

British Club Active Living Section

Dinner Presentation titled: “Hollywood in Thailand: 20+ years of filmmaking in The Land of Smiles”

Chairperson’s Introduction of the Speaker:

It is my great pleasure to introduce today’s speaker, Tom Waller — a filmmaker whose life and career wonderfully bridge East and West. Tom was born right here in Bangkok to a Thai mother and an Irish father, and grew up between Thailand and the UK. This dual heritage gave him an instinctive understanding of different cultures, and a passion for bringing those worlds together through film.

He studied film at Ravensbourne University London, one of Britain’s leading creative schools, and by the year 2000 had already been selected for the prestigious European Audiovisual Entrepreneurs Producers Workshop, an international programme that helped launch the careers of many of Europe’s most ambitious filmmakers. Over more than two decades, Tom has established himself as a director and producer of both independent films and international co-productions.

His Bangkok-based company, De Warrenne Pictures, has created an impressive variety of work — from gripping thrillers and documentaries to Thai-language dramas and stories made for worldwide audiences. Among his achievements, perhaps the two best known are the blockbuster movie *Mechanic: Resurrection* in 2016 starring Jason Statham, Jessica Alba, Tommy Lee Jones, and Michelle Yeoh, and of course the much acclaimed film “The Cave” in 2019, the dramatic feature film about the Tham Luang cave rescue in Chiang Rai. In making this film, Tom worked closely with several of the real divers and rescue participants to bring authenticity and human truth to the screen. This included, of course, our very own Vernon Unsworth, who, entirely and honestly co-incidentally, will tell us his amazing story in 2 weeks’ time. Tom’s career reflects not only his craft as a filmmaker, but also his enduring love for Thailand as both his home and as a stunning cinematic backdrop. For more than twenty years, he has played a vital role in encouraging international productions to base themselves here in Thailand, while at the same time ensuring and succeeding, that uniquely Thai stories and perspectives find their way to audiences across the world. So please join me in welcoming a filmmaker, a cultural ambassador, and a storyteller of remarkable range and vision — Tom Waller.