



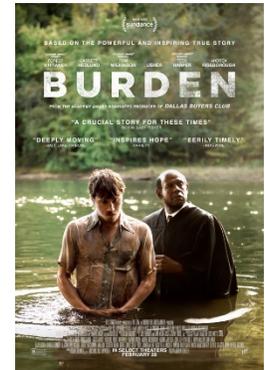
## IMTA ALUM GARRETT HEDLUND'S *BURDEN*

**IMTA Press Release  
February 27, 2020**

*Burden* is in select theatres on Friday, February 28

*"I read the script and I saw something there, I saw a story that I had never seen before. It was very realistic and I was just intrigued by it."* — Garrett Hedlund

When a museum celebrating the Ku Klux Klan opens in a small South Carolina town, the idealistic Reverend Kennedy resolves to do everything in his power to prevent long-simmering racial tensions from boiling over. But the members of Kennedy's congregation are shocked to discover that his plan includes sheltering Mike Burden, a Klansman whose relationships with both a single-mother and a high-school friend force him to re-examine his long-held beliefs. After Kennedy helps Mike leave behind his violent past, the Baptist preacher finds himself on a collision course with manipulative KKK leader Tom Griffin. In the face of grave threats to himself and his family, the resolute Kennedy bravely pursues a path toward peace, setting aside his own misgivings in the hopes of healing his wounded community.



IMTA alum Garrett Hedlund stars as Burden, alongside Oscar winner Forest Whitaker, Tom Wilkinson, Andrea Riseborough, Tess Harper, Crystal Fox, and Usher. The film, which is based on a true story, initially premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2018 where it won the Audience Award.

"It deals with the Klan, it deals with a situation in South Carolina that caused a lot of stir and riot back then in 1996 when it happened," Hedlund said in an interview at Sundance. "When I saw there was a love story in there and redemption, I saw it wasn't all hatred and bigotry. The truth of the matter is I've been doing a lot of films where I've been runnin' and gunnin' with eight other soldiers; this is the first film I've been given in a while that had a love story in it. I thought it was quite wonderful."



Hedlund has two other films that are currently being shown at international film festivals. *Dirt Music* is an adaptation of the acclaimed novel by Tim Winton that premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in September. Taking place in Western Australia, Hedlund plays a young poacher who encroaches on a legendary fisherman's territory, only to become involved with the fisherman's wife, leading to a chase through the outback when the affair is discovered. *Dreamland*, which debuted at the Tribeca Film Festival in April, finds Hedlund as a partner-in-crime to bank robber Margot Robie being pursued by a teenage bounty hunter. Both films are seeking distribution and have not yet been scheduled for a theatrical release.

Hedlund has just completed filming the biographical drama *The United States vs. Billie Holiday*, an adaptation of the 2015 New York Times bestseller "*Chasing the Dream: The First and Last Days of the War on Drugs*" by Johann Hari. It follows Holiday's career as she was targeted by the Federal Department of Narcotics with an undercover sting operation led by black Federal Agent Jimmy Fletcher, with whom she had a tumultuous affair. The film will explore Holiday's struggles with addiction, fame and heartbreaking love.