

# Ultimate excitement and speed rules Rush



By [Daniel Derksen](#)

8 Oct 2013

Passionate rivalry brings out the best and worst of two of the greatest champions that the world of sports has ever witnessed in Rush. Set against the sexy and glamorous golden age of racing, Rush portrays the exhilarating true story of the charismatic gifted English playboy James Hunt (Chris Hemsworth of The Avengers, Thor) and his methodically brilliant disciplined Austrian opponent, Nikki Lauda (Daniel Brühl of Inglourious Basterds, The Bourne Ultimatum).



The film is miraculously brought to life through a meticulous screenplay by Peter Morgan, who previously brought the real-life dramas of The Queen, The Audience, Frost/Nixon and The Last King of Scotland vividly to life, and director Ron Howard's solid vision echoing the blend of fantasy and reality he created in Apollo 13, A Beautiful Mind and Frost/Nixon.

## The realism and authentic detail are paramount

In recreating the merciless and legendary 1970s' Formula One rivalry that captured the imagination on the world, the realism and authentic detail are paramount, and, with Rush, fact and fiction blend seamlessly; you never get the feeling that you are watching a re-enactment, but are genuinely plunged into the action on the racetrack as well as the intimacy of the characters' lives.

The ultra-competitive and spectacular arena of Formula One and Grand Prix reflects the classic scenario of man taming the beast; in Rush, man is pitted against man, men against 500-horsepower monsters, and beast against beast; there is nothing in the world that can beat this, it is raw and primal. A battle in which two seconds can make a world of difference.

Emotional trauma, physical prowess and mortality clash head on in a relentless war zone where entertainment rules, no matter how devastating or horrific. The excitement of wanting to become an integral part of this world and the action, to witness the dramatic duels intimately, has always been a key factor in the endurance of the sport. Ron Howard ensures that we are strapped in, with engines roaring and ready to race for ultimate escapism.

With Rush, we not only escape into its constructed reality, but with its vibrant characters we are taken on an intimate tour with the men and women behind the action, and encounter the man behind his passion. To be able to immerse ourselves fully in the world of Rush, we need to believe all of it, and even if you are not a sports fan, Rush will have you on the edge of your seat.

"You really have to believe it to make it possible," said Hunt, and this echoes true throughout the invigorating experience.

## Passion and vigour



Actors Chris Hemsworth and Daniel Brühl bring their factual characters to detailed life with passion and vigour; Australian Hemsworth perfectly captures every detail of the pompous British superstar, with Brühl delivering a tour de force as Lauda. Their transformation into their characters and the passion of being in the moment of every thrilling or dramatic event are main reasons for watching this excellent film.

Ultimately, Rush is not about racing car action, but about men confronting the ultimate thrill, challenging themselves to the extreme. It's a world where the "sound of cars" is music; where the excitement lies in knowing that for them, "each day could be your last" and one where there's no place for

"idiots who mess about".

As the character of Hunt says of his racing car: "A bomb on wheels - a coffin surrounded by high-octane fuel that races at 173 miles per hour." For him, there's "a nobility in death", where the racing driver is a "knight" and stares death in the face; questioning that there really is no point of having a million cups and planes if you are not having fun.

For Lauda, it's clear that to be champion, you have to have "a body like a temple and a mind like a monk", and that "passion needs discipline". For him, "happiness is the enemy and weakens you", confronting the struggle between the love and loyalty for his wife and the rush of the sport.

An interesting aspect of Rush is how these two rivals are brought together through fate, how losing and even the prospect of death brings them together, and how they are separated by winning.

If ever there was an ultimate bromance film, Rush is definitely it. There's also a great sense of humour between the two rivals that allows the humanity and the characters to surface; when Hunt attacks Lauda for cheating, he shouts that "Rules are rules and rats are rats", with Lauda smilingly quipping that "rats are very intelligent". Through their fateful encounter, we learn that "a wise man gets more from his enemies than from his friends".

## Visual splendour



On a technical level, the realism is taking to visual splendour unlike any you have ever seen before; you only have to visit [www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com) and read the list of sound and visual effect teams, as well as the stunt doubles, to fully understand the massive undertaking and masterful execution of the film.

Ambitious Slumdog Millionaire, production designer Mark Digby (who also designed the world of Dredd) integrated all racing and support vehicles into historically accurate environments, and had the Herculean challenge of reimagining racetracks

from Europe to Japan.

Academy Award-winning cinematographer Anthony Dod Mantle, who won an Oscar for his work on Slumdog Millionaire, perfectly captures the minute detail of the drama and spectacle.

With their collaborations on blockbusters from The Da Vinci Code and Angels & Demons to more intimate projects such as Frost/Nixon, Howard and Hans Zimmer, a Grammy, Golden Globe and Academy Award winner, once again joined forces for the sounds of Rush, producing a haunting and pulsating soundtrack that beautifully underscores the emotions of the characters and drama of the story.

The tempo, pace and rhythm of Rush are superbly integrated into seamless unison by editors Dan Hanley and Mike Hill, quite possibly the most accomplished duo of editors in the industry and marking their 20th collaboration with Ron Howard. Beginning with 1982's Night Shift, Hanley and Hill won the Oscar for Best Film Editing for their work on Apollo 13.

If you are looking for a thrilling on-the-edge-of-your-seat cinematic high, look no further. Rush offers first-rate excitement and human drama for anyone who ever wanted to feel what it's like to have the power of these knights of grand prix racetrack, and rule speed.

## Behind the scenes

Screenwriter Peter Morgan, who lives in Austria, approached Lauda with an idea to write a script that dramatised the tumultuous 1976 racing season. Lauda consented and provided Morgan with invaluable input during the draft stages. "We had a lot of discussions about the Hollywood movie and the reality," Lauda says. "I always brought him back to the reality. They were very interesting discussions."

The passions, personalities and competitive extremes of these characters-not to mention his experience on his last film with Morgan-convincing two-time Oscar winner Ron Howard to direct Rush. "What Peter is great at is looking at characters," continues the director. "When he deals with true stories, he's fantastic at discerning what it is that makes them tick, what is that thing that gets under their skin in positive or negative ways and how to build scenes around that. Some of the scenes are purely factual, some are dramatic illustrations, but they're all meant to serve these ideas he's developed. So, the results are always very honest, if not 1000% authentic."

Read more at [www.writingstudio.co.za/page1037.html](http://www.writingstudio.co.za/page1037.html)

## ABOUT DANIEL DERCKSEN

Daniel Dercksen has been a contributor for Lifestyle since 2012. As the driving force behind the successful independent training initiative The Writing Studio and a published film and theatre journalist of 40 years, teaching workshops in creative writing, playwriting and screenwriting throughout South Africa and internationally the past 22 years. Visit [www.writingstudio.co.za](http://www.writingstudio.co.za)  
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