

Richard Gere on the homeless: It could be me, or you

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Actor Richard Gere, right, poses for a family picture with people attending a press conference to present his "Time Out of Mind" at the St. Egidio Community, in Rome, Thursday, June 9, 2016. (AP Photo/Fabio Frustaci)

ROME (AP) — Actor Richard Gere says he only came to realize how easily someone can end up “lost” and on the streets by playing a homeless man in his new film “Time Out of Mind.”

Gere screened the film to a small group of homeless people at a soup kitchen in Rome on Thursday ahead of a screening at the Taormina Film Festival.

Gere said that only once he started filming, and was ignored as he begged for change on the streets of New York City, did he appreciate the reality of homelessness.

“It’s that fragile, the difference between us who have seemingly productive lives, and someone who ends up lost, a lost soul on the streets,” he said.

“I could feel in a very visceral way what it is like to be untethered, not connected to reality any more, not connected to society anymore, not connected to friends anymore, being invisible on the streets,” Gere added.

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