

# Stars of Stella sparkle and shine at Dominion premiere

Multi award-winning new Scottish feature film *Stella*, which is now available nationwide for free via STV Player, was premiered at The Dominion Cinema earlier this week and will soon be shown at selected cinemas and events around the country.

Writer and director Jessica Fox was joined by stars of the movie including Edinburgh's Oli Fyne (who plays Stella Deutch), Louis Hall (Will) and Fiona MacKinnon for the event in Morningside – which also raised money for Wigtown Book Festival.

Another of the stars on the red carpet was the splendid 1936 Royal Enfield motorcycle which sparks the romance between Stella and Will.

Oli Fyne said: "I couldn't be more thrilled to see Stella not only coming to Scottish screen but premiering in one of my favourite cinemas in my home town. I used to come to this cinema as a child and swoon over all the talented actors projected on its screen.

"To see our film here is amazing. It's such an honour to have been a part of this project and I'm so proud of everyone involved for all their hard work and dedication."

Jessica, the grandchild of holocaust survivors, created the story as a retelling of early folk versions of *Cinderella* in which she was a young woman forced to flee the kingdom where she lived with just a trunk.

It follows the story of a German Jewish refugee who finds herself working in a stately home belonging Lord and Lady Rig (Gary Lewis and Susan Vidler). Lord Rig is an aristocratic supporter of fascist leader Oswald Mosley (Rufus Wright).

Jessica's grandparents were Holocaust survivors. She said: "It's a huge breakthrough to see Stella on screen in a Scottish cinema just as it becomes available to viewers all across the UK. A premiere at The Dominion Cinema is especially fitting as the business was founded in 1937 – the year the movie is set.

"As the granddaughter of people who had to flee their homes with only what they could carry Stella is a tale that's close to my heart. Given the number of people having to escape hatred and violence today – it's also very much a story for now.

"Stella began as a script being written on a kitchen table Wigtown and has undergone an immense journey. It's a dream-come-true made possible by people being incredibly generous with their help – and by STV Player for supporting new work from Scotland.

"Now we want to use the film to support other Scottish creativity by raising funds for the 25<sup>th</sup> annual Wigtown Book Festival – one of the best events of its kind anywhere."

Fiona MacKinnon, known as the "Voice of Scotland" for her work on international promotions for VisitScotland and promoting shows like Take The High Road on STV Player, said: "This is Scottish independent film making at its best. Taking the great story that Jessica wrote and filming on location in Galloway

felt very special for all of us.

“The wealth of Scottish cast and crew that came together to create this beautiful film, featured established and fresh talent, many of us with deep connections to Galloway. It’s fantastic to have STV Player make Stella available UK-wide. You’re in for a treat!”

The film was made at locations in and around Wigtown, Scotland’s National Book Town – where Jessica lives – including Galloway House and will be shown at this year’s festival (22 September to 1 October).

Richard Williams, MD of STV Player, said: “We were hugely impressed by the rich storytelling in this independent film and it’s a pleasure to bring it to a wider audience.

“STV Player is the go-to, free streaming destination for top-quality drama from around the world, and Stella is an exciting addition to the many high-profile titles in our content library. As a Scotland-based service, we’re also delighted to be giving a platform to a homegrown production like this, and helping to shine a light on promising new Scottish talent – both in front and behind the camera.”

Adrian Turpin, Artistic Director of Wigtown Book Festival, added: “In the past 25 years Wigtown has grown into a place which not only celebrates literature but is a centre of storytelling and creativity in its own right – Stella is a shining example.

“Jessica, and many others involved in the film, are active supporters of the festival, and we are grateful that they have used this premiere to support our 25<sup>th</sup> annual event.”

Stella, made by Edward Hocknell’s Fountainhall Films, won international awards at the Melech Tel-Aviv International Film Festival and the Montreal Independent Film Festival.

***Stella is free on STV Player – available on all major platforms across the UK.***

All photos Julie Howden.



Stella – New Scottish Movie's Cinema Premiere Edinburgh actor Ollie Fyne, with co-star Louise Hall, who plays the lead in new multi-award winning Scottish film 'Stella' written and

directed by Jessica Fox which reimagines Cinderella as a German Jewish refugee story. The film, which has been supported by Wigton Book Festival premiered outside the historic cinema The Dominion in Morningside.



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