

Mum's Birthday – 13 December

Scottish independent film Mum's Birthday, produced by Edinburgh Pilton Video as part of Creative Scotland's [Creative Identities](#) programme, has been accepted into the Hollywood Reel Independent Film Festival running from the 14-16 December and was thought worthy of not one but two awards.

Mum's Birthday, directed by Graham Fitzpatrick of [Pilton Video](#), featuring first-time young actors and starring Tam Dean Burn (Acid House, River City) and Elek Kish, centres on new single parent Alex who must tackle heartbreak to save his relationship with son Stephen on his wife's birthday, or risk losing the one thing in his life that is still good.

The film picked up an award for Best Actor for Elek Kish's performance and received an Honourable Mention for the Ensemble Performance. Edinburgh based stars, Ashleigh Shephard and Chris Robertson, director Graham Fitzpatrick and producer Sarah Drummond get set to jet out to Hollywood today to collect the awards.

The screenplay was developed alongside a series of workshops which brought together the life experiences of young people and explored the themes of loss, bereavement and broken family relationships. Tackling personal issues of heartache, broken families and bullying is an achievement for most adults. To have such issues met head-on by a group of young people with experience older than their years is testament to their strength of character and desire to show the reality of their lives.

Caroline Parkinson, Director of Creative Development said; "To be accepted into the festival is a triumph for all involved and a great celebration of the Creative Identities programme. This is a huge achievement for Chris and Ashleigh and I'm sure the experiences they've gained making the film and attending

the festival will stick with them for years to come and hopefully encourage them to continue careers in the creative sector”

Actor, Ashleigh Shephard, said; “I’m quite a quiet person but being involved in the film has given me more confidence. I’m quite similar to Chelsea and her family life is like mine. People ask about her father, and mine left when I was young. I’m also a bit of a drama queen, like Chelsea is in the film! I can’t believe the film has been accepted into the festival and we’re getting to go over!” And the other actor in the film, Chris Robertson, said; “My mum used to act, but I used to think it was boring. But making the film changed all of that. The film was based on great emotion and everyone brought their own experience to it, which made it realistic, and very enjoyable to do. I now want to keep on acting and learn to make films too. Going to Hollywood is amazing, a dream come true”

Graham Fitzpatrick, Writer/Director said; “The workshops were some of the most creative yet challenging sessions I’ve ever undertaken. It was undoubtedly the most positive and rewarding film I’ve ever done, with the young people at the heart of it creating an intense and moving piece. Chris and Ashleigh were a great find and a joy to work with, both bringing great depth and truth to the characters of Stephen and Chelsea. Mum’s Birthday means a lot to everyone involved and came from the heart, with the Hollywood screening and awards the real icing on the cake”.

The Festival showcases the best new feature films and shorts by filmmakers who possess an independent vision, operating without large studio budgets to create innovative work. With an audience of Hollywood industry professionals and fellow filmmakers, the Festival aims to give these motion pictures an opportunity to find distribution, garner media attention and provide filmmakers with a unique chance to progress in their careers.

Pilton Video are however subject to some changes at the moment. Their latest news is:-

After 29 years, the end of an era will be marked by the retirement of Pilton Video Co-Ordinator Joel Venet. He goes with heartfelt thanks and best wishes from everyone involved in a unique resource supporting film making throughout the years.

From 1st December Pilton Video Trust will enter a period of reorganisation and planning with City of Edinburgh Council Children and Families Dept – led by acting manager Graham Fitzpatrick.

The focus will be on building an exciting new programme of training and production initiatives to support young people, new talent and the diverse communities of Edinburgh and beyond.

To aid the process, there will be some changes at Pilton Video.

Hire of all facilities will be restricted to City Of Edinburgh Council projects only, with public hires and access for film makers returning with our new programme in the spring of 2011.