

## HUGO DIEGO GARCIA

**THE *DEATH AND OTHER DETAILS* STAR TALKS HIS TRANSITION FROM RURAL FRANCE TO THE LARGE-SCALE HULU PRODUCTION, PLUS HELMING AWARD-WINNING CONTRIBUTIONS TO INDIE CINEMA ALONG THE WAY.**

The distance between Hugo Diego Garcia's small-town French childhood and the entertainment industry's US capital meant that the blossoming career he's enjoying today wasn't something he always considered plausible. Encounters with the worlds of film and TV were bittersweet for him as a child, at once entranced by the spectacle of the medium he watched from his living room but confronted with the idea that a career in Hollywood wasn't part of the plan for people in Belledoux, a commune with 300 residents in the eastern French mountains.

"My whole life, people told me, 'Well, no, it's not for you.' I would watch so many American movies, but I never connected because I never had the belief that I could be part of it," the actor, director, producer and screenwriter reflects. Now LA-based, his role in Hulu murder-mystery *Death and Other Details* this year, marked just one symbol of a man who, today, is living far beyond the external doubts he once felt limited by.

The "unconventional, quirky" show is "a modern take on a classic whodunit, reminiscent of Agatha Christie," Garcia explains. Events unfold aboard the opulence of the SS Varuna, a cruise liner navigating the Mediterranean, teeming with elite clientele and worn-out crew catering to their every need. As a seemingly unfeasible locked-room murder takes place,

28-year-old passenger Imogene Scott (Violett Beane) finds herself in the wrong place at the right time and subsequently a prime suspect. With all eyes directed at her, she joins forces with fellow passenger, "the world's greatest detective", Rufus Cotesworth (Mandy Patinkin) to uncover the real truth. Garcia plays Jules, the ship's head of security, a character he describes as a "bad boy with a shaded past and good heart" whose previous criminal misgivings draw him into the investigation's focus.

"Jules' profile matched mine or at least the idea that I make of myself," Garcia explains. "A man from another time, with a more classic mindset. I found it amusing to play someone who I identified with in some aspects." A childhood spent training in martial arts then boxing saw Garcia almost go professional at 19, an experience that he says bolstered his physical portrayal of the ship's hardy head of security. While they don't both have a criminal past in common, Garcia identified with the feelings of alienation Jules encounters, the feeling of being an outsider in a world where conformity reigns supreme.

His road to the international Hulu hit show began when he swapped his law studies in Lyon for Paris in a bid to pursue acting opportunities in the French capital. However, having only dabbled in a couple of DIY shorts previously with his composer brother MALO

and childhood friends, finding a foothold in the industry continued to feel beyond grasp. "Nobody was giving me roles. I didn't exist on film. I didn't exist on camera. I barely had done a few student things. You have no control [at that stage of your career]. And then one day, I woke up and I was like, 'You need to offer yourself a part.'"

It was a realisation that marked the genesis of Garcia's double debut, his acclaimed 2018 and 2019 shorts *Tony* and *Cagnolino*, both of which he directed and starred in. *Tony*, according to Garcia, was inspired by his father's turbulent youth in the '80s and the power in finding chosen family amidst toxicity from biological relatives. *Cagnolino* also grapples with coming of age and toxic masculinity in the inner city, following a group of young men as they embark on an overnight crime spree with unpredictable results.

Both projects not only provided a window into his culturally diverse experience but also served as catalysts for his burgeoning career, earning him several award nods and festival screenings. *Tony* was listed as one of the Best 10 Short Films of 2019 by UK Film Review. The success caught the attention of acclaimed Italian director duo Damiano and Fabio D'Innocenzo who saw Garcia's potential and impressed upon him to throw himself unabashedly into a career in the craft. "I did



This page: Hugo wears trench coat & jeans ISABEL MARANT; sweater LACOSTE; boots CHURCH'S X COMME DES GARÇONS. Opposite: Hugo wears jacket & vest LOUIS VUITTON; vest (worn underneath) JUNYA WATANABE



Opposite: Hugo wears hoodie GIVENCHY. This page: Hugo wears coat & belt MAISON MARGIELA; beanie, talent's own; boots ISABEL MARANT



everything from costume to casting, just motivated by the ambition of acting and telling those stories that really mattered to me at that moment of my life." He won small parts in 2022 French indie productions *Touchées* and *Sentinelles* and was cast alongside Demi Moore and Margaret Qualley in the yet-to-be-released Coralie Fargeat biological horror, *The Substance*. Recent years have also seen him write, produce and co-direct (alongside Lorenzo Bentivoglio) his debut feature film *Vache Folle*, due for release this year. He's currently also filming an appearance in John Woo's adrenaline-fuelled remake of his 1989 cult classic, *The Killer*.

"The stories I've told [in my career so far] have been a vector to showcase what I can do," he says. Days on *Death and Other Details* allowed him to diversify his skills again, absorbing

the expertise of the show's seasoned cast and showrunners, and forcing him to adapt fully to the contours of big-scale TV production. "The scale, the timing, lack of rehearsal opportunity, dealing with show-runners, weekly directors and studio executives," was a lot to get used to. "There were so many things at play, especially for me coming from directing, writing, producing and being the lead [in my previous projects]. There are many positives in having the project seen by the entire world, but the negative is not having as much freedom."

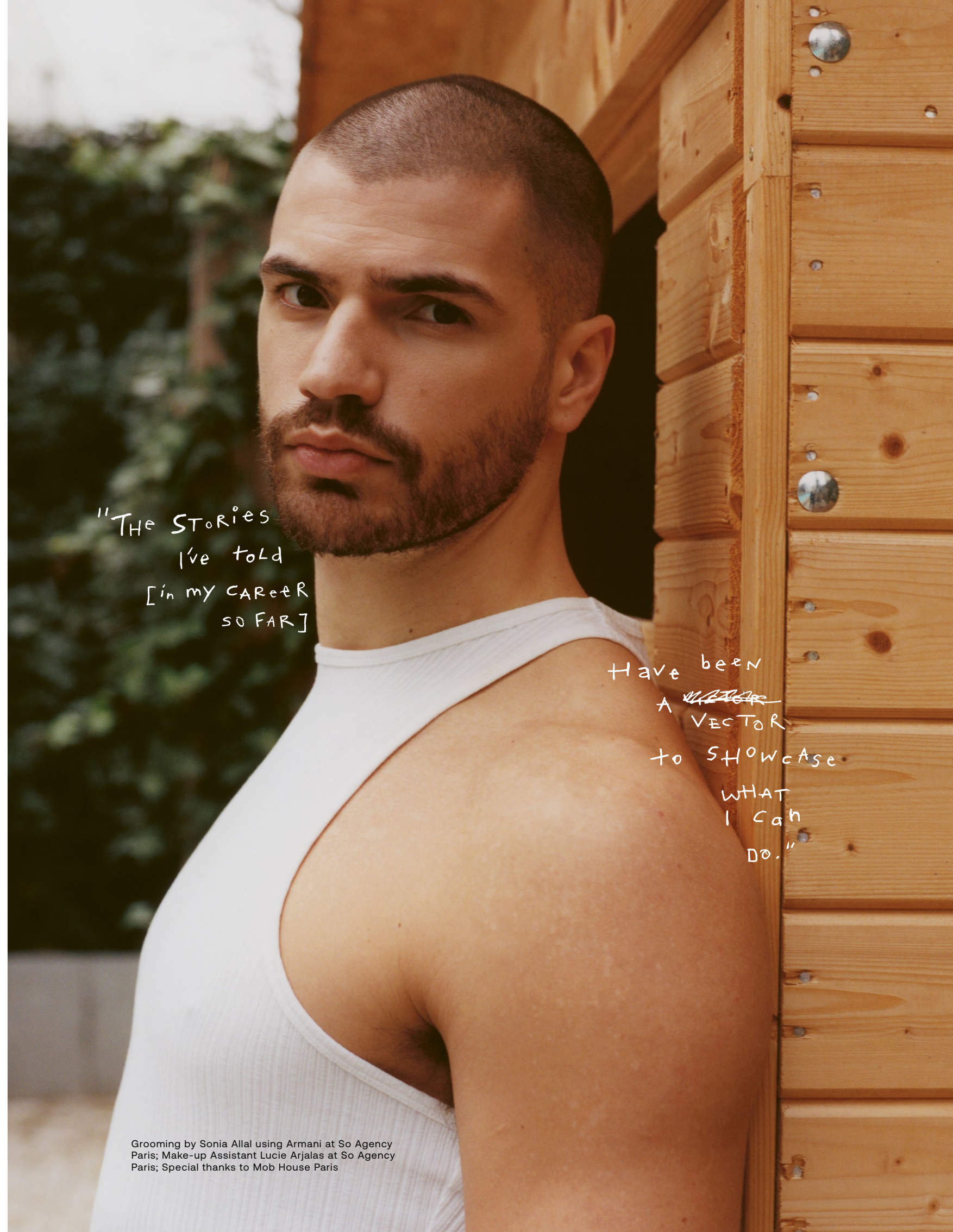
As he discusses the CV of acting credits that now towers over him, you get the sense that the small-town, once-unhopeful child within him is simply in his element at being proved wrong. "I don't have to pay to do [this job]," he laughs. "And I get to [keep doing it]. It's the best of

both worlds. As Robert De Niro said, 'One of the things about acting is it allows you to live other people's lives without having to pay the price.'

His aspiration for future roles and collaborations, rightly, knows no bounds, but he conceals the specifics. "I feel like it's hard because one part of me wants to list so many directors and projects I would want to be in, but maybe I'll jinx it," he smiles. But, "I feel like the game is only starting now for me, and I'm charged and ready to go."

*Death and Other Details is available to watch now on Hulu*

This page: Hugo wears coat, vest & trousers DRIES VAN NOTEN; boots ISABEL MARANT. Opposite: Hugo wears vest LOUIS GABRIEL NOUCHI



"THE STORIES  
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[in my CAREER  
SO FAR]

HAVE BEEN  
~~WHAT~~  
A VECTOR  
TO SHOWCASE  
WHAT  
I CAN  
DO."

Grooming by Sonia Allal using Armani at So Agency Paris; Make-up Assistant Lucie Arjalas at So Agency Paris; Special thanks to Mob House Paris