



THE BRITISH
FILMMAKERS ALLIANCE

BUILDING OUR OWN FUTURE IN FILM.



WHAT IS THE BFA?

The **BRITISH FILMMAKERS ALLIANCE** is an **enterprise** designed, developed and driven by a small group of filmmakers in order to create opportunities and platforms for showcasing talent and to self generate funding to be able to bring various projects and opportunities into fruition for filmmakers and actors throughout the UK and Ireland.

The BFA Will be comprised of:

- **A Networking Society** – a free membership site enabling filmmakers and actors to connect with us and each other.
- **A Self Generated Film Fund** – profits from the BFA will form a fund to support filmmakers and actors in a variety of ways with a long term goal to be able to fully fund shorts and low budget features.
- **Dead Dog Opera Films** – the production arm of the BFA, designed to cater for diverse, auteuristic and challenging films, the kind of films often considered too financially risky to invest in in the current economic climate.
- **Books, Training, Offers and Events** – a selection of books offering practical and realistic advice and the wisdom of successful and established filmmakers, actors and film entrepreneurs. Networking opportunities and social events, as well as offers with discounts and deals from affiliated companies.
- **Yearly Festival and Awards Scheme** – initially to take place online, a unique festival and set of awards which will highlight, celebrate and bring accolade to 'yet to breakthrough' talent behind and in front of the camera.

The **BFA** has been designed specifically to encourage innovation and the emergence of new talent. Membership is free and profits from film sales, advertising revenues, book sales, networking events and the Film Festival and Awards Scheme will be driven back into our film fund and go directly towards aiding filmmakers' and actors' careers and funding their projects.





LAUNCH

HOW WE PLAN TO GENERATE PUBLICITY AND BEGIN ACHIEVING OUR OBJECTIVES

Over the course of the next year, Dead Dog Opera Films, the production arm of the BFA, will produce two films:



- the feature 'Drowning Room Only'
- the documentary 'Fires We're Starting...'

The release of both films will signal the official commencement of the BFA.

Until the release of our launch films, we will continue to evolve, adapt and develop the BFA, accruing members, running networking and other events and generating interest and support.

We will begin promoting actors, filmmakers, writers etc, showcasing selected artists and films each month – monthly featured artists and films will form the shortlist and nominees for the yearly Film Festival and Awards which will be judged by our panel of patrons.

During this initial embryonic phase we will endeavour to gain maximum exposure and awareness for our initiative.





Dead Dog Opera Films, the production arm of the **BFA**, will focus on developing and producing a slate of films which aim to be innovative and inventive, pursue a high standard of excellence at their modest budget levels, have singularity of voice, resonant themes and provoke a return to the auteur theory as well as retaining commercial appeal.

The impetus behind Dead Dog Opera Films is to prove what can be done creatively with strong thought process and technical excellence when scripts are conceived that way from the outset, written to budget and executed tightly and efficiently keeping all employment legalities and safety precautions in place. We cannot emulate big budgets and it would be a mistake to try. Therefore, with diversity being our key main asset, we would aim to create a demand for the kind of experimental, creatively risk taking films which can prove an interesting alternative to conventional or mainstream films.

Ensuring that the films Dead Dog Opera Films produce never cost more than their potential market value we can focus on building a business that is sustainable and could have appeal and potential revenue return both at home and outside the UK and Ireland.

Should Dead Dog Opera Films prove a successful endeavour it would hopefully have far reaching benefits across the low budget sector. If we can create a demand for supply of uncompromising and diverse low budget British films they would carry a smaller risk for investors but with greater potential returns. Financiers would get the rewards that would provide the incentive for reinvesting in smaller scale UK films and hopefully an increase and taste for unique, well made, low budget British films would escalate – emulating the insurgence of such films in the American Independent Sector in the 1990's.



FIRES WE'RE STARTING...

Without muckraking or proportioning blame, 'Fires We're Starting...' will aim to explore the reasons why career paths into filmmaking and acting have become more challenging than ever in recent times.

The documentary will endeavour to analyse the inherent difficulties which exist and explore the various ways filmmakers themselves can take advantage of the progression in technology to bring worthwhile projects into fruition with low but realistic budgets – budgets which do not compromise safety, forsake cast and crew salaries and can, through their restrictions and limitations, enhance creativity and produce bold and unique results.



The documentary will showcase the work and talent of up and coming actors, as well as filmmakers who have already taken the first step by producing their own shorts and, in some cases, features – demonstrating that there is a multitude of fresh and exciting undiscovered talent subsisting just below the surface of the 'British Film Industry' as most cinemagoers know it.

We will also speak at length to our patrons (leading members of the British Film Industry) as well as aspiring filmmakers and actors (who can share their concerns for their future) along with sales agents, distributors, production houses, technology developers, film financiers, film executives and film critics and enthusiasts.

We will explore our patrons' career paths to gain a better understanding of the obstacles they overcame as they fought for their vocations. In addition we will put the question 'what now can we do?' to both ourselves, and some of our other business orientated contributors, in order to formulate a clearer picture of the possibilities that exist to us, if we can let go our resistance to change and adopt an alternative approach.

'Fires We're Starting...' will hopefully unearth some empowering viewpoints and, with obstacles examined and potential solutions discussed, present a picture which is more positive than scathing or destructive and encourage us, as new filmmakers and actors, to be pioneers for transformation at our level of the sector.





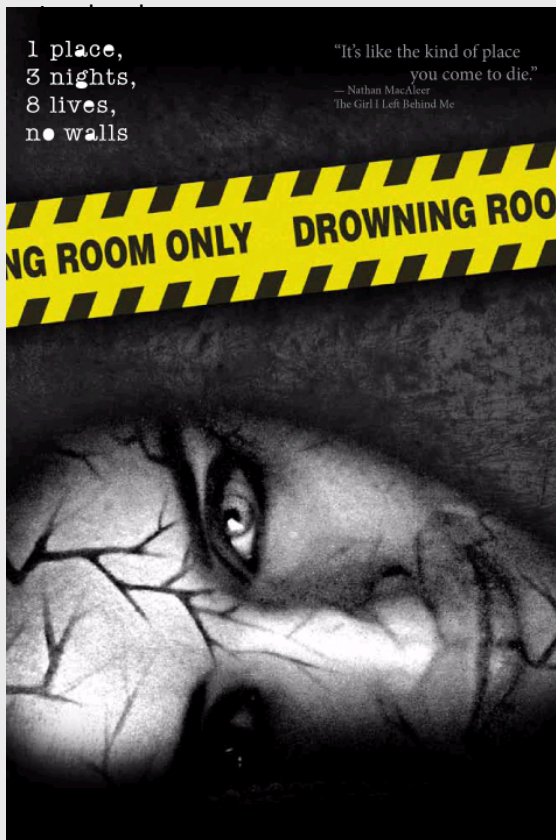
'DROWNING ROOM ONLY'

'**Drowning Room Only**' is a portmanteau thriller set at one location, an old Victorian warehouse, on three different nights; the first when the warehouse is in ruins, the second while it is a construction site and in refurbishment and the third after it has been developed into modern luxury accommodation. The three stories all carry the same main theme, a young man who, for varying reasons, has to escape the place with his life. Exploring issues such as wickedness and

and redemption, murder, revenge and absolution, the three stories all interlink and entwine with one another in a variety of ways, secular and spiritual, blackly comic and moving, surreal and disturbing...

1 place,
3 nights,
8 lives
No walls

Drowning Room Only



Part One 'The Girl I Left Behind Me'

Nathan McAleer is a man with everything; style, looks, money, an endless stream of women falling at his feet. Always chasing the next big deal, Nathan gets more than he bargained for on the day he views an old isolated and dilapidated warehouse with an eye towards purchase for property renovation.

For a mysterious masked woman from his past has set a trap to ensnare him within the baleful place and holds him prisoner there as she turns on her sleek, seductive, wicked charm to play a poisonous and sinister game of cat and mouse. Their strange and stilted dalliance continues with queasy frisson and shards of twisted madness until she literally and figuratively brings him to his knees. Broken in defeat, Nathan finally succumbs and lets his tender and savage angel peel back the last fragile layers of his soul until he is stripped naked to his core and eventually able to account for the consequences of a lifetime of sinful arrogance.



'DROWNING ROOM ONLY'



Part Two 'The Rugby Club'

Having spent six years in prison for the murder of his niece, Charlotte, twenty-nine year old Caleb Mann is finally released from prison after his conviction is found to be based on a 'false confession obtained under duress' and quashed by the Supreme Court. But Cal's emancipation is short-lived, as on the night of his release he is kidnapped by his older brother, David Mann, the murdered girl's father, and dragged deep down into the bowels of a remote rundown warehouse, currently in the midst of reconstruction while it undergoes renovation. In the grey and lonely place David, a man tormented by grief, mistrust and guilt, as he struggles to survive in a world that has taken his daughter from him, enlists the help of his three closest friends and together they put Cal on a trial of their own design and try to beat a confession out

of him and discover the dark truth of Charlotte Mann's terrible death. However, despite the unputting brutality his kidnapers rein down on him, Cal refuses to admit his guilt or declare his innocence. As the night drags on, Cal slyly manages to turn the tables on his omnipotent tormentors, goading and provoking them until some long buried secrets and guilty half-truths come unwittingly to the fore. The battle of wits continues and Cal goes to inhuman lengths and suffers unimaginable cruelties in a bid to prove his innocence to his brother, making one bloody sacrifice after another as he tries to trick the real killer out into the dusty light.



'DROWNING ROOM ONLY'



Part Three 'Your Reasons, Numbers 4 5 7 & 9'

On a Friday night, the week before it is due to be opened to the public for sale, Nathan McAleer's subordinate, surveyor Blake Williams, visits the remote warehouse, now gloriously converted into an opulent luxury home. On a trumped up assignment, thinly veiling Blake's true intention - a romantic weekend away with his girlfriend - he makes the lonely journey only to hit both trouble and disappointment. After knocking down and killing a dog on his way through the winding wooded roads, he then receives a call from his girl informing him of a death in her family and the fact that he will now have to spend the night at the secluded house alone. Feeling rejected and disgruntled Blake arrives at the pristine property where, as the night moves on, the glossy surfaces yield to an eerie desolation and the sleek and stylish interiors give way to a prickly sense of indefinable dread.

Blake's fear and unease is compounded by the series of strange and sinister calls he receives, wrong numbers and salesmen, all seeming to carry a malevolently unspoken agenda and looming tone of threat. From there on in the night gets creepier and more strange and Blake begins to doubt his own sanity; is his sickly progressive fear and the quick glimpses of strange manifestations he bears witness to being brought about by the warehouse's ghostly past inhabitants, or is his once sound mind teetering into madness? The ambiguity of Blake's thoughts and his anxiety is worsened by the inescapable intuition that he is being watched and stalked by someone or something out in the surrounding woods and the decision to either stay or flee carries equal proportions of soul-shaking dread.



CAST

Part One of 'Drowning Room Only' – The Girl I Left Behind Me is currently in pre-production. French actress Delphine Chanéac will play the lead role of Etienne Dane. We are now looking for the male lead to star opposite her as Nathan McAleer.

PATRONS

Their Involvement and Importance

The fresh blood of any industry finds life and subsistence when nurtured and inspired by the wisdom and experience of its current leaders and those who have attained success before.

One of the key factors the BFA is aiming to achieve is to bring together a selection of the British Film Industry's, and a select few international, leading filmmakers and actors to form our group of patrons. Those who are or have been at the top of their game and have a genuine interest in seeing the next generation of talent come through.

A list of our Patrons will be published soon.



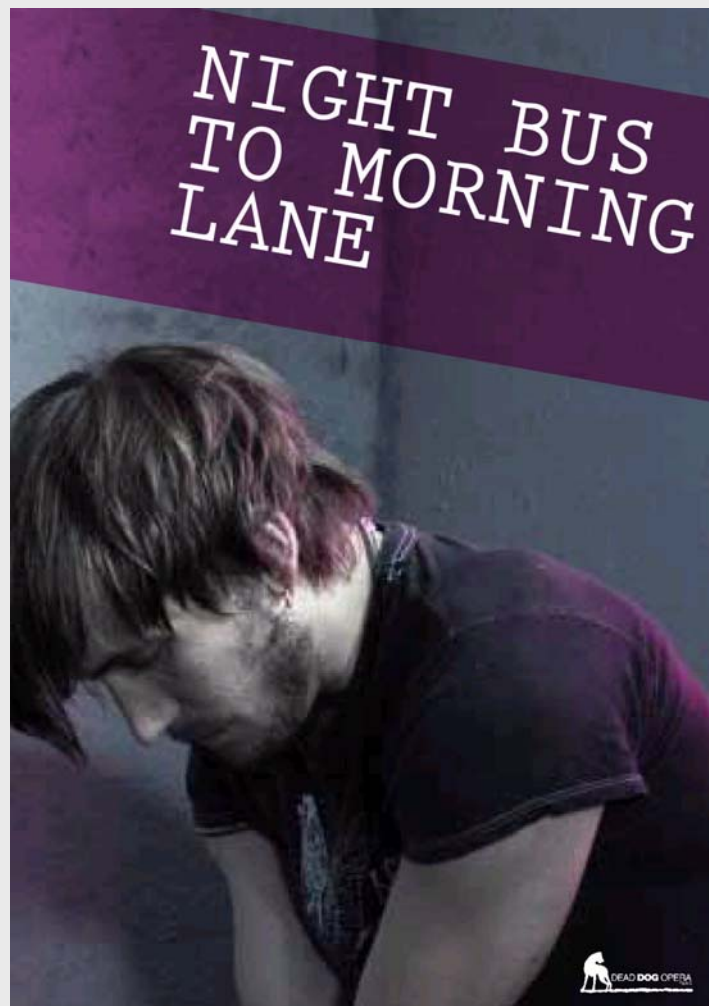
SHORTS: ALL NEW TALES OF THE UNEXPECTED

One of Dead Dog Opera Films goals is to produce a set of shorts, reminiscent of Roald Dahl's 'Tales of the Unexpected' but with a modern contemporary twist.

The films are designed to push boundaries in terms of storytelling, set design, acting and technical execution and are planned to feature a mix of established actors and filmmakers alongside the raw energy and exhilaration of undiscovered talent behind and in front of the camera.

10 stories, all with a twist in the tale.....

Night Bus to Morning Lane
The Portrait of a Stranger
The Death of the Muse
Entwined
To Reach a Racing Heart
As Long as You Follow
Glass Beach Sunday
The Spoiler
Beautiful
Death Mask



NEW AND EMERGING FILMMAKERS

WHY WE MUST START BUILDING OUR OWN OPPORTUNITIES

Nothing gets in the way of a will that wants. There has never been a harder time for filmmakers and actors to breakthrough. And yet we also sit in the midst of the greatest technological revolution since cinema began. For the BFA's incentive to work filmmakers themselves must accept that we live in strange and difficult times across all industries, not just filmmaking, and embrace the challenges and look into the heart of them for the solutions that lie therein. And in order to find those solutions the best thing we can do is accept a degree of change. And change should not be either feared or fought against. For the powerful medium of cinema is one that has undergone countless reinventions across its hundred year history; silent to sound, black and white to colour, film to digital. For emerging filmmakers to survive in this brutal climate we must evolve with our times, work harder than we've ever worked before, trust our instincts, and never give up.

Kurt Vonnegut's dictum states 'we could have saved ourselves, but we were too lazy and cheap to do so'. If filmmakers approach the problems we face with practicality, not panic, tenacity, not despondency, we could amaze ourselves with what we can achieve.

Difficulty inspires creativity. Lowering budgets may not be the desired choice, but in the face of adversity, embracing the idea of working to a smaller scale, capitalizing on digital technology and digging deep for bold and exciting ideas tailored to such budgets may be the answer.

Park Chan-wook, the esteemed Korean director of 'Old Boy' and the highly acclaimed 'Vengeance Trilogy' this year made the film 'Night Fishing' entirely on his iPhone. The no budget horror film 'Paranormal Activity' made for just £15,000, and shot on a camcorder, made \$7million on its' first weekend – even though it was only shown on 160 screens. Ultimately it went on to earn \$194 million worldwide and is considered one of the most profitable films ever made.



From 'Night Fishing' Park Chan-wook



'The 400 Hundred Blows' by Francois Truffaut

While films like 'Paranormal Activity', 'Open Water' and 'The Blair Witch Project' are the exceptions, other, less well publicised home grown films also achieve healthy returns for their investors. A recent British Film made for a budget of under £200,000, had a one day cinematic release but has gone on to make a 94% return for its small group of private investors through DVD sales.

A Return to the Auteur Theory

The unique advantage of creating and governing a self generated film fund is the liberation we will

have to take risks and to offer greater independence to writers, directors and producers. As Truffaut was an advocate for change for French, and ultimately World, cinema with the New Wave in the 1950s and 60s, we believe that our endeavours could spearhead our own movement for change by pushing projects which are bold, daring and uncompromising - thereby offering something alternative and unique to audiences.

Filmmakers have often come together to create their own paths, on both business and creative issues. In the 1920s Mary Pickford, Charlie Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks and D.W. Griffith formed 'United Artists' to better control their own work as well as their futures. The 1990s saw the rise and success of the "Indie Film Movement" in the United States and gave us films like 'Dazed and Confused', 'Pulp Fiction', 'The Shawshank Redemption' and careers to Richard Linklater, Quentin Tarantino, Darren Aronofsky, Todd Haynes and resurgence to John Travolta, Pam Grier and, more recently, Micky Rourke.

The next generation of British filmmakers and actors does have to come from somewhere. Talent matters. There will always be an audience for quality. If we really want to write, act, make films, then nothing, not even the seemingly insurmountable hard times will stop us. So, unless we are all prepared to let British Films die with those currently considered bankable we have to take a stand. We have to see filmmaking as a business as well as a creative endeavour. We have to develop a similar attitude as that naturally inherent in our American contemporaries who are excited rather than disgruntled about working on interesting low budget projects and have passion for them that extends through to the end product. We have to resist slipping into divides and work as one for the same desired outcome. Through a non exploitative effort such as the BFA filmmakers can trust that it is not success for one, but success for all, that is being fought for. With all the new developments in media technology present to us, why would we all just sit down and give up? We can moan and complain about the loss of the Film Council, the lack of public funds, the rarities of opportunities open to us. But surely our energy would be better spent taking up the challenge of making things happen for ourselves. We, as filmmakers, are driven by our passions. We have within us the ability to make powerful and impactful changes if we are prepared to put in the effort to do so. And why would we not? After all, it's our futures that are at stake.



From 'Persona' by Ingmar Bergman



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