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SET VISIT: DAYLIGHT ROBBERY

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We go behind the scenes on Paris Leonti's debut feature, the heist pic Daylight Robbery.

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As football fans gather to watch England going for gold in a World Cup final, a gang of bank robbers take aim at piles of cash inside a London Exchange bank... The pitch for British heist caper Daylight Robbery hopes to match the bulldog spirit of 1969 classic The Italian Job with the bristling character dynamics of Quentin Tarantino's debut crime flick Reservoir Dogs (1992). It's an ambitious big screen bow for London-based writer-director Paris Leonti. Yet as daunting as the task is, history shows that it doesn't take a vaultload of swag to produce a winning thriller.

The genre demands a heavy dose of adrenalin-fuelled action and despite the budget constraints Leonti is confident of delivering. He's adamant that the success of any such film ultimately rests on the strength of its characters. "At heart," he states, "the goal is to produce a movie which excites our emotions as well as our senses." From the moment Leonti conceived the story, he viewed it first and foremost as "a very tense and human drama".

Leonti is especially focused on the human capacity for greed, "a kind of poison" that infects the gang - Geoff Bell (The Business), Leo Gregory (Green Street), Vas Blackwood (Lock, Stock And Two Smoking Barrels), and Paul Nicholls (Hustle). Leonti sees the confines imposed on the characters as a crucial element in amplifying the tension: "As in real life," he notes, "each

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individual is hemmed in by their choices."

We visited the London set of Daylight Robbery in December, on the final day of the shoot, to find out more from director Leonti plus DOP Milton Kam and producer Nick O'Hagan.

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Stella Papamichael | Published 01 February 07

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