. Historien om Whitney Houstons spektakulære liv og alt for tidlige død fortælles gennem intimt arkivmateriale, interviews med inderkredsen og koncert- og backstageoptagelser, der ikke tidligere har været offentliggjort. Fra de spæde år som gospelsanger i den lokale kirke til den verdensomspændende berømmelse med hits som 'I Wanna Dance With Somebody', 'I Will Always Love You' og ikke mindst filmen 'The Bodyguard'. For en stund indtog Whitney verden med bredt tandpastasmil og en enorm selvsikkerhed på scenen. Siden fulgte det stormombruste forhold til Bobby Brown og det altødelæggende stofmisbrug, som førte til hendes død i 2012 – kun 48 år gammel. Hendes arv er enorm: Ingen Rihanna eller Beyoncé uden Whitney.



**Originaltitel:** Whitney: Can I Be Me.

**Manuskript:** Nick Broomfield.

**Produktionsland:** UK/USA.

**Fotograf:** Sam Mitchell.

Produktionsselskaber: Lafayette Films,  
Passion Pictures, Showtime Networks.

**Klipper:** Marc Hoeferlin

**Sprog:** Engelsk.

**Originalmusik:** Nick Laird-Clowes.

**Spilletid:** 105 min.

**Primære rolleliste:**

**Instruktør:** Nick Broomfield, Rudi Dolezal.

Whitney Houston

**Producers:** Nick Broomfield, Marc Hoeferlin.

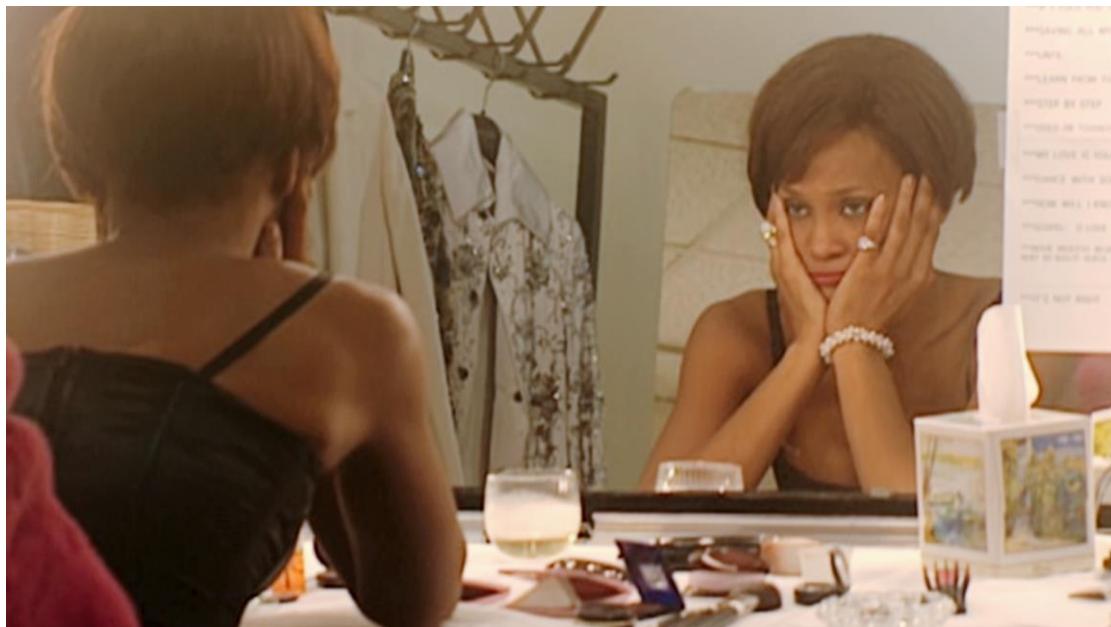
Bobbi Kristina Brown

Bobby Brown

Robyn Crawford

John Russell Houston Jr.

Cissy Houston



## KONTEKST

Whitney Houstons sidste succesfulde turné er omdrejningspunkt for Nick Broomfield's dokumentar om sangerindens kurs mod stjernerne og efterfølgende deroute. Hvordan kunne det gå så galt at en af verdens dygtigste og mest succesfulde sangerinder gik til i en blanding af alkohol og stoffer? Det forsøger Nick Broomfield at finde svaret på ved at tale med de mennesker som kendte og arbejdede sammen med Houston og ved at lade os iagttage Houston på nært hold i Rudi Dolezals optagelser fra hendes *My Love Is Your Love* World Tour i 1999. Nick Broomfield har som den første fået tilladelse til at offentliggøre Dolezals optagelser af Houston, som på det tidspunkt stod ved en afgørende skillevej i sit privatliv.



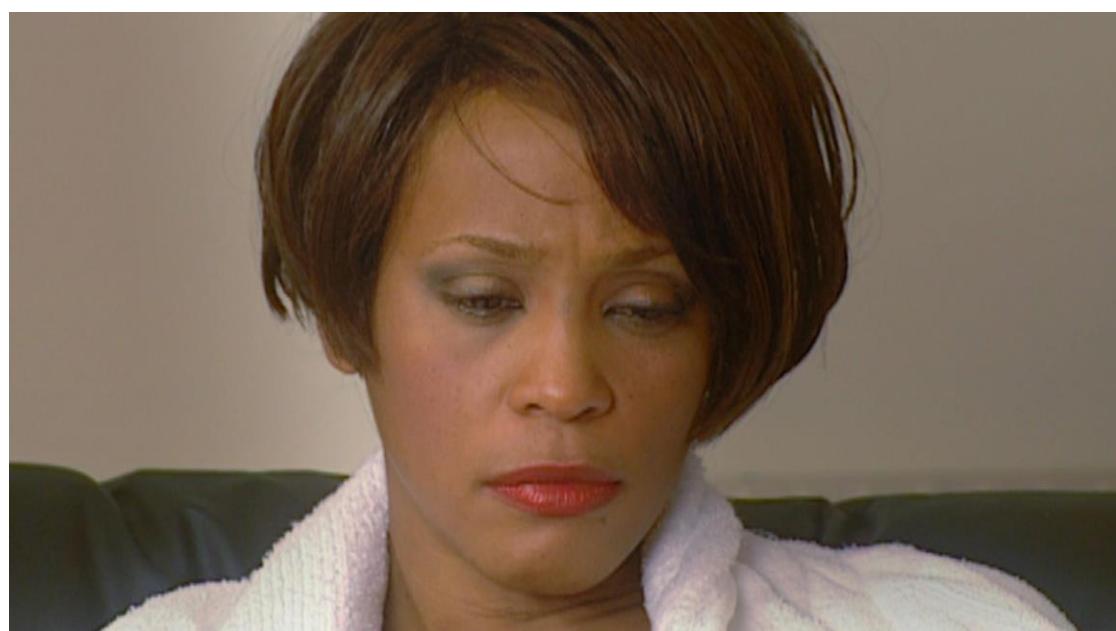
**INTERVIEW** med instruktørerne Nick Broomfield og Rudi Dolezal:

“There’s been a lot of stuff done on Whitney, but if you look at them, they’re pretty much the same story,” says Broomfield, joined by Dolezal and the movie’s producer and editor Marc Hoeferlin on the roof of the Tribeca Film Festival hub. “But I became more obsessed with the fact that she was this incredible crossover artist. Clive Davis’ genius was to market her to white teenage girls, and she eventually paved the way for Beyoncé. But that took its toll, and she paid this price for it.”

Dolezal, who was friends with Houston up until her death, had recorded more than 500 hours of footage of the singer both onstage and in private moments during her 1999 world tour. The concert film was shelved after Dolezal asked Houston to address the rumors of drug addiction on camera. “She said, ‘No, no, no, I don’t have a drug problem.’ So we let the footage sit. I couldn’t release a tour film in my name where we are not touching on the main theme that the whole world is talking about.”

For years, he had refused offers from many people (including Clive Davis) to buy the footage but agreed after a meeting with Broomfield last May. Dolezal’s footage has never been seen before and ranges from the startlingly personal to the morbidly hilarious — including one lengthy scene in a hotel room (shot by Dolezal) where Houston and husband Bobby Brown vividly mimic a scene from *What’s Love Got to Do With It*, casting themselves as Tina and Ike Turner.

“I love the intimacy of Rudi’s footage,” Broomfield says. “He shot with a teeny little camcorder, but it doesn’t matter the quality. When you see Whitney Houston after having sung ‘I Will Always Love You,’ coming off that stage, you suddenly realize there’s tears streaming down her face. And she’s looking into that camera. There’s an emotion on her face that I almost can’t believe.”



WHITNEY: CAN I BE ME

Broomfield, who often narrates and appears on camera in his documentaries (like 2014's stunning *Tales of the Grim Sleeper*), decided to melt into the background for Whitney. "We shot some stuff with me in it," he says, "but the film only started working when it was a very intimate portrait of Whitney. My voice became irrelevant. We would ask ourselves, 'What does Whitney feel in this particular scene? How is this affecting her? Where is her head at? What is she going through?' And the more we answered that and told the story subjectively through her, the stronger and more moving it became. We wanted to tell Whitney's story from Whitney herself."

In fact, Broomfield and editor Hoeferlin admit to getting overwhelmed with emotion while working on the film. "We both denied it for a while, busily looking out the window when in fact we were both crying," Broomfield says. "I'm not often very affected in that way, but there is something so emotional about Whitney Houston's story. And I find looking at the movie, especially the ending, to be an incredibly heartbreakingly experience."

Dolezal agrees. Despite all the time he had spent with Houston, the film shattered him by offering a deeper emotional glimpse into her life.

One sequence in the film surprised Dolezal most of all. "The long scene with Whitney's bodyguard," he says, referring to an interview in the film with David Roberts, a Scottish security expert who was hired to protect Houston in the mid-1990s and ultimately wrote a confidential letter to her managers, begging them to intervene as Houston was spiraling out of control.

"For me, the letter that we see in the film is one of the most important moments," Dolezal says. "Because for anybody who witnessed Whitney's tragic downfall, we all say, 'Why didn't anybody do anything? Why couldn't anybody help her?' To find out that somebody tried and was ignored is very tragic. It just breaks my heart."



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