

Edinburgh film-maker releases trailer for new film



After achieving over one and a half million hits with his stunning time lapse video, Edinburgh's award-winning filmmaker has released his long awaited film trailer.

Walid Salhab, lecturer in media practice at Queen Margaret University, is the creative talent behind the stunning 'Kinetic Edinburgh' films. 'Kinetic Edinburgh II', a time lapse/stop motion film of Edinburgh in winter achieved well over a million hits over the festive period.

His striking portrayal of Edinburgh's winter wonderland, Portobello promenade, Newhaven and Dean Village, as well as some of Edinburgh's landmark buildings, has gained recognition from a multitude of Edinburgh and Scotland's promotional agencies. It has also been enthusiastically received by an international audience.

But for Walid, the sole purpose of 'Kinetic Edinburgh' was to help perfect the technique needed for his latest film 'Avaritia'. This week, Walid released the trailer on Vimeo, a site which allows filmmakers to share their work within the film-making community.

Walid explained:- "Filming in various locations in Edinburgh has been a crucial part of my research and I am now able to use these techniques in the new film. It is very difficult to create a fictional story which combines time lapse/stop motion film. The visual element of the story needs to be very strong because there is no dialogue. With 'Kinetic Edinburgh', it's all about the image. It has been so much more challenging to effectively combine the story with the filming technique.

“The trailer differs from other movie trailers – is like a mini short film in its own right. The trailer has a different story but the same message as the short film. We have used it to see if this process actually works and fortunately, the positive feedback from other filmmakers suggests we’re on the right track.”

Completion of the film is expected to take around seven months as Walid has to work around full-time teaching commitments and commercial projects at Queen Margaret University.

He said: “I spent every evening in the freezing cold for two months shooting ‘Kinetic Edinburgh II’ and the trailer for ‘Avaritia’. I put my actors through hell and I’m so lucky they are still on board with the new film. It will be a blessing to work in the warmer months.”

‘Avaritia’ which is being filmed in Edinburgh’s city centre and Portobello, tells the story of a money obsessed banker who has been corrupted by the banking culture. He is isolated and searching for something positive, but is trapped by the materialistic world which he has created.

“We live in such a consumer driven society that sometimes we forget the important things in life like health, happiness, family and friends. The main character in the film views everything and everyone as a way of accumulating more wealth – that’s why he is trapped” explained Walid.

Walid has been quietly making films for the last 20 years with little or no budget. He pays tribute to his loyal crew, as he knows, without their support, it would have been almost impossible to produce anything. He said: “The actor Robert Welsh, is co-producer of ‘Avaritia’, and he stars in nearly all of my productions. Over the years he’s portrayed a priest, a geek, a homeless man and now a banker. The filmmaking with Robert and his partner, Ros Campbell, who is also the production manager, is a critical part of my development as a

filmmaker and a lecturer. However, my filmmaking career would have come to a grinding halt had it not been for the on-going support of Queen Margaret University. The University gives me the time to be creative and continually encourages me to develop as a professional."

As a filmmaker, 2012 has been Walid's most successful year ever. Aside from getting over a one and a half million hits on You Tube with Kinetic Edinburgh II, Walid's earlier short film 'Bra-et Al Rouh' (Innocence of the Spirit) has been screened at festivals in Cannes, The Hamptons (New York), Las Vegas and Cape Cod and has picked up six awards in the process. 'Bra-et Al Rouh' is also to be screened in the Edinburgh Filmhouse as part of the International Festival of Middle Eastern Spirituality and Peace on the 21 February 2013.

He has high hopes for 'Avaritia' in 2013, but the most gratifying thing for him is to see how the knowledge and skills he has gained in the last year are having a positive impact on his students. He said: "To see them create beautiful films, and to notice elements of your work in their productions, is just the best feeling in the world."