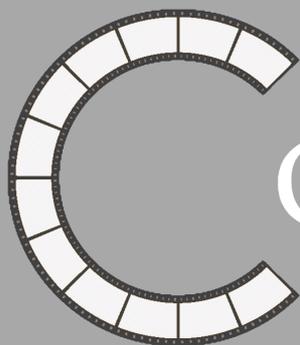
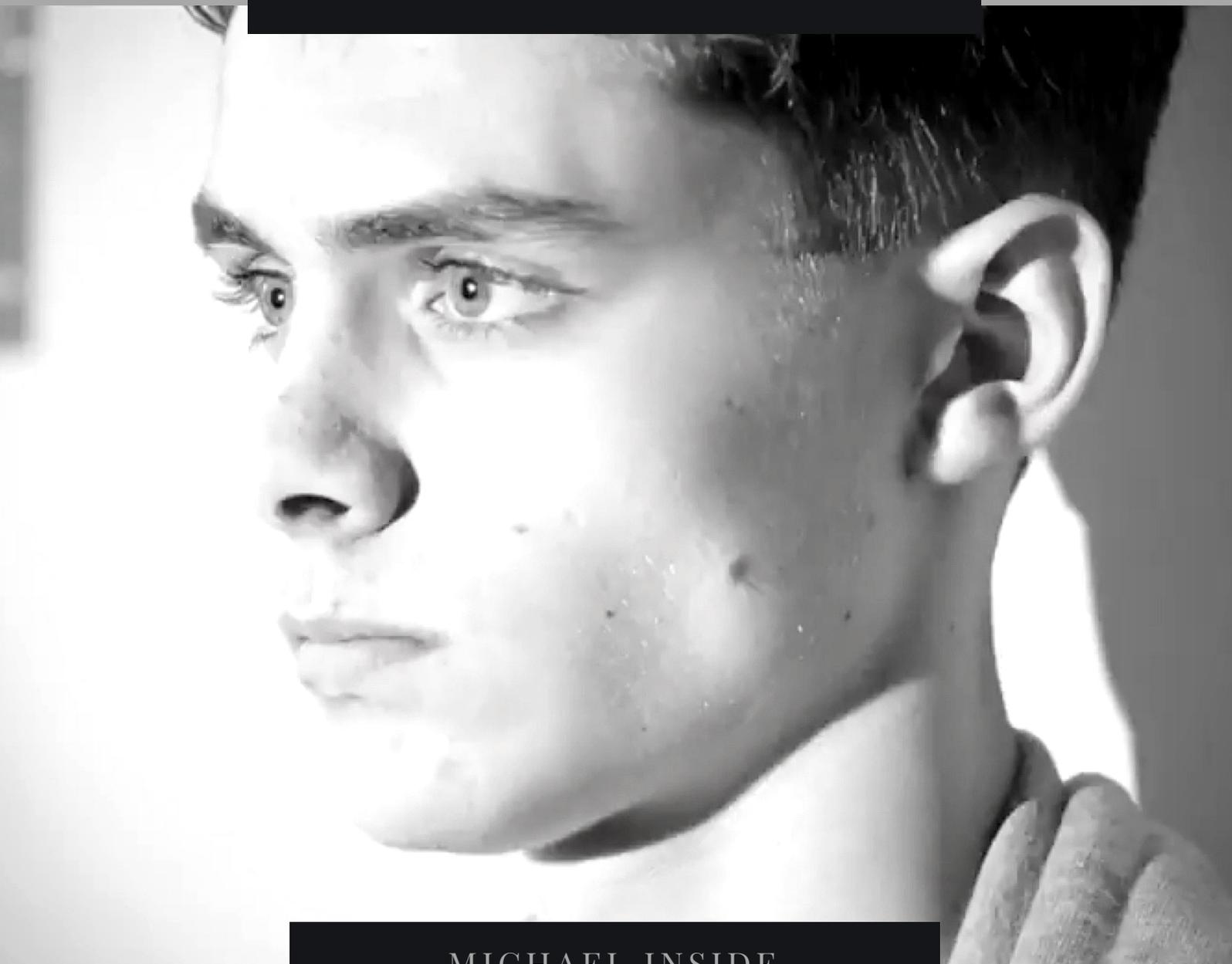


ISSUE NO. 6 // VOLUME NO. 1 // APRIL 2018



CINÉIREANN

IRELAND'S FILM MONTHLY



MICHAEL INSIDE

Frank Berry tells us about the making of his award-winning prison drama

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TOTAL FILM

“GRIPPING”

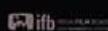
THE IRISH TIMES



A CAMBODIAN

A FILM BY
CHRIS
KELLY

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RYAN MULLINS & PAWEŁ STEC WITH THANKS TO JOHN MISTER ORIGINAL MUSIC BY JAMES HOLDEN EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS



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Maintaining Illusions with a Marvellous Grace: The Substantial Style of Wes Anderson

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Published Monthly by Scannain Media

ENQUIRIES

Advertising: advert@cin.ie

Editorial: editor@cin.ie

Submissions: submit@cin.ie

SOCIAL MEDIA

w: cin.ie

f: CinEireann

t: CinEireann

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SCREEN IRELAND?

IT'S ABOUT TIME

The Irish Film Board has been granted a €200 million commitment over the next 10 years as part of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's investment in the media production and audio-visual industry. This is fantastic news on a number of fronts, but mostly because it secures the future for the IFB. Unfortunately it also falls short of this current government's pledge to double funding to the arts during the next five years as it equates to €20m a year rather than €30m, which would be closer to doubling the current budget. It also is just marginally more than what the IFB's budget was prior to the recession in 2008.

Nevertheless the security that the IFB now has should be embraced by the organisation. Noticeably it was the sole film or wider media organisation to be provided funding under this new plan, meaning that, if it hadn't realised it before now, it is the only game that matters. At least as far as the government is concerned. The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht has pledged money for the upkeep of a number of libraries and archives,

but excluded the Irish Film Institute from that list. The IFI will continue to be funded out of the Arts Council budget, a organisation who was also curiously lacking in the announcements.

One of the announcements made was that come June 18th the IFB will finally be rebranded to Screen Ireland, a plan that is now over a decade old. This rebranding will bring with it an enhanced standing and a wider remit mostly in the area of feature drama, something that the IFB has been increasingly moving into. The publication for the announcement even included specific mention of Nightflyers, the George R.R. Martin series currently filming in Troy Studios in Limerick. Feature drama is of course something that we should be doing more of as we have the proven capabilities and the demand for them is at an all-time high internationally. But that doesn't mean that we should turn our back on feature films, documentaries, shorts, and animation. In fact the IFB should be doing a whole lot more to support animation as that is an arena in which we are world

leaders.

It is imperative that the the IFB or Screen Ireland (the name is irrelevant) use this opportunity that has been given to them to try something new, to take a risk, to look outside of the status-quo and become a pioneer for the media industry.

We should be looking at new distribution models, we should be doing more to promote Irish film within the country, we should be working with the broadcasters and with the streaming media services to create content that can compete with the best of what's out there. We punch above our weight in so many areas, from animation to scripted comedy to feature drama films. The last few years have been remarkably successful in terms of international recognition for Irish films and Irish talent in front of and behind the camera. It's time to build on that and to strike a bold vision for the future.

The IFB is playing with house money. What has it got to lose?

Niall Murphy
Managing Editor

INDUSTRY NEWS



Ireland's famous **Ardmore Studios** has been acquired by Olcott Entertainment, after they struck a deal for Ardmore Studios International Ltd's 68% holding and Enterprise Ireland's 32%.

The news alleviates huge concern in the Irish film industry which had feared that the facility would be sold to property developers. New purchasers Olcott hopes to retain Ardmore's staff, including Siún Ní Raghallaigh as CEO. They will also provide further investment to the facility.

Olcott Entertainment is a private-equity firm fronted by Ion Equity co-founder Joe Devine, who is chairman of Troy Studios in Limerick which also has Siún Ní Raghallaigh as CEO.

Recognised by filmmakers and producers across the world as Ireland's leading provider of film and TV studio infrastructure, Ardmore Studios has benefited from a significant investment programme in recent years to enhance its facilities and has recorded year-on-year growth in profitability.

Situated on 18 acres in Bray, Co Wicklow, Ardmore Studios is the only media hub in Ireland capable of providing production, post-production and support services for full-length feature films and TV productions. Its tenants include a range of film specialists offering pre and post production, as well as support services.

Productions currently on site TV series *Into the Badlands* and *Dancing With the Stars* and feature films *The Rhythm Section* and *The Turning*.

Established in 1958, Ardmore is the largest and only studio in Ireland to offer seven international standard sound stages with full support services on site. A brand that is recognised by producers throughout the world, it has been home to hundreds of international and national films and TV productions over the years including *Braveheart*, *My Left Foot*, and *Excalibur*; and in more recent times *The Tudors*, *Moone Boy*, and *Penny Dreadful*. Productions at Ardmore have received 14 Oscars and many BAFTA, Golden Globe and Emmy awards.

"Our interest in the sector is against a backdrop of significant global demand for content and thus for production facilities. The drive for more content is fuelled by 'big screen' film, increasingly 'on demand TV' and the gaming industry. When coupled with Ireland having one of the more attractive incentive schemes in the world, it makes Ardmore an attractive asset. We have ambitious plans for the business and believe this heralds a new era for these historic studios".

Joe Devine - Olcott Entertainment

"The Studios continue to represent a vitally important part of the infrastructure of the Irish film industry. It is very heartening to

hear about the commitment of the new owners to their investment in and the development of these historic studios."

Irish Film Board

"This is a very positive development for everybody associated with Ardmore and for the broader production sector in Ireland. Quality film studios ensure that the industry in Ireland will scale up and provide significant employment. Olcott has ambitious plans to invest in and to develop the facilities in Ardmore which will ensure that it will continue to compete at the heart of the international film and TV production market."

Siún Ní Raghallaigh, CEO - Ardmore Studios

"I welcome the news of the acquisition of Ardmore Studios by Olcott Limited. In the past 60 years, Ardmore Studios has produced hundreds of international and national films and TV productions and the studios continue to represent a vitally important part of the Irish film industry."

"Ireland is an attractive location for film production and Olcott plans to develop and expand the Ardmore Studios offering. These ambitious plans will ensure that Ardmore studios will continue to compete at the heart of the international film and TV production market."

Josepha Madigan, Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

Alan Duggan has been announced as the new Manager of Galway Film Centre.

Alan is an Annaghdown, Co. Galway native and a veteran of the mobile games industry. He is the CEO of Tribal City Interactive which is part of the new games hub based in the Cluain Mhuire campus of GMT. He holds a Degree in Engineering from the University of Limerick and also studied at Boston University and MIT.

"We are delighted to welcome Alan as the new Manager of Galway Film Centre. On behalf of the board of the centre we look forward to working with him on the continued development of both Galway Film Centre and the Galway UNESCO City of Film designation."

Celine Curtin, Chairperson of Galway Film Centre

Founded in 1989, Galway Film Centre is a non-profit, members based organisation dedicated to the

development of film as an artistic medium in the West of Ireland. To this end, they support filmmakers, community and youth groups through education and training, equipment provision and information.

In 2014 Galway was awarded the prestigious title of UNESCO City of Film as a result of a bid led by Galway Film Centre in partnership with both local authorities and over 50 local companies involved in the audiovisual sector. Since gaining the designation Galway City Council, Galway County Council, Bord Scannán na hÉireann / The Irish Film Board, Údarás na Gaeltacht and TG4 have all been involved in setting up a governance structure whereby the UNESCO City of Film offices are now housed within Galway Film Centre. This initiative is also supported by Pálás Cinema, Galway Film Fleadh, Telegael, Eo Telifis and all of the main production companies and filmmakers based in Galway city and county.



An Roinn
Cultúir, Oidhreacht agus Gaeltachta
Department of
Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

Minister Josepha Madigan TD announced plans to invest €1.2 billion in Irish culture, heritage and language infrastructure as part of Project Ireland 2040. Investing in Our Culture, Language and Heritage 2018 – 2027 is a ten year plan setting out the Government's commitment for capital investment of almost €1.2 billion in Ireland's culture, language and heritage.

A Cultural and Creativity investment programme comprising €265 million will be closely aligned with the cultural infrastructure, creative communities and creative industries pillars of the Creative Ireland Programme.

€200 million of this will be invested in Ireland's vibrant media production and audio visual industries which will have a positive impact right across the country.

Bord Scannán na hÉireann/the Irish Film Board (IFB) welcomed the publication of Investing in our Culture, Language and Heritage 2018-2027, announced as part of Project Ireland 2040. IFB Chair, Dr Annie Doona took the opportunity to thank the host, Minister Josepha Madigan T.D., and An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar T.D. for unveiling an unprecedented governmental commitment to culture and creativity, including funding to invest in media production and the audio-visual industry over a ten-year period.

As part of the publication the IFB welcomed the announcement of an investment of

€200 million over a ten-year period in Ireland's film and screen content sector, including the commitment of funding to the sector through the IFB. This will allow the agency to fulfil its remit and help to position this vital part of the creative industries as a strategically important contributor to the cultural and economic life of the country.

The IFB also welcomed the announcement of the implementation of the change of name of the Board, with effect from 18 June 2018, to Screen Ireland to reflect and encompass the widening remit of the agency across film, animation, TV drama and other screen content. This will bolster the Board's commitment and responsibilities in supporting the continuing success of Irish creative talent on screen as well as strengthening the agency's abilities to capitalise on the growth opportunities currently experienced in film and screen content storytelling.

Central to the role of the IFB is the support and empowerment of Irish creative filmmaking talent. This talent — which includes established and emerging writers, directors, producers, editors, post-production supervisors, set and costume designers and directors of photography to name but a few — is the lifeblood of a thriving audio-visual sector, which presently supports over seventeen thousand full-time jobs; all making significant and salient contributions to the cultural and economic fabric of Irish life. The IFB has always prided itself on providing a platform for our uniquely Irish stories on screen to come to the fore at both a domestic and international level. This announcement of additional capital funding will allow the agency to facilitate the creation and realisation of many more original and diverse stories on screen.

It will also allow the sector to build on its reputation as an attractive territory for international production, comprising world-class locations and infrastructure, a skilled workforce and a competitive tax credit, and will focus primarily on film production, high-end TV drama and animation.

The €200m investment in the audio visual Industry relates to capital investment through the Irish Film Board. This will bring Film Board capital investment to an average of €20m per annum over the period of the plan which is the level sought by the Film Board. The actual annual yearly allocations will be determined through the normal budgetary process.

Investment priorities will be a matter for the Film Board in the first instance but it should be noted that Investing in our Culture, Language and Heritage specifically refers to investment in training for film workers and crews.

The Department also proposes to publish shortly a plan for the audio visual industry based on an economic analysis commissioned by the Department in relation to the industry. It should be noted, as set out in the plan, that all proposals for capital expenditure measures will be subject to evaluation and appraisal in accordance with the provisions of the Capital Spending Code.

The Irish Film Board called the promise "a confirmation of a significant increase in relation to our capital funding (€14.2m in 2018) over a ten year period 2018 to 2027. It may not initially be €20m a year and to the extent not, will be more than €20m as the years go on so that the total is €200m over the ten years."

SHORTS IN SHORT



Galway Film Centre has selected three Writers scripts to continue in this year's **RTÉ/GFC Short Film Commission**.

The Bridge by Sarah Ingersoll, *Fitzy's Last Stand* by Gemma Creagh and *Neap Tide* by Glenn Gannon were selected and the three writers will now work with Script Editor Deirdre Roycroft to develop their scripts further.



Sarah Ingersoll is a screenwriter and director based in Dublin. A graduate of the Glasgow School of Art, Sarah's visual art and Photography background strongly informs her writing and filmmaking. After directing her first short documentary in 2016, through the Galway Film Centre, Sarah went on to study screenwriting at The New School in New York. In 2017 her feature script *The Keeper* was selected as a finalist for Best Inception and Best Overall Script at the Oaxaca Film Festival. Sarah is currently completing her second short documentary and working on her second feature script.



Gemma Creagh is a nomadic writer, filmmaker and journalist. She was born in Cork, currently lives in Dublin, and has studied both in Belfast, and more recently in Galway. It was there she graduated with a First from NUIG's MA Writing programme. Gemma has penned articles for several publications and worked for a time as an editorial assistant for *Film Ireland Magazine*. *Spoiling Sunset*, her short theatre piece, was staged in the Jerome Hynes One Act Play series in 2014. Gemma was the writer and co-producer of the five-part comedy 'Rental Boys' for RTÉ's *Storyland*, and has gone on to write, direct and produce several shorts which screened at festivals around the world.



Glenn Gannon is from Sligo and holds an MA in Screenwriting from the Huston School of Film and Digital Media, NUI Galway, as well as a BA in

Communication Studies from Dublin

City University. Glenn was the winner of RTÉ and Filmbase's TV50 'Doc on the Box' initiative. His subsequent 25-minute documentary, *STRIPPED*, aired on RTÉ 2 in December 2012 to critical acclaim. In 2014, Glenn and Sligeach Films first teamed up to produce their Irish language short, *CAS TIMPEALL*, which screened at various national and international film festivals. The short film *TRESPASSERS* (2016), starring Páraic Breathnach, was Gannon's second effort in directing drama. A qualified primary school teacher, Glenn uses film-making with great effect in the classroom and has helped two Co. Sligo primary schools in winning various awards at the inspired *Fis Film Festival*. Working as part of the Cannon Writing Collective, Glenn continues to write shorts, feature lengths and TV Dramas with the hope of directing more in the future.

Based on the strength of their applications and a subsequent interview three writers were selected and each will receive a cash prize of €500. All three will also get to work with an experienced Script Editor to develop the story outline into a finished script. One finished script will be selected approximately 4 weeks after the interview date to become the film that goes into production.

The GFC / RTÉ Short Film Commission is a scheme with a fund of €15,000 to produce a 10 to 15 minute short.

Full info on the RTÉ/GFC Short Film Commission is available [here](#).

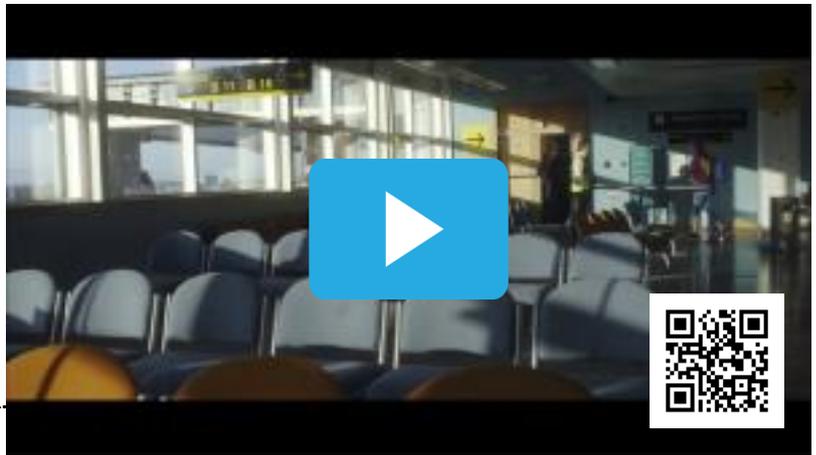
Irish short film **Terminal** has been made available to watch for free online.

The film sees two women meet at an airport departure terminal, waiting to board a plane to Manchester in order to seek safe and legal abortion.

The film, written and directed by Natasha Waugh (Fight Back Films), shines a spotlight on the bodily rights of women in Ireland. The film aims to humanise women who face criminal charges for seeking abortions in Ireland, and who therefore travel abroad to have the procedure.

Terminal won Best Irish Short Film at the Indie Cork Film and Music Festival, and has gone on to receive numerous

nominations from other festivals, including the Irish Film Festival London, and the Dublin Feminist Film Festival.



Terminal was produced by David C. Lynch (Hopehapp Productions), in association with Driftwood Doll Films. The film stars Andrea Kelly (Lenny Abrahamson's *Prosperity* and Rebecca Daly's *Joyriders.*), and newcomer Aoife Doyle.

With the referendum on the repeal of the 8th amendment next month it is a very timely release.



In the wake of screenings at home and abroad, and having recently being acquired by InFlight for AerLingus, Jason Branagan's short film *Jaffa* has been released online. Within a day of being released through Vimeo the film was featured on the streaming

platforms narrative category.

The film tells the story of a young man who learns he can't have children and struggles to come to

terms with his new reality while trying to find a way to break the news to his girlfriend.

Written and directed by Branagan and produced by Roisin O'Brien, the film stars Danny Mahony (End of

Sentence) and Aoife Honohan (The Ladies). The film was shot by Cinematographer Noel Greene.

Jaffa marks the third time that writer/director Branagan has teamed with actor, Danny Mahony. The pair first worked together on the micro-budget feature *Shoobox Memories*, after which they filmed the award-winning short film *Transitory*.

The team behind the film have decided to make the film available for free in the hopes that it sparks a conversation about the very thing that it deals with – male infertility. The subject itself still carries a stigma, but recent studies have examined the incidence of male infertility around the globe and it concluded that 15% of couples, amounting to 48.5 million couples, are affected by infertility.



Bord Scannán na hÉireann/the Irish Film Board (IFB) has announced the successful projects in the latest round of its Frameworks short film scheme. The successful projects are: **A Cat Called Jam**, **Lady Isabel & the Elf Knight**, **Nitelink**, and **Hedy**.

A Cat Called Jam is written, directed and animated by Lorraine Jordan and produced by Jeremy Purcell. A cat called Jam longs for the world to see him as he sees himself, but it's hard when his outside doesn't match.

Lady Isabel & the Elf Knight is written and directed by Cashell Horgan, animated by Graham Isherwood and produced by Andrew Moore. A lonely princess dreams of a shining knight but has to make do with an Elf Knight instead.

Nitelink is written and directed by Aidan O'Sullivan, animated by Finbar Coyle and produced by Greg Connolly. A bereaved man, grieving and drunk, idly asks for a way out. Unfortunately, in doing so, he annoys those that could give him just that.

Hedy is written, directed and animated by Andy Clarke and produced by Matt D'Arcy. A savvy young homeless girl creates a robot as a surrogate for her departed

younger brother. Not everyone is happy with their partnership.

About Frameworks

The scheme has produced global award-winning films to a consistently high standard including titles such as Alan Holly's *Coda*, which was shortlisted for the 2015 Academy Awards®, Nicky Phelan's *Granny O'Grimm's Sleeping Beauty*, Jack O'Shea's *A Coat Made Dark* and Vincent Gallagher's *Second to None*; all of which went on to become internationally award-winning films.

Funded by the IFB and RTÉ, projects selected for FRAMEWORKS funding will combine creative exploration with an ability to appeal to a general audience.

FÉILTE/FESTIVAL NEWS

hotdocs

OUTSPOKEN. OUTSTANDING.

25 | CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL

Four Irish feature documentaries – Feargal Ward’s *The Lonely Battle Of Thomas Reid*, Maurice Sweeney’s *I, Dolours*, David Sington and Heather Walsh’s *Mercury 13* and Katrina Costello’s *The Silver Branch* will screen at this year’s HotDocs festival in Toronto – the largest documentary festival in North America. They will be joined by *Smithy & Dickie* a short directed by Hannah Quinn.



The Lonely Battle of Thomas Reid will be having its North American premiere at the festival. Ward’s documentary, a poetic telling of bachelor farmer Thomas Reid’s struggle to hold onto his farm after receiving a compulsory purchase order from the IDA had its World Premiere in the Main Competition at IDFA in Amsterdam and recently won Best Irish Film at ADIFF.



I, Dolours, which is enjoying its World Premiere at the festival, is a complex

portrait of Dolours Price, militant IRA activist, hunger striker and dissident Republican who two years before she died gave a filmed interview on condition that it would not be broadcast in her lifetime.



Mercury 13 profiles women who were tested in 1961 for spaceflight, but had their dreams dashed when only men were chosen to become astronauts. The film is a Netflix Original screening as a special presentation at HotDocs.



In *The Silver Branch*, Patrick McCormack is an Irish farmer/poet who is trying keep his relationship to the natural world intact and to make a difference in the world. Patrick and his rural community are drawn into a divisive battle with the government, which wants to increase tourism to the area, thus destroying the fragile

landscape. The film was nominated for the Best Documentary IFTA in 2018.



Smithy & Dickie which screens as an opener to *Dreaming Murakami* is the charming documentary which celebrates old love letters that have stood the test of time, while questioning how the current digital age is potentially obliterating any record of our most precious moments.

We are delighted to be bringing our film to Canadian audiences at HotDocs this year. As the biggest documentary festival in the Americas, the festival’s profile and prestige will provide a great platform for our film. Many thanks are due to the Irish Film Board and Culture Ireland for their support. Luke McManus, Producer - *The Lonely Battle Of Thomas Reid*

HotDocs is North America’s largest documentary festival, conference and market. Its 25th annual edition will run from April 26th to May 6th, 2018.



The 19th Annual Newport Beach Film Festival presented by Pacific Sales will screen the West Coast's largest celebration of Irish Cinema from April 26 - May 3, 2018 in Southern California. Highlights include an Irish Showcase Celebration, premieres of feature length narrative and documentary films, two Irish Shorts programs, and Q&As with Irish filmmakers and actors.

On Sunday, April 29th, 2018, the Newport Beach Film Festival (NBFF) will present its Irish Showcase, an evening celebration of Celtic cinema and culture. The event will feature the premiere of the three highly anticipated Irish films, *Maze* (2017), *The Drummer and the Keeper* (2017), and *Michael Inside* (2017), followed by a festive post-screening party.

MAZE

Based on the true story of the 1983 Maze High Security Prison breakout, *Maze* (directed by Stephen Burke) follows the development of a prisoner's improbable friendship with his warden, who was born on the opposite side of North Ireland's political divide. As the film unravels, it becomes clear that the prisoner is grooming the warden for use in his master plan of escape, resulting in serious consequences for the both of them.

The Drummer and the Keeper

The Drummer and the Keeper (directed by Nick Kelly) opens as a rock drummer begins occupational therapy for his recent bipolar diagnosis. As part of his therapy, he takes up soccer, where he encounters a teen with Asperger's syndrome. While the two don't get along at first, they eventually develop

a mutual friendship as they help each other cope with their conditions and the world around them. Actor, Jacob McCarthy, received the Rising Star Award at the 2018 Irish Film and Television Awards for his performance in *The Drummer and the Keeper*.

Michael Inside

Winner of the Galway Film Fleadh's Best Irish Film, the Cork Film Festival's Audience Award and Best Film at the 2018 Irish Film and Television Awards. *Michael Inside* (directed by Frank Berry) brings audiences an unforgettable on-screen experience. Caught holding drugs for his friend's older brother, eighteen-year-old Michael is sentenced to three months in prison for a crime he did not commit. Once inside, he is befriended by an older drug dealer and exposed to severe violence and intimidation.

The Irish Showcase films will screen on Sunday, April 29th, 2018 (6:00pm: *Maze*, 6:15pm: *The Drummer and the Keeper*, 6:30pm: *Michael Inside*) at Edwards Big Newport (300 Newport Center Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660). The post-screening celebration will take at 8:00pm at Muldoon's Irish Pub (202 Newport Center Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660) and will feature music and hosted hors d'oeuvres.

Admission to an Irish Spotlight Film and the Post-screening Party is \$25.00.

"The Festival is extremely proud to shine a spotlight on the exceptionally strong filmmaking community in Ireland. With seven feature films and seventeen short films from Ireland in the Festival lineup, our 2018 program represents the largest celebration of Irish film on the West Coast of the United States."

Gregg Schwenk, CEO - Newport Beach Film Festival

The Newport Beach Film Festival Irish Showcase is presented by Guinness and supported by Aer Lingus – LAX to DUB Direct, Culture Ireland, Tourism Ireland, Irish Film and Television Academy, Irish Film Institute, Galway Film Fleadh, The Irish Film Board, Irish America Magazine, The Ireland Funds, Irish Screen America, Richard Harris International Film Festival, and the

Audi Dublin International Film Festival.

The Newport Beach Film Festival will present the International Premiere of *The Camino Voyage* (directed by Dónal Ó Chéilleachair), U.S. Premiere of *Making the Grade* (directed by Ken Wardrop), West Coast Premiere of *Kissing Candice* (directed by Aoife McArdle), and the West Coast Premiere of *Zoo* (directed by Colin McIvor).

The Festival will celebrate outstanding short films from Ireland. Two Irish short film programs will screen on Sunday, April 29th: *Irish Coffee & Shorts* at 12:00 pm at The LOT in Fashion Island (999 Newport Center Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660) and *Shorts O' the Irish* at 3:00 pm at Edwards Big Newport (300 Newport Center Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660). The Irish Shorts programs are curated collections of some of the strongest Irish films on the international festival circuit and feature several North American Premieres. Irish short films screening at the NBFF include *Acorn*, *Ancients Lights*, *Bless Me Father*, *The Date*, *Departure*, *Heart Overheard*, *Hey Ronnie Reagan*, *Homecoming*, *Late Afternoon*, *Lost Memories*, *Perilous Sea*, *Pernicio*, *Ronnacháí Buí*, *Sasha of the Sea*, *Smithy & Dickie*, *Time Traveller*, and *A Timely Gift*.

Admission to the (non-Showcase) Irish feature length narrative and documentary films and the Irish Shorts programs is \$15.00. For ticket information and updates visit www.NewportBeachFilmFest.com.

Celebrated as one of the leading lifestyle film festivals in the United States, the Newport Beach Film Festival seeks to bring to Orange County the best of classic and contemporary filmmaking from around the world. Committed to enlightening the public with a first-class international film program, a forum for cultural understanding and enriching educational opportunities, the NBFF focuses on showcasing a diverse collection of studio and independent films from around the globe. The 19th annual Newport Beach Film Festival runs April 26 - May 3 and will spotlight over 350 films from around the world. The Newport Beach Film Festival presented by Pacific Sales, is sponsored in part by Tito's Handmade Vodka, Karma Automotive, Fashion Island, Compass Real Estate and the City of Newport Beach.

PRODUCTION NEWS



Award-winning director Sophie Hyde (52 Tuesdays, Life in Movement) is directing a feature adaptation of author-turned-screenwriter Emma Jane Unsworth's best-selling novel **Animals**, an unconventional female driven comedy starring Holliday Grainger (*Tulip Fever*, *My Cousin Rachel*) and Alia Shawkat (*Arrested Development*, *Search Party*).

The official Irish/Australian co-production from Vico Films and Closer Productions is currently shooting in Dublin, having secured production investment from Bord Scannán na hÉireann/the Irish Film Board (IFB) and Screen Australia in association with the South Australian Film Corporation (SAFC) and the Adelaide Film Festival.

Grainger and Shawkat will star as Laura and Tyler respectively, best friends and drinking buddies whose hedonistic existence falls under the creeping horror of adulthood when Laura gets engaged to Jim — an ambitious pianist who decides, unfathomably, to go teetotal.

Sophie Hyde is also producing alongside Rebecca Summerton for Closer Productions, BAFTA-nominated Sarah Brocklehurst (*Black Pond*), and Cormac Fox for Vico Films. Emma Jane Unsworth wrote the screenplay based on her novel which was first published in 2014 in the UK, followed by editions in the USA, Canada, Germany, France and Spain.

"Emma's novel (and screenplay) is a celebration of a female friendship and an examination of being a modern woman, a woman with faults and longings, aspirations and competing desires. I couldn't be more thrilled to be working with both Holliday and Alia to bring two characters to the

screen who are funny, disturbing, charming and nuance, and I am delighted to bring this Animals world to life with an exceptional team from both Ireland and Australia."
Sophie Hyde, Director

Sophie Hyde made her debut in 2014 with the ground-breaking film *52 Tuesdays*, which she produced, directed and co-wrote. The breakout hit went on to win several awards including Best Director at Sundance and the Crystal Bear at Berlin Film Festival in 2014. Hyde and Summerton are both owners and directors of Closer Productions and recipients of Gender Matters Brilliant Careers funding in 2016 for a proposal to identify and support exceptional female voices, allowing women's stories to flourish.

"The IFB, alongside Screen Australia, is delighted to support Sophie Hyde's Animals, which is set in and will film in Ireland. Led by unique and distinctive female creative filmmaking talent, we are also proud to help bring this complex and nuanced portrait of contemporary womanhood to screens around the world."

James Hickey, Chief Executive - Irish Film Board

*"Sophie Hyde is a hugely promising talent who has demonstrated both her distinctive style and directorial agility with projects like her captivating feature debut 52 Tuesdays and comedy series F***ing Adelaide. With Animals, Sophie and Rebecca will have the chance to collaborate with their Irish production partners and capitalise on the immense opportunities presented by the official co-production program - a proven pathway to reaching international audiences."*

Sally Caplan, Head of Production - Screen

Australia

Post production will be handled by Kojo in Adelaide, with Bonsai Films on board to distribute in Australia and New Zealand.

"The SAFC is thrilled to continue the journey with the now renowned South Australian production company Closer Productions, and the unique creative voice of Sophie Hyde, as they take this exciting next step into international co-production with Animals. It is an amazing opportunity for the South Australian team to work on an international production, which has roots in South Australia."

Adam Smith, Acting CEO - South Australian Film Corporation

"The Adelaide Film Festival FUND has supported Sophie Hyde's extraordinary work to date. Adelaide Film Festival champions the work of bold and distinctive directors and we are thrilled to be involved in this venture with Closer Productions and Sophie Hyde's vision for this international co-production with all female key creative."

Amanda Duthie, Artistic Director and CEO - Adelaide Film Festival

Australia's co-production treaty with Ireland was signed in 1998 and to date has produced five official co-productions — one TV miniseries, two children's drama series, one feature-length documentary and one documentary series. **Animals** will be the first drama feature film made under the treaty. The Competent Authorities tasked with administering the Co-production Program in Australia and Ireland are Screen Australia and the Irish Film Board respectively.

Element Pictures has announced that shooting has wrapped on *Rosie*, a new feature directed by Paddy Breathnach (*Viva, I Went Down*) and written by award-winning Irish novelist Roddy Doyle (*The Commitments*, *When Brendan Met Trudy*).

Rosie tells the story of a mother trying to protect her family after their landlord sells their rented home and they become homeless. Finding a room, even for a night, is a tough job and finding somewhere permanent to live is even harder. Within the confines of their car, Rosie and John Paul strive to maintain a loving home while shielding their young family from the reality of the situation around them. *Rosie* examines how even in times of crises; the love and strength of a

family can endure.

Rosie stars Sarah Greene (*Noble, Rebellion*) in the title role, alongside Moe Dunford (*Vikings, Handsome Devil*) as her partner John Paul. The pair also appear in Lance Daly's forthcoming *Black 47*.

Rosie is Roddy Doyle's first original screenplay in 18 years and is a direct response to the current housing crisis in Ireland.

Rosie is produced by Emma Norton,



Rory Gilmartin and Juliette Bonass. Ed Guiney and Andrew Lowe are Executive Producers for Element Pictures and Dearbhla Regan is the Irish Film Board Executive Producer.

Rosie was shot in and around Dublin over four weeks and is backed by the Irish Film Board, Element Pictures Distribution and BAI.



Principal photography has wrapped in Tyrone on Colin Broderick's *A Bend in the River*.

The film sees New York-based Broderick return to his native county to tell the story of an Irish writer returning home for the first time in

two decades to face the ghosts of his past.

The film stars retired pro-boxer John Duddy (who appeared in Broderick's previous feature *Emerald City*), the IFTA award-winning actor John Connors (*Cardboard Gangsters*), and

Kathy Kiera Clarke (*Derry Girls*). The film will also feature a host of familiar faces of Irish stage and screen and a large number of locals.

Fellow Sixmilecross native Shane F Duffy (*Boyhood, Everybody Wants Some!!!*) also returns home to act as

cinematographer on the film.

"Someone remind me next time to write a screenplay about a guy sitting on a beach in the Bahamas! Outside of that, we've kicked off - Tyrone looks great and Shane Kelly is making us all look good"
Colin Broderick

A Bend in the River is produced by Julie Ryan (*The Young Offenders*) for MK1 Productions.

A film on the nature of Irish identity and on how Northern Ireland has changed over the last 30 years has never seemed more timely.

A Bend in the River will be released later this year.

Currently shooting in Cork and the midlands is Mike Ahern and Enda Loughman (aka D.A.D.D.Y.)'s *Extra Ordinary*.

The film stars comedian Maeve Higgins as a driving instructor who must use her supernatural gifts to save a lonely man's daughter from a rockstar looking to use her for satanic purposes.

The film also stars Barry Ward (*Maze*). It is being shot by DoP James Mather (*Frank, Nails*), with production design by Joe Fallover. It will be edited by Gavin Buckley (*Chewing Gum, Moone Boy*).

Extra Ordinary is produced by Katie Holly, Ailish Bracken, Mary McCarthy, and Yvonne Donohoe for Blinder Films. It received €750,000 in support from the Irish Film Board in their most recent round of staff.

Despite playing a driving instructor Higgins does not hold a licence as she recently told Ryan Tubridy on a recent Late Late Show **appearance**.

Extra Ordinary should be ready for cinemas later this year.





Funding Decisions Quarter One 2018

Words: Niall Murphy

The Irish Film Board has announced the film, television and animation projects awarded funding for the first quarter of 2018. Q1 sees €6,278,950 being offered to Irish productions and co-productions. As always, there were Provisional Offers of Commitment for amounts to be specified at a later date, as well as films offered under multiple quarters due to changes in production timelines and personal.

Production

Marcie Films was awarded €100,000 in production funding for *Trade*, adapted by actor and writer Mark O'Halloran from his own play. *Trades* is the story of a young man searching for stability in the wake of his father's death. The film will be directed by Scottish director Peter Mackie Burns who's debut short film, *Milk*, starred Brenda Fricker and won the Golden Bear for Best Short Film at the Berlin Film Festival in 2005. His debut feature, *Daphne*, was released last year and won multiple international awards. *Trade* previously had Cambodian/British director Hong Khaou attached.

Ian Fitzgibbon's new feature film *Dark Lies the Island*, which is currently in post-production, received €7,500 in addition to the €700,000 that was offered to producers Grand Pictures in Q2 of 2017. *Dark Lies the Island* has a script from Kevin Barry, based on characters from his short story collection of the same name. Set in a small Irish town and unfolding over the course of one week, a long-standing family feud comes to a head and forces the men to face the truth. The cast includes Peter Coonan, Pat Shortt, Moe Dunford, Charlie Murphy, Tommy Tiernan, John Quinn, and Jana Mohienden.

Two awards of €250,000 were made to Element Pictures and Subotica for *Calm with Horses* and *Amerika* respectively. *Calm with Horses* will be directed by Nick Rowland from a script by Joe Murtagh. The film is set in small-town rural Ireland, and follows ex-boxer Douglas 'Arm' Armstrong who is the muscle to a local drug dealer. Arm is content to coast through life, but when he learns his ex-girlfriend is taking his son away he is forced into action. Simultaneously, his employer falls into trouble with a child-molester, and needs Arm's help more than ever. Arm's loyalties are torn between his family and his life-long friend. *Amerika* will be directed by Danish director Kirstian Levring from a script he wrote with Anders Thomas Jensen.

A provisional offer of commitment was made to Parallel Films for *On the Line*, a new drama to be written and directed by Kirsten Sheridan, whose last directorial outing was 2012's *Dollhouse*.

The single largest award of the round was €900,000 offered to Parallel Films for Brian Kirk's *Borderland*. When an IRA operative (Jamie Dornan) is dispatched to London to head a new unit and wreak havoc, he uses the move to hunt down the person responsible for the accidental lethal shooting of his wife – an SAS captain (Sam Claflin) who happens to be hunting the Irishman. *Borderland* is based in 1970s London, from a script by Northern Irish writer Ronan Bennett (*Public Enemies*).

€750,000 was offered to Blinder Films for Mike Ahern and Enda Loughman (aka D.A.D.D.Y.)'s *Extra Ordinary*. This is an increased on the €620,000

offered to the film in Q3 of 2017. The film stars Maeve Higgins as a driving instructor who must use her supernatural gifts to save a lonely man's daughter from a rockstar looking to use her for satanic purposes. The film also stars Barry Ward and is currently shooting in Cork with DoP James Mather.

Similarly €750,000 was offered to Fastnet Films for George Kane's *Send in the Clowns*, the story of three beleaguered children's entertainers battling poverty, repetitive strain injuries and creative difference. The film is the feature film debut of comedy troupe Dead Cat Bounce, or Shane O'Brien, James Walmsley, and Demian Fox as they are known to their parents.

Playground Pictures were awarded €600,000 plus an additional €100,000 in female funding for Ruth Meehan's debut feature *Dead Happy*, which is written by Meehan (*The Measure of a Man*) and Jean Pasley.

€550,000 plus an additional €100,000 in female funding was offered to Samson Films for Cathy Brady (*Cant Cope, Won't Cope*)'s debut feature *Wildfire*. The film is the story of two sisters set against the backdrop of contemporary Ireland.

Tailored Films were awarded €650,000 to produce Phil Sheerin's *Winter Lake*, based on a script by David Turpin (*The Lodgers*). The film is a gothic coming of age tale about a young boy who uncovers a dark secret in a turlough (seasonal lake) which sets in motion a series of unsettling events involving his mysterious neighbours.

Two Cine4 productions, which are

Broadcasting Authority of Ireland and TG4, were awarded €300,000. These were Tom O'Sulli van and Macalla Teo's Arracht, and Dathai Keane and Abu Media's Finky.

On the documentary side €125,000 was awarded to Marcie Films for The Last Days of Peter Bergmann director Ciaran Cassidy's next project which is titled Screamers. Cassidy's latest documentary, Jihad Jane received additional production funding of €50,000. That film is the tale of two American women who went looking for love online and became the 'new face in the war on terror.'

Other documentaries funded include Seamus Murphy and Blinder Films' PJ Harvey: Staring Through the Glass, based on the legenadry singer, which was awarded €10,000; and Garry Keane and Andrew McConnell's Gaza: Out of the Ordinary. Through a cast of carefully chosen characters, Gaza: Out of the Ordinary takes an uncommon look at life inside the Gaza Strip. An unidentified offer was also made to Underground Films for Kim Bartley's Defenders, which focuses on the extraordinary experiences of people who grew up as the children of a human rights activists.

In animation €250,000 was awarded to Cartoon Saloon to continue their Annie Award-nominated series Puffin Rock. Set on a fictional island off the Irish coast, the series follows a young puffin named Oona and her little brother Baba as they explore their world. Cartoon Saloon were also awarded another €250,000 for Dorg Van Dango. Created by Fabian Erlinghauser, animation supervisor on Cartoon Saloon features The Secret of Kells and Song of the Sea, this comedy examines life through the thick-lensed glasses of a 13-year-old boy named Dorg Van Dango. After discovering a motley crew of supernatural beings who escaped while being transported to a secret holding facility (Area 51), Dorg disguises them as teenagers and befriends them. Under his wing, the creatures quickly learn there is more to life than haunting and scaring unsuspecting humans.

€200,000 was awarded Pink Kong Studios for their series Urban Tails, where audiences see Animal Music Artists ooze attitude as their videos play in the Urban Tails Music Chart show. Filled with funny character-driven content the series is energetic, unpredictable and upbeat, presenting the viewers with a unique take on

Urban Wildlife. Each episode is a music video that educates us about what life is really like for the creatures living among us in our cities.

Other animation projects funded include €100,00 to Kavaleer Productions for Boy Girl Dog Cat Mouse Cheese, €150,000 to Igloo Productions for The Lost Letter, and €30,000 to Ink & Light for Hopscotch & the Christmas Tree.

Development Funding

35 projects were offered Development funding, 4 animations, 2 documentaries, 2 international TV dramas, 1 international co-production, and 26 feature productions. The largest of these was €40,000 to Parallel Film Productions for At Swim, Two Boys, written by Mark Doherty. Further awards were €31,000 to Treasure Entertainment for One More Tune, written by Sarah Francis and Una Mullally and to be directed by Sarah Francis; €25,000 to Footnote Productions Ltd for Tainted, written by Declan Croghan; €25,000 to Snapshot Productions for Arrangements, written by Jeremy Massey and Johnny O'Reilly and to be directed by Johnny O'Reilly; €23,050 to John Kelleher Media for Plurabelle, written by Michael Kinirons; €20,000 to Tumbledown Media for Freddy Buttons, written by Fiona Dillon and to be directed by Aoife Doyle; €20,000 to Igloo Animations for Old Irish Tales, written by Richard Morss and Trevor Courtney and to be directed by Trevor Courtney and Julie Rush; €20,000 to David P Kelly Films for The Master, written by Anne-Marie Casey; €20,000 to Buckshee Films for What We Know About Men, written and to be directed by Peter Murphy and Rachael Moriarty; €20,000 to Underground Films for The Unreliable Narrator, written and to be directed by Terry McMahon; €19,200 to Workshed Films for Let The Wrong One In, written and to be directed by Conor McMahon; €18,500 to Treasure Entertainment Ltd. for Alima, written by Ciaran McGoldrick; €18,300 to Calico Pictures Ltd for The Night I got Shot by Santa, written by Ronan Blaney and to be directed by Michael Lennox; €18,000 to Red Tile for Broken Empire, written by Philip Busier; €18,000 to Park Films for Son, written and to be directed by Ivan Kavanagh; €17,950 to Deadpan Pictures for The Last Right, written and to be directed by Aoife Crehan; €17,500 to Samson Films for Witch Fever, written by Ron Hutchinson;

€16,000 to Samson Films for Freight, written by Gary Duggan; €16,000 to Mammoth Films for Choosing Sides, written and to be directed by Stephen Burke; €16,000 to Underground Films for Lupa, written by Andreas Hadjivassilou and to be directed by Alan Friel; €15,000 to Soilsiu Films for The Alexander Complex, written by David Rane and Neasa Ní Chianáin and to be directed by Neasa Ní Chianáin; €15,000 to Soilsiu Films for The Good Father, written and to be directed by Neasa Ní Chianáin; €15,000 to Fastnet Films for Silent Caller, written by Kate Dolan; €14,000 to Fastnet Films for Spanish Fly, written by Will Ferguson; €14,000 to Lovely Productions for Goliath, written by Garret Shanley and to be directed by Lorcan Finnegan; €12,900 to Danman Films for The High Five, written and to be directed by Stephen Bradley; €12,300 to Savage Productions for Faith, written and to be directed by Brendan Muldowney; €11,900 to Tailored Films for Hive Mind, written by Demian Fox and to be directed by Conor Mc Mahon; €11,750 to Venom Films for July Fly, written by Vanessa Ronan and to be directed by Stevie Russell; €11,600 to Tailored Films for Don't Come After Me, written by David Turpin and Antii Karumo and to be directed by AJ Annila; €10,000 to Element Pictures for The Gee Gees, written by Kevin Barry and to be directed by Billy O'Brien; €8,500 to Fastnet Films for Send in the Clowns, written by Shane O'Brien, James Walmsley and Demian Fox and to be directed by George Kane; €5,000 to Piranha Bar for Max and the Monster Trucks, written by Sam Morrison and to be directed by Alan Foley; €5,000 to Magpie 6 Media Entertainment Ltd for Bonobo JoJo, written and to be directed by Clifford Parrott; and €1,500 to Park Films for A Quiet Woman, written by Ciara Geraghty and Caroline Grace-Cassidy.

Distribution Funding

One film was offered Direct Distribution funding, with €15,000 going to Tailored Films for Brian O'Malley's The Lodgers.

Under Distribution Support, which provides funds to distributors of Irish film, three awards were given to Wildcard Distribution for Rob and Ronan Burke's Damo & Ivor: The Movie (€75,000), for Frank Berry's Michael Inside (€55,000), and for David Freyne's The Third Wave (Wildcard Distribution €20,000).

EDUCATION COLUMN

Words: Conor Murphy

My ten-year-old daughter was asked, along with the rest of her classmates, to bring in a DVD of her choice, as a treat before Christmas. We took a significant amount of time to slowly go through, disc by disc, our selection of films (probably too significant amount of time). Should she choose a movie that the class would know, like a *Despicable Me*, or should she go for a film that they might not have seen before, like *Kiki's Delivery Service*?

The debate was considered. The options were painstakingly reviewed, criteria decided, amended, discarded. In the end she went for *Wolf Children*. The thinking being that it would suit boys and girls equally, it was funny and sad, it had love and action, and it was different.

The teacher went for *Polar Express*.

There is nothing wrong with the teacher's choice, as a

treat before Christmas it fits the criteria perfectly. And my daughter wasn't too disappointed, she could see the logic behind the decision, but it did make me think.

What films should students study at Primary School level?

Primary School texts are different to Secondary School texts, which are different to those studied at Third Level. Primary Schools look closely at themes and characters, at the 'message' behind texts, at how texts help students deal with everyday social interactions, at everyday problems like bullying and deaths in the family.

With this in mind I have a few suggestions that Primary School teachers might want to consider when deciding on what films to use in their classrooms.

MY NEIGHBOUR TOTORO

A film suitable for all ages but, along with PONYO, perfect for the younger classes.

The film is a gentle look at children coming to terms with the fact that their mother is seriously ill in hospital. Satsuki (10 years old) and Mei (4) move to the country with their father, Tatsuo, in order to be closer to their mother's hospital. Although there is great excitement about the move we can sense, beneath the surface, that there is a strain on the family as the father tries to juggle work, fatherhood and visiting his wife in hospital.

The children must deal with their own problems, not least of all are those special sibling relationships. With their father so busy they spend a lot of their time on their own, exploring their new environment. This involves a meeting with Totoro, a giant, cuddly, forest spirit.

They also meet a catbus.

Hayao Miyazaki's film is an imagination-defibrillator for children (and adults) but it also deals with emotions in a realistic manner.

PONYO

A glorious retelling of the little mermaid story with an emphasis on environmental issues.

The story centres on a boy's love for a mermaid he finds in his bucket. Who doesn't want to see that?

I must admit that, having only seen the film as an adult, I find the film bizarre. Spirits, tadpole-like merchildren, shrinking and enlarging toys and one of the best 'car outrunning a tidal wave' sequences put to film, come at the audience in a surreal blur.

But the film wasn't made with an adult audience in mind.

Miyazaki purposefully ignored the adult audience and aimed firmly at the 4 to 7-year-old demographic. And it hits its mark.

This is a beautiful film with a simple love story at its centre, made all the better for the love being the purest love there is; a child's love.

PADDINGTON

named after a train station.

This is a perfect film for students in 1st or 2nd class. Well, really, this is a perfect film.

If you're looking for a message film where the message is so obvious as to be almost invisible than this is it.

A foreigner comes to England looking for a new home. Instead he is shunned by those that appear to be the most honourable, and he becomes hunted by the film's version of authority.

This is a story about immigration, about family, about love, about sacrifice, about hope and the search for a home. But it is also a great introduction to film language. Watch as the red of Paddington's coat slowly takes over. We see it appear in other's clothes and even in his new home. There are obvious moments, like the mural on the wall, and nice simple touches, like the Wes Anderson approach to character sketches.

INSIDE OUT/UP

could help in the study of these texts.

Both seem suitable for the 3rd/4th class bracket. Both use light and colour in an interesting and obvious manner. But it's their look at issues and how we have to work through them that is also appealing for the primary school environment.

Carefully constructed, intelligent use of film language allied with an entertaining array of characters result in films that are easily opened out for discussions around themes that might otherwise be difficult to bring to a classroom.

NIM'S ISLAND



Jennifer Flackett and Mark Levin's film is about a young girl, Nim (Abigail Breslin), left alone on an uncharted tropical island. Nim must fight off pirates, tourists and also find the time to save her, literally, lost-at-sea father (Gerard Butler, back when he was in films people wanted to see). To do this she contacts her hero Alex Rover, who is, in fact, author Alexander Rover, played by Jodie Foster.

With surprising subtlety, the film explores issues of masculinity and femininity, perseverance, creativity, determination, sacrifice and real bravery, as well as touching on environmental issues.

And it's great fun.

MY LIFE AS A COURGETTE (ZUCCHINI)



This film is most definitely for older classes as Claude Barras and Micahel Sinterniklaas delve into various childhood traumas in their gorgeously realised stop motion animation.

Set in an orphanage full of children suffering from various adult induced traumas the film follows 9-year-old Courgette as he comes to terms with being abandoned by his alcoholic mother. At the orphanage he finds children from similarly traumatic backgrounds. Although the film never shies away from the realities of their childhood it does so sensitively and always with an eye out for that triumphant moment where hope leads to love.

Although I highly recommend this film, I also think that you should watch it before teaching it and have a very carefully planned class ready for when the film finishes.

Powerful in all the right ways.

SONG OF THE SEA



What other film could I have finished on?

This is not only one of the most stunningly beautiful films but also one that contains all the positive aspects of those film mentioned above.

Ben (10) lives with his father and sister Saoirse (6) on an island off the Irish coast. Their mother disappeared after Saoirse's birth. (There is a running theme in the films around the loss of a mother, a fear all children suffer from) As the story progresses it soon becomes apparent that Saoirse has magical powers. They must find her voice to control these powers and, also, escape their grandmother (a touch of Hansel and Gretel here).

One of the strengths of the film, like *My Neighbour Totoro*, is the realistic depiction of sibling interaction at this age. Watching it with my own children I have to stop my self from pointing to the screen and saying, 'Look. Now. See.!' And then shaking my head in exasperation.

There are films that utilise folklore to such an extent that watching it becomes a deciphering exercise. Here Tomm Moore uses folklore in a similar way to Ghibli's *Spirited Away*; you don't have to understand the background tales on which the film is based in order to appreciate the magic they conjure. Indeed, the universal aspects of folklore and myth are what comes to the fore. If we know the references we enjoy the film in one way, if we don't then the exotic nature of the film becomes equally enjoyable.

But the film is more than simply a beautiful modernising a various traditional tropes and characters; it is about family, love and responsibility.

But the film is more than a simple set of themes; it is also the perfect launch pad for any number of subjects a teacher wants to move on to next.

Maths? Look at all of those Fibonacci swirls.

Science and nature? One of the main characters is a selkie and much of the film takes place on the beach.

History? Why not start history with a few folk stories?

Art? Maybe you could start by counting the different shades of green Cartoon Saloon have discovered in the making of the film.

Irish? Learn the Irish song repeated in the film

If ever there was a film that should be shown to every child in the country than this is it.

These are only a few of the films that my daughter would have loved to have experienced in school, that she would have loved to have shared. She might still, she has a few years left.

And I didn't even get to mention her favourite, *Wolf Children*. ✨



When in Rome....

Words: Gar O'Brien

Dispatches from the 11th Irish Film Festa

There's something delightfully surreal about walking into the main theatre of the Casa del Cinema in Rome.

A large, modern arthouse cinema, situated in the middle of one of Rome's largest public parks, Villa Borghese, the Casa del Cinema hosts the annual Irish Film Festa Roma, Italy's only dedicated Irish Film Festival. It's a wonderful venue and its surroundings provide a delightful backdrop for the sight of hundreds of Italian cineastes, eagerly queueing up to take in some of the best in new Irish Cinema.

Inside the building, and just before the main theatre, there is a large, open space where cinema-goers congregate before screenings. What makes it a slightly surreal occasion is that upon entering you find yourself under the watchful gaze of a formidable cross-section of Irish Cinema. Impressive black and white framed portraits of everyone from

Leia Doolan, Bob Quinn, Fionnula Flanagan and Jim Sheridan and onto Martin McCann, Caoilfhionn Dunne, Moe Dunford, and many more, cover the room's walls. It's hard not to feel that they are looking directly at you or, in the case of Terry McMahon's picture (which for some reason seems to be a photo of him in front of a photo of a boat), possibly staring directly into your soul.

As a spectacle it's at once slightly strange (and not just McMahon's eyes somehow trailing you around the room, like a demented Captain Birdseye) but also incredibly welcoming, conveying not just a knowledge or awareness of the Irish Film Industry at large, but a very real affection and appreciation for the people who make it all happen. That these are all past attendees of the festival speaks volumes of the festival and the genuine passion its organisers hold for Irish Cinema.

Now in its 11th year, Irish Film Festa Roma is a grassroots institution built entirely upon a deep love of Irish Cinema. The festival is the brainchild of Susanna Pellis, a film critic, lecturer in film at Rome's La Sapienza University, author of *A Brief History of Irish Cinema* and, according to her twitter bio, a former footballer turned boxer. That last part is unsurprising given the energy, enthusiasm and 'never-say-die' attitude required to run an event of this type, let alone one which aspires to be more than the random overview of new Irish Cinema that such festivals can often become. Indeed the curated films and events on display comprise a rich and detailed interrogation of the state of Irish Cinema, encompassing both industry-produced and more independent work from the entire island of Ireland. The latter is

something Pellis was keen to emphasise when asked about her inspiration for the festival.

"Irish Film Festa started in 2007, originating from my desire to present Irish films (and actors!) to Italy, where nobody knew anything about Irish cinema. The festival has grown year after year since then, and so has Irish cinema, which is now very creative, inspiring, and full of surprises: I am very pleased because I knew this was coming. I am very happy also with the festival's selection this year, the quality of the features and particularly of the shorts is very high. Moreover, a large part of selection comes from Northern Ireland, confirming and reinforcing the 'All Ireland' spirit of our festival."

The 'creative, inspiring and surprising' output of Irish Cinema over the last number of years was on full display at the festival which opened on Wednesday 21st March with John Butler's sublime *Handsome Devil*. This was preceded by a welcome address by the Irish Ambassador to Italy, S.E. Colm Ó Floinn to an audience which was made up more by interested Italian cinephiles, film students, and the general public than the usually high numbers of the Irish diaspora which often attend this sort of event. Over the course of the week it became more and more fascinating hearing the perspective of a wide cross-section of Italians of all ages on the current crop of Irish Cinema.

Thursday kicked off with a unique insight into The Short Film Sector of the Irish Film Industry with the Panel Making Shorts. Despite a city-wide transport strike the event was full of aspiring Italian filmmakers eager to glean all the insight they could from the panelists Derry O'Brien, Short Film Distributor and Managing director of Network Ireland Television, and Eibh Collins, Ireland's unofficial Short-film ambassador, Shorts programmer at the Galway Film Fleadh, manager of IndieCork, Irish Screen New York and LA, and has programmer of Irish shorts in places ranging from Malta to Luxembourg to everywhere in between.* O'Brien displayed all of his near three decades of experience in the sector with an engaging and informative overview of the do's and don'ts of short film distribution. With countless Oscar winners on his slate,

few are better placed to do so. Collins, who has seen virtually every Irish Short film over the last five years, gave her own advice on the avoidable pitfalls that she sees on an almost daily basis. (Pro tip: Stop opening with drone shots, we get it, Ireland has trees.) That this wide-ranging and detailed discussion was translated on the fly to the audience and panelists via headsets and a translator seemingly well versed in Irish idioms and swearing was doubly impressive. The discussion continued long after the panel with eager young Italian filmmakers chatting in the cinema bar with the panelists for an hour after the screening.



Up next the festival launched its new #IFFbooks section, dedicated to Irish literature, with a conversation with award-winning Irish writer Paul Lynch, author of three novels: *Red Sky in the Morning* (2013) *The Black Snow* (2014, winner in France of the Prix Libr'à Nous for the best foreign novel and the Prix des Lecteurs Privat) and *Grace* (2017, candidate for Walter Scott Prize). Lynch's style, has been compared to that of Seamus Heaney and Cormac McCarthy and received praise from established Irish writers such as Sebastian Barry and Colm Tóibín. At another festival such a literary event may have stood out like a sore thumb but it fit perfectly with the tone of the festival and bodes well for the future of the festival and potentially incorporating a wider array of Irish culture.

This was followed by a screening of Michael Fanning's *Rocky Ros Muc*. The doc, which one Best Irish Documentary at the Galway Film Fleadh in 2017 is for the most part told in the Irish Language and follows Sean Mannion, an Irish boxer who emigrated from Connemara to Boston in the 70s. The film was preceded by the short *Guard* by Jonathan Harden, the story of a young woman who learns to box from her ex-convict

father. (Both films no doubt a personal delight for our pugilist-turned-programmer, Pellis). Once again it was an energising experience to see a largely indigenous audience experiencing an incredibly personal Irish story (Both in terms of emigration and the Irish Language) and hear their perspective on the fascinating story.

On Friday short films took over for most of the day with both a live action and animation Short Film competition taking centre stage. The former showcased films such as *A Break in the Clouds* from Tristan Heanue, *Captors* by Chris Baugh, director of last year's fantastic *Bad Day for the Cut*, *The Date* by Selina Cartmell, the aforementioned *Guard*, *Gustav* by Denis Fitzpatrick and Ken Williams, *The Jar* by Carleton Rodgers, *Listen* by David Moody, *Lava Lisa* by Edward Cleary, *Marky's Bad Week* by Daniel Holmwood and Pádraig Conaty's *You're Not a Man at All*. Galway was well represented with work from two female directors, Amy Joyce-Hastings *QED* and Linda Breathnach's Patrick Bergin-lead *Native*.

Following this Ireland's continued excellence in animation was celebrated with a fine selection of short pieces. Opening proceedings was an out-of-competition screening of Tom Collins' adaption of Flann O'Brien's *An Béal Bocht / The Poor Mouth*. This was preceded by a fascinating and in-depth introduction by John McCourt, professor of English Literature at the University of Macerata, who alternated between English, Italian and Irish throughout. An impressive feat, especially as his obvious passion for the topic, and the warmth and humour with which he delivered it, translating effortlessly across all three languages. The festival's continued juxtaposition of contemporary film with literary interrogation continued to reap dividends and inform a unique aspect of Film Festa Roma. The rest of the programme enchanted the assembled audience with Steve Woods' *Coranna*, Dillon Brannick's *The Line*, *Departure* by Aoife Doyle and *Cartoon Saloon's Late Afternoon* by Louise Bagnall, which had pretty much the whole

audience in bits, though I couldn't be sure as I had something in my eye at the time. Ahem.

Closing out Friday was *Kissing Candice*, directed by Aoife McArdle and featuring a real breakout performance from Ann Skelly. Fresh off the heels of its European premiere at the Berlin International Film Festival in February 2018, having made its international bow in the Discovery section at Toronto last September. It's a complex, fever-dream of a film sure to divide audiences (in the best possible way) and marks the feature debut of director McArdle, best known for her celebrated commercials in the US. On a limited budget it manages to deliver some of the most stunning imagery from an Irish film in recent memory and its brave narrative choices mark McArdle as a real talent for the future. It's inclusion was a real coup for the festival and its surreal, almost magic-realist style provided a nice segue into Saturday's first screening, the now-classic *Into the West*. It was once again hugely informative to talk to the Roman audience on their perspectives on the film, especially as for many it was their first time seeing it. By large they were as impressed with the robust and at times grimly social-social realist aesthetic as they were with the more fantastical elements.



Saturday's next big screening was Stephen Burke's *Maze*. Following the screening there was a thought-provoking Q&A with Burke, producer Jane Doolan and actor Barry Ward. By this point nothing the audience came out with would have surprised me but the knowledge and genuine interest in the nuance of Northern Irish history and Politics was impressive and made for a unique experience. This was followed by Nora Twomey's gorgeous *The Breadwinner* which was preceded

once again by *Late Afternoon*, and yes something inexplicably found its way into my eye again.

The Festival closed on Sunday 25 March with another strong selection of work. Pat Collins singular *Song of Granite* introduced by celebrated Irish singer and long-term Italian resident Kay McCarthy. The film's focus on traditional singing was just the latest in the wide array of Irish culture celebrated through cinema at the festival. Similarly, *My Astonishing Self: Gabriel Byrne on George Bernard Shaw* was a canny inclusion as the RTE/BBC co-production hadn't been seen in Italy and again showcased a core element of Ireland's literary landscape in both Shaw and Byrne.

Before the festival closed with Pdraig Conaty's *No Part for Billy Burns* there was an award ceremony for the shorts competition which saw Conaty win for his very funny and surprisingly moving mockumentary *You're Not a Man at All*. Louise Bagnall took home the animation award for *Late Afternoon* (Which was mercifully not shown again as by this point I would just have made a show of myself.)

On to the closer then. *No Party for Billy Burns*, which premiered in the Galway Fleadh last summer and stars Kevin McGahern as the titular character. Billy lives in rural Cavan, but imagines himself as an old-school gunslinger from the Wild West. Shy and quiet, Billy lives a lonely life with only his grandfather and his own imagination for company. It alternates from humour to tragedy throughout as Billy remains largely on the periphery of events going on around him.

The film may seem, upon first reflection, a slightly odd choice to close the festival but is in many ways a perfect encapsulation of a core aspect of modern Ireland, with its focus on rural isolation. It's also a wonderful example of the kind of grassroots cinema which plays a vital role in reflecting rural communities on screen, something that's still all too rare in contemporary Irish cinema. The film took some six years to complete, costing somewhere between €7,000–8,000, and is clearly a deeply personal passion project on

the part of the filmmakers. It was shot in their hometown of Cavan, and maintains a fierce sense of authenticity throughout, capturing both the humour and the paralysing isolation of many rural communities. Talking before the screening, director Conaty mentioned how the film had played for three weeks in the Odeon in Cavan with local audiences deeply moved to see their lives reflected on screen, arguably for the very first time. This kind of indigenous, independent cinema experience cannot be underestimated, either in the importance of showing lives we can connect with on screen or in showing an authentic portrayal of an underrepresented community. In this sense the film proved to be a clever closer and another canny move for a festival which aims to not just show a selection of Irish films but to really celebrate Ireland and its people through its cinema.

It was somewhat surreal then, having spent some 90 minutes in Cavan Town, to leave the screening (Again under the watchful eyes of Lelia, Fionnula, Bob et al.) and find ourselves once back in the surroundings of Villa Borghese in Rome.

Reflecting on a festival experience that showed a mad diversity of not just Irish Cinema but an astonishing array of Irish life, society and culture on screen one can't help but be impressed. Pellis and her team have not only brought a consistently potent selection of Irish films, filmmakers, actors, and industry professionals to Rome over the years but have developed and cultivated a smart, engaged and loyal Italian audience for Irish Cinema in the heart of Rome. It's a remarkable achievement and one which helps remind us of the Trojan work being done by the many Irish film festivals around the world, to showcase Irish Cinema and develop a passion for our cinematic output in new audiences.

More of this.

* Full disclosure, this correspondent is in a relationship with Ms. Collins and is more than likely related to O'Brien because, well, Ireland.





Stone Walls Do Not A Prison Make

**Talking Michael Inside with
writer/director Frank Berry**

Words: Niall Murphy



Michael Inside is the story of Michael McCrea, an impressionable 18-year-old living with his grandfather Francis in a Dublin housing estate, who gets caught holding a bag of drugs for his friend's older brother and is sentenced to three months in prison.

The film is the third feature from Dublin director Frank Berry, following the critically acclaimed *Ballymun Lullaby* and *I Used to Live Here*. Here he works again with star on the rise Dafhyd Flynn who starred alongside fellow rising-star Jordanne Jones in his sophomore film.

Fresh from winning the IFTA for best film earlier this year we sat down with Berry to talk about the film.

Cin É: You managed to walk a fine line with *Michael Inside* in that it manages to impart a message without ever feeling preachy. There's almost a lightness to it.

Frank Berry: Similar to *I Used to Live Here* as well, the making of the film, and they are both very different films, but we did have a lot of fun making both films. The subject matter doesn't weigh down the experience of actually shooting the films. You still get a bunch of people together and you have something that you feel passionate about, that you'd like to make a film about and you share that with the people that you are working with and together you kind of bond, and everything that goes with that. There's fun and there's serious moments, but it's an experience that you share together. It's a job that you are

all working to achieve the same thing. Dafhyd, myself, Moe, Lalor, the cast, Tom Comerford [DoP], Louise [Stanton, costume designer], Niall [Owens, first AD], and the producers as well, we all got on really well, and with that it's not all serious.

When we spoke to Moe Dunford for the January issue he talked about how the fact that you were all in one place after shooting, that you essentially decamped to Cork, led to an almost familial feel to the production.

That is very true for the two weeks in Cork, because we were in a prison and you do start to feel that, the claustrophobic feel. Then you could go back to the hotel and debrief and talk a little about the film, and have a drink. That was quite important. It did help the crew and the cast. It helped us all. I think with the experience of filming in a prison it was quite important to do that.

It must have been difficult for yourself and Tom to work in the confined space of the prison and to find shots that work.

One of the things that we decided early on, and that was quite important to me, and Tom would very much agree with this, was that we wanted to shoot everything on location, and not to recreate a bigger cell as you may see in some films. That we wanted to shoot in the actual cells. We wanted the film to really express real experiences. When Michael is walking through the corridor and he

arrives at his cell and walks into the cell, that that is exactly the experience. And then we used sound effects as you could never close the door of the cell with the crew there. So we used sound effects to express that sense of enclosure, of claustrophobia. What I tries to do was keep Dafhyd away from the real locations as much as I could, so that when he was walking through a corridor...and a number of times throughout the film that was the first time that he'd ever been there. I used that technique a couple of times. It's nothing new and it's obviously very successful for a lot of filmmakers. That idea of surprise. That you'd get a reaction from the actor. Dafhyd fully understood this. He was really on-board with it. In fact I told him that I wasn't going to give him the script, I was only going to give him the scenes on the morning. There were scripts laying around. The ADs were very good. They would block out some scenes. They were really on the ball about that. But Dafhyd could have picked up a script and read the whole thing, but he didn't. He took the whole thing very seriously and said 'no, this is the process. I'm not going to cheat'. And even if he did read the script he would have told me. It was an approach that I wanted to take, but it wasn't a hard and fast rule where I said 'you must not read the script'. Instead I said 'this is what I would like us to do' and he respected that.

You appear to have a great relationship with Dafhyd.

I do. I met him when he was 12. I thought he was 13, but he reminded me that he was 12. It was in Killinarden when we were working on I Used to Live Here and he came along to one of the workshops that we were shooting out on the street. We were doing workshops in the community centre, and after a while, after a few months I said 'let's see what these look like outside'. So with the youth workers we went outside and started shooting some scenes on the street. And in the background was Dafhyd. I just asked the youth worker about him and was told that he was a bit shy, but a lovely lad. So I started taking to him and as soon as we started workshoping I could see his talent for performing subtly and for expressing emotions. He reminded me of myself as a teenager. Even though we are very different backgrounds, well not very different, but we are from different backgrounds. There was something about him that reminded me of my teenage years. He was just absorbing things and he spoke in a very funny, very

honest and very light way, but sometimes he would say things that would resonate with me. I thought that by working with him we could explore teenage years. That's how he caught my eye.

The idea for Michael Inside, the idea was that the main character in the film would be an extra in a more traditional film about crime. I wasn't interested in the world of gangster activities for territories or in buying and selling drugs. I was more interested in the life of a young person living in a disadvantaged community who is affected by the ripple effect of that activity. About somebody who may have left school early and who was just normal, r even just unlucky that when he's asked to hold drugs that he gets caught. Someone who is naive and gets caught up and involved in other people's activities. The aim was to make a purposeful film about real-life circumstances. That was the motivation. To put something up on the screen that doesn't necessarily feel too much like a genre, that it feels more like a film that takes a realistic look at the world that we are in, in a naturalistic way.

And when did you get the idea for this story?

The idea came to me when I was making I Used to Live Here. I spent a lot of time sitting down with young people in Killinarden and seeing the world from their point of view. And the idea came to me that this is a great subject for the film, the lives of the young people that I am sitting around. Not the lives of the guys driving around in the big cars, but actually these younger people who I felt were vulnerable. So I got this idea to make a film about this subject and I brought it to the Irish Prison Service. I said to them that I'd like to make a film about somebody who is convicted of a crime and becomes part of the prison population. They sent me to Pathways, which is the prison educational part of the CDETB [City of Dublin Education and Training Board], the education body. I went there and that's were I researched the film.

You spent a while working with them then.

18 months. It started off being very very casual and I would go in and just start to get to know the former





prisoners. They would have breakfast cooked for them first thing on a Monday morning, and I'd go in every Monday morning to eat with them and chat, and then talk about this film. That evolved into me facilitating discussions with groups of former prisoners about the idea of making a film. I started those conversations by saying that I would like to make the film, not necessarily about criminal activity, but rather the effects of criminal activity. And I said that normally you would have the more familiar characters in a drama like this. They'd be the nucleus of criminal activity, the dynamic characters would be at the centre of this criminal activity. What I'd like to do is take the camera and move it over here and tell the story of that guy. The one who is generally in the background and lets look at how this all affects him. Perhaps it can be something like he got caught holding a bag of drugs. And they resonated with that so enthusiastically. They said that either that was their story or the story of someone that they knew. And also they said that there was a moment in their lives that they could point to where things changed for them. Either they started taking drugs or they started getting involved in criminal activity, but they didn't really know what they were doing. They were making decisions, but that they didn't feel like decisions, if that makes sense. They were in a culture where lots of people would do a lot of different things. I said to the former prisoners 'what if we put that up on screen and we actually see how easy that is when you are living in this moment for something like that to happen? And then all of a sudden you are on a different pathway in your life and it has taken a different direction.' They responded really well to that.

It's the very definition of the ripple effect. One act changes everything.

In that way it has a connection to *I Used to Live Here*. It had the ripple effect of a suicide cluster. We don't focus on any type of primary event, but instead we focus on the drama

in how it affects other people, which I think is important.

How then do you go about reflecting something real?

The prison service were really wonderful and helpful, and are keen to help people make artistic work about the penal system in Ireland. When I went to visit Cork prison, and they were bringing me through, we stopped at the committal area, the place where Michael is searched. That's the first point at which he crosses the threshold into prison. I said to the prison guard who was giving us the tour 'how would he be now? What are the guys like when they get to this stage? Are they all bravado because they feel that they must survive and be tough or what?' And he said to me 'sometimes they just say 'I'm scared' and I thought to myself that's kind of a no-no to tell an audience how the character is feeling. But I felt in this context it works very well, because he is saying that he is scared but he's also asking for help. He's saying that 'I need you to know that I'm worried'. For me, the whole way through the process, it was about asking questions and trying to find the realism. And sometimes the realism is the opposite to what you'd think and it's lovely when that happens. Sometimes it expresses truth. I think sometimes when creatively you go the other way to what you would expect then it can feel more real. Even though what you expect originally you go this is obviously real, but if you go the other way it can feel more real. It mimics life because life is surprising and you go 'oh okay' and it actually recreates the feeling of our realistic experiences which is that we are learning and being surprised by things all of the time. If you are developing a screenplay and everything is exactly as how you would think it would be then it just doesn't seem that interesting. In actual fact it feels kind of unoriginal, whereas if you challenge it and think about it and then through research or creativity go the other direction then it can very often be better. It can feel more like life.



Michael as a character internalises a lot of his emotions and is very quiet, and for him to break his silence in that moment is an insight into his mind and into his genuine fear. He becomes more human in that moment.

It is him trying. I think that one of the aims of the film is to show how easily Michael's path changes. I think that the film does show that idea of 'what would it be like if that was me?' or 'how would I cope if that was me'. Nothing too dramatic happens in the film that changes Michael's path. He gets a pack of drugs, puts it in his pocket, takes it home, and puts it in a wardrobe. And that's it. Then his life is irredeemably altered.

And not just his life, but also that of his grandfather.

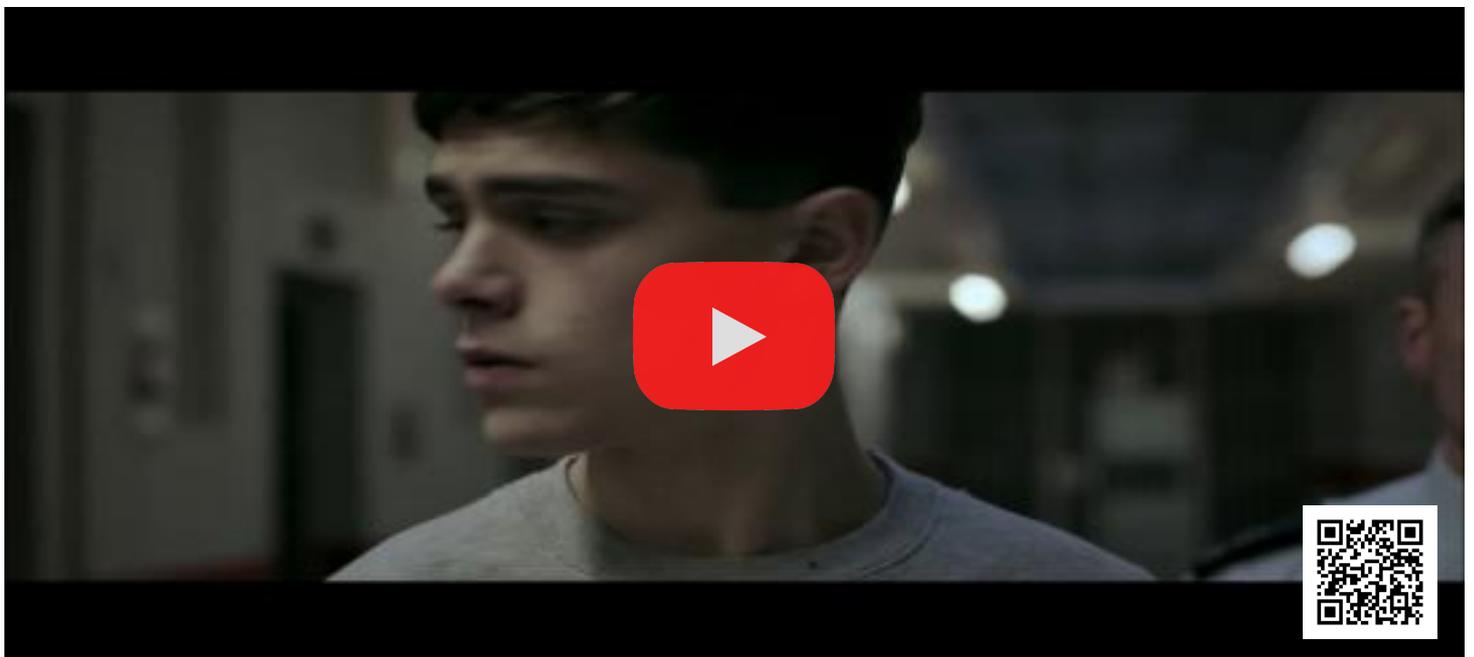
Lalor was amazing. He was absolutely wonderful to work with. He's an actor that I've admired for many years and I had him in mind. I just contacted him and asked him if he'd do it and he said yes. He brought so much to the film. He was always asking questions. Always digging. Always challenging. In a very collaborative, very nice way. And at the end of the film I said to him 'you've made it better by all of that'. It was a lovely working relationship and I really can't wait to work with him again. I really can't. And he's a complete gentleman too.

Because Lalor brings a Northern accent in it allows you to imagine his own backstory. Perhaps he was in jail, perhaps he was involved in the troubles, perhaps he had to escape down from the North. And with Michael's father in jail already, perhaps there was never any chance for Michael,

The part in his background that we felt was important to put across was that he gave up his own addiction, which was to alcohol, 19 years ago when Michael was expected. So Michael was a fresh start for him, and that was very important to him. It makes Michael's decline that much more difficult to take, because he held out such hope for Michael.

He obviously felt that he failed his own son and that his grandson was a chance for redemption.

Yes. Exactly as you said. There's a point when a teenager just distances themselves from their family and it's difficult for parents or grandparents to reach them and it's a terrible helpless feeling. People in the neighbourhood know more about this young person that you love dearly and you try to fight that all of the time. So that was where the Francis character was coming from. He was trying to help him, and to do everything that he could to figure it out how to reach him. ✨



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Maintaining Illusions with a Marvellous Grace: The Substantial Style of Wes Anderson

Words: Stacy Grouden

March 30th marked the release of the ninth feature film written and directed by quirky formalist Wes Anderson, *Isle of Dogs*. Firstly, take a second to read that title out loud to yourself, if you have not done so before. It's a cute, gentle surprise, a happy homophone bursting forth from unassuming, stoic syntax. It's not unfair to read this joke as a typical expression of the relationship between form and content in Anderson's oeuvre overall – a firm, formal structure buttressing something softer and more emotionally revealing.

On a visual level, it's easy to recognise an Anderson film for its rigidly-symmetrical shot style, elaborately-detailed *mise en scène*, expository captions and title cards, and complementary colour-coded set design. The filmmaker has been much celebrated – and frequently parodied – for this storybook aesthetic, though he is still accused by his detractors of favouring style over substance.

Take a closer look at any of Anderson's films, though, and it becomes clear that, aside from being merely aesthetically pleasing, these formal devices actually highlight the central themes and unspoken ideas within his work, as well as revealing Anderson's own interests and influences.

Rather than make any claim to realism, Wes Anderson's films announce their own artificiality from the outset through narrative framing devices that immediately signal to the audience that we are watching a highly-stylised, highly-constructed story. Red velvet curtains are drawn at the beginning of *Rushmore*, as well as *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou*, to signal the commencement of a theatrical narrative; while *The Royal Tenenbaums*, *Fantastic Mr. Fox*, and *The Grand Budapest Hotel* are each presented as literal literary novels.



Not dissimilarly, the protagonists and locations are frequently established through artwork. Rushmore opens on a painting of the Blume family, in arguably happier times; similarly, Richie Tenenbaum's wall of portraits of his sister Margot sets up their close relationship in *The Royal Tenenbaums*. The opening shot of *Moonrise Kingdom* is a child-like painting of the Bishop house, while the film closes with an image of the titular cove sought out by its protagonists, Sam and Suzy, when they run away together.



Anderson's artistic presentation of his texts' artificiality places the audience at a remove from the events of the film, compelling us to engage with the formal elements as much as the characters and themes. But if we look beyond the mere formal reasons for this, it's notable how many of Anderson's characters create novels, plays, films, or paintings diegetically (or, within the fictional world

of the film) in addition to Anderson's narratives being presented extra-diegetically (or, to the film's audience) as novels, plays, films, or paintings. It's clear that making sense of the world through art is an imperative common to Anderson's characters and Anderson himself.

To make sense of his own work, Anderson frequently leaves us in the hands – or rather, the voice – of a narrator. This narrator is usually a complete outsider to the story, such as the disembodied voice of Alec Baldwin recounting the events of *The Royal Tenenbaums*, or the unnamed author of *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, who is merely a conduit for Zero Moustafa's story, 30 years later. While the use of a narrator is a formal quirk which can allow for quick, extra-diegetic exposition, using this kind of outsider as the narrator also allows the audience to read his presentation of events as more objective and reliable than if it had been recounted by a character involved in the story itself. Just as Anderson distances us from the events of the story from the outset by drawing attention to its status as a work of fiction, so, too does the narrator distance us from the characters in this way.

It's noteworthy that even when the narrator does appear in the film, his function remains the same. He's there to set the scene and catch us up, not to pass judgement or get emotionally involved. Bob Balaban appears as the narrator in *Moonrise Kingdom*, speaking directly to the audience about the geography of New Penzance, the island on which the film takes place. However, unlike the other previously-mentioned narrators, this character turns up in the film for one scene. As the parents and guardians of the two runaway sweethearts, Sam and Suzy, clash on the pier in New Penzance over their kids' whereabouts, he appears from out of nowhere to advise that, as Sam's cartography tutor, he has a hunch as to where they may be headed.

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It's interesting that the other characters in this scene merely absorb this information, and do not engage the narrator in conversation or any kind of dialogue. They are just as in thrall to him as the audience of *Moonrise Kingdom*. This moment also provides some neat thematic commentary: while the pre-teen Sam and Suzy know

exactly where they're going – and are miles ahead of everyone else in the film, in every sense – the adults are decidedly at a loss as to what to do before the arrival of Balaban's character.

This is a common thread that can be traced through Anderson's films; their central characters typically suffer from a lack of direction or guidance. From Max Fischer in *Rushmore*; to the Royal Tenenbaums, to give them their full family name; to the three Whitman brothers in *The Darjeeling Limited*, there is a recurring sense of dislocation and disorientation, of arriving at a particular point in your life and being unable to traverse it, physically or mentally.

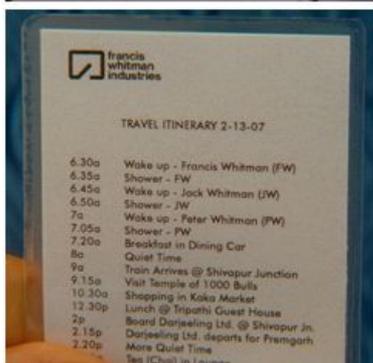
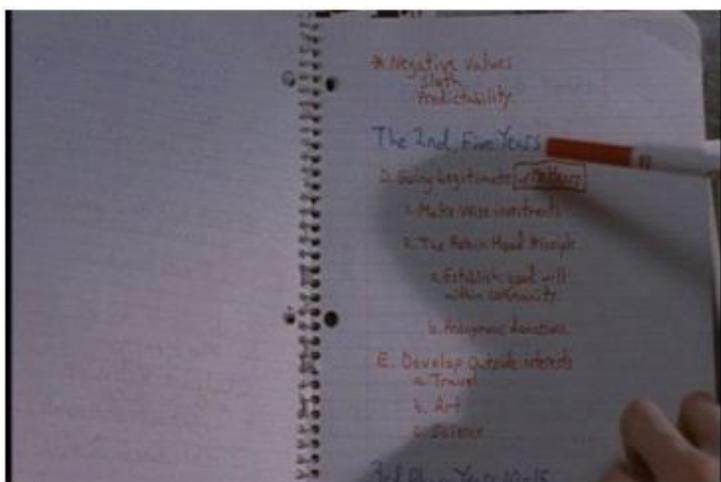
Often, this lack of direction, or search for meaning, is linked to the absence of a parent or mentor. While this theme can be observed directly in the storyline and dialogue of almost every one of Anderson's films, we can also see the ghosts of his own cinematic influences haunting the formal structure of his films, just as his characters' lives are shaped by a missing mother (*Rushmore*); father (*The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou*); or both (*The Grand Budapest Hotel*; *The Darjeeling Limited*; *Moonrise Kingdom*).

Going beyond the nods to cult crime thrillers like *Mean Streets*, *Heat* and *Witness* in his early work, Anderson draws on a range of influences in structuring his films. Photographer Jacques-Henri Lartigue, who worked with filmmakers such as Robert Bresson, François Truffaut and Federico Fellini, directly inspired a number of shots from *Rushmore*. The work of oceanographer and documentarian Jacques Cousteau, and the structure and format of his documentaries, clearly informs the ancillary films-within-a-film in *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou*, while *The Grand Budapest Hotel* notably borrows its mannered humour and old-world nostalgia from renowned German director, Ernst Lubitsch. Anderson has also spoken about the influence of the legendary Indian director Satyajit Ray on his work. While this is most apparent in *The Darjeeling Limited*, a film set in India, shot in a widescreen format, with a noticeably more muted palette than his usual fare, a 2008 interview with *The Statesman* reveals that Anderson adopted other qualities of Ray's work into his own:

'His films (which were usually adapted by him from books) feel like novels to me. My favourites are the Calcutta trilogy [...] which are very adventurous and inventive stylistically, and 'Days and Nights in the Forest' ('Aranyer Din Ratri'), which I relate to the kind of movies and books that completely captured my attention when I was a teenager, with soulful troublemakers as heroes.' Anderson's adoption of these formal structures and genre tropes may function as a sort of meta-framing, a way in which he borrows from his own mentors and influences to guide his own narratives and characters. Indeed, we see in *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou*, *Moonrise Kingdom* and *The Grand Budapest Hotel* that, by adopting the habits and skills of their respective mentors, Steve, Sam and Zero respectively attain a certain level of professional competency and success. Though, even adhering to these guidelines is not enough to achieve personal or emotional

fulfilment, something each character struggles with at some point in their own narrative.

Of course, within each of his films, Anderson's characters have their own strategies for coping without a mentor or parental figure – invariably, they make plans. Intricate, illustrated plans. They might schedule on a day-to-day basis, as Francis does in *The Darjeeling Limited*; or try and plan for the next 75 years, as Dignan does in *Bottle Rocket*. For all the maps, lists and itineraries we see on screen across his films, we can at least get the sense that Anderson's characters are really, truly trying to figure things out. But simply having a plan and instructions in place doesn't mean they will be observed. As Francis discovers in *The Darjeeling Limited*, when attempting to spontaneously destroy the itinerary for trip to India that has been painstakingly prepared, and then laminated, by his assistant Brendan, it's best not to set anything in stone – or plastic – in a Wes Anderson film.

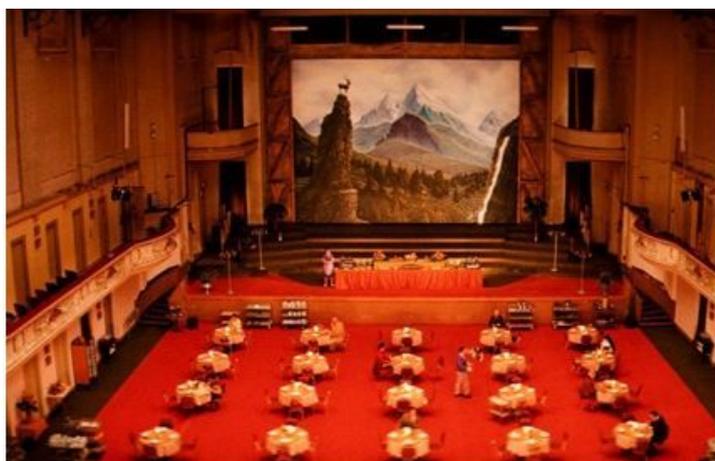


It's just as well for Anderson's characters that their surroundings reveal as much about them as their (thwarted or misdirected) actions. His physical locations are often presented in a highly-stylised way, though rarely just for appearances' sake. When

first presenting Steve Zissou's ship, the *Belafonte*, in *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou*, and the Bishop house in the opening scene of *Moonrise Kingdom*, Anderson divides each space into many small components or compartments, before his camera slowly pans through each location, allowing us to process the space and all its relevant details (sometimes highlighted by an on-screen caption, or by a narrator).



While this presentation of the space ties in with the living dollhouse aesthetic that complements Anderson's presentation of his characters as characters, as figures acting in a staged, constructed narrative, it can also be extremely effective in communicating the film's theme to the audience. The framing of the two Bishop spouses in separate doorframes in separate rooms neatly highlights their estrangement, both physical and emotional, from each other; an idea compounded later on when they are seen lying next to each other in separate beds, in mismatched bedclothes. Similarly, the author-narrator of *The Grand Budapest Hotel* astutely notes in tandem with a grand overhead shot of the sparsely-populated dining hall that the guests of the titular hotel, during his time there in the 1960s, were 'without exception, solitary.'



Given his fondness for this kind of itemised, knolling presentation, Anderson's use of trains, cable cars, and funiculars as modes of transportation, as featured in *The Grand Budapest Hotel* and *The Darjeeling Limited*, is a natural and inspired choice. Train carriages are, of course, compartmentalised and allow for the filmmaker to include a lot of detail in a compact, Polly Pocket-style space, in keeping with his visual style. To take it further, a carriage on rails or cables represents a level of formal control, or at least, a desire for it – what better way for characters to stay on track than by placing them on tracks? But even narratively, that control is lost on the two occasions the train is stopped in *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, with violent, even fatal results; as well as in *The Darjeeling Limited* when the Whitman brothers wake to discover that overnight, the titular train 'got lost'. Francis excitedly responds to the conductor's comment that 'we haven't located ourselves yet' as a metaphor for the brothers' spiritual journey across India; a declaration that actually works to diagnose a pretty high proportion of Anderson's characters.



The blue shirts and red caps worn by Team Zissou in *The Life Aquatic* fulfil this same function of connecting people; but also show when this connection has been broken. Eleanor, Steve's estranged wife, is notably not wearing any component of this uniform at the beginning of the film – there's not a red cap or speedo in sight in her wardrobe. Instead, she's clad in white gowns, suits, and tunics. These outfits are directly comparable to the fashions of her ex-husband, and Steve's self-proclaimed 'nemesis,' Alistair Hennessey. However, after coming to Steve's aid after the *Belafonte* is hijacked by pirates, and she gradually starts to reconnect with him, her outfits slowly begin to incorporate more of the colour and structure of Team Zissou's uniform. Eleanor donning a blue shirt in the film's end-credit sequence suggests a reconnection with her husband and their team.

Another way in which the assembled cast in any given Wes Anderson film attempt to 'locate' themselves is through their distinct, identifiable costumes, worn as you would a uniform to signal their place and role in the world. Characters often communicate more through their choice of clothing than they may directly express in words. This can be as straightforward as the hats worn by Zero in *The Grand Budapest Hotel* and Sam at the end of *Moonrise Kingdom*, declaring their job titles and affiliations ('Lobby Boy' and 'Island Police', respectively) or more subtle, as in *The Royal Tenenbaums* and *The Life Aquatic* with Steve Zissou.



Clothing is frequently used to connect characters in *Tenenbaums*, perhaps most obviously in the case of Chas Tenenbaum, who wears the same style of red-and-white tracksuit as his sons, Ari and Uzi. The film goes further in making these connections with regards to adoptive siblings Richie and Margot. The striped headbands worn by Richie, a former tennis champion, often complement the patterns in his sister Margot's tennis dresses, subtly hinting at the complicated connection between the two of them that must be kept hidden. That flashbacks reveal the siblings' wardrobe has remained largely the same since childhood makes for a funny visual gag, but also speaks to a long-lasting, and developmentally-arrested, obsession. Both seek to obscure this through other accessories: Margot is frequently cloaked in a huge fur coat, while Richie hides behind his large sunglasses, long hair and full beard.



In addition to using uniforms and costuming in this way, Anderson is well-versed in utilising items and props to make similar thematic points, most notably in *The Darjeeling Limited*. The three Whitman brothers have a lot of baggage. Jack Whitman discovers part of the way through their trip that his ex-girlfriend hid a bottle of her perfume inside his suitcase during their last meeting – baggage inside baggage, a fragrant Russian doll of lingering emotions. Similarly the eldest brother, Peter, has assumed ownership of a number of his late father's personal belongings, including his razor and a pair of prescription sunglasses, giving him not only the look, but the outlook, of his late father. That the prescription is unsuitable for him, and gives him headaches, speaks to the damage it's doing him to retain this view.



But the film specifically draws our attention to the brothers' literal baggage: a ten-piece Louis Vuitton luggage set which had belonged to their father and has since been divided up among the three brothers. The bags are visually striking – monogrammed with the senior Whitman's initials and decorated with a playful animal print – and the bags could be dismissed as stylish set-dressing at best, product placement at worst. However, the luggage fulfils a larger narrative purpose. A flashback to the day of their father's funeral shows the removal of a 'missing' bag from the boot of his vintage car, symbolic of a legacy of issues being passed on to them. The three haul the suitcases around India, under increasingly trying conditions, but in order to catch their train home at the end, the brothers must literally leave their baggage behind them. While somewhat on the nose, it makes for a satisfying conclusion, revealing

how the trip has allowed the brothers to cast off the lingering bitterness and neuroses developed since their father's death.

Of all of Anderson's beautiful and functional props, there's one from *The Grand Budapest Hotel* that may, most neatly, summarise his ideological project. When a wrongly-imprisoned M. Gustave requires hammers, chisels, and other implements to break out of prison, Agatha, a local baker, conceals the tools inside an assortment of delicate-looking pastries. A guard unwraps the box of pastries upon its arrival at the prison, but cannot bear to destroy them in the name of checking for contraband, so they enter undetected and unscathed.

This box of pastries is an apt metaphor for the work of Wes Anderson. When first unwrapped, the audience sees something meticulously designed and lavishly decorated, but the power of what is concealed beneath these perfectly-arranged, deceptively-deep layers may only be discovered by those willing to look beneath the surface.



Isle of Dogs is out now in selected cinemas nationwide. You may even be lucky enough to catch it at one of the special dog-friendly screenings in Dublin's Light House Cinema and Galway's Pálás. ✨





Still it's not the
end of the
world...

Words: Darren Mooney

Mankind has always had a preoccupation with the end of the world.

The tradition dates back to at least Babylonian times, with The Epic of Gilgamesh suggesting a divine reckoning for mankind. The Hebrew and Christian Bibles are populated by imagery of the end of the world. Indeed, several creation myths posit that the world has already been destroyed several times over, a work in progress wiped clean so that new foundations might be installed. Naturally, cinema has reflected this recurring obsession, revelling in the opportunity to depict the apocalypse on screen and with sound. The Danish film *Verdens Undergang* might be the first cinematic depiction of the end of the world, released in 1916, but there were a handful of examples into the thirties; *La Fin du monde*, *Things to Come* and *Deluge*.

This number increased significantly in the fifties and beyond, whether reflecting advances in filmmaking technology to more convincingly depict the end of the world on screen or driven by cultural concerns about the power unleashed by the atomic bomb. Modern audiences can point to any number of films depicting either the lead into or the aftermath of the end of the world; *Doctor Strangelove*, *Planet of the Apes*, *Logan's Run*. The nineties even had duelling apocalyptic movies; *Deep Impact* and *Armageddon* both threatening mankind with the same extinction-level event.



As such, it is hard to tell whether mankind is any more or any less obsessed with the end of the world than they have been at any other point in history; after all, recency bias often leads audiences to assume that they are living through defining eras in certain genres and certain media. However, there has been an interesting shift in the kind of apocalyptic stories that modern audiences are watching. There are still

familiar end of the world stories like *Mad Max: Fury Road* or *The Maze Runner* or *A Quiet Place*. However, there is an interesting subset emerging from within the genre.

On of the more interesting aspects of contemporary Irish cinema has been in watching Irish production embrace contemporary genre sensibilities in innovative and exciting ways. Irish cinema has performed phenomenally over the past decade, producing both prestige hits like *Room* and crowd pleasers like *Sing Street*. However, recently, certain strands of Irish filmmaking have shifted into genre storytelling in a manner that seems very much in conversation with international innovations and cultural shifts.



Black '47 is a revisionist western film set against the backdrop of the Irish Famine. However, it very much exists in the context of a broader contemporary approach to the western genre. In particular, it uses the genre to comment upon colonialism and historical injustice, which is very much in the style of modern westerns like *Django Unchained*, *Hostiles* or *The Hateful Eight*. More than that, the film makes a point to lean heavily on horror movie tropes to underscore the monstrous brutality of its frontier setting, similar to the tone of *The Revenant* or *Bone Tomahawk*.



The Cured does something very similar. On the surface, writer and director David Freyne has fashioned a

familiar zombie narrative. In keeping with the tradition that George A. Romero established in *The Night of the Living Dead* and continued in *Dawn of the Dead*, the feature uses its zombie outbreak as a vehicle for pointed social commentary. As with modern zombie movies like *Resident Evil*, [rec] or *28 Days Later...*, the film frames its zombie apocalypse in pseudo-scientific terms with reference to a viral infection rather than any underlying supernatural cause.



However, *The Cured* also does something that radical with its zombie apocalypse, in that it suggests a thwarted apocalypse. It unfolds in a world that didn't end on the outbreak of its viral zombie infection, known as "the Maze" virus. Somehow, civilisation endured. The United Nations intervened, suggesting that political systems are still operating. Ireland was apparently most affected by this outbreak, but even it still has a functioning class system and operating law enforcement apparatus. Not only have many of the infectees been cured, but there is also a system in place to ensure that they have to check in with military personnel to assess their reintegration into society.

Of course, this is arguably just an extension of the film's central metaphor. *The Cured* treats its zombie apocalypse as an allegory. In some ways, the film is a companion piece to *Michael Inside*, Frank Berry's rich social commentary being released in the same month. *Michael Inside* is the story of a young man who finds himself trapped inside the Irish prison system. *The Cured* feels like a metaphor for what happens to prisoners released from custody; the demands that society imposes on them while refusing to reintegrate them. Like prisoners released from custody, the eponymous reformed zombies find themselves cut off from the families and victimised by the system. In fact, the holding facility that houses the infected is shot and

presented very much like a prison.



The Truth Commissioner

The Cured also plays its zombie metaphor as a broader political allegory with particular resonance to Ireland. It is a story about reconciliation after a horrific period of social turmoil. It is about the struggle to integrate people who have committed horrific acts during a time when civil society broke down. It resonates with all manner of events from recent history; the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, the road to reconciliation in Rwanda after the genocide, the delicate balance to be struck between Serbia and Kosovo. In Ireland, these challenges manifest themselves in relation to the Troubles, an idea that has been explored in earnest in films like *The Truth Commissioner*. How does it feel to live near people responsible for the death of a friend or a relative, to interact with individuals who have committed horrific acts in living memory?



MAZE

The Cured seems to bridge these two central metaphors in the name of the virus responsible for the crisis. "The Maze Virus" evokes the name of the infamous prison outside of Belfast during the Troubles, where the British government would incarcerate suspected Republican terrorists. This connection is reinforced by David Freyne through the casting of Tom Vaughan-Lawlor in *The Cured*. Vaughan-Lawlor plays Conor, a reformed zombie who embarks upon a campaign of political agitation (nominally) to draw attention to the experience of these individuals rehabilitated and released. Vaughan-Lawlor had previously appeared in the film *Maze*, playing a prisoner who masterminds a daring escape from captivity in that iconic institution.



The Cured

In order for these central metaphors to work, *The Cured* needs to unfold after an apocalyptic event and within a recognisable political framework. This explains why *The Cured* unfolds against the backdrop an apocalyptic event that didn't destroy civilisation as the audience recognises it. However, *The Cured* belongs to a recent and popular subgenre of apocalyptic fiction, one that blurs the traditional line between before and after the end of the world. Increasingly popular culture explores the end of the world as a perpetual and on-going process.



Terminator 2: Judgment Day

Historically, apocalyptic narratives have relied upon a clear delineation between stories about an apocalypse and stories that unfold in the wake of an apocalypse. Films like *Terminator 2*, *The End of the World* and *Independence Day* all treat the end of the world as a cataclysmic event towards which the characters are hurdling. Films like *The Book of Eli*, *Waterworld* and *Children of Men* all treat the end of the world as something that happened. Recently, there has been an interesting shift in emphasis, a tendency to portray the apocalypse as something that is constantly happening; not as a single catastrophic event, but as a slow crumbling of recognisable structures.



Independence Day

There are plenty of examples. The television series *The Leftovers* repeatedly suggests that its characters have effectively lived through the end of the world, but live in a state of perpetual denial of that fact. The villainous Guilty Remnant exist to remind the characters that the world has ended and that business cannot continue as usual. The film *Logan* hints the complete breakdown of governance in a version of the United States that still has working (and recognisable) casinos and petrol stations. *Interstellar* unfolds in a world where mankind has clawed itself back from the abyss of a horrific global war to the point that there are taxes and schools and baseball games, but is still slowly suffocating in the dust. The recent *Planet of the Apes* trilogy depicts the slow and gradual decline of the human race over the course of three whole films.



Logan

Of course, there are any number of reasons why this sort of slow and gradual apocalypse has become such a fixture of contemporary popular culture. The threat of immediate extinction of the human race through mutually-assured destruction has greatly decreased since the end of the Cold War. As recently as 1982, two-in-five thought that a nuclear war was "fairly likely" or "very likely." However, by 1993, only one-in-five Americans thought that nuclear war would break out before the turn of the millennium. An expert in risk perception, David Ropeik has argued that people's fear of nuclear energy has gradually morphed from fear of instant death in nuclear holocaust to anxiety about a slower and longer death due to cancer from exposure.



Waterworld

While public anxiety has slowly drifted away from the idea of the world ending in flame and fury, the public are increasingly concerned by more gradual and long-term apocalyptic scenarios. Polling suggests that Americans are afraid of shifting living standards, of the idea that their children will have a less prosperous life than they enjoyed, an existential threat to the American Dream. This is to say nothing of the threat posed by climate change and global warming; a 2009 survey suggested that almost nine out of ten Europeans considered climate change to be a "very serious" or "serious" problem and a poll from 2017 revealed that respondents around the world were more terrified of climate change than any other threat. It should be noted that scientists are currently arguing over whether the planet has reached a "tipping point", whether climate change is still reversible or whether mankind has set in motion a creeping apocalypse.



The Cured

These fears (cancer, the breakdown of

social mobility and climate change) are all existential in nature. However, they lack the immediate "bang" of traditional apocalyptic threats like rogue asteroids or alien invasions or rapidly-spreading viral infection. Instead, they suggest that civilisation and society will erode rather than collapse, that the end of the world will sound with a whimper rather than a bang. This explains the fixation on zombie societies in modern pop culture, in worlds that seem to have already ended even if the inhabitants are oblivious to this fact.



The Cured

The Cured fits comfortably within this subgenre. It depicts a version of Ireland that believes it has survived the end of the world, and can re-establish social order. Early in the film, it is suggested that the plague is being brushed aside; the United Nations is withdrawing from Irish soil, the rehabilitated infected have been released, those that cannot be cured have been contained and will be dealt with. It spoils very little to reveal

suggest that this is a false sense of security. After all, *The Cured* is a horror film rather than a political drama. The audience understands that the threat of apocalypse has not retreated, even if society has granted itself a stay of execution.

The Cured suggests that the world has already ended, but that civic institutions are shuffling on oblivious. It would appear that the real zombie in *The Cured* is society itself. ✨





Learning lessons: Ken Wardrop discusses the deceptive cadence of *Making the Grade*

Words: Niall Murphy

Ken Wardrop is a maker of heartwarming and fulfilling documentaries on the smaller things in life. *Making the Grade* tells the simple story of the teacher student relationship, but does so in a beautiful way. When we sit down he has just returned from SXSW in America, where the film enjoyed its North American premiere.

Ken Wardrop: America was great. I really like Austin as a city. And SXSW was a great festival. A good spot for *Making the Grade* given the music content and everything. It seemed ideal. We kind of had an inkling of it way back some time ago so we kind of held out for the festival, and I'm glad that it came through in the end.

We've now done Telluride (with *Mom and Me*), Sundance (with *His and Hers*) and now South By. Only Tribeca remains of the big four US festivals.

Are the grades in piano teaching the same in the US?

That's the curious thing. The US doesn't have a grading system. So in Europe we have a grading system. Certainly in Western Europe. Eastern Europe is kind of different as they are quite hardcore about the whole piano thing. Having said that it didn't actually come up in the Q&As at the screenings. Everybody just connected with it on a human basis. I had a few people come up to me

after the screenings and say that they taught or studied piano and thank you for the film. But it never really came up in the Q&As as a discussion of it as a system. Which I thought was interesting as I was full sure that that would be one of the first few questions. As it would be quite alien to them. They would learn it in a different way. But it didn't appear and they just went with it. They understood it and it didn't confuse matters. The time that it takes to teach students is the same and it's probably the same the world over.

Have you gone through the process yourself?

never had the opportunity. I blame my sister. She's older than me and she was the one given a few lessons and she hated it and abandoned ship. So my mother said that's it I'm not wasting any more money you can all go and play sport. Unfortunately we then didn't get to play piano. Actually in the context of making the film I think that was an advantage. I could have gotten bogged down in the academic side of it. It could have come out quite a different film if I'd have been interested in piano playing and the education of it. I actually glaze over when people would start talking about that. I think I ended up concentrating on things that I know best, exploring relationships, exploring the subtleties of these everyday things what they mean in the greater scheme of life. I think that if I had had even a little bit of knowledge I may have explored that side of it which would have ended up quite differently and not had...if I may be so bold to say...the universal appeal that I think it has. Or the heart.

How then did you come to make a film about learning piano?

It started with the fact that my partner plays piano and we were doing a bit of renovation work and I put in isolation which brought out the walls 3 inches. Which meant that the alcove could no longer take the piano. So there was a bit of drama in the house because the piano had to be sold. This was very upsetting. And it got me thinking. I was so keen on doing the Reel Arts scheme, the Arts Council's project opportunity. And it was around the same time that I was having piano woes in my personal



life, and I recalled my mum moving house and wanting to move our piano which had never been played, apart from my sister and her 3 or 4 lessons. She had no notes herself but she insisted on moving the piano for her Aynsley collection to sit on, with the odd family photo. This was all ruminating. And I was also looking for ideas for the Reel Art project and not being that highbrow intellectual I was kind of thinking that documenting the arts was potentially beyond me. Then I said 'wait a minute, what about pianos?' and I started to investigate pianos and the connection that people have to this instrument. I always saw pianos as the king or queen of the instrument world. And then I discovered the grading system and that was a eureka moment. For me I'm always looking for a narrative spine or thread to a film. Here I was presented with a beginner through to grade 8 and coming out an accomplished pianist. This was quite straightforward given that I would probably make a film with lots of different characters. Once I started to

explore even further what was at the heart of all of this was the relationships that teachers and students have. That shared journey. I was talking to some friends who had been with the same teacher for 12 to 14 years. So obviously there are wonderful bonds that develop and familiarity. And that's a really interesting opportunity for someone like me. Because I know that I can delve into that world and find some connections and some stories that go beyond the normal.

In many homes the piano is an essential piece of furniture. It's part of the room.

Having been around the country now and being into houses that actually get pianos played is different. Because I always remembered the piano as something that needed to be dusted down once every month, but in these other houses it was a living object. Things would be thrown on top of it, music books, magazines, things would be pulled down. They'd have little carpets that they'd put over the keys. I was like wow. It was a living object. It was interesting to experience. And then of course moving around the word from keyboards, to pianos, to grand pianos, to little old pianos, to out of tune pianos. It was fascinating. So the piano became a character as well.

To fill a house with music is a beautiful thing, and to have generations of family members doing that is lovely.

Absolutely. It's something that seems to run in families. A tradition and a love of music. It's something that I



didn't have growing up, which was a great shame. It wasn't part of my life, but thankfully I'd other wonderful aspects of my life. In these people's lives it means so much for a parent to be pottering around in the background and to hear their children practice. I got that sense from people that it was just one of the joys of life. No matter how badly the student or kid was playing they are safe and well and enjoying and learning something at the same time.

You managed to capture a wide spectrum of stories in the film, from big houses to small front rooms to parish halls.

It's interesting that you should point that out. There was no agenda at play. When we went out to cast the film we threw the net wide. We didn't have any quotas that we must have x amount of young people and x amount of mature students. It just all fell in place. I think that when you look at the film now in its totality it is a fair representation of modern Ireland. There's a lot of mixed cultures, mixed backgrounds and we didn't go out with any agenda. It just happened. And I think that shows modern Ireland at its best.



It also went all around the country, rather than just being centred on one area or one particular school of music or through one particular teacher.

We went as far north as Derry and as far south as Crosshaven and as far west to Kylemore Abbey to the wonderful Sister Carol. When I say there were no quotas we did split up the country into the four provinces, and I did say let's get a good spread. I did want it to have that flavour of

accents and flavour of people, in the sense that it didn't become a Dublin-centric children and parents learning a musical instrument. I wanted to bring it into the countryside. I wanted to dig deeper into the Irish nation. Making a film is expensive and it's a lot easier and cheaper to stay in Dublin. One of the things that we did on this film, which could be another film, was that we spent our evenings in B&Bs spread out across the country.

Piano playing isn't cheap and it is an investment from parents to invest in the education, but fortunately now pianos are relatively cheap. What's most expensive is actually moving them into a house. You can pick up second-hand pianos now as there are so many of them on DoneDeal. Then of course there are the electric keyboards that are disliked by the vast majority of teachers but liked by the parents, because if you invest in an electric keyboard it's very easy move in and out. Just in case your child only wants to play for a few months before they discover ballet or horses or GAA. So they are not such a big commitment. What we found was that when it came to music people found a way of affording it. It was

seen as a necessity rather than a luxury in some of these people's lives. Which I think says a lot about it as a hobby and a pastime. That it brings so much more than other things do to your life.

Because a piano is there with you in the house you can sit down at any time and play. You don't get that with a lot of hobbies.

I think that's one of the beauties of

learning any instrument. Apart from a piano, most instruments you can throw in a bag and go. But with a piano now you can find them almost anywhere. I was only in Heuston Station and they have put a piano in there. And there's been one in Pearse Street for some time. Around the European capitals now it is a thing to put pianos in public spaces.

You've featured piano music in your films before...

Often over the years I've edited my own films, and my first port of call when I'm looking for music is piano music. I always go up to this classical collection that I have, 50 CDs in a box. Somebody said to me once that I really need to improve my musical knowledge and avoid going back to the same old familiar pieces. Piano music has always been around me in a way. There's something that I enjoy about the piano and the sound of the piano. and maybe with the films that I have made it just suits and I think looking back on it that would have been part of the inspiration as well. In this film when I went out to make it I just wanted to use the piano music from the film as the soundtrack. there's no other music there.

Everything that appears in the film would have been played. Apart from the final piece, everything that appears was played by the person on the screen. There was no other music needed thankfully. But someone did ask me did the students ever get the opportunity to learn other pieces, more modern pieces, as opposed to just the graded pieces. And I answered yes, but I couldn't afford the copyright of Ed Sheeran and Adele, which are pretty much the only ones that are played. You would go in and it was literally either Ed Sheeran or Adele that was their other piece, so I said we'd stick to what was in the red book because I knew how much that was going to cost me.

This was a departure for you in that you were your own DoP and you hired in an editor.

Yes, on the other two films I'd worked with cinematographers and had to edit myself, but on this occasion I was either going to have to go with a

cinematographer or an editor but the time-frame was very tight and I knew that when I start editing it can take me forever so I fortunately got the opportunity to work with John O'Connor in Windmill. It was a wonderful experience and I will never go back to editing my own work. It was so liberating. Hopefully one day I'll be able to afford a cinematographer and an editor. That would be a joy. That would be living the dream.

You seem to have a great relationship with your producer Andrew Freedman

at Venom.

I'm very fortunate. I'm not sure if he thinks he is fortunate. I think with me there is only one other person in the world who cares more about the project that I'm currently working on and that is Andrew. That's very special to experience that. I think that I'm very fortunate to have found a colleague and a creative soulmate in that sense. When we're watching things he laughs in the same places, he sees the same beats that are wrong. We are just in tune. It's great

to be able to work with a fellow filmmaker such as Andrew.

And having Element Pictures in your corner must be a great help?

Element have been so good. It's our third venture with them and they appreciate and understand my work and Andrew's work. It makes life so much easier when you are working alongside good people and such hard workers. ✨





Monsters Recuperated: Director David Freyne talks The Cured

Words: Niall Murphy

For writer/director David Freyne it's been seven long years to get his feature debut on to the big screen. Seven years that were filled with promises and disappointments, false starts and false hopes, but finally his vision of post-zombie apocalypse has been released in Irish and international cinemas.

The film itself tells the story of a disease that turns people into zombies which has now been cured. The once-infected zombies are discriminated against by society and their own families, which causes social issues to arise. This leads to militant government interference. This is the platform on which he weaves a memorable tale of social

injustice, class warfare, and the power of family

We caught up with him to talk us through his end of the world.

Cin É: *One of the things that I wanted to ask you is where did the name of the virus come from? Why Maze?*

David Freyne: It was a lot of things. In the script for a very long time there was no name for it and everyone kept saying that we needed a name. So it came from the Maze prison in Northern Ireland. There is no major, in-depth thesis written on it. I was like "I'm calling it Maze. It's a cool name!". So it was kind of arbitrary. I should come up with a better reason.

Why does the disease lead to the infected hunting other humans?

The idea was that with an infection there's an element in which it wants to spread, but in the process it kills as well. We did a lot of research into that. Basically the idea is that the infected choose who to kill and who to infect. So they choose to kill Tom, choose to infect Senan, Senan then decides to infect others who I won't name. There's an element of the people subconsciously wanting to kill certain people and infect other people that they might have an attraction to or want to control. So that's where the idea came from. Like any virus it's two-pronged kill and spread.

They seem to have heightened senses, or at least there's definitely an olfactory component to the infection.

Totally. Actually that came up in the research with Jane [McGrath] that we did. That part of this was the olfactory bulb would spread and it would give them the senses of a dog. That everything was so heightened and repulsive. Rather than wanting to eat brains it's almost as if the smell of humans is so repulsive that the only way to get rid of it is by ingesting it. That was part of the idea of why they act like they do. And then the idea that they would behave and act like wolves. And that they would have that pack mentality.

They have a distinctive look your zombies...

We had a really great makeup designer, Julie-Ann Ryan, who created a brilliant look. Again it was a very heightened human infection. So it didn't feel supernatural or otherworldly. It was blue veins and skin and that kind of strange saliva-type look around the mouth. She did a great job to enhance that. I think the combination of the movement and the makeup really helped bring them to life.

Did you look to other work as inspiration?

Yes absolutely. It is in the zombie genre, so of course you are going to look to what people had done before. And look to see what you can do that is different. I think the big thing for us

was that the infection had that wolfpack mentality and heightened intelligence. Of course you look at things, but you don't want to repeat what somebody else has done, while still playing a sort of homage to Romero. It was about creating our own style, our own creature, that would be synonymous with The Cured. It is a tricky balance. You want to make sure that it is somewhat familiar, because you can't do the zombie film that begins when others end if what is there is not in any way familiar to what has gone before. So you need to find what is familiar from those films while elevating it to make it distinct and have your own style. So we absolutely paid homage to the masters.

So there was no desire then to go full Romero and set it at Phibsborough Shopping Centre?

I would have if I could have got the permission! We got really lucky with the locations. One of the locations that I really wanted, and that I didn't get, was that the quarantine centre was supposed to be set at Mosney. But obviously that's where we have a lot of asylum seekers and people in direct provision. That has its own horror story going on there. It would have been so apt, but unfortunately we couldn't shoot there. So that was the one location that I wanted and couldn't get. I had that idea...I had this big image of having a doctor's examination room in an abandoned pool. Which we did find and had painted. Our incredible production designer [Conor Dennison] had painted all of that childhood stuff. It

was an image that I had. I like the idea of taking a resort or a hotel where there are happy memories and turning it into a military facility.

Some of our hotels have become a bit like that with the housing crisis, and that's something that you hit on a bit with this. That idea of people with nowhere to go due to circumstances beyond their control.

I wanted to make sure that it was a complicated picture. Which it would be. That's why we open with these two characters who are being let out of quarantine. Senan, Sam's character, is being accepted back by his remaining family, Abbie, Ellen Page, his sister-in-law. And then have Conor, Tom's character, who is rejected by his. And the idea is that it is a complicated picture. There are those who are of course accepted by their loved ones, and then those that just can't forgive them for what they have done or are frightened by them, and then those that don't have any family left to take them home. It is very much a divided society. It's not a blanket hate or blanket open arms. We are trying to ensure that it is all shades of grey and a complicated picture. Which I think it would be.

You wrote the part of Senan with Sam in mind...

Yeah, when I had it written I thought that he would be great at that! I think with all of the actors you have to be open-minded but we were really lucky





that we pretty much got our first choices. When you are talking about Irish actors Sam and Tom are up there and they are so good. They both have these qualities that they bring to the screen. Sam has this incredible empathy and vulnerability that brings Senan to life. In many ways that was the biggest challenge, because Senan is struggling with this inner monster and all of this inner turmoil. But the problem with inner turmoil is that it is not verbalised. So there's very little dialogue to do that with. You have to be able to emote and get into the character and under the skin and portray that with a look, and that was what I thought Sam could and did do brilliantly. Now with Tom, I think again that he's an incredible Irish actor and nobody can go from charming to menacing quite like Tom. We always wanted that moment where...we wanted people to be behind Conor until halfway through the film when they realise "Christ, I'm rooting for the bad guy!" and I think that Tom does that so beautifully. I've said it time-and-again now but I just got so lucky with the casting of this, particularly a first feature. Just to have the guys and have Ellen on-board it really is a dream scenario.

You announced the casting of the film at Cannes of all places!

It was the announcement at the start of the summer just before we shot. Once we got Ellen attached then the sales agent was like "this is the next

market so we should get i out there" and it was a lovely place to do that. It was really nice. that was when we were on the home stretch and it is such an up and down journey, filmmaking, particularly when you're a first-timer, and there's lots of dips and troughs. There are lots of financing up and downs, but that was the point where we knew officially that this film was going to happen, at Cannes, and we were moving towards that pre-production and that was an exhilaration for us. Finally! It was great.

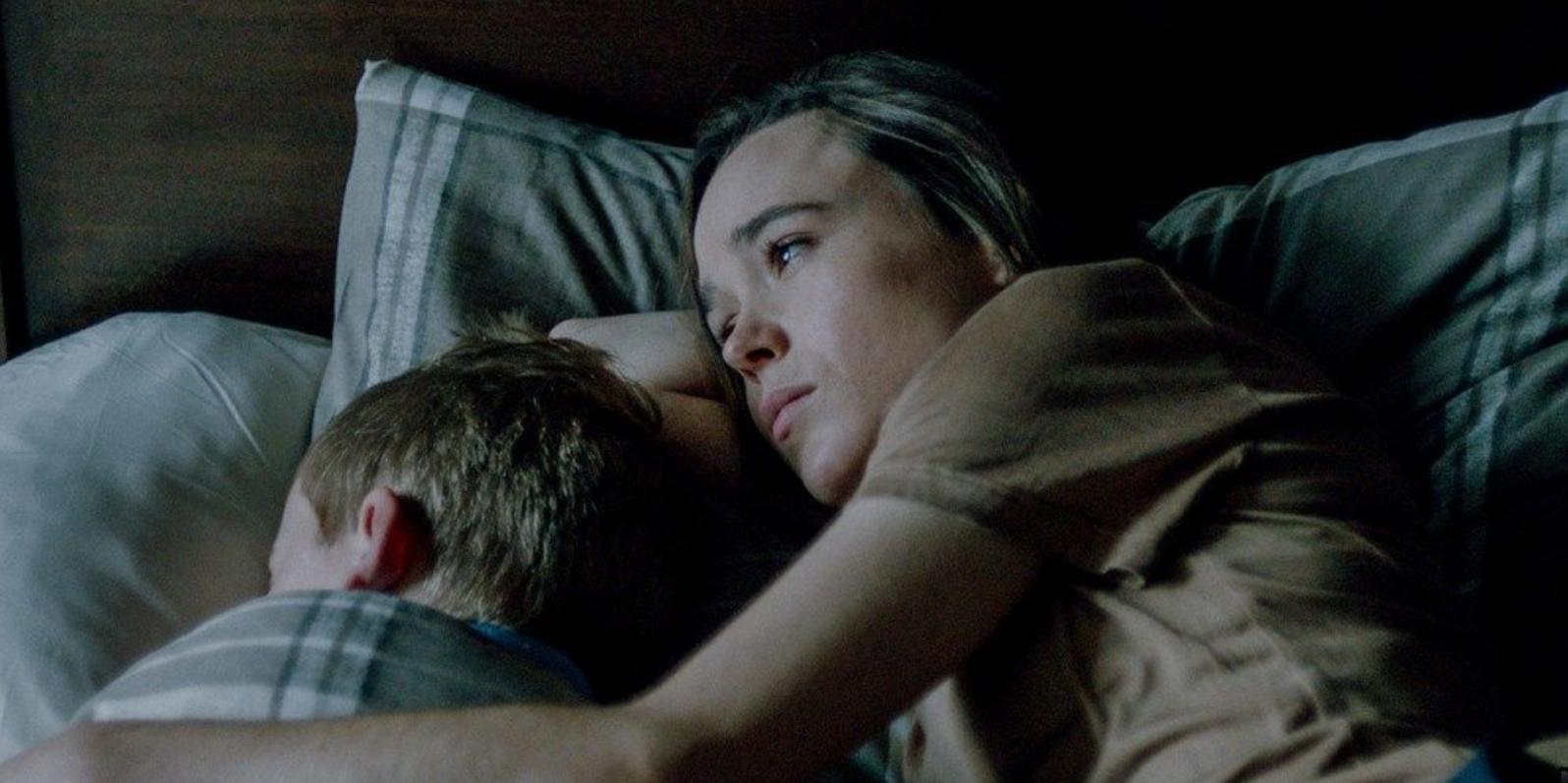
The Marché [the film market at Cannes] is not quite as glamorous as the main festival...

Cannes is not a great place for directors, unless you are in the competition. There's so many films there, there's so many films in the Marché, and you just get frightened and petrified by the amount, by the volume of films that are competing to get out there.

You launch amid such glamour and heat and then return home to shoot in cold north central Dublin.

That's what you expect when you're shooting in winter in Ireland. I think it only rained one day, which was so much a blessing. And you can't plan for it. You can prep and prep and prep but things just go wrong. We had to go to Belfast for a day of shooting. And that was mad. We were pretty

much shoving to days into one as it was the only place that we could get a prison type of location. Then as we were driving back at 6 o'clock in the evening we went to recce this carpark for a scene and we had our unit base out there and everything, and then we get a phone call while we are there saying that they had reneged and we weren't allowed shoot there. So for the rest of the evening, myself and Rory [Dungan] and Rachael O'Kane my other producer and locations [Karl Daly] just drove around Dublin trying to find a carpark that we could possibly shoot in the next day. And we were literally with Julien [Benoiton] the A.D. going "can we reschedule this?" and he was like "no, we've rescheduled everything. We have nothing left to reschedule!". So we were like "we can't lose a day" so we ended up finding a carpark and we lost a couple of hours by the move, but we got it done. And that's what you have to realise, shit goes wrong and you just have to embrace it and go with the madness. in a way that's part of the fun of filmmaking. The good thing was that we always handled that stuff, perhaps with not a smile, but a slight grin. A panicked grin. Everyone came in and were asking "why do David and Rory look so tired?" We had just got in! Meanwhile it was me and Piers [McGrail, the DoP] running around going "can we shoot this scene in that alley? No we can't there's too many needles. Can we use this alley?" so I think that you just have to go with



that. You can plan and plan and plan, but the magic comes in that unpredictable moment.

Something that happens a lot when Irish people watch Irish film is that they will critique the geography...

I do it all the time! How did he transport from Phibsborough out to Dalkey? You realise particularly when you are shooting that it's because of logistics. Because we were there that day and we had to. But it's absolutely the case. Now that I live in London, and the better I get to know the place the more I do it now with London and with British TV. "Wait a second, that's there and now they are over there!" I think that happens with any place you

know intimately and something is filmed there. You just get to criticise the implausibility of it. That's the nature of shooting.

It must have been nice to be able to film in that part of Dublin. And show it kind of differently on screen.

It was. It was amazing. They were locations that I had written for and the locals were really inviting. And the neighbours were lovely where we shot. It was really nice. There was a real boyhood glee in seeing zombies running down those streets and running past the Four Courts and shooting around those locations. In making this film that you would normally see set somewhere else, set in the city, in Dublin. Dublin is very

much a part, a character in this film in many ways, which is something that we are very proud of. It was a great privilege that we got such a welcoming invite from the various locations that allowed us to shoot.

It ends on an open question so will you return?

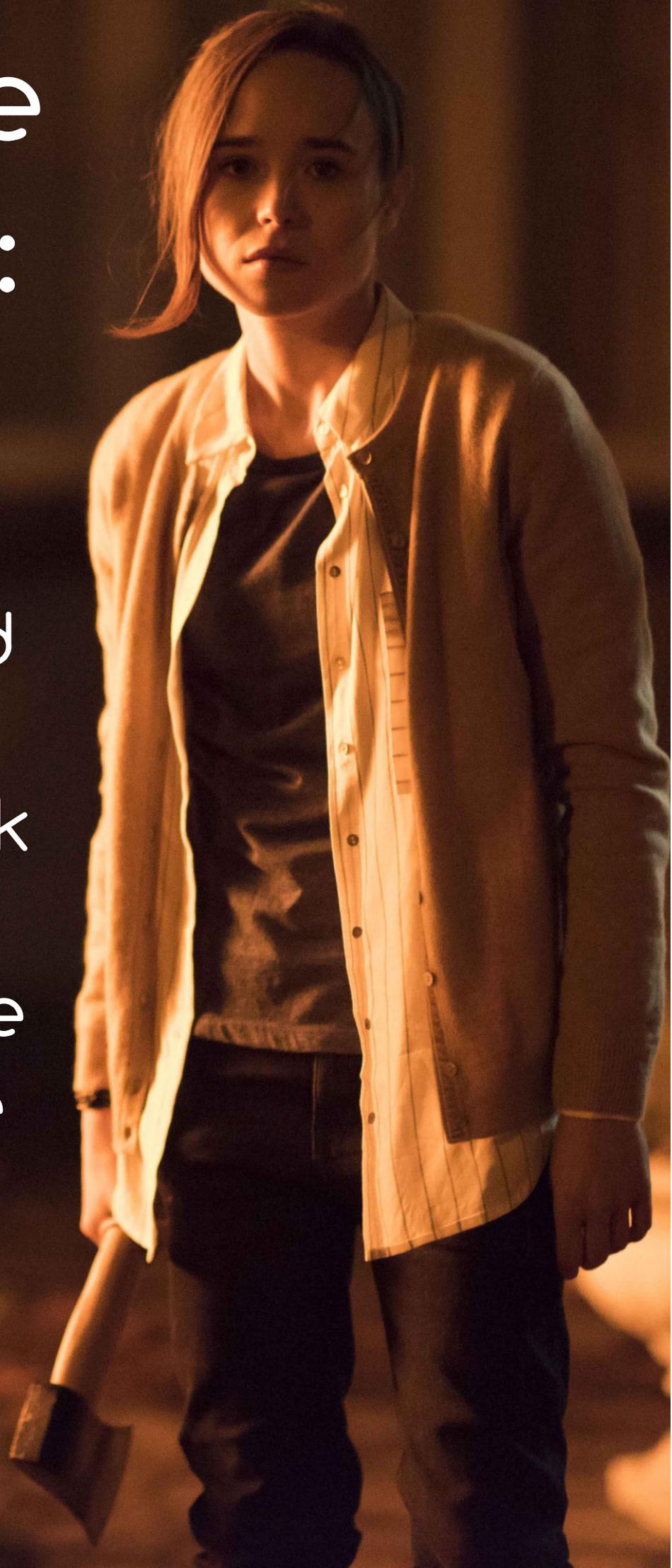
No more zombies! We always said the film is Senan's redemption and I think that it is that journey to redemption. It's slightly ambiguous but it's a hopeful ending and there's a sense of redemption, without giving any thing away!

The Cured is out now in cinemas nationwide. ✨



Zombie Nation: The Cured producers Rachael O'Kane and Rory Dungan talk about framing the apocalypse in Ireland

Words: Niall Murphy



The Cured is a curious beast, it's a zombie film that takes place after the infection has been cured. It's also a sociopolitical thriller with important messages for how we treat people who are different and how societies can alienate and isolate outsiders to their own detriment.

With all of that at play **CinÉireann** sat down with Rachael O'Kane and Rory Dungan, the producers of the film, who have been shepherding it, alongside writer/director David Freyne, from the very beginning.

Foremost in our minds were what were the challenges in making a genre film like this in Ireland on a low budget and with large set-pieces, how do you handle that logistically, and just how do you cast Ellen Page, Tom Vaughan-Lawlor, and Sam Keeley?

Cin É: The film has been almost 7 years in the making, but the first we saw of it was the 2014 short film, essentially a proof-of-concept *The First Wave*. Why did you go down this route?

Rachael O'Kane and Rory Dungan: We decided early on, in order to showcase David's talents, plus the world of the movie, that we would make a short, based in the world of the feature (which was already scripted by then). This became *The First Wave*. It was a tough decision to make the short, in that we knew that we had to do it on a shoestring budget from our Irish Film Board development funding, and we were wary of it being an anti-sell if it looked inadequate and didn't actually look polished. But thankfully we managed to execute it well! We used the short in tandem with the great script as a calling card and began getting calls from America and went over and sat down with about twenty five to thirty financiers, US producers and sales companies. We ended up teaming up with one of them and developing the



project with them for about eighteen months before their creative team changed and we realised that our aspirations for the project no longer aligned. They wanted to make a more generic and less thoughtful film than we wanted to. So we parted ways and financed it through co-production with Northern Ireland and France. The Irish Film Board were the majority financier and were brilliant throughout development and production. It was a long journey that actually started in 2011 when we first submitted to the IFB for development finance, and they stayed the course throughout. A lot of the script came from when David was in Amsterdam at the Binger FilmLab in 2012. That was a fantastic resource, but unfortunately it's no longer there.

And you've been with David every step of the way. What has the creative process with him been like?

The creative process with David was great. He really knows his own mind and his voice is so assured, but he's always very keen to work in ideas and script notes that will improve the script. So we worked through a great many drafts discussing the world and the character and plot development together, David and

myself and Rachael. But ultimately he was always the one who had to go back into the room and write it. It was initially a much bigger world with all sorts of different elements such as ongoing capture missions and different bureaucratic levels that had to be sacrificed in order to foreground the primary characters and build them and the emotional aspect up further. David was very early to realise that everything had to emanate from the characters. Plus, ultimately, we had to trim down or cut out certain sequences due to budget constraints. Or find creative solutions around certain things.

The film is a co-production with France and with Northern Ireland. Did that come with any constraints?

Thankfully the financing from France was a 'financial' co-production which meant that we were able to spend that money in Ireland and beef up the S481 tax rebate. The Northern Irish financing required a 5:1 spend, as in we had to spend five times more up there than we received from NI Screen, which was tight, but we managed it through basing the entire post-production process up north. So we shot the movie in Ireland and posted up North.



Much of the action takes place in north central Dublin. What was it like to film in the area?

Filming in Dublin was fun but challenging. It's a big part of the character of the movie, and we grew up here, which is why it was fun transforming certain places into the two-tiered world of the movie. We have some recognisable locations, but by and large we had to box clever due to budget restrictions where we weren't able to shut down big thoroughfares and fill them with tons of extras. Because that's expensive. So we had to choose more narrow streets so they didn't look empty and the extras filled the space better, stuff like that. So it'll be fun for local viewers to pick out places that they know and see whether they're different! We managed to get permission to shoot at Croke Park and again, had to shoot that cleverly in order to make the crowd feel fuller. We also managed to get Dun Laoghaire baths which was tricky because it was night time, and wet, and time was against us. We had some pretty close calls such as losing the big car park location the night before shooting, and it features in the third act and involved a significant amount of pre-planning and action scene choreography to pull it off. That was tough and we ended up driving around for the night before shooting that stuff trying to get somewhere else that worked that we could get

permission at no notice, that worked visually, and then having to move all of the wardrobe/make-up/facilities/catering trucks etc in the middle of the night! The joys of low budget filmmaking!

The film is a three-hander in many respects and it hangs on the performances from the central trio. How did you come to get Sam, Tom and Ellen?

Sam Keeley was on board from early. David loved his vulnerability and sensitivity as an actor, as did myself and Rachael. And we knew from other projects how much he gives to his roles. And we needed strong commitment from our cast because of the scale and ambition of the project versus the low budget! He's just a really talented terrific actor and just fitted the role so perfectly. Ellen Page and Tom Vaughan Lawlor were shots in the dark in a lot of ways. Due to their profile and status and how busy they are. But what ended up swinging it was really the quality of the script. And persistence. We pestered Ellen's agent for a while and made no headway and ended up changing tack and getting in touch with her manager. There's a series of levels that you have to get through before there's any response. So the manager's assistant reads it, and if she likes it then the manager reads it and if she likes it then it gets to Ellen, who thankfully loved it and came on board. And we knew Tom's

agent already and had already pitched him the script and Tom thankfully loved it too and could see that we were trying to do something different, because horror isn't something that he's naturally drawn to. But the depth of the social and political allegory and quality of his character came through and made him get on board. They were uniformly brilliant to work with. They were so committed, and it was freezing cold and the hours were long but there were never any issues with any of them. It was tough for Ellen when she arrived also because she's extremely political and a homophobic horror show of a President got elected in her first week here. But she was a trooper through all of the being away from home and the freezing cold and was just so giving with her time. And her talent is undeniable of course. She's an Oscar nominee! The standard of acting performance with Sam and Tom and the others was exceptional. Paula Malcomson and Stuart Graham were great, such brilliant talent and experience. And the hidden gem was Hilda Fay who was extraordinary in making us feel a depth of sympathy for an infected woman. ✨





Words: Niall Murphy

Get the Right One In: Talking Casting with Louise Kiely

"Casting is everything. If you get the right people they make you look good." So says noted American director Todd Solondz. Luckily in Ireland we have a number of great casting directors, and one of the best is Louise Kiely. **CinÉireann** caught up with her to talk about casting two of the Irish features out this month, *The Cured* and *I Kill Giants*, and her work in general.

Cin É: What we don't see that often is the process of casting as it is something that happens before a film begins principal production and happens in the background. You have two films out this month that you would have cast a while back, can you talk us through the process of casting each?

Louise Kiely: They were two different processes actually. *The Cured* was one that we were with for quite some time. Rory Duggan the producer and David Freyne had been trying to get Ellen Page, and that had taken some time with her agent in L.A. So that probably like 8-9 months of to-ing and fro-ing. And because she was shooting elsewhere dates had to be shifted. So when you are with a movie for a long time that does allow things to sit more. You can become more just to the people, and that's just a really really nice

process. We had a long time at the being of it, but then once Ellen Page came on board then the dates were set and that was great. It was at the end of the year [2016] that they were shooting. There were a couple of people in there...for example Paula Malcomson was in there and she was one that I was really keen to get working in Ireland as she's actually Northern Irish and I think that it's a really good fit. And she was keen to work in Ireland so I'm excited to see that, and it's a really nice role. [Malcomson plays the doctor who developed the cure in the film]. And then what happened was that it was 6 weeks to prep time and Thyrza Ging, my colleague who works with me, came in and they did the kind of traditional casting and seeing people for all of the roles. Obviously we also had the two guys as well, Sam Keeley and Tom Vaughan Lawlor, so they were the same as Ellen. It was me and the guys over a series of months trying to work out when that person was available and we were very lucky in getting the people that we did because they were the ones that we had wanted and they were available. And that was it. The three leads took a long period of time and then we went into prep, and also Paula as she was coming from L.A. But then the more

traditional casting would have kicked in. Auditions, showreels, and we were very lucky with who we got. It was a big ensemble cast and there's some really lovely actors in there. Lesley Conroy is in there, and Stuart Graham is in there. There's just lovely Irish actors in there. And David was incredibly open to really good quality actors. He really likes actors and he really likes people.

So that kind of thing were you have particular actors that you want and trying to fit many moving parts in together would be common on the big films?

Yeah. And it always seems to sort of land. What sometimes happens is that it won't be workable with one of them but most of the time it just all slots in. Often if somebody is coming from America then they'll have to be shot out in the first three weeks or the first two weeks. We fit it in as it works a little bit like a puzzle. And that's kind of it really. It's always just patience and time. And negotiation, not just money negotiation, but also the fact that they arrive in on this day and they need to be here on that day, and we end up having to put a puzzle together. It's all a bit mathematical, but it all works out.



— I Kill Giants

How much interaction would you have then with the location manager in working that out?

Very little. Obviously the locations manager is just over there. Casting and locations are the ones that they would start with at the beginning. They are the ones that they get going with. And locations impact on schedule and then the schedule would impact on the actors. In the same way that you bringing in somebody for two weeks at the top, or 4 days here, and they are not available on this date and this date and this date, you feed that back to the schedule, and to the locations manager and to the First A.D. who is doing the schedule. So it is very much collaborative and puzzly in that same way. You're trying to kind of say 'okay that person has to get on the 27th so we have to shoot him on the 26th, but if the location won't work on the 26th this is not going to happen'. So the First A.D. is the one building the jigsaw. The First A.D.s are amazing, they really are. When you think about how they make it work. We're just one tiny slice of the pie, but they just do and they are very chilled. It works very well. We're all kind of parts of an army, but if everybody has a chilled attitude, which people do, then it all works out fine.

Then for something like *I Kill Giants* they were coming here on a particular date. How then would that be different?

They would have come to Parallel. And then Susan Mullen came to us, and

again Thyrsa Ging was very involved in that one. So we collaborated on that one in so far as she started looking for a couple of young. Madison Wolfe plays the lead. Barbara McCarthy was doing the American casting on that, who is absolutely lovely, and she got us up to speed on where she was and then we had to find the best friend, who we got from England, and there were a couple of other kids. And then I did all the adult deals, or almost all of them. There was a bit of auditioning in there. Noel Clarke was in there who was an offer. So again it's just ideas and availability. Once all of the audition stuff has happened then all of the other stuff begins to click into place. We something like *I Kill Giants*, because they did have a shoot date, there was a ticking clock as well. And that would be fairly regular.

They had to decamp from here to Belgium to complete the shoot so you knew that you had a very definite end date, but also that certain people had to be available to go there.

Exactly. What we were given at the top of it was a schedule, and Irish schedule and a Belgian schedule, and you then had to tell the actors in advance that this is what was happening. And people are grand with that as long as they know. And with kids you have to get licences to allow them work. Licencing in Ireland is fine, licencing in England takes a little bit of time, and I don't know about Belgium, but that just would have had to have been

done in advance. There's only certain amounts of hours that children can work on a film set relative to their ages.

That kind of film, where it's a multi-national co-production. Has that become normalised because we do it so often?

It's so normal. There are a number of things that are really really normal in my day to day job now. We often work on American stuff and there's an English casting director and an American casting director. For example we just finished our second season of *Into the Badlands*, and the way that that works is that Marc Hirschfeld works from L.A., and for the last season Jina Jay's office worked from England, and we worked from Ireland. And we all would feed information in. The scripts all came at the same time. If there was any chance that we could get a big part for somebody here then of course we would see people for it. If the person is going to come from North America then Marc would look after it. All of the tapes are fed through to Cast It, a casting upload site. People upload from where they are and it can be watched from an office, or a production truck, or some recce. And it's like a machine. What I like is working with other casting directors. Recently we worked on casting for the *Avatar* sequels. Margery Simkin is a casting director based out of L.A., a total legend, an amazing woman

who's from New York and who is just really interesting and has amazing stories, and I met her when i was in L. A. She was casting *Avatar* worldwide, and we represented Ireland. A few years ago we did *Pan*, which Jina Jay was casting out of England, so what they do is literally look around the world and they'll be casting Australia and New Zealand all of these golden looking children, and then from New York where they're really diverse, and then L.A. is a bit sort of golden as well, and then Ireland which is a bit more character to it. With *Avatar* it was funny, because when you think about it it's set in space, on this very beautiful planet where people run a lot and jump a lot, so skills like parkour are really handy, or gymnastics, and martial arts. And the Irish people we'd say 'tell us what you do outside of school?' and they'd say that the read, so we'd ask 'do you run... ever?'. What's amazing is that I will actually spend Friday evenings like a

total nerd watching the tapes. I absolutely love it. And watching other people's tapes so there's a simpatico and I can learn from it.

Then if you see somebody and the pique your interest, but they are not right for this role, will you remember them?

For some reason when you say that children pop into my head. And you won't remember all of them, but for example Aidan McCann who was in *Red Rock* just missed out on something else that he didn't get, but we liked him so much that we remembered him when that opening came up. I always say that 5 brains are better than 1. I only have a certainty capacity, but then Thyrza and Karen [Scully] and Fionnuala [O'Shea] are great at helping me, and we don't use any paper normally. We just feed it all into Dropbox and we just share information. And it comes from all

different resources. If I say that I'm looking for a 14-year-old boy who can play the guitar, like on *Sing Street*, we had done a music video for a big Irish band and we got a lot of candidates from that, from the dancers , from the hip-hop artists. Ferdia [Walsh-Peelo], the lead actor actually came into us from that video because he was such a good dancer and so then we were like 'we can use you. we can audition you for *Sing Street*'. There's a lot of cross-pollination. You can find people in commercials as well. Thyrza is always sending use through people from them that she thinks are really good. It's very very handy. Then things like *Red Rock*, which are long-form and have a lot of small roles, if we had to cast just from people we know then they would all be gone. Each type of job has its own challenges but its exciting and always interesting.



Films cast by Louise Kiely Casting



Dark Lies the Island
The Hole in the Ground
Dublin Old School
Don't Let Go
The Belly of the Whale
The Cured
Halal Daddy
Sing Street
Handsome Devil
A Date for Mad Mary





Playing the Game: Mark O'Rowe on his debut feature *The Delinquent Season*

Words: Niall Murphy

After years in the industry writing scripts for film and TV, as well as writing and directing theatre Mark O'Rowe steps out from the shadows to direct his first feature film with *The Delinquent Season*.

The film is the story of two couples who appear content in their middle-class Dublin lives: rewarding jobs, good work/life balance, happy kids and entertaining friends. Cracks begin to appear when Jim (Cillian Murphy) and Danielle (Eva Birthistle) discover that Yvonne (Catherine Walker) and Chris (Andrew Scott) are

having problems.

Cin É: Do find film a different medium from theatre in that there isn't the instant response for the audience?

Mark O'Rowe: Well film isn't a million miles away from that in that you can sit in with an audience and watch it with them. I know that you're not getting it live, but you can watch them and you can experience them experiencing your work. I think that the separation is between those dramatic arts and the novel. If you

write a novel you can't watch someone read it, well you could, but you are not going to get much out of it. Whereas you kind of have the sense of response if people are interested by something, if they are being held by it, if it is funny and they are laughing. You can see all of that with a film or play. It doesn't quite work in as binary a way as that. For example if you are watching a play that is really really dull, and I've heard people say many times that the difference theatre and film is that theatre is live, they are right in front of you, but if I'm watching

something that is really driving me demented then I don't care that there are actors in front of me. It's not helping that they are live. In fact it's worse because I can't just walk out because they'll see me. Then with good theatre...I mean there are different energies. I'm just not sure. Am I nourished by the audience? I don't know. Sometimes you are if the reaction is good and you are not if the reaction is bad. And if you can't gauge the reaction then you are just living in sheer terror. So the audience is your best friend and also your mortal enemy at the same time. And it's always like that so you have that same fear when you are presenting, every single time. And yes if you have an audience responding wonderfully to your play it feels wonderful of course, but even if it's a play that's generally getting a great response night after night, anytime you go in and start and watch the play again you reset the kind of terror. And you have to be made feel okay again.

Do you enjoy the fixed permanency of a film then because it's done once and it's the same for ever more?

Again both of them are sort of bittersweet. The lovely thing about theatre is that it can change every single night and be different every night. So that means on a particular night, and occasionally you'll have your actors ring you when it's a night that you're not in, and they'll say "oh you should have seen us last night. We were through the roof" or occasionally you can be lucky enough to be in at a show and something really special happens, but equally you can have bad nights. So you can't tell. Yes you get the great stuff, but you also get the bad stuff to balance that out. And that's both exhilarating and terrifying and not particularly pleasant sometimes if it's the bad ones. And then with film it's the same thing, because you wish that you could do things better, but you are happy that it's not going to get any worse, because it's there. You kind of gain and lose in different ways in both disciplines.

You've given over control of your scripts up until this point, why was this the one that you wanted to direct?



It was my own script, which I hadn't done in a while. And I wanted to direct. I was tired of giving my work over. Sometimes you are working on commission and you're doing an adaptation so it's not really your work, you're just one step in the process. Although when you do adapt something you do get very very precious about it. You kind of fall in love with it a little bit. And then you've got to give it over. Even when the result is good, it is different, and it's a little bit frustrating in that way. My agent had said to me to write something that you can't give to anybody else. So I wanted to write something that was very delicate and with *The Delinquent Season* an awful lot of the story is told in what's not happening. And you are constantly trying to gauge motive and you are constantly trying to gauge your own moral levels against what is happening there. That felt like a very active engagement and I wanted to keep that open and not let it be shut down by a director who might have misunderstood the script and wanted to make it a little bit more obvious or a little bit more safe, or give people more clear or defined motivations. For me the film is about the opposite of that. It's about the fact that there is mystery in terms of every decision that everybody makes. That it's a more active type of watch. So I wrote the script to direct it. You're doing a lot of that work upfront when you are writing the script anyway. You give it a tiny cast, you decide to set it in only a very limited number of locations because you'll have no money, and then you just hold on to it and don't let anybody near it and you do it yourself. In theatre I started

10 years ago, directing my own work, and it was hugely gratifying to take something from the beginning to the end. Although in a way you don't get to take it to the very end, because the actors take it that final step. They kind of say goodbye to you at the end and they go onto the stage. And you start spending your nights at home wondering how they're getting on. With a film it's different because the actors go home before you do. And you go on to the end of the film. I wanted to write and direct a film, and so I wrote a film and I directed it. My wife was sick of me moaning about other directors and told me to just do it myself. So I said I do it and see if I liked it, because the pressures in making a film are much bigger than doing a play. And that would either be quite exhilarating for me or would be really unpleasant for me. Thankfully it was the former. It was really exhilarating. I had to figure out whether it was for me. Sometimes you try something and you never enjoy it for a second, but this was different, given those kind of time constraints and a big crew, and everybody working towards the same thing. The clock is ticking you have to be creative you have to invent and allow people to invent. It's a really kind of addictive environment and it's quite difficult to come down from once you're finished shooting. It's quite difficult to sleep at night because that energy is still running through you.

I spoke with your cinematographer Richard Kendrick and he said that you had a remarkable sense of control over the shoot. That's unusual for a first time director.

slightly. Another thing is that you make loads of mistakes. some of them people save you on, and some of them they don't and they are there in the movie. If you are any good you remember them all and you learn for next time. Richard saved me several times. there were several times were Richard said "medium shot" and I said "yeah" and he'd say "where" and I said "you decide". And he would pick what he thought was the best background the deepest background, and he would do it there. a big inspiration, and I don't mean a creative inspiration in terms of the contents of the thing, was an inspiration in terms of my own confidence going in to direct the movie was Michael Hanneke. Watching a movie like Amour or Hidden and looking at the limited amount of shots that he used. How very specifically he was with getting things across in as minimal away as possible. I found I very much that identified with that. And that might have come from theatre as well. With theatre you have nothing. You have your set, but your set isn't doing anything. So everything has to come across with the minimal amount of means. it's just people talking to each other I suppose. I very much identified with his style. And the second thing was that I knew I would have to shoot it on a really low budget. I knew that I would have to be able to do it quickly. I wasn't going to be left standing on a set not knowing

what to do. So I planned out every scene. I storyboarded every scene. I always knew where a scene would cut. If you look at the script for *The Delinquent Season*, you would see maybe for moments that are a bit shorter, that are a bit different. But everything cuts the way that it was written. I'm not advocating that as the best way of making films, although it's good for some people and other ways are good for others. But I am advocating it indicates work your first time and you don't have a lot of confidence, and you don't have a huge amount of time. When you have lots of time before you make the movie and you're planning it, then you can kind of depend on that when you hit that moment when you go "I don't know what to do". And even if a problem comes up or a location turns out to be different than you expected, you can go back and ask "what did you want to get across in that plan you made, and is there a way with this that you can get that across" as opposed to kind of going "I don't know what to do". That saves a huge amount of time and the actors love that as well, because they know there's no time as well and they want to get in and out as fast as they can. Not as fast as they can but as economically as they can. And then another thing was the story of when John Huston directed *The Maltese Falcon*, which was his first feature. He storyboarded the whole thing so that

when he turned up on set on the first day he could go "over there, that's where we begin" and not have to be fretting and panicking. what happened was I got so confident, not overconfident, confident about what Richard was doing as well that I was able to say "I need a medium shot hear of that character". I wasn't looking for control to the extent that I would pick the window or the background. Richard as we went along had a lot of freedom, but if I wasn't controlling it in that way I would panic and lose my confidence and start making very bad decisions. You know that when you planned it does it works. if you had a lot more time to shoot the movie in then you might be able to try stuff, and even with a really tight spot juice you still have a little bit of time. Some days you find yourself getting something very quickly and having a little bit of time then to play around with it, and that's great. But other days you barely make it, and you look at everything that you shot in that scene, and you look back and you go "that take there, you can cut to that, and you can take that out of there even though it's messed up at that point. I think it's all might cut". And that's all you can go at the time as you are about to get thrown out of the location. I like the idea, not of being controlling because I loved the idea of people...and you give the actors an awful lot of



freedom as well... all working towards the one design. And somebody has to know what that design is. The clearer you are in your intention, and to clearer you are in articulating that, the happier everybody is to follow you. Because all they want to know is "what you want me to do?" and if you can tell them that then they will go do it no matter how difficult that is. These are things that I have read but I never made happen or experienced. It was lovely to discover that a lot of the stuff that I had read makes sense in the practice of it as well.

One of the things about The Delinquent Season is that while it is set in Dublin and it's recognisable, it could be anywhere.

When I had the idea for the script I would have been around the same age as Jim [Cillian Murphy's character] and I've a wife and two kids. So the idea was it something like this happened to you. What could make this happen? And one of the great ideas that I had was because I'm a writer my days are free, I don't have to go to a building and be there all day, and so if you could get together with somebody else who was free in the morning then the affair could happen in mornings. As opposed to I'm going out with Joe tonight and questions about why is he out every night or staying at the office late. That felt like a good way of doing it. Back to the writing of script, I wrote the script as economically and stripped back as possible. if you were to read the script you would have Danielle and Jim sit in the kitchen, Danielle and Jim sit in the sitting room, and dialogue. Because they're in the sitting room and there is dialogue. When you're on the set they might have the radio on or TV or whatever. What kind of a house is it? I don't know. Because we needed to go out and location scout. And we may not have many choices. It is like describing a character, he's 6ft tall and he has a particular lopsided grin and he has whatever. No, he's going to look like the actor that they hire to play the character. That's what he's going to look like. You've got to kind of the age range right. I know that enough from being specific on scripts and having directors ignore me, and not understanding that at the time, but then realising that the director's can only work with the options that they are given. Basically you go and look at a load of locations, and you go "this

feels like a place that they like live". And there are some that you feel a bit iffy about and you strike them off because you find better places. the two locations of the houses that the characters live in were both in Dublin 8, around the Harold's Cross area. That was kind of luck we could have found our ideal interior for the other family across the city, but it turned out that they were in the same area. I'm not interested in Dublin. I feel that there are enough films out there that are about Dublin. I wanted to explore the inner lives of these characters and do something that was quite stripped down and intensely about their kind of problems. So we never really discover what jobs anybody has. I wanted to go this is their lives, this is the lives of those people. I didn't want them to have too much money and I didn't want it to look like they had too little money. I didn't want there to be any preconceptions to make the audience judge the characters or any of their decisions based on external influences. I read something recently in a book by David Thompson and he was talking about the notion of space in films, and I guess he would be a big fan of Hollywood films going back through the ages, and he said space in films is always bigger than it would be in real life. Because the camera needs space and the audience needs space. and if you look at certain films from the 1950s you can see that even if the subject of the film with somebody's lack of money that still takes 10

the door. I think that we accept that subconsciously because we need space. So those characters are not ultra middle class. Both partners work in both relationships. It's not like one of them is making a huge amount of money. A very credible location for them to live could be a really small three bedroom house, but if you put them in a really small house then they are going to look poor. so is about finding a location that will be aesthetically nice, that will give them space to move around, but that wouldn't say too much one way or another. The non-feeling of Dublin is very deliberate as I didn't want it to go near any other elements. I wanted to keep it about the characters and in on the characters as much as I could. so whatever we get of Dublin we bring to it ourselves and we bring to it just by certain locations being chosen. I will tell you one thing that may be kind of revealing, I wouldn't mind having one of those houses, I like those areas and I love those red bricks. I would kind of feel that the characters will be very close as people to me, and I couldn't afford to live in one of those houses. But my house would be too small to film in. It wouldn't have to space. It was important for me and Richard to have space and to have options. You have two scenes that were set in the kitchen, but then you find that the living room is beautiful so you move one of them in there because it looked kind of great.





A Walk on the Wild Side: Director Michael Pearce talks us through the making of **Beast**

Words: Niall Murphy

In a small island community, a troubled young woman falls for a mysterious outsider who empowers her to escape her oppressive family. When he comes under suspicion for a series of brutal murders she defends him at all costs and learns what she is capable of. Michael Pearce's debut feature, **Beast**, is a wonderfully confident film full of mystery and fine performances.

Cin É: One of the first things that captured me is the difference in pacing between shots that are taken outside and those are taken inside. There seems to have been a deliberate move for slow and steady movements for interior shots and more dynamic and energetic shots for exterior.

Michael Pearce: That's quite perceptive of you. I had talked with my DoP and we wanted to have two very distinct looks. The character is kind of trapped between two worlds. The world of her family and her community and we wanted that to feel oppressive without being too heavy handed about it, but we wanted

to give that feeling of unease and discomfort. And so we used very slow tracks and slow zooms and we kept the camera kind of static with odd framing. And the editing was more slow pace than deliberate. generally those scenes are when she's inside. and then when she's outdoors and particularly when she's falling in love with Pascal we wanted it to have a more organic feeling. Predominantly they are handheld scenes and the editing is more impressionistic it plays with

continuity a lot and it's more guided by emotion. We kind of break these rules as well but we wanted to set up a sort of general philosophy based on where she is, who she is with, what she is feeling. And then we were going to have a different aesthetic approach to that.

What it does for me is really heighten the tension. Then when you add in some very atmospheric sound into the mix you get a film that triggers multiple senses.



Me and the sound designer are very very big fans of [David] Lynch and how he can very imperceptibly take you down into a very psychological place without you noticing. I think sounds can be almost the most expressive part of the film because it's the part that can go through the back door. You won't notice too much if your heightening the sound as cinema is such a visual medium. You can affect the audience in a much more psychological way with the types of sound design. So me and the sound designer were constantly asking ourselves questions about how to do it without distracting the audience. How can we make this root more firmly with the subjectivity of the character through the sound design? Whether that's just an ominous tone that is reverberating through the background when she's at the house or something that's a little bit more warm and intimate when she's in nature. And it felt like there was something comforting about the sound of birds or wind or the forest. And we tried to push it along hopefully without breaking that relationship with reality.

It reminded me in a way of *Under the Skin* which uses sound in a more oppressive fashion. I think it's the isolation or the different landscapes. We don't see Jersey often on screen.

Well that's good because I'm a huge fan of that movie. And it's also nice to see filmmakers making movies about the specific regions that they are from. Like Francis Lee making *God's Own Country* and Clio Barnard making *Dark River* and *Lady Macbeth* being set

in Durham. Films don't all have to be set within a few miles of Hampstead Heath. You can explore different landscapes. In some ways we felt that our film was quite un-British. I'm from Jersey and it's only a few miles away from France, so I was very much influenced by French filmmakers. Bruno Dumont shoots around Brittany and the landscape is quite similar. And I thought about Claude Chabrol type thrillers or Claire Denis. Sometimes they're even more of an influence than British filmmakers. We want us to really use the island and the paradisaical nature of that type of landscape as a juxtaposition to the crimes instead of trying to draw tension from the landscape. Traditionally in a thriller you would draw the tension from the landscape and from the mood and from the weather in order to make it seem more ominous. And I felt that we had seen that a lot of times in British movies and they can all feel very gloomy. And that can be great and I love some of those movies, but I felt that it felt more genuine to adapt to the scenic side of Jersey and the area that I grew up in. It is very beautiful. We just used that as some kind of counterpoint to the horror of the crimes that had been committed. We are maybe a degree or two or more there and we may have allowed ourselves a bit of artistic licence to grade in another couple of percent of warmth. We happened just to shoot in a summer that we were very lucky with the weather. So we kind of embraced that. Of course there are other influences like *Badlands*, which is one of my favourite movies. West

Texas looks beautiful as it's all shot at sunset and with that type of landscape you have the horror of these crimes, which are very brutal, but they're set within this incredibly beautiful landscape. I thought that maybe there's something more interesting about the way he sort of rendered that as a sort of fairytale. It felt a sort of fitting reference point for us, as opposed to making a dark gloomy British thriller. There's a lot of them about, and I love them. They're great. But it just didn't feel genuine to me because I'm from Jersey.

We had that here with John Michael McDonagh's *Calvary*. The landscape of Sligo is beautiful, but the events happening in the film are horrible.

I like that one. I like when what you are seeing is kind of incongruous what is happening in the story and in the setting. There's something there that I find quite striking.

There's a duality to the location in *Beast* and there seems to be a duality to all of the people in *Beast* as well they all seem to be hiding something.

Yes, all of the characters in one side of themselves, and they're hiding something. They might even be hiding something from themselves. I think it's very interesting to go there. When we were developing the script there was often the question about what are the characters lying about. Because we all keep secrets from other people even in a small way.





And then deeper question was what are the characters lying about to themselves? And that kind of duality about what is above the table, what's below the table, and Jersey seeming like this safe and wholesome place, which it is, but it can still be the epicentre for some sort of evil character. You have this wholesome perfect family and there are families that I would have visited when I was a kid. Some of my friends families and then when I went behind the front door I realised that I found something not quite sinister but chilling about the hierarchy within certain families. Some of my friends had a very differential relationship to their

parents and the family that I'm from we are more like mates than we are like parents and children. Seemingly perfect environment, seemingly perfect community, seemingly perfect households and relationships and people, and then when you poke behind those facades you see something unexpected. It's a very different movie but something like *Blue Velvet* was a touchstone thematically. It has one of the best openings I think in cinema. and the whole movie is about what is happening behind these forgotten American towns. Finding out the dysfunctionality behind seemingly normal domestic environments I think that's very interesting.

In many ways it's Kafka-esque. It's that pretty normal story with just one element changed.

Yeah it kind of gave us confidence. We kind of made life difficult for ourselves where you've got this film about serial killer stalking an island, but there's no murders on screen. And we're not following the detective hunting the killer. We're not hunting a macabre psychopath. We are really following a character who is on the periphery of these stories. That actually takes a lot of tools away from you as a filmmaker. All of the archetypal scenes that you would go through to create tension and set-pieces are sort of taken away from you. But then when we thought well maybe the film can be psychologically unsettling, that can have emotional tension and it's not like we're gruesomely fascinated by the violence of these crimes, we're interested in the emotional turmoil at the character goes through. It felt like that was a very rich arena to explore. what is going on inside this character, behind these normal houses, within a seemingly normal relationship. it felt that the more we dug into that the more it felt incredibly dramatic. What looked like a problem originally in development, that there is no cops, there is no bad guy, and no one is stamping anybody, actually turned into a virtue.

Then how did you go about getting this made? Who did you have to pitch it to?

There were two different producers that came on board, the BFI and Film Four. There had actually been a few feature films around the time that I was developing it that had kind of straddled the art-house, elevated genre realm. They were partly very strong stories, but they were very strong character pieces as well. When I saw Martha Marcy May Marlene, there was a kind of thing in there where it's got this gothic Americana story. It's about a woman escaping a cult, but really the main story is about the girl and how she is psychologically trapped despite now being outside of this cult environment. I saw *Animal Kingdom* and *The Place Beyond The Pines*, and I saw filmmakers were making their first or second feature and some of

them are quite low budget, but they were creating these sort of mythical backdrops. They became reference points. Of course Hitchcock has some influence with his female lead psychological thrillers like *Shadow of a Doubt* and *Suspicion*. It's almost like a Hitchcock setup but I want to shoot it like somewhere between Lynch and Malick. It has to feel really naturalistic at some points and really psychological at another points. You might be setting yourself up for a fall with those touch points. Aim high. I suppose I was pitching a movie that hadn't been done in the UK much before. There wasn't a format because I wanted to have it with this fable quality. I was really interested in how directors with more arthouse aesthetic were starting to work with genre. Someone like Lynne Ramsay when she did *We Need To Talk About Kevin* and now *You Were Never Really Here*. I thought wow she's got such a curious eye and there is such a focus on details and she's really getting some sort of poetic visual rhythm in her films, but she's working with much pulpier material. Someone like her quite a big influence. So it was a whole manner of films, from older ones like Hitchcock and Chabrol, to the masters like Lynch and Malick, to up-and-coming filmmakers.

Some of our filmmakers here, like Lenny Abrahamson are working in the same sphere and also working with FilmFour. They seem to be allowing artists to make what they wish to make.



They have been really fundamental in the development of a lot of careers, like Steve McQueen, Lynne Ramsay, Andrea Arnold, Shane Meadows, and Yorgos Lanthimos. There was a year, maybe 4 years ago, in Cannes where they had four films in competition. I don't think that any other production company or financier had had that. I found out really unique. They invest in quite a number of films, and they have notes, it's not like they just write a cheque, you collaborate with them. But they try to encourage filmmakers to find the uniqueness in their voice. And I think it's great that they can invest in them and help artists find voices. I felt very at home and supported by both them and the BFI. And even though I really love to work Stateside and work with U.S. talent, there's a part of me that feels really supported by the BFI and FilmFour. Ideally they could still come and work on my projects even if they are filmed on the other side of the pond. And they're making bigger films, the likes of *Three Billboards*. They are expanding their canvas and types of films that they want to be involved in,

as well as encouraging new voices. It seems like they are not mutually exclusive aim to make really thoughtful and hopefully cinematically daring stories told with like a sophisticated type of filmmaking, but also reach audiences. I think that as long as there's the possibility to do that I want to be in that game. these are the types of films that I always return to, those films that were made in the 70s, like *Chinatown*, *The Godfather*, *Rosemary's Baby*, *Dog Day Afternoon*, *Taxi Driver*. That period has so much romance for me, because they were making films that were entertaining and they were captivating stories, but they had so much depth to them. They had characters and so many dimensions to them.

What has changed since then?

It's harder now as you can get pushed to either end of the spectrum, you are encouraged towards making the massive blockbuster, or you stay in the arthouse silo. That middle ground has disappeared or moved to television now. As long as there's the chance to make medium budget films that seduce and challenge an audience that's just what I want to aim for, and *Beast* was my first experiment in making something that was kind of playing with genre but it was really an excavation into a character. Genre is the Trojan horse in which you can smuggle in to an audience what you really want to talk about. and for me that's kind of like a human question, like a human predicament, a very complicated moral question, and you're using parts of the genre language to try and captivate an audience and seduce them into the cinema. And then once they're in there seats you can give them a tasty and complex meal. ❄️





He who cares, wins: Frank Berry and the working class

Words: Jason Coyle

The documentary as artefact is a fascinating time stamp. That snapshot period when it was made can be more informative further down the line where it can illuminate an even clearer thematic message. So it goes with ***Ballymun Lullaby***, Frank Berry's acclaimed documentary from 2011. Ron Cooney is our lead in for the film. An optimistic and funny music teacher of the kind you dearly wished you had growing up. A film ostensibly about a music programme in St. Joseph's school in Ballymun on the north side of Dublin, the opening sequences fill in the history of the area through archival footage. And what footage it is. We see protests in the 1960s about the rising cost of rent and people not being able to rent or buy homes. The high rise towers of Ballymun were seen as a response to the crisis. This scenario is extremely familiar to anyone in 2018 who notes with alarm the phenomenal rise in rents and the

lack of housing, both with social housing and general stock. We seemed to be doomed to repeat mistakes. Berry is acutely aware (see also the excellent recent doc *The 4th Act* which explores this in more detail) of the toll this takes on the residents of the area. In that archival footage we note the lack of playing spaces for children after the flats were built. It happened again when the regeneration of the area took place. Ballymun is an area littered with broken promises and people with faded hopes. They are not unique across working class Dublin (and beyond) but the social experiment of the towers has meant that there is plenty written about the area.

Filmmakers have always been drawn towards working class stories and what they say about society. In Ireland we have had Lenny

Abrahamson's *Adam and Paul*, John Boorman's *The General*, Alan Parker's *The Commitments* to name a few. What marks Berry apart from his contemporaries in Ireland is the feeling of a hard earned authenticity. In ***Ballymun Lullaby*** it is his patient and intimate chronicling of the young people who are drawn to the music. In particular the 'on the move' interviews with older teenagers Tara, Darren and Wayne, who speak about their hopes and dreams and what the music program has meant to them. These interviews are terrific, frequently punctuated by younger children mugging to camera at any opportunity. But it is the humanity that shines through, they trust Berry and seem to know that his camera will not betray them. In ***I Used to Live Here***, the work with both Headstrong, the National Centre for Youth Mental Health and the young (and mostly first time) actors in preparation for the film

performances from the terrific cast. Most are from Killinarden in Tallaght, where the film is made and the community is superbly represented on screen. A lot of the time we sense the authenticity. But it is not screaming out. It is in the smallest of details. Amy's dad getting a quick pick for the lotto in the local shop. Amy using a pub pint glass for water with dinner. Much of this is down to budget but also a director's interest and understanding of the world he is trying to convey. In *Michael Inside*, Berry researched the prison system with the Pathways Centre and it clear that his research was thorough. This is an impeccably realistic trip through the prison system and how corrosive to your life it can be. The sentence you serve isn't the only sentence you serve.



Berry, particularly in reviews for *Michael Inside*, has been compared to film directors such as Mike Leigh and Ken Loach. It is easy to see why. His similar interest in working class characters is obvious, his workshopping with actors before filming is certainly something Leigh does plenty of. Like those directors Berry is interested in the social contract, where fairness does or doesn't interact with real life. But there is something that is missed in the comparison. Berry believes in hope and the possible difference one person can make. He also seems, to quote Whitney, that children are our future. We can see the faith in humanity he has for the children in *Ballymun Lullaby* (as do I, they literally make me weep with hope). In *I Used to Live Here* he acknowledges the pressures young people are under in the modern world. But even though the hope is somewhat tempered at the end, it is still there. In *Michael Inside* the hope is in the essential decency of Michael and how much he wants to do the right thing. He also avoids one of the main criticisms of

Leigh and Loach's films, namely the evil middle/upper class caricature. Berry's characters seem compromised at worst, as much a product and shaping of their backgrounds as his protagonists. It is a messy world he seems to be saying and individuals can do bad things for a myriad of reasons. This makes his films better, the injustices more impactful.



But Frank Berry is not naïve. He knows and indeed shows what the prison system does to minor offenders. He is in awe of the work done in Killinarden by the National Centre for Mental Health but surely despairs over cuts to the mental health services in Ireland. Similarly it is also clear how important programmes like music and other arts can mean to an area such as Ballymun but if the recent controversy over sports funding is anything to go by areas such as Ballymun will be left, as always, to rot. Berry draws attention to these deficiencies but he is not lecturing us through his characters. This isn't a civics lesson. It is woven through the fabric of his films, his lens.



In talking about the social aspects to his work what can sometimes be obscured is the remarkable technical skill in his films. Considering the budgets Berry's films look like they cost a lot more than they do. The cinematography by Tom Comerford in *Michael Inside* is superbly claustrophobic, continuing on from and contrasting with Colm Mullen's

excellent Tallaght vistas in *I Used to Live Here*. His casts in both those films are phenomenal, with the superb Dafhyd Flynn the link to both of the films. With Flynn and the brilliant Jordanne Jones (brilliant as Amy in in *I Used to Live Here*) we have two potential breakout actors from a working class background (add in Barry Keoghan and the fantastic Caoilfhionn Dunne and Ireland has a very bright future in this regard). The scores in all three films are composed with some grace by Daragh O'Toole. This is a tight knit group of very talented people.



It is mentioned in *Ballymun Lullaby* about how Ballymun was a by-word for deprivation for news media and media in general (films, TV shows etc.). This kind of perception extends to Tallaght, Coolock, Finglas and various other places in working class Dublin. Where *Ballymun Lullaby* is very effective is showing the thirst for learning and the need for people with limited chances in life to express themselves. Across these three films Berry is continuously asking about our society and what we want from it. We want less crime but we do not invest enough in education in working class communities. We want drugs addicts off the streets but not nearly enough is invested in drug treatment facilities. We want to see less homeless people lying in doorways but the government is seemingly paralysed in dealing with this problem. We want the court system to work but it is completely stacked against working class people huge sums of money made by 'respectable' people in this area. Berry's films are asking, no pleading, with society to be better and fairer. It really shouldn't need a filmmaker to state the bloody obvious. But here we are. See the films. They are brilliant and individual and have the effect of making you feel a little wiser and maybe even nicer with the watching. That really is a wondrous thing. I hope they can continue for many years to come.



Michael Inside

The new film from writer/director Frank Berry (*Ballymun Lullaby, I Used To Live Here*) is a powerful story about Michael, an impressionable 18-year-old who gets caught holding a bag of drugs for his friend's older brother and ends up being sent to prison for three months as a result.



Let the Sunshine In (Un Beau Soleil Intérieur)

Juliette Binoche plays Isabelle, a divorced artist living in Paris, who has several potential lovers and suitors competing for her attention, or in some cases displaying complete indifference despite Isabelle's own obvious interest...



Making the Grade

Ken Wardrop's new documentary *Making the Grade* invites us into the world of the piano lesson as teachers and students throughout Ireland prepare for the annual graded musical exams.



The Square

Swedish director Ruben Östlund follows his highly acclaimed hit *Force Majeure* with this Palme d'Or winning no-holds-barred satire of the art world.



A Fantastic Woman (Una Mujer Fantástica)

After his international hit *Gloria*, Chilean director Sebastián Lelio presents this moving drama about a woman struggling with societal prejudice.



Heartstone (Hjartasteinn)
access > CINEMA Exclusive:

The long-standing friendship between two pre-teen boys in a small Icelandic village is threatened when they strike up romantic relationships with a pair of local girls, in this affecting and beautifully crafted debut feature from Guðmundur Arnar Guðmundsson.



Goldstone

Australian director Ivan Sen's follow-up to 2013's *Mystery Road* is a complex, stylish and tense western that sees Indigenous Australian detective Jay Swan investigating the disappearance of a Chinese migrant worker in the Outback town of Goldstone.



Hotel Salvation

Believing that his life is coming to an end, 77 year-old Daya decides that he must travel to the Indian holy city of Varanasi so that he may attain salvation before dying. His overworked son Rajiv reluctantly accompanies him. *Hotel Salvation* is a charming comedy-drama about death that, at its heart, is a delightful, poignant celebration of life.



Rosalie Blum

A random encounter has unexpected and life-changing consequences for three characters in *Rosalie Blum*, a quirky, heart-warming tale based on the graphic novel trilogy by French artist Camille Jourdy.



Glory (Salva)

Co-directors Kristina Grozeva and Petar Valchanov confirm the promise shown in their award-winning debut, *The Lesson*, with this new satirical drama.



Call My By Your Name

Based on the romantic novel by André Aciman, *Call Me By Your Name*, the lovingly crafted new film from Luca Guadagnino (*I Am Love*), is a sensual tale of first love.



in Between (Bar bahar)

In Between, the remarkable feature debut from Maysaloun Hamoud, explores the challenges facing young Arab-Israeli women who must negotiate being "in between" cultures and traditions.



Casting 2018



Northern Ireland Screen is seeking applications for its Casting skills development scheme – CASTING 2018

CASTING 2018 is a paid placement scheme (NMW/NLW) which will run from June 2018 – 31 March 2019. This is an initial 10-month contract with the possibility of an extension thereafter.

Participants will gain experience with a local Extras/Casting agency on Northern Ireland Screen funded productions.

The programme will provide a training opportunity in the Extras department for one person. Previous experience within an Extras department as an Assistant Director, or set experience, is desirable but not essential.

Where is it based?

The scheme and placements will be based in Belfast, Northern Ireland and participants will be expected to base themselves in Northern Ireland for the duration of the scheme.

Who is eligible to apply?

You are eligible to apply if you can answer YES to these two questions:

- Are you a legal resident of the UK?
- Are you available to participate in the scheme for from June 2018 – 31 March 2019.

o these two questions please do not apply. In eligible applications will be automatically discarded.

What are the priorities?

Applicants who can demonstrate a keen eye for casting and a long-term commitment to working in the area of Casting and Extras Coordination are being sought, nobody else should apply. Applicants who can demonstrate excellent organisational and time management skills along with first-class communication and interpersonal skills will be prioritised. Previous experience within an Extras department as an Assistant Director, or set experience, is desirable but not essential. Please click here for a full job description.

How do I apply?

To apply to the Casting 2018 scheme applicants must submit the following:

- A completed application form.
- A ONE A4 page letter of application confirming that you meet the eligibility requirements of the scheme, your aims for the future and how this scheme would help you achieve them.
- A current CV with the contact details of two referees.

How will applications be assessed?

Representatives of Northern Ireland Screen will assess your application based on the following criteria:

- The information contained within the applicant’s letter.
- Strength of CV and references from referees.
- Suitability of the scheme for the applicant, i.e. how the individual’s career will benefit from Casting 2018.
- The applicant’s demonstration of a long-term commitment to working in this area within the film and television industry.
- In the event of a high number of applications being received the desirable criteria will be used to shortlist for interview.

NOTE: Short listed applicants will be invited for interview by Friday 11th May 2018.

Hardcopies

Hardcopies of the application details can be obtained by contacting Paula Campbell at Northern Ireland Screen on 028 90 232444.

For application queries please contact Paula directly.

Email both pages of the completed application form, along with all required application materials to: applications@northernirelandscreen.co.uk

Or post your application to:

Casting 2018
Northern Ireland Screen
3rd Floor, Alfred House
21 Alfred Street
Belfast
BT2 8ED

**Deadline for applications:
1200 hrs Friday 4th May 2018**

PLEASE NOTE: under no circumstances will applications be accepted after this deadline.

NB: Due to the high volume of applications Northern Ireland Screen receive, unfortunately we are unable to offer individual feedback to unsuccessful applicants.



SCREEN TRAINING IRELAND

TALENT. CREATIVITY. ENTERPRISE.

Intimacy Etiquette for Film and Television

30th April

Cost: €0

Venue: Bow Street Academy, Smithfield, Dublin 7

Bow Street Screen Acting Academy and Screen Training Ireland are seeking participants for "Intimacy Etiquette for Film and Television".

This course will provide guidance on best practice for Actors, Producers, Directors, 1st Assistant Directors and Directors of Photography on working with scenes of intimacy.

Ita O'Brien is a movement director and intimacy coordinator for film, television, and theatre. She teaches in some of Britain's premier acting schools, publishes research, and devises her own work. She is currently working to establish best practice for producers, directors, and actors working with scenes of sexual content (Intimacy on Set).

The course will be facilitated by Shimmy Marcus, Creative Director, Bow Street.

Participant Profile:

This course is aimed at Actors, Producers, Directors, 1st Assistant Directors and Directors of Photography.

Application Procedure:

Please apply online at www.screentrainingireland.ie with a current CV by 12:00 on the 23rd of April. For further information please email grainne.bennett@screentrainingireland.ie

Script Analysis for Actors

May 3rd and 4th

Venue: Dublin TBC

Cost: €150

Screen Training Ireland in association with Bow Street Screen Acting Academy is seeking participants for "Script Analysis for Actors".

This course will provide guidance to actors on:

- How To Read and Choose A Project
- Reading The Writer's Intentions
- Understanding Dramatic Tension
- Scene-Enhancing versus Scene-Stealing
- Gleaming Details Conveyed by The Actor

Mary Kate O'Flanagan is an award-winning screenwriter and story consultant in the European film and television industry. She teaches screenwriting in The UK and The US, across Europe as well as in Ireland for Screen Training Ireland among others.

She has written six feature-length screenplays, five of which have been optioned and supported by funding from Bord Scannain/IFB and a pilot for a television series which won the EATC Prix Europa.

Mary Kate is Ireland's First Grand Slam Champion Storyteller at The Moth, a title she won at The Abbey Theatre in October 2015. She is also The Grand Slam Champion Storyteller at The Moth in LA, a title she won in January 2017.

Participant Profile:

Actors who wish to enhance their script analysis skills.

Application Procedure:

Please apply online at www.screentrainingireland.ie with a current CV by 12:00 on the 18th of April. For further information please email grainne.bennett@screentrainingireland.ie

Investigating Characters

April 24th and 25th

Venue: Dublin tbc

Cost: €150

Screen Training Ireland is seeking participants for "Investigating Characters".

This course will provide guidance to writers and creatives on:

- Clarifying a Character's Primary Motivation
- How to Write Secondary Characters
- Beats of Transformation
- The Gleaming Detail

Mary Kate O'Flanagan is an award-winning screenwriter and story consultant in the European film and television industry. She teaches screenwriting in The UK and The US, across Europe as well as in Ireland for Screen Training Ireland among others.

She has written six feature-length screenplays, five of which have been optioned and supported by funding from Bord Scannain/IFB and a pilot for a television series which won the EATC Prix Europa.

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Participant Profile:

This course is aimed at emerging screenwriters, producers and development personnel.

Application Procedure:

Please apply online at www.screentrainingireland.ie with a current CV by 12:00 on the 16th of April. For further information please email grainne.bennett@screentrainingireland.ie

Sound on Film

With Glenn Kaufmann

Making music with Making the Grade

There's plenty of press given to big budget series and breakout features made in Ireland, and the few Irish documentaries that make it onto our radar tend to be about social issues, immigration, or some connection we have to the land. The fact that director Ken Wardrop's work (*Mom and Me, His & Hers*) focuses on intimate personal connections, make his films feel quite fresh and compelling. His latest film, ***Making the Grade*** tackles the niche (and for some, traumatic) subjects of piano lessons, student-teacher interaction, and the Royal Irish Academy of Music's "grades" for piano students. After watching the charming and quiet, but persistently probing film, I was curious to learn about Wardrop's approach to sound. How do you capture sound in a piano lesson without affecting the lesson? And, in a film about such a broad range of music, how do you choose the score, etc.?

Wardrop's films offer us glimpses of the connections between people and situations, so I had to ask about his own connection to music, lessons, and particularly the piano. Because he'd often used piano in his past films, he says he's "always been working with it (piano music), and liked it on that level". Growing up his family always had a piano in the house, but more as furniture than something that ever got played. And, he now lives with a pianist. So, as he began to think about and consider piano as a subject, and narrowed his focus to piano lessons, he thought, "Here's a wonderful window of opportunity into a bizarre relationship between a teacher and a student, who only get to meet each other once a week for thirty minutes. Sometimes that relationship can go on for twelve or fourteen years

while someone goes through the grades". He continues saying, "Obviously then, the grade system itself provided this wonderful opportunity of a narrative structure that, as a documentary maker, you're always looking for."

Production & Process

When pressed about the details of sound in production, Wardrop admits that with his small team, they wind up each wearing many hats, and often approach challenges differently than larger productions. For *Making the Grade*, Wardrop's production coordinator, Steve Battle, also recorded the sound. Battle's musical background (playing in bands) gave him an understanding of how to record the piano as best he could with the gear they had available.



And, though they didn't want to disrupt the rehearsal process too much, they did take the time to put radio mics. on the two characters (teacher and student) in each scene, as well as swinging a boom on the piano for lessons. These mics. were mixed to two channels, with both radios going to one channel, and the boom placed on its own ISO (isolated) track. For scenes with only one individual (usually a student) playing, they used the "extra" radio mic. for further coverage

of the piano. And these two-channel mixes went from the mixer straight to camera.

Wardrop proudly points out that Battle had “never done sound for film before”. And given the constraints of the production, and the barebones crew’s limited inability to throw resources at location sound issues (lawn mowers, dogs, etc.), the sound is “quite good throughout the film”.

While Wardrop and his team did their best not to affect the “process” of the lessons, certain concessions had to be made. To allow for technical issues such as focus, framing, etc., some lessons were extended from 30 to 45 minutes. And, on occasion, he would interrupt a lesson for reasons of story. For example, in a typical lesson, teacher and student might labor over a given scale or musical phrase for most, or all, of a lesson. But during production, Wardrop might ask them to move on to another piece, or take a different approach.

“Score” & Post Production

Apart from the last track in the film, which was recorded by pianist Ben Murray in a studio, the music in the film is all played by the characters in the film during filming. Nothing was re-recorded after it was shot. In fact, the opening piece of music stands on its own so effectively that the audience hardly notices as it deftly pulls them into the first scene.

Wardrop admits to being something of a perfectionist in general, but, in a film that’s all about music, and, as with his other work, relies so heavily on dialogue, he confesses to maybe driving his crew

a bit hard. But, it wasn’t just them. He worked hard all the way through the final mix to banish any dialogue inconsistencies. And the result is a film that sounds very good, does justice to students working at all levels of ability.



For those students that are clearly struggling, Wardrop honors their struggle, and makes it more real by capturing it honestly and cleanly, and not trying to pretty things up. He neither mocks their trials nor gets overly emotional about their successes. Overall, this gives the film a nice sense of realism, while still preserving bit of distance.

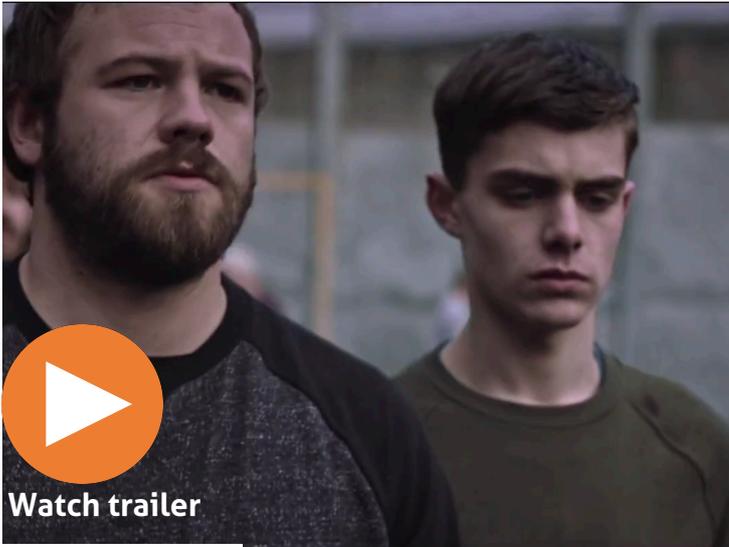
Ultimately, the quiet, nurturing relationships and personal struggles in Ken Wardrop’s *Making the Grade* are made all the more accessible by the director’s attention to details, both sonic and visual, and by his straightforward approach to his subject.

What do you listen for, and what are you hearing?

Please address your questions, comments, or criticisms to sound@cin.ie.



OUT NOW



Watch trailer



Michael Inside

Written and directed by Frank Berry, **Michael Inside** stars Dafhyd Flynn, Moe Dunford and Lalor Roddy and tells the story of Michael McCrea, an impressionable 18-year-old living with his grandfather Francis in a Dublin housing estate, who gets caught holding a bag of drugs for his friend's older brother and is sentenced to three months in prison.

Michael Inside premiered at the Galway Film Fleadh last summer where it won Best Irish Film and Dafhyd picked up the Bingham Ray New Talent Award. Since then it's been wowing audiences and critics alike. It picked up the Audience Award at the Cork International Film Festival in November and has garnered numerous five-star reviews. The film had its UK premiere at the highly regarded Glasgow Film Festival this week where received ecstatic reactions from the festival audience.

Produced by Donna Eperon, Tristan Orpen Lynch and Aoife O'Sullivan for Subotica and Write Direction Films, the film was made with funding from the Irish Film Board.



Watch trailer



Making the Grade

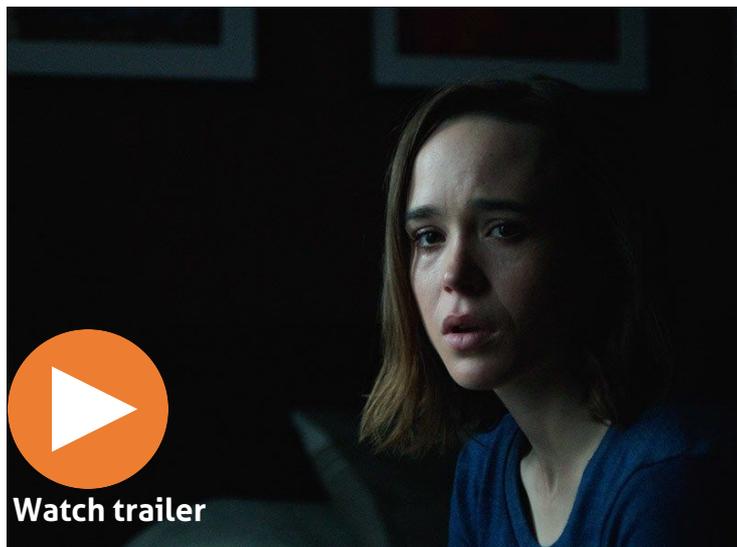
Irish documentary filmmaker Ken Wardrop's returns with his latest feature **Making the Grade**.

Wardrop's signature style once again shines through in these heart-warming and life-affirming tales of students and their beloved piano teachers.

Making the Grade invites us into the world of the piano lesson. Every year teachers and students throughout Ireland prepare for graded musical exams. These exams can be pleasing for some but daunting for others. Each student has their own particular goal but reaching Grade Eight is considered a pinnacle. This endearing and uplifting documentary explores the bond between piano teachers and their pupils as they struggle through these grades. This is a story of the transformative power of music and the pride and happiness it provides both the students and teachers. It may inspire us all to keep making the grade.

Making the Grade is directed by Ken Wardrop and produced by Andrew Freedman. It is a Reel Arts film funded by the Arts Council. The film played the 2017 Audi Dublin International Film Festival under its original title *The Piano Lesson*.

OUT NOW



Watch trailer



Watch trailer



The Cured

The Cured, which is Irish writer/director David Freyne's feature debut, is set in the aftermath of a world ravaged for years with a devastating virus that turned the infected into zombie-like cannibals. While a cure is found, the wrenching process of reintegrating the survivors back into society begins. Among the formerly afflicted is Senan (Sam Keeley), a young man haunted by the horrific acts he committed while infected. Welcomed back into the family of his widowed sister-in-law (Ellen Page) he attempts to restart his life - but is society ready to forgive him and those like him? Or will fear and prejudice once again tear the world apart?

The film also stars Tom Vaughan-Lawlor, Paula Malcomson, Stuart Graham, and Hilda Fey.

Since its world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival last year, *The Cured* has gone on to win the Best Horror award at Fantastic Fest and screen at the BFI London Film Festival and Glasgow Film Festival.

The film was produced by Rachael O'Kane, Rory Dungan and Ellen Page for Tilted Pictures, Bac Films Production and Bounder And Cad in association with Savage Productions and Yellow Moon Post Production with funding from The Irish Film Board / Bord Scannán na hÉireann, The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland and Northern Ireland Screen.



The Delinquent Season

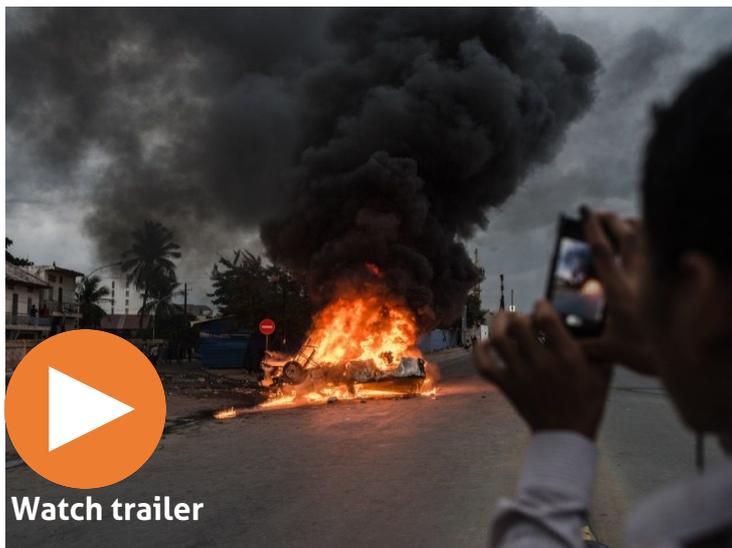
The Delinquent Season is a tense drama which revolves around two couples in suburban Dublin - Jim and Danielle and Yvonne and Chris. On paper, they both appear to live in marital bliss, until an altercation between one couple occurs and cracks begin to appear in both of these seemingly steady marriages. *The Delinquent Season* is an examination of love, lust and family relationships and asks the question how well do any of us really know each other?

The film stars Cillian Murphy (*Peaky Blinders*, *Dunkirk*, *Free Fire*), Catherine Walker (*Critical*), Eva Birthistle (*Brooklyn*) and Andrew Scott (*Spectre*, *Sherlock*, *Denial*).

Writer/director O'Rowe has several key writing credits to his name, including the award-winning *Intermission* (IFTA winner for Best Script in 2003), *Boy A* (BAFTA-nominated in two categories), *Perrier's Bounty* (2010) and *Broken* (nominated for Best Screenplay at BIFA 2012).

The Delinquent Season is produced by Alan Moloney (Siege of Jadotville, *Intermission*, *Mary Shelley*) and Ruth Coady (Siege of Jadotville, *Mary Shelley*) of Parallel Films. Executive producers are Dixie Linder and Nick Marston of Cuba Pictures, and the film was shot on location in Dublin, with support from the Irish Film Board, RTE, and BFI.

COMING SOON



Watch trailer



A Cambodian Spring

A Cambodian Spring is an intimate and unique portrait of three people caught up in the chaotic and often violent development that is shaping modern-day Cambodia. Shot over 6 years, the film charts the growing wave of land-rights protests that led to the 'Cambodian Spring' and the tragic events that followed. This film is about the complexities – both political and personal, of fighting for what you believe in.

Winner of the Special Jury Prize at the 2017 Hot Docs International Documentary Festival, winner of Best Documentary at the Brooklyn Film Festival and nominated for Best Feature Documentary at 2018 Irish Film & Television Awards, the critically-acclaimed film has gone on to win a slew of other awards and feature in many other film festivals around the world.

A Cambodian Spring is a Little Ease Films and Zanzibar Films production.



Watch trailer



The Breadwinner

The Breadwinner is directed by Nora Twomey (co-director, Academy Award®-nominated *The Secret of Kells*) with screen story by Ellis and screenplay by Anita Doron. The Breadwinner is the story of Parvana, a young girl living under the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, who must disguise herself as a boy to become the breadwinner of the family when her father is unfairly imprisoned. A story of self-empowerment and imagination in the face of oppression, **The Breadwinner** also celebrates the culture, history and beauty of Afghanistan with a cast that includes many performers of Afghan descent.

The film is a collaborative effort of Canada's Aircraft Pictures, Ireland's Cartoon Saloon and Luxembourg's Melusine Productions in association with Jolie Pas Productions. **The Breadwinner** was produced with the financial participation of Telefilm Canada and the Talent Fund, the Irish Film Board, Film Fund Luxembourg, Mimi Gitlin Productions, The Shaw Rocket Fund, Artemis Rising Foundation, The Broadcast Authority of Ireland, The Ontario Media Development Corporation, The Harold Greenberg Fund, RTE, Movie Central, The Movie Network a division of Bell Media Inc., the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit and the Ontario Film and Television Tax Credit.

FROM THE CREATORS OF THE ACADEMY AWARD®-NOMINATED
THE SECRET OF KELLS & SONG OF THE SEA

AND EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
ANGELINA JOLIE



THE
Breadwinner

A FILM BY
NORA TWOMEY

ANIMATED BY ANIMAPRODUCTIONS LTD. STORY BY ANIMAPRODUCTIONS LTD. & JULIE PASCAL PRODUCTIONS LTD. DIRECTED BY JULIE PASCAL
PRODUCED BY ANIMAPRODUCTIONS LTD. & JULIE PASCAL PRODUCTIONS LTD. EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS ANIMAPRODUCTIONS LTD. & JULIE PASCAL PRODUCTIONS LTD.
WRITTEN BY ANIMAPRODUCTIONS LTD. & JULIE PASCAL PRODUCTIONS LTD. BASED UPON THE NOVEL BY HOUDA SABBAGH
CASTING BY ANIMAPRODUCTIONS LTD. & JULIE PASCAL PRODUCTIONS LTD. COSTUME DESIGNER ANIMAPRODUCTIONS LTD. & JULIE PASCAL PRODUCTIONS LTD.
EDITED BY ANIMAPRODUCTIONS LTD. & JULIE PASCAL PRODUCTIONS LTD. MUSIC BY ANIMAPRODUCTIONS LTD. & JULIE PASCAL PRODUCTIONS LTD.
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS ANIMAPRODUCTIONS LTD. & JULIE PASCAL PRODUCTIONS LTD. PRODUCED BY ANIMAPRODUCTIONS LTD. & JULIE PASCAL PRODUCTIONS LTD.
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SAM KEELEY

ELLEN PAGE

TOM VAUGHAN-LAWLOR

THE CURE
IS JUST THE BEGINNING



THE ØURED

BORD SCANNÁN NA HÉIREANN / THE IRISH FILM BOARD PRESENTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE BROADCASTING AUTHORITY OF IRELAND AND NORTHERN IRELAND SCREEN
IN ASSOCIATION WITH SHINAWIL AND SAVAGE PRODUCTIONS AND YELLOW MOON POST PRODUCTION A TILTED PICTURES, BAC FILMS PRODUCTION, AND BOUNDER & CAD PRODUCTION
STARRING ELLEN PAGE SAM KEELEY TOM VAUGHAN-LAWLOR COSTUME DESIGNER TIZIANA CORVISIERI MAKEUP & PROSTHETICS DESIGNER JULIE-ANN RYAN PRODUCTION DESIGNER CONOR DENNISON
SOUND DESIGNER/SUPERVISING SOUND EDITOR JENS ROSENLUND PETERSEN COMPOSERS RORY FRIERS NIAL KENNEDY EDITOR CHRIS GILL CASTING BY LOUISE KIELY THYRZA GING DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY PIERS MCGRAIL
LINE PRODUCER MARK BIRMINGHAM EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS AARON FARRELL AIDAN ELLIOTT MARK HUFFAM KELLY BUSH NOVAK JOHN KEVILLE CONOR BARRY
CO-PRODUCERS MATHIEU ROBINET DAVID GRUMBACH PRODUCED BY RACHAEL O'KANE RORY DUNGAN ELLEN PAGE WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY DAVID FREYNE

