

REVIEW – For Those in Peril (2013, Paul Wright)



For years, it seems like Scottish cinema had sort of bubbled under the filmic radar as Hollywood took centre stage. Then, there was 2013. As films such as Jon S. Baird's 'Filth' and the utterly lovable 'Sunshine on Leith' premiered, it seemed we had finally reached a much needed cinema renaissance.

Adding to these features is an entirely different film: the compelling debut feature of Paul Wright, For Those In Peril.

Aaron, a teenage lad living in a rural fishing community is distraught after a fishing boat accident that killed his brother and several others – the only survivor being himself. Forced to live with the guilt of surviving in the close knit town, Aaron seeks solace in folklore and local tales, in the hope that they will lead him to his brother.

Fife-born Paul Wright has exquisitely used his seaside roots to make this film feel so emotionally rife and authentic. The twisted blue hues of the cinematography are paired with stark, emotional profile shots that let you dive into the characters' souls. Visual aspects aside, the cast is simply magnificent. George MacKay plays potentially the most torn and destroyed Scottish character cinema has seen this year in the lead role as Aaron. His mother, finely played by Kate Dickie, is the human glue that holds the film's heavy story together. She's never over-dramatic, but plays the role with a subdued, realistic skill – only truly letting go when a real mother would.

With a stunningly crafted soundtrack, Wright's script and camerawork make For Those In Peril a heavy, somewhat depressing film that is sensational if you stick with it.

It shakes your innards, and holds you by the throat refusing to let go even after the credits roll. Make no mistake, For Those In Peril may be heavy going, but it's one of the best things to come out of Scottish cinema in quite some time.

Plays from Friday 15th to Thursday 21st November at Filmhouse, Lothian Road

Photo courtesy of Protagonist Pictures