

Little Song Films

Newsletter Number 3 January 2005

Intro

Some good new films are up now on the site - details are on page 2.

Our interview for this edition is with film director Roger Thorp. Roger has been closely involved with Little Song Films and there are a number of works by him on the website. At the moment we are in the process of serialising a full length feature film of his in the Narrative section, but in this newsletter we are concentrating on a shorter film, *Hinterland*, which is show in 4 parts on the website.

Images - the images that currently are on the website are by antidote & infamy a couple of multimedia artists who describe their work as “an eclectic middle England mix or irrational unconsciousness spliced with an emotional ambivalence that disturbs yet intrigues. With dutiful respect to negative space, which to us is the night sky and the pitch black itself, these images bring our unconscious mind to your conscious mind.”

The images are shown in their unedited form on pages 8 & 9. More can be seen at www.antitiodeandinfamy.com. Also look out for the live shows they do.

Latest Films

Latest Films

Simon Vince - Between Land And Sky

Added to the site on 06/10/2004. Words are by Emi Kodama. The film is a result of a collaboration between Simon and Emi which aims to cross boundaries between contemporary poetry and experimental ambient music. In this case they also use images and film. See <http://landsky.iuma.com> for more details.

Roger Thorp - Naked August

We have started to serialise this 90 minute film from the beginning of 2005. So far there are 2 episodes on the site in the Narrative section. We describe it on the site as *An experimental film that takes you slowly through poetry and music into the opposite worlds of its protagonists*. Episodes will be put up on the site approximately every 2 weeks. At the moment we're not sure exactly how many episodes there will be. Episode 1 is about 7 minutes long and episode 2 is just over 4 minutes, so probably about 15 episodes in total. Hopefully we'll have some more detailed articles about the film later, but for now here are some credits :-

Cast

Adam Penny

Sophie Clarke

David Barker

Raman Chagger

Rebecca Ford

Luc Frederic

Helen Kirkpatric

Victoria Siddal

Directed by

Roger Thorp

Script

Roger Thorp

Produced by

Iain Brown

Bill Chamberlain

Sound Department

Mike Kingston

Bill Morgan

Matt Vowles

Roger Thorp in conversation with Rob Vasey

Why did you use black & white for filming Hinterland?

We wanted it to be as anonymous as possible in terms of where it was shot for one thing and because black & white creates a different palette - it's about darkness and light rather than about pigment. it's more abstract.

Where was it shot? It looks a bit like France at times.

It's Gloucestershire and London. Some of the interiors were shot in a little studio called Cinema Action which was just about the first film co-op/workshop which existed in England, run by a wild German guy called Gustave Lamche who also goes by the name of Schlacke and they gave us some space and some lights.

What about the hotel?

The interior of the hotel was there but the exterior was in Cheltenham. There was a street where one guy was fascinated by Citroens...

Yes, that's what made me think of France.

...there were 3 or 4 of them parked up in various states of disrepair in this street which had this amazing arch.

Whose car was the Saab?

Get your research right please.

Volvo. Whose was the Volvo?

A friend of mine called Christopher Robin. Chris Collins. He's in Australia now. He was doing pop promos and commercials directing them and we were mates and he lent it to me.

How much did you pay him to put the dent in the door?

Yeah! The thing was the dent was in the door already. We shot it with the dent in the door and it was really nice to have the dent in the door - it was there. But then we had to reshoot one of the scenes and by the time we came to reshoot he'd had the dent in the door repaired.

The car was quite old at that point?

Yeh, we knackered it, man. When it drove into that car park. Later Chris said he'd had to have the chassis repaired, and I felt incredibly guilty, but he wouldn't take any money for getting it done. In that scene where it comes into the car park Rich...

That's Richard Meyrick who co-wrote the film?

Yeh, he's lying on the floor of the car so that when David opens the door it doesn't fly open. So he's lying on the floor where it comes into the car park and the chassis breaks. Rich was ok though! He's a great writer. I've been pestering him to work with me for years since. He wants to but can't get motivated...he's living in Copenhagen now...

And that petrol station - is that a deserted petrol station or did people still actually go there to buy petrol?

Not petrol, but there was a transport cafe there - a really good one - great location. We wiped out the name - I wish we hadn't really - it was called Windrush.

Anyway let's move on and I'd like to bring up the subject of narrative. The film to a certain extent is about narrative it uses various forms of narrative, and I just wondered where that idea came from and why it was chosen?



I don't bloody know to be honest. I don't know how that script came about. It's the first thing that Rich and I wrote together and it went through different phases of expanding the narrative more towards the maritime and the story within the story. The whole theme was never really pointed out to either of us until this guy called Dr Peter Allingham from Copenhagen University (attached at end) who I never met wrote a critique about it. But it wasn't an accident, we were working off instinct and emotion.

Was a lot of it based on what was possible to film rather than a plot and script?

No it wasn't approached like let's look around see what we've got, it was carefully planned out...the actual script was like an outpouring.

You've got this guy he's alcoholic and he's the narrator. Is he alcoholic or is he just on a bender?

He's just on a bender. We'd have had to make more of a study of alcoholism if we'd written him in as an alcoholic. It was just a bender. An excuse to use a hip flask with a picture of a sailor on it.

I was wondering about the character, Pappas. He's mentioned in the script, in the dialogue of the story told. The story's on the cassette isn't it?

Yeh. The narrator relays the story.

We hear about Pappas and he's given a credit at the end. Which character actually is he?

He's the guy in the raincoat walking the dog.

Was he an important character to you? How did he come about? It's a fairly minor role in some ways, but he's mentioned in the narrative.

He was there as a part of the story within the story. Erm

What I'm trying to get at is did he first exist in the story or as a character walking along the road?



He was in the story at first.

And then you found this role for him walking along the road?

Yes. How did that happen? I'm trying to work out what happened with Pappas. He puts down the viewfinder but he also checks into the hotel.

So did you show the film anywhere?

Barcelona - the Barcelona Film Festival, but that was a disaster because they were supposed to screen it before a feature film on the last night. So we went in to see it and then suddenly the feature film came on. And I'd just spent 3 days in bed with food poisoning - in a 5 star hotel they actually paid for. So anyway when it didn't come on I ran up the road about 3 blocks and went to the office and they'd actually packed it away to send back. So I made them get it out and put it on after the film and they put it on without the subtitles and I wished I'd been Bunuel and had rocks in my pockets as people started to walk out. But then again..

People walked out?

A couple of people walked out who were in front of me.

And it was shown recently again in Yorkshire?

That was great, it was brilliant and it went really well. I was amazed by it that they'd seen it on the Little Song site and wanted to screen it.

Ok a few more questions then. Why is the girl the mermaid?

Because we couldn't get a real mermaid....it's the thing about parallel themes - reality & fiction blur. The internal and external blur...

And the white horse - what does that represent?

Waves.

There's quite a few interesting props - the slide viewer, the book with the picture of the city.

That was the view from our bedroom window. From Brick Lane across to the city. For me that was what was beautiful about that film in a way. It was all things designed and built in such a way that they amplified the theme. The sets, the mise en scene, intrinsic to the story, totally.

And that shot where he runs up the hill.

We made him do that quite a lot of times, actually, poor guy.

And you made him drink all that alcohol.

No, but we made a prequel actually called 'Architect', it's about 3 or 4 minutes long. It's

good actually, I'll have to see whether I've still got it. We bought a bottle of Bison Vodka as a prop and he drank most of it through the night. David's a fantastic guy and he's a great actor. He's into production too, we've been involved in trying to raise finance together, mostly for Empires Must Fall, a road movie set in Germany and Italy...

What's he doing now?

Last thing I heard he was in Narbonne eating duck! He's doing loads of theatre and he teaches too.

How old's the girl now?

Candida? She's thirty.

She must remember it clearly - how old was she when the film was made.

Fourteen I think.

Did she get into acting at all?

No, she thought about it. She's my niece.

So you see her?

Yeh, every now and then. There was something you said earlier I wanted to talk about.

The props?

Nah.....Dennis Cullum the cameraman, he was a painter - he worked at Cinema Action....he totally interpreted what I wanted and then some.....and there was this part of the script that David was sitting under a tree - and the camera was rolling "did not come from solid land and solid cities but from the ceaseless unrest of the sea from those unknown highlands ... unknown... forgotten... forgotten" and Dennis just drops the camera down to his side and just cuts. He thought David had forgotten his lines. "But it's the dialogue Dennis". It was classic.

Just going back to Candida - those last shots where she goes out of the hotel and sees the narrator drive back - she's suddenly really freckled.

That's the whole point - it's a parody on Bambi. Didn't you realise that? What sort of interviewer are you?

I should have done my research.

Yeh, it's weird that shot isn't it. There's a couple of shots before where she looks totally different. It's the light - it's the only thing it can be is the way that the daylight is picked up and that her hair was looking different.

She looks a bit older.



Suddenly. But that's the whole point.....

And she goes out and catches the eye of the newspaper delivery boy. There's a bit of romance there.

Yeh and that whistle.

Yeh gets you going doesn't it?

That's me. I did that whistle.

And you appeared in the film as well.

Yeh I did. That's bloody awful.

But you didn't give yourself a credit for the acting part.

No way..

I think it's because you're too good isn't it?

Yeh, where there's a will there's a "Too Good"

Boom boom!

Here follows the article by Peter Allingham referred to above:-

HINTERLAND

A critique by Doctor Peter Allingham of Copenhagen University.

Hinterland is a complicated attempt at showing the fluid boundary between the realms of reality and fiction - the dream and the fairy tale. Moreover, it manifests how one story takes over and creates the background for another, ad infinitum - centred around the capturing of that special point in every story where the *internal* and the *external* merge. This might perhaps be called the *once-upon-a-time* effect, that point where two narratives cross each other and visualise themselves in each other, or become the image of the other; or at that point where the narrator, gradually, as an awakening, becomes aware that he himself is an 'actuant' in the narrative he's narrating - that it is about himself.

Hinterland is an exciting work, with great understanding for and knowledge of the significance of fiction.



images by antidote & infamy



Karlovy-Vary, Prague



Oxshott Woods



Skull Garden



Wardrobe



Merry Glow Round