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SOUTH WEST FOCUS:

Showcasing the best film-making talent from Bristol and the South West.

Bristol Encounters International Film Festival, one of the world's best-known showcases for new and established international short and animated film talent, returns to the **Watershed** and **Arnolfini** from **16th to 20th November 2011**. As part of the exciting programme of screenings and events, the festival celebrates the work of leading and emerging film-making talent from Bristol and the South West area in **Best of South West** and **Animated Encounters**.

Best of South West highlights new and established local film talent. It includes three Digital Shorts funded by South West Screen. *Ella*, made by writer-director Dan Gitsham, demonstrates Dan's great passion for horror cinema, and features Anthony Head (Buffy, Merlin) in a disturbing story of a father struggling to deal with the terrible events that have destroyed his family. Dan's profile as a writer and film maker has grown significantly over the past few years with his films being shown at over 100 film festivals worldwide. This will be the third year his films have screened at Encounters. He said it was "a real surprise...[and] a great feeling to get the recognition" as one to watch in Screen International's Stars of Tomorrow in 2010. He is currently developing *Ella* into a feature film with producer Sophie Mair and SW Screen.

BAFTA winner and Royal College of Art graduate, Rachel Tillotson presents her 9th short film, *I'll Tell You*, about a 13 year old girl, Lola, who lives in her own world. Lola is angry and adamant that her mother is wrong about so many things. "I'll tell you what love is" she thinks as she feels propelled to tell an intimate tale about what she believes love to be. Rachel has won numerous awards for her films, including Clermont Ferrand, DepicT! and RTS. In 2009 she was a directing mentee on the UK Film Council Guiding Lights scheme to David Yates (director of *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*).

For several years, award-winning UK film-maker and artist, Joe Magee has collaborated with celebrated comedian and actor Bill Bailey (*Black Books*, *Never Mind the Buzzcocks*) on a number of large-scale video art and multimedia works for Bill's highly inventive comedy tours at Wembley and O2 London and Dublin. Their latest project *Car Park Babylon*, which they co-wrote and directed, is a modern fable with a Scrooge-like Bill out shopping for Christmas presents. He's confronted by a mysterious force that lurks behind a car park ticket machine.

The programme line-up for **Best of South West** also features Barry Wilkinson's film *请勿打扰 (Do Not Disturb)* which explores what it is like to be a foreign visitor in the UK with dialogue spoken in Mandarin Chinese.

The Things I Think About by Geoffrey Taylor, a peculiar film about a man called Ed and the things he thinks about, and *Until My Hearts, Like, Finished* by Pete Snelling, a filmed created with young people living in the Bridgwater YMCA who talk movingly about their experiences of homelessness.

Award-winning television director and editor Stuart Napier makes his first foray into film directing with *Little White Lies*, a dramatic short about two brothers in temporary care, who go on a picnic with their mum and her new boyfriend only for the brothers to see something sinister in the boyfriend with things taking a dramatic turn...

Paul Dudbridge, who freelances as a Camera Operator and Director for local television stations BBC Bristol and ITV West presents his new film *Maria* which was inspired by wanting to work with the talented young actors at the ITV West Television workshop in Bristol. The main cast were found in the workshop, and were also joined by Amy Burnett and Kessie Bartlett who have both appeared in *Skins*. The story focuses on a teenage girl who tries to shed her old life of prostitution and take herself back to school. Things get complicated for Maria when her new class mates find out about her other life.

Scubaboy are directing duo James and Jon who produce a combination of animation, live action and motion design. They have been working with the charity Cross Border Initiatives (CBI) for their new film ***My Dream / My Reality***. CBI work to combat human trafficking and child exploitation, with a specific focus in Eastern Europe. The Scubaboys' film is a real story about the emotional and psychological impact of sex trafficking from the victim's point of view.

Animated Encounters

The **Ani 1: Animated Worlds** programme showcases two films from Bristol-based animators. **Nokia "Dot"**, directed by Ed Patterson and Will Studd, aka Sumo Science, who's distinctive name comes from Will's father who "was a research scientist until recently, and Ed's beloved uncle Simon [who] was the UK's first sumo wrestler in the 1970's, we just combined the two". They both finished animation and graphic design degrees in Bristol in 2003, and are currently commercials directors at Aardman Animations. The inspiration for their latest animation film comes from "Side-scrolling computer games. We've both grown up around Mario and Sonic amongst others. So the idea of creating something with real objects was immediately inspiring".

This is Linda McCarthy's third year to show her animation films at Encounters, and she will be screening her fourth *Small Birds Singing* film, **Hinterland**. "*Small Birds Singing* is a cartoon strip created by Steven Appleby, one of Britain's most prolific cartoonists (*New Musical Express*, *The Guardian*)...", explains Linda; "*Small Birds Singing* is a country estate, somewhere in England, in which lives a dysfunctional family, their masked butler and a herd of tiny elephants who dust under the furniture. The cartoon strip appeared in the Times Magazine for 8 years".

Steven and Linda are cousins and began their professional collaboration in 2007, when Linda studied animation at Glyndŵr University. "He agreed to let me adapt *Small Birds Singing* into a stop motion film as my graduation film. The resulting film, *Small Birds Singing*, was screened at many festivals worldwide, including Annecy 2008". Linda subsequently formed stop-motion animation company Tiny Elephants to continue their collaboration, making *A Traditional Christmas at Small Birds Singing* which screened at Encounters in 2009 and *The Grand Easter Egg Hunt*, which was at Encounters last year.

Emerging local animators showing their new films at Encounters in the programme **Ani 3: The Human Condition** are Bristol-based freelance animator, Ben Mitchell's film **Ground Running** which focuses on an infant propelled into the world and sees his future life speed past him; and MA Animation graduate at UWE, Bristol, Beatrice Borghini who presents her graduation film, **Liberties**. Arts University College, Bournemouth graduate Mark de Winton Gilbert screens **Perdus** as part of **Ani 4: Travels – Near and Far** alongside Matt Morris and Naomi Zahl's animation **The Bus** about the war memories of a Bristol bus ride, made for the Encounters 0117 Film Challenge.

A former winner of Newport's Film School Ffresh award, animator Daisy Gould shows her new film **Jackie and Kevin 1977** as part of the **Ani 5: Domestic Bliss**, while Samuel Turner presents a short roto-scoped film **The Neighbour** in **Ani 6: Light and Dark** about a man who becomes suspicious of the man next door.

If you're inspired to make your own animation films, then Bristol-based Aardman Animations (a world-leader in producing animation films such as *Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were Rabbit*; *Chicken Run* and *Shaun the Sheep*) will present "a crash course in puppet building" with the **Kids Model Animation Workshops**. It will be a rare opportunity to observe and learn from Jim Parkyn, a top animation industry professional who has been working in animation for nearly 14 years and in Bristol since 2000. Jim will show his approach to sculpting and model making and explains "It is really nice to share with people how much you can achieve in a very short space of time and that they can go away with and make their own bit of movie magic".

Taking short film out of the cinema and onto the streets, the festival presents a series of unusual short film experiences free to the public. The Showroom will host a week-long **Pop Up Cinema**. Encounters will fashion a boutique, pop-up cinema, celebrating talent from across the city with a series of daily short film screenings.

The fabulous **Vintage Mobile Cinema**, which was recently seen on BBC2's *Reel History of Britain* with Melvyn Bragg, is one of seven buses custom built for the British Government in the late 1960s, and used at the time to promote the British industry. As the only remaining example of a quite stunning piece of British transport heritage, it will be a unique opportunity to share a slice of cinema and automotive history as it will screen a free selection of archive films.

The full festival programme, Delegate registration and online tickets sales are available now. For more information visit www.encounters-festival.org.uk.

Join the discussion and find us on Facebook and Twitter @EncountersSFF #ENC2011

EDITOR'S NOTES

Bristol Encounters International Film Festival

SW Focus screening listings:

Best of South West

Wednesday 16 November, 17:30 to 19:30 at Bristol Watershed.

Saturday 19 November, 12:00 to 14:00 at Bristol Watershed. (repeat)

Ani 1: Animated Worlds

Wednesday 16 November, 10:00 to 11:30 at Arnolfini Auditorium.

Friday 18 November, 20:00 to 21:30 at Arnolfini Auditorium. (repeat)

Ani 3: The Human Condition

Thursday 17 November, 10:00 at Arnolfini Auditorium.

Saturday 19 November, 12:00 at Arnolfini Auditorium (repeat).

Ani 4: Travels – Near and Far

Thursday 17 November, 12:00 at Arnolfini Auditorium.

Saturday 19 November, 14:00 at Arnolfini Auditorium (repeat)

Ani 5: Domestic Bliss

Wednesday 16 November, 18:00 at Arnolfini Auditorium.

Friday 18 November, 12:00 at Arnolfini Auditorium (repeat)

Ani 6: Light and Dark

Friday 18 November, 10:00 at Arnolfini Auditorium.

Sunday 20 November, 16:00 at Arnolfini Auditorium. (repeat)

Aardman Presents: Kids Model Animation Workshops

Saturday 19 November at 13:00 and 15:30 at Arnolfini Light Studio.

£5 per child, parents free entry. Suitable for ages 7 +

Pop Up Cinema

Monday 14 to Sunday 20 November, 10:00 to 18:00 at The Showroom.

Vintage Mobile Cinema

The bus will be parked outside the MShed on Friday 18 November, 10:00 to 17:00 and Saturday 19 November, 10:00 to 17:00.

Bristol Encounters International Film Festival is the umbrella festival for Animated Encounters and Brief Encounters which together presents one of the world's best-known showcases and meeting points for new and established international short and animated film talent. The longest running competitive short film and animation festival in the UK, and one of Bristol's leading cultural events, Encounters seeks to promote the importance of short film as a means to develop and progress the next generation of creative talent. The 2011 festival will be held in Bristol, UK, between 16 – 20 November. The festival is funded by the British Film Institute, Bristol City Council, Creative England and South West Screen. Encounters Festivals Ltd operates as an independent company and is a registered charity. For more details log on to: www.encounters-festival.org.uk

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

A selection of images are available to download at: <http://www.encounters-festival.org.uk/press.html>

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