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U.S. Army Combat Veteran Advin Illa Stars in "The Fight," a Three-Minute Film About a Veteran Fighting to Keep His Humanity

Directed by Catherine French, the film imagines a future VA system that tries to cure trauma by merging veterans with AI and robotics

NEW YORK, NY (September 23, 2026) - Actor, filmmaker and U.S. Army veteran Advin Illa stars in *THE FIGHT*, a three-minute film directed by Catherine French. In *THE FIGHT*, Iraq War veteran Marcus confronts a future VA system that claims to have found a solution to trauma: integrating veterans with AI and robotics to suppress their emotions. As the system pushes him toward becoming a human-machine hybrid, Marcus fights to retain control of his mind and his humanity.

Illa, who served a one-year deployment in Iraq as an Army combat camera soldier, brings his own military experience and a personal perspective to the role. Juan Alzate co-stars as Leo.

Director Catherine French cast the film around authenticity, noting in her director's statement that Illa's military background "provided invaluable insights" into the portrayal.

Illa created *THE FIGHT* as a concept for a larger slate of films representing veterans in Hollywood, where veteran stories and veteran storytellers are still rare on screen. The film runs exactly three minutes by design.

"I wanted it to be exactly three minutes so the audience can feel many emotions in a short time. Filmmaking and storytelling don't have to be two hours to be entertaining. I made THE FIGHT as a concept and as a call to directors, filmmakers, investors and anyone who wants to see more veterans represented in Hollywood," said Advin Illa.

THE FIGHT was released in the United States last week. It was photographed by Matias Almeida.



Advin Illa and Juan Alzate in THE FIGHT. Photo by Matias Almeida.

LOGLINE

When a future VA system tries to cure his trauma by turning him into a human-machine hybrid, an Iraq War veteran fights to keep control of his mind and his humanity.

SYNOPSIS

In THE FIGHT, Iraq War veteran Marcus confronts a future VA system that claims to have found a solution to trauma: integrating veterans with AI and robotics to suppress their emotions. As the system pushes him toward becoming a human-machine hybrid, Marcus fights to retain control of his mind and his humanity. The three-minute project stars U.S. Army veteran Advin Illa, whose own military experience brings a personal perspective to the role.

FACT SHEET

Title	THE FIGHT (IMDb: "The Fight Scene")
Format / Genre	Short film / Drama, Science fiction
Release	September 2026 (United States)
Country / Language	United States / English
Running time	Exactly 3 minutes
Director	Catherine French
Cast	Advin Illa (Marcus), Juan Alzate (Leo)
Director of Photography	Matias Almeida
First Assistant Camera	Liliet Reyes
Sound	Andreina Morales
Makeup	Jayne del Valle, Sameera Shawkat
Editor	Nicolas Sicurella
Concept	Proof of concept for a larger slate of films representing veterans in Hollywood
IMDb	imdb.com/title/tt33547968
Screener	Available on request

THE OPPORTUNITY

THE FIGHT is a call to directors, filmmakers, producers and investors. Advin Illa is open to conversations about developing the concept into a larger project that puts veterans and their stories at the center of Hollywood storytelling.

ABOUT ADVIN ILLA



Advin Illa. Photo courtesy of Advin Illa.

Advin Illa is an actor, filmmaker, entrepreneur and U.S. Army veteran. He served in the Army as a combat camera soldier, documenting operations on the ground during a one-year deployment to Iraq, an experience that shaped both his eye for story and the discipline he brings to set. After his service he turned to acting and filmmaking, and he now builds his own media and production ventures alongside his screen work.

Selected credits

THE FIGHT - Marcus (lead), three-minute sci-fi drama, dir. Catherine French

ROMAN - Soldier, crime series, created, written and directed by Alfredo Diaz (Rebel Religion Works)

Cubby (2019) - feature film

Service

U.S. Army - Combat Camera; one-year deployment, Iraq

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Advin Illa

Advin Illa is an actor, filmmaker, entrepreneur and U.S. Army veteran who served a one-year deployment in Iraq as a combat camera soldier. He stars as Marcus in the three-minute film THE FIGHT and appears in Alfredo Diaz's crime series ROMAN.