



CHERRYBOMB

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LIMELIGHT
OCTAGON FILMS
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NORTHERN IRELAND SCREEN
WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF
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CHERRYBOMB

RUPERT GRINT
KIMBERLEY NIXON
ROBERT SHEEHAN
AND JAMES NESBITT
LALOR RODDY
KATHY KIERA CLARKE
NIAMH QUINN
PAUL KENNEDY
PAUL GARRETT
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PRODUCED BY BRIAN KIRK, SIMON BOSANQUET

DIRECTED BY LISA BARROS D'SA & GLENN LEYBURN

CHERRYBOMB

Synopsis

With their exams over, best friends Malachy and Luke are out to have one hell of a summer. However, the arrival of Michelle, a captivating but troubled beauty, tests their friendship to the limit as she encourages the two boys to carry out increasingly dangerous and illegal stunts in the battle for her affections. Against the backdrop of a troubled city reconstructing its identity, the future paths of all three are thrown into question as the competition between Malachy and Luke spirals out of control.

Best friends Malachy and Luke are from different sides of today's Belfast – a city vigorously redefining its identity. Malachy is a high achiever at school with a stable family life and a summer job at the local Leisureplex; Luke lives with Smiley, his alcoholic father, and deals drugs for his brother Chris. The bonds of friendship are strong between the boys and they are having themselves one hell of a summer – until the arrival of Michelle, the daughter of Malachy's Leisureplex boss, Crilly. A stunning beauty, Michelle instantly steals both Luke and Malachy's hearts.

Michelle has recently moved back to Belfast from London to stay with her father, and it becomes clear that Crilly has very little time for his daughter; he is far more interested in her best friend Donna, with whom he's having a secret affair. When the neglected Michelle becomes aware of the two boys' infatuation she welcomes the attention and playfully flirts with both of them at the Lifeboat Club. Luke gets into a bar fight and as he is carried out of the club by bouncers, bloody but unbowed, he blows Michelle a kiss. Michelle turns to Malachy and issues the challenge; 'Top that'. And so begins a weekend of increasingly dangerous and illegal games in which the boys compete to win Michelle.

It is not long before the rivalry reaches such a pitch that Malachy's and Luke's friendship is strained to breaking point. After a particularly dangerous bout of joyriding in which Malachy's dad's car is written off, the tension between the two finally explodes. Angry words are exchanged and Michelle gets caught in the crossfire when Luke reveals that her father has been sleeping with Donna.

Back at home, Michelle decides to carry out a desperate bid to gain Crilly's attention and at the same time punish him for his sexual transgressions by seducing Malachy in her father's bedroom. Crilly walks in on them and orders Malachy out of the house – but he does not become the over-protective father Michelle longs for. Bitter and resentful, Michelle packs her bags and prepares to return to London.

Michelle goes to say a final goodbye to Luke and Malachy. Although the two boys have been reconciled, they have little to celebrate. Luke has just been abandoned by his father and Malachy fears that Michelle is going to abandon him too. All three decide to perform the ultimate rebellion that will set them against Crilly, their parents, and ultimately the law.

Luke steals his brother's drugs, and with the aid of Malachy's security clearance the three teenagers break into the Leisureplex and host the party of the decade. However, this night of youthful abandon will come at a high cost. When Crilly arrives at the Leisureplex in the morning and discovers the havoc that has been reaped by his daughter and her friends, the situation culminates in a tragedy that will change the lives of all three teenagers forever.

CHERRYBOMB

The Beginning

CHERRYBOMB is a Teen Romance starring Rupert Grint, Robert Sheehan, Kimberley Nixon and James Nesbitt. The film is the joint debut of co-directors Glenn Leyburn and Lisa Barros D'Sa, and was written by Daragh Carville. Shot on location in Northern Ireland, it is the second picture from respected UK-based producers, Mark Huffam and Simon Bosanquet's new company Generator Entertainment. CHERRYBOMB was produced in association with Northern Ireland Screen and with the participation of the Irish Film Board, and features a score by acclaimed Belfast-based Hollywood composer, David Holmes.

Generator was approached to co-produce the film by Belfast producer, Michael Casey of Greenpark Films who developed the project with co-producer Brian Kirk. Green Park's previous film, the dark thriller *Middletown*, was also written by Daragh Carville. Michael and Brian have worked closely with Daragh over the last ten years and together they developed the script for CHERRYBOMB.

"We wanted to make a teen movie," says Daragh Carville, "we wanted to make a film about young people because it felt like that film hadn't been made before in Northern Ireland."

"So starting from that, I quickly developed the characters of Malachy, Luke and Michelle and then they started to take over. But I did pull lots of experiences not only from my own life but also the lives of people I know, so there's truth in it."

"There weren't a lot of jokes in *Middletown*," continues Carville, "and CHERRYBOMB still has a dark quality to it - an edge - but because it's about youthful characters, it's a very contemporary film."

The Directors

A key aspect in getting the project together was to find the right director, or as it turned out, the right directors.

"We looked around at various people who we thought might bring something to the story," explains Carville, "and Glenn and Lisa were really the ideal people."

Directors Glenn Leyburn and Lisa Barros D'Sa pick up the story: "It probably began with a short film we made called, *The 18th Electricity Plan*, which was in a few festivals. Michael Casey of Green Park Films saw and liked it, and we met up and decided to work on something together, which at that time meant developing a screenplay of Lisa's called *Canderblinks*."

"Then Michael came to us in Spring 2007 with the script of CHERRYBOMB," continue the directors. "We came back with ideas and an approach for the film and were on board from then."

"Myself and the producers were really impressed by the short film they'd made," adds Carville, "and we'd met on and off, so it just seemed to be a good coming together of people. Glenn and Lisa have a youthful energy to them and they've got amazing visual style."

Sharing the director's chair Glenn and Lisa add to the short but ever growing list of duo-director partnerships. "Many people find this strange," say the directors, "but for us it was a natural development as we have collaborated on creative projects for many years."

“There are definite advantages in having two heads – more time for one of us to spend with the actors and one with the cinematographer – though our roles crossed over a lot. And if problems and glitches arise, two heads can incubate ideas and solutions more quickly than one. Conversely, perhaps, you can endorse each other to take more risks on set, which is often creatively beneficial.”

“The potential problems are mainly around a level of confusion that could arise on set from cast and crew hearing mixed messages about how to proceed,” continue the directors, “so we were very careful to ensure this wasn't the case. The key was to prepare as much as possible, and to ensure that there was always a united directorial voice.”

The joint-directorial approach was not the only unusual aspect of the filmmakers' methods. Glenn and Lisa's influences were many, and not all from cinema.

“From the earliest stage of our involvement in CHERRYBOMB, we started collecting visual references,” say the directors, “mostly photographs, that influenced every aspect of the production.

“We love the work of a photographer called William Eggleston whose pictures find beauty and striking displays of colour in ordinary scenes and we have tried to limit and control our use of colour throughout the film to give it as much visual impact as possible.”

“Of course having a leisure centre as one of our main locations has been great, as it is a very graphic and potentially slightly surreal environment visually and we have tried to heighten that aspect of the world within our story.

“Other people that have inspired us are Ryan McGinley, a young New York based photographer, and Hedi Slimane, both of whom have taken some amazing studies of teenagers. Graphic designer and filmmaker Mike Mills has been an influence as are the films of the French new wave,” say the directors.

The fresh approach is apparent as the cast elaborate on Glenn and Lisa's working methods.

“The good thing about them is they have their own territories marked out,” says Robert Sheehan, “Lisa was very much 100% on the drama, going through the script in the rehearsals and so on, and Glenn is much more of a visual worker – he was a graphic designer for years – so they have their own areas.”

“And they don't step on each other's feet,” says Sheehan, “so it is working with two directors but you're not getting two voices in your ear at the same time.”

“I feel so comfortable with both of them,” adds Kimberley Nixon. “Lisa's so great at the intimate scenes and Glenn's sort of got the big picture in his head – they've both got their strengths and they really, strongly stick to those.”

Rupert Grint agrees: “It's good – it's a different dynamic and a different way of working because you've got two people to talk to. They're both really great and they're really nice people, so it's been really fun.”

The Cast

Directors Glenn Leyburn and Lisa Barros D'Sa helmed the casting process and had very clear ideas about what they were looking for.

“Despite the level of action in the plot, we always saw this as a character driven piece,” says

Glenn, “and so we were looking for young actors who could bring real subtlety, intelligence, humour and truth to the characters - the three lead roles are testing in terms of the emotional range required, and we wanted actors who could draw out the subtext of their characters.”

For Rupert Grint, who plays Malachy, the challenge of playing a character far removed from his *Harry Potter* persona was one of the things that attracted him to the project.

“I think it is the most adult thing I’ve done,” says Grint, “and there are some risky things going on – the drug taking and there’s a bit of romance – so, yeah, I’m glad I’m doing it, it’s good to do something different.”

Rupert stars alongside Robert Sheehan (*Summer of the Flying Saucer*), who plays Luke, Malachy’s best friend, and Kimberley Nixon (*Angus, Thongs and Perfect Snogging*) who plays Michelle, the catalyst for all that follows.

For writer Daragh Carville, the transition of his characters from the page to the screen is an unusual process.

“It’s kind of strange because they’re never quite how you picture the characters in your mind,” says Carville, “but very quickly, when you get the right actors, they replace the idea you had originally.”

“So now when I think of Malachy and Luke, I think of Rupert and Robert, and when I think of Michelle, I think of Kimberley, because they’re perfect for the parts,” says Carville.

“We were thrilled with our final cast,” add Leyburn and Barros D’Sa, “and also delighted to be able to cast some great actors from Northern Ireland in many of the roles, including Lalor Roddy (*Hunger*) with whom we’d worked before, and who gives a brilliant performance as Luke’s Dad, Smiley.”

For Lalor Roddy, the parallel between Smiley’s relationship with his son and Lalor’s own life is one of the reasons he signed on to the film.

“It’s a beautifully written journey between an adolescent son and a wayward father,” says Lalor, “and it’s really educational at this moment in my own life, when my kids are just on that cusp of trying to break free on the one hand, but yet still need you on the other.”

“It gives you a greater sensitivity to their needs and to the complications of teenage hood,” he adds.

James Nesbitt plays Crilly, Michelle’s father, and manager of the local leisure centre.

“Brian Kirk, who had directed me before on *Murphy’s Law*, told me about it and asked me if I’d do it,” says Nesbitt. “I thought it was a fantastic script – a small part but a part that was quite interesting – and it was an opportunity to come home for a few days!”

“Jimmy Nesbitt (*Five Minutes of Heaven*) is a well-known screen presence,” add Leyburn and Barros D’S, “but we feel he really goes somewhere different in this performance, playing a father struggling between following his own desires and the responsibility of being a full-time dad.”

The Story

“CHERRYBOMB is a teen story,” explains writer, Daragh Carville. “It’s a story about two best friends, Malachy and Luke, who are both 16 and have known each other forever and suddenly they meet someone new, a girl called Michelle, who’s come back into town after being away for a long time.”

“She turns their lives upside down and brings their friendship into question. And the three of them have a series of increasingly wild adventures as the two boys compete for the girl.”

Over the course of a crazy weekend, the competition spirals out of control with fatal consequences.

The Northern Ireland-set story appealed to Glenn Leyburn and Lisa Barros D’Sa, who would embark on their debut feature film as directors. “We were immediately excited by what felt like a fresh and truthful portrayal of the friendship between these two boys,” say the directors, “with all the banter, spark, affection and rivalry that entails.”

“The story takes place at a moment when that friendship is already being tested by events and circumstances in the wider world - families, responsibility, decisions about the future.”

“Michelle’s arrival is the catalyst for accelerating the changes in the boys’ lives. In other words, played out through the events of one weekend is a rites of passage story, in which the paths of the characters’ futures are to some extent decided and discovered. The universality of the coming of age tale really appealed to us.”

“Malachy is the sensitive and intelligent one of the two boys. He has a solid relationship with his parents, keeps it tidy at work and does well at school. But he’s got a more subversive streak – his friendship with Luke suggests as much”

“Until now Malachy’s been content to look on as Luke creates havoc,” say the directors, “but we enter the story at a point when Malachy is getting frustrated with being the good guy and trying to keep everybody in his life happy. He needs to become more independent, to find his own voice.”

“The competition to win Michelle becomes the catalyst for this journey, as Malachy steps up and really starts to take risks.”

“I do like Malachy,” says Rupert Grint, “I think I saw quite a few similarities in me really, so he’s fun to play.”

Alongside Malachy, Luke couldn’t be more different. “He is charismatic, eccentric; the golden guy with rock-star cool who always gets the girls,” say the directors, “but he’s really a neglected boy who needs his friendship with Mal perhaps more than Mal needs him - Malachy’s more like family to him than his own brother and father.”

“So as the competition starts to drive them apart, Luke’s confidence and security are at stake, not to mention the fragile balance of his family life.”

Luke’s family life largely revolves around drugs – both his brother and father are in the business – and whether he likes it or not he depends on it to put a roof over his head.

“Luke comes from a very unstable and aggressive background,” explains Robert Sheehan, who plays him. “He and his whole family have gotten themselves into a very awkward situation, which affects his personality hugely,” says Robert. “I think the reason he’s such

good mates with Malachy is because Malachy is kind of an escape from the very uncomfortable and horrible reality he has to face every day of his life.”

“Malachy’s home life is really quite good,” adds Rupert Grint, “he has a good family and he does well at school. They are very different in that sense. I guess Mal takes more of a back seat, in a way,” continues Grint, “he sort of looks up to Luke, as he always gets the girls and he’s more of a ladies man. It is quite a strange double act, really, but it works.”

Into the lives of the best friends comes Michelle, a beautiful 15-year-old who has just moved back to Belfast to live with her father, Mal’s boss, Crilly.

“This is a whole new world for father and daughter,” explain Leyburn and Barros D’Sa, “as it’s been a weekend and holidays situation for years. We soon become aware of troubling undercurrents within the Crilly household, which drive Michelle’s determination to make her mark with Malachy and Luke.”

“They are enthralled by this sophisticated and mysterious stranger, and she enjoys fanning the flames of their rivalry, but they don’t quite realise how troubled and vulnerable she is,” say the directors.

Kimberley Nixon, who plays Michelle, elaborates: “I think she has this very sexy, confident façade but it just masks how vulnerable she is and how scared she is of not being wanted by her mum and her dad.”

“At the same time, it’s not all doom and gloom,” says Nixon, “she does like to play with the boys and flirt with them – but when it starts getting deeper, that begins to scare her I think.”

“Michelle’s got the nice home like Malachy but she also has the lack of an authority figure like Luke,” adds Nixon. “She can relate to both boys whereas they can’t relate to each other about their home lives.”

“It’s about each of the them and their relationships really,” adds Rupert Grint, “each character has their own story and arc and change – some of us grow up quite a lot throughout the film.”

“To me, it’s a very honest exploration and portrayal of the relationships young people have with adults now,” concludes James Nesbitt, “the relationships they have with themselves, the relationships they have with drugs, with sex and I think for this country it’s pretty unusual actually.”

The shoot

For Rupert Grint, the experience of shooting CHERRYBOMB was a world away from the lavish sets and big budgets of *Harry Potter*.

“I really enjoy it because it is a totally different world,” he says. “I think we do get a bit spoilt on *Harry Potter*. I really prefer the pace of these sorts of films – on this one you do maybe seven scenes a day – so it moves really quickly. It’s exciting.”

The three leads quickly developed a rapport in an extensive period of early rehearsals, which carried through to the shoot, as Robert Sheehan explains.

“You know, you have to get to know each other or else the whole thing goes topsy-turvy. When people are thrust into that situation they do become mates who can say whatever they

like to each other.”

“Rupert and Robert are so lovely,” adds Kimberley Nixon, “and they give you lots to play with and bounce off. If we’re doing a really fun scene or a crazy scene, and then a more quiet, intimate scene, the boys made it easy to fall into those different moods.”

James Nesbitt was very impressed with his fellow cast members’ performances and commitment. “They were great,” says Nesbitt, “I mean, they’ve obviously filmed quite a bit before, so they have an understanding of when to act the eejit and when to kind of knuckle down.”

“They’ve been fabulous, funny, disciplined, professional, good – very good – and they’ve been a real delight to work with. I think they’re a very good cocktail and they work well together.”

For first-time directors Glenn and Lisa, there was a certain amount of trepidation as they approached the shoot date. But this anxiety soon dissipated. “We were - not quite surprised - but certainly delighted by how much fun it all was,” say the directors, “we really enjoyed the whole experience and the many adventures it entailed.”

“Working with such a lovely cast and crew, we were probably spoiled. The crew were, without exception, fantastic - I know of international directors who've described the crews here as the best they've ever worked with, which doesn't surprise us at all.”

Shooting in Northern Ireland

CHERRYBOMB is an important film in that it shows a Belfast and a Northern Ireland through the eyes of the generation relatively untouched by ‘the Troubles’. For the filmmakers, presenting a new Northern Ireland to the world was on the agenda from the start.

“It’s a movie about young people,” says writer Daragh Carville, “and I thought that story hadn’t been told, the story of people who grew up after the ceasefire period, and for whom that world has no real relevance but they’re trying to find their way in a whole new world that’s been built up around them.”

“I think that there are all sorts of new stories to tell about this place,” says Carville, “stories that haven’t been explored before.”

“It’s connected to the way that Northern Ireland is changing and building a new identity for itself,” continues Carville, “but it’s also story that could be set anywhere. It’s universal.”

The directors recognised the parallels between the story in the film and Northern Ireland’s reinvention. “It was always important to us to tell a story about a different Northern Ireland than the version people are accustomed to seeing on film, a story that reflects the contemporary world.”

“This film is about young people, and to teenagers here today, ‘the Troubles’ are a world from the history books. Naturally their reality is shaped to some extent by the fallout from recent history, and that’s what we wanted to talk about - Northern Ireland trying to redefine, reinvent itself.

“Like our characters,” continue the directors, “this country can be seen as going through a stage of adolescence post-troubles: trying to work out what shape it’s going to take next, rushing to redefine itself. The story to some extent questions whether the version of the

future that's taking shape is the best one possible - whether it really answers people's needs and desires.”

“Also, in the rush to move forward, what do we lose? What's necessary to leave behind, what is sacrificed in choosing a new future? In that sense, the world chimes perfectly with the characters' coming of age story.”

The film's two leading local cast members, acquiesce that the film is indeed an important step forward in the portrayal of Northern Ireland on screen.

“I think it's great,” says Lalor Roddy, “I love the idea of telling stories about here, looking at the city that we live in. We're emerging - and there's so much potential for what we are at the minute, so I love the idea that it has nothing to do with 'the Troubles'.”

James Nesbitt agrees: “As important as it is not to forget our legacy – and to continually explore that – clearly it's important to embrace the new found peace and the fact that these kids ironically grow up without any knowledge of or interest in 'the Troubles'. We haven't really looked at the deeper and more hidden emotions of teenage life, and this film attempts that.”

Rehearsals (and accents)

As part of the pre-production process, an intensive period of rehearsals took place. None of the film's three leads is from Northern Ireland so it was vital that their accents were flawless before the cameras rolled.

“We had a week of rehearsal with the three young leads over in Belfast and worked as intensively as possible on building the emotional journeys of their characters,” explain Glenn and Lisa. “On a schedule like ours it's difficult to find much rehearsal time on set, so this prior work proved very valuable.”

“Accent is obviously a major consideration,” continue the directors, “as it's important that the world feels as authentic as possible, and Northern Irish accents are apparently among the most difficult – but we had invaluable assistance from a world class vocal coach, Brendan Gunn.”

“And in truth we were never really worried about the issue as from the time of casting it was clear that our leads had the talent and commitment to master the accents quickly – and so it proved.”

“Good old Brendan Gunn!” says Robert Sheehan. “He's a softly spoken genius and he's been with us since the start.”

“But it's okay for me,” says Sheehan, who is Irish, “fair play to Rupert, you know? He's got it dead on and Kim as well. We basically got our heads round it after the first intensive week of rehearsal.”

“Everybody knows what Rupert's voice sounds like,” adds Kimberley Nixon, “so for him to come on screen and do this quite deep Belfast accent...”

“...and Robbie, who's southern Irish, doing this Northern accent – he completely changes his whole body shape, the way he walks,” continues Nixon, “and mine is different again, because Michelle hasn't got as thick an accent as they have – because she's been away for quite a long time – so she brings a sort of softer Belfast to it.”

For Rupert Grint, the challenge of perfecting a Belfast accent was initially daunting. “I was a bit worried about it because it’s quite a strange sound,” says Grint. “Brendan Gunn, the dialect coach, made a CD with all our lines on it, so I was always listening to that!”

Music

Music is a crucial part of the CHERRYBOMB world, particularly within the friendship of the two boys.

Glenn Leyburn and Lisa Barros D’Sa have worked with DJ, musician and soundtrack composer David Holmes (*Hunger, Ocean’s Eleven, Twelve and Thirteen*) for ten years on various projects - pop promos, album artwork, sleeve notes – so he was the obvious choice to provide the score and supervise the music for the film. The three have started a production company together, Canderblinks Film and Music Ltd.

“It’s a truism that people listen to music differently today,” say directors Leyburn and D’Sa, “iTunes and the internet mean a larger range of sounds are easily available and so a very eclectic range of musical influences/atmospheres felt right for a contemporary teenage story.”

“From David’s earliest involvement in the project, he hoped to bring that variety and fusion of musical influences to the world and does so brilliantly.”

“We were all keen from the start to feature some of the amazing talent that is coming up through the local band scene,” continue the directors, “and several local artists feature on the soundtrack, including Robin Shiels, James Smith and Cashier no 9.”

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CHERRYBOMB – cast Q&As

Rupert Grint (Malachy) INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWER: Being in Harry Potter for so many years Rupert, was it weird to do a low budget movie?

RUPERT: Yeah, but I really enjoyed it because it is a totally different world; everything's so much smaller. I think we get a bit spoilt on Harry Potter because we have fancy dressing rooms and stuff like that. But there is actually a lot more waiting around (on Harry Potter) so I prefer the pace of films like CHERRYBOMB. On this you do like seven scenes a day and they're really quick days and it's exciting - it's good fun.

INTERVIEWER: Going back to the beginning, how were you cast - did they approach you, did you read for it? Did you just want to do a more adult film?

RUPERT: (Laughs) Yeah...it just came to me and I really loved the script and I met Lisa in London and did a little screen test. And then I flew out to Belfast and did some rehearsals.

INTERVIEWER: You hadn't been in Belfast before, how did you like it?

RUPERT: It was nice to be out of England and somewhere different. I really enjoyed it. We had a really good time.

INTERVIEWER: How did you find getting the accent?

RUPERT: I was a bit worried about it because it's such a strange sound and a real challenge but we had a dialect coach - Brendan Gunn - who made a CD and he put all our lines into it so I was always listening to that on my iPod. Hammering it in.

INTERVIEWER: And your role; is that the one you would have chosen?

RUPERT: Yeah, I do like Malachy. I saw quite a few similarities in him in me - so he was fun to play. And I liked the fact he takes a back seat and looks up to Luke as he always gets the girls.

INTERVIEWER: Malachy has a totally different background to Luke as well...

RUPERT: That was important. Malachy has a home life which is good; a nice family and he does well at school. They are opposites in that sense.

INTERVIEWER: How was working with two directors?

RUPERT: It's a different dynamic - a different way of working - because you've got two people to talk too. And they were very clear. We had this week of rehearsals and we went through the whole script and really got into the detail of it. And I think the edgy look to Luke and Malachy is down to Lisa and Glen. It took a while to get used to the quiff, and my dyed eyebrows and eyelashes!

INTERVIEWER: Mark (Huffam - Producer) said that the most difficult scene to shoot was the one in the swimming pool?

RUPERT: Yeah, that a long day! Me and Rob had to do this big fight scene and wrestle each other into the pool and it got quite out of hand because we're fighting and scratching - it did get pretty violent. Plus we did so many takes and in that pool it got really cold. So it was

probably the hardest day I've ever done.

INTERVIEWER: I know you've done a couple of other movies as well as Harry Potter but this is your most adult plot - how do you feel about that?

RUPERT: It is the most adult thing I've done and there are some risky things going on - the drug taking and there's a bit of romance - so yeah it's different; it's good, it's cool.

INTERVIEWER: Do you cringe at the thought of your parents seeing you in this kind of role?

RUPERT: There's a scene that's going to be hard to watch with my nan and my family (laughs) but I think it'll be okay. It's pretty tastefully done.

INTERVIEWER: And this is an ensemble cast - the three leads and the two dads - you all work closely together throughout the whole movie don't you?

RUPERT: Yeah, definitely and on top of that each character's got their own story and arc and change. Some of us grow up quite a lot throughout the film.

INTERVIEWER: Is there a message to be sent out to the youth of the world through CHERRYBOMB?

RUPERT: It does deal with modern issues, like drugs and it is a coming-of-age story - especially for my character, because I grow out of that lifestyle and realize there's more to life than messing about.

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ROBERT SHEEHAN (Luke) INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWER: How did you get into the business?

ROBERT: It was a fluke. When I was 14 I went for an open audition for a film called Song for a Raggy Boy and I got a small part in it. But then straight afterwards I got an agent and carried on going up for stuff throughout school.

INTERVIEWER: Apart from Raggy Boy, what else have you done?

ROBERT: A lot of TV and film. Recently I did a bit in The Tudors and a show called Rock Rivals. There's also a film coming out now in the summer I'm in called Summer of the Flying Saucer.

INTERVIEWER: How did you get the role in CHERRYBOMB,?

ROBERT: Good question! (laughs) I met up with Lisa and Glenn in Dublin and we just went for a read through of some of the key scenes and that was it. We got on very well straight off.

INTERVIEWER: Could you explain the plot of CHERRYBOMB in your own words?

ROBERT: The plot of CHERRYBOMB is; two best mates, who are at that age where it's kind of like, oh what's next, is it college or is it living on the streets because mammy and daddy won't pay the rent? Yeah, so there's two guys and they're on the edge of adulthood

and best mates and they come from two very different backgrounds - one more wholesome than the other - and then, as all this is going on, a girl comes along (and) both the lads fancy her and see it as a challenge to get her. A healthy competition ensues - going after the girl - and yeah, that's the whole idea of the film.

INTERVIEWER: How would you describe your character Luke?

ROBERT: He's a naughty, nasty boy! Very much your case of aggressive, but aggressive because he comes from a very unstable background. He's gotten himself into - well he and his whole family has gotten themselves into - a very awkward situation, with their power structure and how they live their lives. And the reason Luke's such good mates with Malachy is because Malachy is an escape from this whole, very uncomfortable and horrible reality he has to face every day.

INTERVIEWER: Can you talk a little bit about your character's relationship with his father?

ROBERT: Well, we hug a lot, that's the main thing (laughs). No, me and my dad are in a trapped, warped family situation where we're kept in a newly developed house, a hollow shell, by my older brother - Chris. And Chris is using us as employees of his drug business. He has us in this kind of Catch 22 situation because we can't really support ourselves and we are practically hobos in disguise because there's a roof over our heads. And dad and I battle with that whole reality whilst I kind of mind him, he doesn't mind me. That's the irony of the whole thing.

INTERVIEWER: Is this the most adult and violent role you've done to date?

ROBERT: Yeah. I did do a thing where I had to strangle my brother, so that would be in there as well.

INTERVIEWER: Can you talk about the fight scene (with your dad)?

ROBERT: That scene where we kick the crap out of each other? Yes. It's an accumulation of the tension that's been building between the three members of the family - where my dad, Smiley has just shown himself incapable of taking care of himself - again - and Luke's constantly having to go, "pick yourself up dad! Be a dad, be a bit paternal for a change, will ya?" And it all blows up in a very violent fashion.

INTERVIEWER: Was there a lot of preparation? Training for the stunts?

ROBERT: No, to be honest! We spent about half an hour working out how we were going to slap each other around the place - safely, of course - and then (we) just got into it.

INTERVIEWER: How was working with the rest of the cast?

ROBERT: Lovely. You get to that point where you're working for twelve hours, every single day, day after day for weeks, where it's such an intense bout of time being very close to a person, that you just don't have time to be polite and nice. You know you have to get to know each other or else the whole thing goes topsy turvy. So when people are thrust into that situation they do become mates who can say whatever they like to each other.

INTERVIEWER: How have you found working with two directors?

ROBERT: It's been my first time working with two directors, but the good thing about them is they have their own territories marked out. Each being in charge of different things; like Lisa was 100% on the drama and going through the script in the rehearsals, and Glenn is much

more of a visual worker. I mean he was a graphic designer before for years - so they don't step on each other's feet and you're not getting two voices in your ear at the same time.

INTERVIEWER: Have you worked in Belfast before?

ROBERT: I worked on a TV show in Belfast called Belle's Boys, but this time I took the opportunity to go wandering around the city and explored a bit.

INTERVIEWER: What did you think of the script? Did you read it before you met Lisa and Glenn?

ROBERT: Yeah, I did, I read the script and luckily enough, Luke's character was the most compelling for me. So I was just really, really delighted to have a crack at it.

INTERVIEWER: How did you find doing the accent?

ROBERT: Oh yeah, the accent! Good old Brendan Gunn - the dialect coach - is a softly spoken genius. He was with us from the start and we had the first intensive week of rehearsal to get our heads round it. And fair play to Rupert, you know? He's got it dead on and Kim as well.

INTERVIEWER: Did you enjoy working with the local crew too?

ROBERT: You know that point I was saying about having been thrust into a twelve hour day with people in such a close environment, you just get to the point where you can just say anything to each other. And they were a great crew. Not only did we have a laugh but we felt comfortable doing the scenes in this that were very harsh and challenging. It does help when you know the crew well, and you can push yourself emotionally in front of them without feeling ashamed or embarrassed. I've been on stuff before and felt self-conscious doing crying scenes or anything very emotional and we got beyond that.

#

KIMBERLEY NIXON (Michelle) INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWER: How did you get into the industry Kimberley?

KIMBERLEY: I was at drama school (The Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama) and just before I graduated I got a really big job - Cranford - so I left early to do that and then from that I got a Working Title film called Wild Child and then from that I got Angus, Thongs and Perfect Snogging, then Easy Virtue and now CHERRYBOMB.

INTERVIEWER: Busy girl!

KIMBERLEY: Yes! My first year out as an actress and it's been really exciting.

INTERVIEWER: So how did you get CHERRYBOMB?

KIMBERLEY: I went to London - I live in Wales - and I met Lisa, the director, and I read the part and about a week later I got a phone call saying would you come out to Belfast...so I did!

INTERVIEWER: What did you think of the script?

KIMBERLEY: I thought it was really great. I loved the triangle that the three main characters have and there were so many different ways to play little themes, little moments between the couples. And Michelle's a real catalyst for what happens.

INTERVIEWER: How would you describe her?

KIMBERLEY: I think that she gives off this very sexy, confident façade that masks how vulnerable she is and how scared she is of not being wanted by her mum and her dad. But at the same time it's not all doom and gloom; she does like to play with the boys and flirt but when it starts getting deeper, that begins to scare her.

INTERVIEWER : Which boy did you think she would go for?

KIMBERLEY: I suppose she does go for Malachy but she was quite partial to Luke so she just sort of test drives him too. I think the boys she has always gone for in the past are like Luke and then she meets Malachy he has something different about him and she can't quite get him out of her head. And also Malachy is better looking!

INTERVIEWER: What about her relationships at home?

KIMBERLEY: She's got the nice home like Malachy has, but also the lack of authority figure like Luke is dealing with - so she can relate to both boys whereas they cannot relate to each others family lives. I think the point is, coming to realize that your parents aren't infallible and that they are just human beings who screw up as well.

INTERVIEWER: Did you have to dig deep for the different facets of the role?

KIMBERLEY: Yes, but Rupert and Robert, were so lovely and they gave me lots to play off. So if we were doing a really fun scene, we'd be giggling, and then if we had a quieter, more intimate scene, it was easy to fall into those different moods.

INTERVIEWER: The boys are good, aren't they? And so different...

KIMBERLEY: Yeah, really good, and completely different, and the fact that we all do different accents in it...everybody knows what Rupert's voice sounds like obviously, and then for him to come on screen and do this quite deep Belfast. And Luke...Robbie, who's southern Irish, to do this Northern (accent), completely changes his whole body shape, the way he walks. And mine too because Michelle hasn't got as thick an accent as they have, because she's been away for quite a long time, so she brings a sort of softer Belfast to it.

INTERVIEWER: The others were talking about the dialogue coach and how great they thought he was...

KIMBERLEY: Yeah, originally I was going to be English or American - lots of different things were thrown about - so the two boys had already started on their dialogue coaching and they turned around and said maybe Michelle has got some Belfast in there and so I had to quickly get up to the boys' level! It is softer but it's harder for me because if it was full whack, I think I'd get into it, but because it's gentle, different sounds, it's difficult to get the balance, you know.

INTERVIEWER: You've worked on big budget productions whereas this is a small budget movie. Do you find them to be very different?

KIMBERLEY: No, I don't find it different at all; it's still a really professional crew and cast

and there's no difference at all in their level of commitment and work.

INTERVIEWER: How did you feel working with the two directors?

KIMBERLEY: I'd never worked with a female and a male director at the same time and I think the fact that they are married just adds this really great element. I feel so comfortable with both of them. Lisa's so great at the intimate scenes and then Glenn's got the big picture in his head, so to flit between the two is so useful. They've both got their strengths and they really, strongly stick to those and so when one argues a point the other one will sort of yield, in that, 'yeah you know what you're talking about more than me' (laughs)! Which is good!

INTERVIEWER: Is this your first time in Belfast?

KIMBERLEY: I hadn't been to Belfast before so I didn't really know what to expect but it's been so lovely here, everyone's been really friendly; not just on the crew but generally, when you pop into a shop or something. I really like it - I think I might stay!

INTERVIEWER: Were you comfortable with playing Michelle?

KIMBERLEY: Yes. I really liked Michelle and I think that's half the battle really - if you like them you can be them. But then she's also confident in ways that I personally am not confident; about her body and drugs and things like that, so I had to overcome those inhibitions to become her. But, you know, I think it's done me some good.

#

JAMES NESBITT (Crilly) INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWER: With CHERRYBOMB, was it the script that appealed to you?

JAMES: CHERRYBOMB I heard about a couple of days before I decided to do it. Brian Kirk, who had directed me in Murphy's Law – a fantastic director who did the film Middletown – asked me if I'd do it, and I thought it was a fantastic script. It was a small part, but interesting, and it was an opportunity to come home for a few days. I was delighted to come and work with the young ones, y'know?

INTERVIEWER: So you enjoyed working with the cast?

JAMES: Yeah, they were great. I was a little bit skeptical at first about the accent thing - whether they would grab hold of it - but they've done really wonderfully and they're incredibly committed. I mean they've obviously filmed quite a bit before so they have an understanding of when to act the eejit and when to knuckle down. They're incredibly disciplined, very good, all very different, unique actors. I think they're a very good cocktail.

INTERVIEWER: What about having two directors?

JAMES: Well, it didn't really impact on me having two directors because Lisa deals with the actors, and then goes and consults with Glenn. She's very, very good with the actors and has pretty strong ideas about what she wants. As I say, it's been a pretty relaxed experience for me.

INTERVIEWER: Can you explain the plotline of CHERRYBOMB and where your character fits in?

JAMES: Well, I thought CHERRYBOMB was a very honest and at times funny, and at times sad, savage, shocking and raw exploration of what life is like for teenagers and how we tend to treat them as children, but they certainly don't think of themselves as children. And within the plot we have this astonishing, confident - yet probably underneath very insecure and still quite young - attractive girl, who's been sent away from her mother, because her mother can't handle her anymore, back to her father who hasn't had to deal with her for a long time. And she walks into his life and the lives of the young community and has an extraordinary impact.

INTERVIEWER: And you play her father?

JAMES: Yes. She's come back to live with me – and at first I'm very accepting of that – but actually I'm not equipped for it at all. Meanwhile, the two best friends, Malachy and Luke, have fallen head over heels for her. She kind of, at first, unquestionably creates a division between them but it's a friendly division in a way. I mean, there's an element of the musketeers, they're very much together but she unquestionably does divide them because they both want to court her. But there's also a trail of destruction that goes throughout the film and it's sad, I think. But as I say, to me it's a very honest exploration and portrayal of the relationships young people have with adults now, the relationships they have with themselves, the relationships they have with drugs, with sex and I think for this country, for Northern Ireland, it's pretty unusual actually.

INTERVIEWER: Is it important that stories come out of Northern Ireland that have nothing to do with 'the Troubles'?

JAMES: Absolutely. As important as it is not to forget the legacy of 'the Troubles', it's also important to embrace the new-found peace and the fact that these kids ironically grew up without any knowledge of, or interest in the troubles. Aye, their lives are about much more important things than that!

INTERVIEWER: How did you find working with such a young cast?

JAMES: It was very depressing. A dark day of my life, arriving and I'm the oldest person on set. No, they were great. And kids do grow up an awful lot quicker nowadays. I mean certainly when I left drama school at 22, 23, I wasn't as grown up as they are. I don't think I had the professional discipline at that time that these kids have. Of course, they've all worked before and Rupert particularly but they've been fabulous, funny, disciplined, professional, good – very good – and a real delight to work with. (It was) quite a surprise to me actually, just how much I really liked them.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think their personalities fit the characters?

JAMES: I think they've been cast well.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think a Belfast audience will accept foreigners doing their accent?

JAMES: I think truthfully we've always found it difficult to accept other people doing our accent. I think that's one of the many things we think, "why isn't there someone here who can do it?" But, having said that, I hope that they will rise above that and see that actually these kids can do the accent very well but also see how great they are at their roles.

#

LALOR RODDY (Smiley) INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWER: What's your take on the plot of CHERRYBOMB?

LALOR: The plot is about two adolescents - one from a very stable background, one from a very unstable background - and the misadventures that happen over a short period of time, complicated by a girl, a very charming, beautiful girl, who enters into the picture and confuses both of them. And the situation leads to disastrous results with lots of very funny, entertaining moments on the way.

INTERVIEWER: How was working with the kids?

LALOR: I worked mostly with Luke - I play his father Smiley - a part-time, would-be drug dealer who indulges more in his product than he sells. But there's a lovely relationship, or a lovely journey, between Luke and his dad during the course of the movie. And having two teenage twins myself, it's been very insightful - very educational for me as a father.

INTERVIEWER: You might be a bit of an expert on the subject?

LALOR: No, far from it! I don't think there's anybody who is expert with teenagers.

INTERVIEWER: How do you feel about a film set in Northern Ireland that's breaking away from the Troubles?

LALOR: I think it's great. I love the idea that it has nothing to do with the Troubles, despite the title, which is a minor explosion (laughs), rather than a major one. I love the idea of telling stories about here, looking at the city that we live in now, which we're all very proud of. I happen to be from Belfast and we're emerging; there's so much potential for what we are at the minute.

INTERVIEWER: How do you find Robert's Belfast accent?

LALOR: That's a loaded question! A terrible question to be asking (laughs). It's great!

INTERVIEWER: And how did you find working with two directors?

LALOR: I'm lucky, they're good friends of mine. I just think they're a great pair that really know their business and I hope this is a big success for them.

INTERVIEWER: And have you enjoyed the experience?

LALOR: I wasn't being facetious when I said that it's really educational at this moment in my own life, when my kids are on that cusp of trying to break free on the one hand, but yet need you on the other. And that's really what's paralleled in the journey of the film.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that the relationship with your own kids maybe helped you play the role?

LALOR: Yes. It's given me a greater sensitivity, to their needs and to the complications of teenage hood. We in Belfast at the minute, have the highest rate of teenage suicide. It's sometimes thought of as a working class phenomenon (but) far from it - it's across class and across creed - and it's a huge problem and very worrying for parents. So it's good to contemplate these issues and good to bring your own experience of parenting to the table.

CHERRYBOMB – filmmaker Q&As

LISA BARROS D'SA AND GLENN LEYBURN INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWER: Can you describe the story of CHERRYBOMB?

LISA & GLENN: It's the story of two best mates whose friendship is threatened when a beautiful but troubled girl moves back to town and encourages them to commit a series of increasingly dangerous and illegal deeds in the battle for her affections. Over the course of a crazy weekend, the competition spirals out of control with fatal consequences.

INTERVIEWER: Can you say a few words about the three lead characters - Malachy, Luke and Michelle?

LISA & GLENN: Michelle is a beautiful 15 year old who has just moved back to Belfast to live with her father, Mal's boss Crilly. This is a whole new world for father and daughter as it's been a weekend and holidays situation for years. We soon become aware of troubling undercurrents within the Crilly household, which drive Michelle's determination to make her mark with Malachy and Luke. They are enthralled by this sophisticated and mysterious stranger, and she enjoys fanning the flames of their rivalry, but they don't quite realise how troubled and vulnerable she is.

Malachy's a sensitive, intelligent guy. He has a solid relationship with his parents, keeps it tidy at work and does well at school. But he's got a more subversive streak - his friendship with Luke suggests as much. Until now Malachy's been content to look on as Luke creates havoc, but we enter the story at a point when Malachy is getting frustrated with being the good guy and trying to keep everybody in his life happy. He needs to become more independent, to find his own voice. The competition to win Michelle becomes the catalyst for this journey, as Malachy steps up and really starts to take risks.

And Luke is charismatic, eccentric; the golden guy with rock-star cool who always gets the girls - but he's really a neglected boy who needs his friendship with Mal perhaps more than Mal needs him - Malachy's more like family to him than are his brother and father. So as the competition starts to drive them apart, Luke's confidence and security are at stake, not to mention the fragile balance of his family life.

INTERVIEWER: How did you get involved in the project?

LISA & GLENN: It began with a short film we made, *The 18th Electricity Plan*, which was in a few festivals. Michael Casey of Green Park Films saw and liked it, and we met up and decided to work on something together. Then Michael came to us in Spring 2007 with the script of CHERRYBOMB. We came back with ideas and an approach for the film and were on board from then.

INTERVIEWER: What did you think of the script?

LISA & GLENN: We were immediately excited by what felt like a fresh and truthful portrayal of the friendship between these two boys - with all the banter, spark, affection and rivalry that entails. The story takes place at a moment when that friendship is being tested by events and circumstances in the wider world - families, responsibility, decisions about the future. Michelle's arrival is the catalyst for accelerating the changes in the boys' lives. In other words, played out through the events of one weekend is a rites of passage story, in which the paths of the characters' futures are decided and discovered. The universality of the coming of age tale really appealed to us.

INTERVIEWER: Can you talk about the cast and the casting process? What were you looking for?

LISA & GLENN: Despite the level of action in the plot, we always saw this as a character driven piece, and so we were looking for young actors who could bring real subtlety, intelligence, humour and truth to the characters - the three lead roles are testing in terms of the emotional range required, and we wanted actors who could draw out the subtext of their characters. We were thrilled with our final cast and also delighted to be able to cast some great actors from Northern Ireland, including Lalor Roddy with whom we'd worked before. And Jimmy Nesbitt is a well-known screen presence, but we feel he really goes somewhere different in this performance, playing a father struggling between following his own desires and the responsibility of being a full-time dad.

INTERVIEWER: Can you talk about the rehearsal process prior to shooting? Did you have any concerns about the three leads (none of whom are from Northern Ireland) speaking in Northern Irish accents?

LISA & GLENN: We had a week of rehearsal with the three leads over in Belfast and worked as intensively as possible on building the emotional journeys of their characters. On a schedule like ours it's difficult to find much rehearsal time on set, so this prior work proved very valuable. Accent is obviously a major consideration as it's important that the world feels as authentic as possible, and Northern Irish accents are apparently among the most difficult - but we had invaluable assistance from world-class vocal coach, Brendan Gunn. And in truth we were never really worried about the issue, as from the time of casting it was clear that our leads had the talent and commitment to master the accents quickly.

INTERVIEWER: Two people directing a film is rare - can you describe the different roles each of you took on and the advantages/advantages of having two directors?

LISA & GLENN: Yes, many people find this strange - though I think it is becoming more common! And for us it was a natural development as we have collaborated on creative projects for many years. The potential problems are mainly around a level of confusion that could arise on set from cast and crew hearing mixed messages about how to proceed; so we were very careful to ensure this wasn't the case. The key was for us to prepare as much as possible, and to ensure that there was always a united directorial voice on set. I think it worked OK - the cast and crew said so at the end of the shoot - unless they were just being kind! But we got through slates pretty efficiently on a tight schedule and the performances look great, so something must have been going right. There are definite advantages in two heads - more time for one of us to spend with the actors and one with the cinematographer - though our roles crossed over a lot. And if problems and glitches do arise, two heads can incubate ideas and solutions more quickly than one. Conversely, perhaps, you can endorse each other to take more risks, which is often creatively beneficial.

INTERVIEWER: Were there any specific references, influences or approaches to the visual style of the film?

LISA & GLENN: Several, and not all from cinema. From the earliest stage of our involvement in CHERRYBOMB, we started collecting visual references, mostly photographs, that influenced every aspect of the production. We love the work of a photographer called William Eggleston whose pictures find beauty and striking displays of colour in ordinary scenes and we have tried to limit and control our use of colour throughout the film to give it as much visual impact as possible. Of course having a leisure centre as one of our main locations was great, as it is a very graphic and potentially surreal environment visually. Other people that have inspired us are Ryan McGinley, a young New York based photographer, and Hedi Slimane, both of whom have taken some amazing studies of teenagers. Graphic designer

and filmmaker Mike Mills has been an influence as are the films of the French New Wave.

INTERVIEWER: Music seems to play an important role in the film - can you talk about music in relation to the story and specifically the title of the film? Can you also talk about David Holmes' involvement in the project?

LISA & GLENN: Absolutely, music was always a crucial part of this world - particularly within the friendship of the two boys. It's a truism that people listen to music differently today - iTunes and the internet mean a larger range of sounds are easily available and so a very eclectic range of musical influences/atmospheres felt right for a contemporary teenage story. From David's earliest involvement in the project, he hoped to bring that variety and fusion of musical influences to the world and does so brilliantly. We've worked with David for ten years on various projects - pop promos, album artwork, sleeve notes, and now the three of us have started a production company together, Canderblinks Film and Music Ltd, through which we're developing other feature projects. It's very natural and enjoyable for the three of us to work together as we are very much on the same creative wavelength. We were all keen from the start to feature some of the amazing talent that is coming up through the local band scene, and several local artists feature on the soundtrack, including Robin Shiels, James Smith and Cashier no 9.

INTERVIEWER: CHERRYBOMB is a story set in Northern Ireland but 'the Troubles' are nowhere to be seen - how important is this?

LISA & GLENN: It was always important to us to tell a story about a different Northern Ireland than the version people are accustomed to seeing on film. A story that reflects the contemporary world. This film is about young people, and to teenagers here today, the troubles are a world from the history books. Naturally their reality is shaped to some extent by the fallout from that recent history, and that's what we wanted to talk about - Northern Ireland trying to redefine and reinvent itself. Like our characters, this country can be seen as going through a stage of adolescence post-troubles: trying to work out what shape it's going to take next, rushing to redefine itself. The story to some extent questions whether the version of the future that's taking shape is the best one possible - whether it really answers people's needs and desires. Also, in the rush to move forward, what do we lose? What's necessary to leave behind, what is sacrificed in choosing a new future? In that sense, the world chimes perfectly with the characters' coming of age story.

INTERVIEWER: How did you find working with a Belfast crew?

LISA & GLENN: The crew were without exception fantastic; incredibly helpful, friendly and hardworking over and above the call of duty. They were also very smart people who were never at a loss when it came to rethinking or shifting tack at short notice. I know of international directors who've described the crews here as the best they've ever worked with, which doesn't surprise us at all.

INTERVIEWER: Can you talk about the editing process?

LISA & GLENN: We'd worked with Nick, our editor, before, on a short we made and so were really confident that we would be in good hands - we're all 'get' each other creatively, but like all good collaborators Nick is very happy to challenge our ideas and bring a great deal of his own to the process. So it's really fun, but tough going at the same time. You want to make the perfect decisions on every aspect of the film, on every level of detail, which can create a lot of pressure.

INTERVIEWER: What will be your lasting memories and impressions of making CHERRYBOMB?

LISA & GLENN: As it was our first feature there was a certain amount of trepidation as we approached the shoot date; anxiety never entirely disappears as there is always a schedule to wrestle with whilst trying to get everything on film that you want. But we were - not quite surprised - but certainly delighted by how much fun it all was - we really enjoyed the whole experience and the many adventures it entailed. Working with such a lovely cast and crew, we were probably spoiled. We'll also always appreciate being given the chance to take this on - the producers showed a lot of faith in us which made it a pleasure.

INTERVIEWER: What future projects are in the pipeline?

LISA & GLENN: We've various other film projects in the offing. One is written by Lisa, a spooky psychological thriller called *Canderblinks*, which is at script stage with development funding from NI Screen. Among other ideas, we're developing a script by local writers, Glenn Patterson and Colin Carberry, which we're very excited about. It's also based in Northern Ireland - a darkly comedic biopic, centered around the punk scene in the seventies, it features a very compelling protagonist drawn from a real-life character. There's lots of other stuff happening in the next year too which we're just getting round to planning; suddenly having a little time to breathe again!

#

DARAGH CARVILLE INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWER: Can you tell us how you wrote CHERRYBOMB, how did it come to fruition?

DARAGH: Well, I'd been working on the script ever since the previous film I did, *Middletown*, which I finished three years ago, so it's been quite a while.

INTERVIEWER: *Middletown* was very gripping and dark and CHERRYBOMB has its darkness as well...

DARAGH: There weren't a lot of jokes in *Middletown*! And, yes, CHERRYBOMB has a dark quality to it, an edgy quality but because it's about youthful characters - it's a very contemporary film - it's got more humour and it's a pacier story.

INTERVIEWER: Were you involved in bringing the two directors, Lisa and Glenn on board?

DARAGH: To some degree. We looked around at various people who we thought might bring something to the story and Glenn and Lisa were really the ideal people because they've got a youthful energy to them and an amazing visual style. Myself and the producers were really impressed by the short film they'd made and we'd met on and off, so it just seemed to be a kind of good coming together of people.

INTERVIEWER: You'd worked with the production team before?

DARAGH: Yes, the team that made *Middletown* was myself as writer, the director Brian Kirk and producer Michael Casey. Brian and Michael are both producing CHERRYBOMB as well - and we've worked really closely together as a unit over the last ten years.

INTERVIEWER: What do you feel about the cast? Are they as you pictured?

DARAGH: Well, it's strange because they're never quite how you picture the characters in your mind but very quickly, when you get the right actors, they replace the idea you had in

your head. So now when I think of Malachy and Luke, I think of Rupert and Robert and when I think of Michelle, I think of Kimberley, because they're just perfect for the parts. And similarly with Jimmy Nesbitt and Crilly. So I kind of have to reach back to try and remember - how did I originally envisage the characters? Because ultimately the characters now belong to them, they're not mine anymore, but I'm delighted, it's been brilliant watching it come alive.

INTERVIEWER: You're well known for writing plays - six plays and you've got another one in progress at the moment...

DARAGH: Well, I'm supposed to have. The plays have mostly started in Northern Ireland but they've gone around the UK and been on in America and Germany and France. The next one I'm doing - or the current one I'm doing - is a play called Europa, which is very, very Belfast, and that's with a company called Tinderbox Theatre Company, who I've worked with a lot. Hopefully that will happen next year.

INTERVIEWER: I read that you were the writer in residence at Queen's (Queen's University, Belfast)?

DARAGH: I was writer in residence for three years but then I made myself indispensable, so I'm still at Queen's. During the time I was writer in residence we set up a Masters Degree in creative writing as part of a new project called the Seamus Heaney Centre, and I'm still part that. I teach on the MA in creative writing and I specialize in scripts.

INTERVIEWER: Could you, in your own words, explain the plot of CHERRYBOMB?

DARAGH: CHERRYBOMB is a teen story. A story about two best friends, Malachy and Luke, who are both 16 and have known each other forever. And then suddenly they meet someone new in their lives, a woman called Michelle who's come back into town after being away for a long time, and she turns their lives upside down and brings their friendship into question. And between them, the three of them have a series of increasingly wild adventures as the two boys compete for the one girl. With hilarious consequences (laughs)...

INTERVIEWER: What was your inspiration?

DARAGH: We wanted to make a teen movie. We wanted to make a film about young people because it felt like that film hadn't been made in Northern Ireland, or indeed in Ireland. So starting from that, I quickly developed the characters of Malachy and Luke and Michelle and then they started to take over. But I did pull lots of experiences from not only my own life but the lives of friends and people all over the shop, so there's a grain of truth in it.

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything you wanted to set out to do differently from other stories that had come out of Northern Ireland?

DARAGH: Yes. The fact that it's a movie about young people, I thought that that story hadn't been told; the story of people who grew up after the whole Troubles and ceasefire period and for whom that world has no real relevance. And they're trying to find their way in a whole new world that's been built up around them. I think that there are all sorts of new stories to tell about Belfast, lots of stories that haven't been explored before.

INTERVIEWER: And are you happy with what you've seen of the film?

DARAGH: I'm delighted with it. I watched some of it last week and was just really taken with the stuff they'd shot in the Lifeboat, the bar/club sequences, which are so authentic and

true and atmospheric. Very often movies get those things wrong, when you see a club scene or disco, it all looks a bit embarrassing, and this feels just very real.

INTERVIEWER: It is actually a generic story that could be set anywhere - it's young people...

DARAGH: Exactly! It feels to me that it's connected to the way that Northern Ireland is changing and kind of building a new identity for itself but absolutely its story that could be anywhere and certainly it doesn't trade in the usual Protestants and Catholics.

INTERVIEWER: How did you feel about everybody's accents...

DARAGH: I think they did brilliantly. We've worked with a great guy called Brendan Gunn, who's a dialogue coach - who worked on Middletown – and he's brilliant with actors and they love working with him. It doesn't massively bother me, to be honest, either, because ultimately I want this film to be seen by everyone in the universe (laughs).

INTERVIEWER: Did you at any point feel like you wanted to direct it yourself?

DARAGH: No. It's crossed my mind occasionally because all writers want to maintain a degree of control and you always know a way that you want it to be done. But actually I love the process of collaboration; I love working with actors and I love somebody else coming in with their vision and doing something that I hadn't thought of and then I can take credit for it and think that that's what I wanted all along!

#

CHERRYBOMB – BIOGRAPHIES

ABOUT THE CAST:

Rupert Grint (Malachy)

Although *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* was Rupert's first foray into the world of professional acting, his natural talent has earned him worldwide critical and public acclaim and a British Critic's Circle nomination for Best Newcomer. Most recently the UK's leading film magazine *Empire* has honoured Rupert and co-stars Daniel Radcliffe and Emma Watson with the prestigious Outstanding Contribution Award in recognition of their phenomenal performances in all of the *Harry Potter* films.

Since filming the first *Harry Potter* film, he has gone on to star alongside Simon Callow and Stephen Fry as a young madcap professor in Peter Howitt's *Thunderpants*. He of course also starred as Ron Weasley in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* and *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. And most recently Rupert filmed opposite Julie Walters in Jeremy Brock's *Driving Lessons*.

Prior to winning the role of Ron Weasley, he performed in school productions and with local theatre. Productions included the role of the gangster Rooster in *Annie* and a production of *Peter Pan* and Rumpelstiltskin in the *Grimm Tales*.

Rupert is currently filming alongside heavyweights Emily Blunt and Bill Nighy in *Wild Target* the comedy about an uptight hit man. *Wild Target* is a CinemaNX and Isle of Man Film Presentation, in association with Entertainment Film Distributors, of a Magic Light Pictures production with Matador Pictures and Cinema Four in association with Regent Capital.

Scheduled to shoot for six weeks at Twickenham Film Studios and on location in London and the Isle of Man, *Wild Target* will be sold internationally by Odyssey Entertainment with Cinetic Media handling North American sales. The film will be released in the United Kingdom by Entertainment Film Distributors Ltd in 2009 (date tbc)

2009 will also see Rupert star in CHERRYBOMB which, set in Belfast, is a gritty thriller about two teenagers who get into trouble when they both fall for a beautiful new girl in town. Kimberley Nixon and Robert Sheehan star opposite Rupert and the film is the joint debut of co-directors Glen Leyburn and Lisa Barros D'Sa.

When not on the set Rupert is most likely to be found on the golf course.

Robert Sheehan (Luke)

Originally from Portlaoise, Robert has been acting since childhood, making one of his debut appearances in Aisling Walsh's acclaimed feature film *Song For A Raggy Boy*. Since then, he has appeared in a number of feature films including *A Dublin Story*, *Ghostwood*, *An Creatur* and most recently he played the leading role of Dan in Martin Duffy's new feature for Magma Films *Summer of the Flying Saucers*. On television Robert appeared in all 24 episodes of *Foreign Exchange* (Magma Film/9 Network Australia) and in all 13 episodes of *Young Blades* (Insight/PAX TV) as Prince Louis. More recently Robert has appeared in *The Clinic* (Parallel Films/RTE), *Bel's Boys* (ITV) and in Season 2 of *The Tudors* (Showtime/BBC).

Robert recently appeared as series regular Addison Teller in *Rock Rivals* (Shed Productions /ITV). Robert also appeared as Liam in *Bittersweet* a new two-part comedy drama directed by Declan Eames for RTE, which aired in early 2008.

Robert has also just completed filming the role of BJ in the *Red Riding Project*, a trilogy of films based on the novels of the same name by David Peace and starring Sean Bean, Paddy Considine and Peter Mullan. The first, *Nineteen Seventy-Four* was directed by Julian Jarrold, *Nineteen Eighty* directed by James March and *Nineteen Eighty Three* directed by Anand Tucker all for Revolution Films/Channel Four.

Robert is currently on location in Europe filming a leading role opposite Nicolas Cage and Ron Pearlman in *The Season of the Witch* directed by Dominic Sena for Atlas Entertainment/Relativity Media.

Kimberley Nixon (Michelle)

Born in Bristol, and raised in the South Wales valleys, Kimberley Nixon trained at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama in Cardiff, and shot to notoriety in Autumn 2007 when she starred as Sophy Hutton in the BBC One costume drama series *Cranford*, opposite Dame Judy Dench.

Kimberley has starred in an impressive number of films in the short time since her *Cranford* debut, including *Wild Child*, directed by Nick Moore, *Angus, Thongs and Perfect Snogging* directed by Gurinder Chadha, and Stephen Elliot's, *Easy Virtue*, opposite Colin Firth, Kristin Scott Thomas and Jessica Biel.

More recently, Kimberley returned to her theatrical roots, starring as Griet in the acclaimed West End production of *Girl with a Pearl Earring*.

James Nesbitt (Crilly)

Born and raised in Northern Ireland, James Nesbitt followed the advice of his school teacher and attended drama school in London. Starting his career on stage, Nesbitt has appeared in numerous plays including *Paddywack*, *Translations*, *As You Like It*, *Philadelphia Here I Come* and *Shoot The Crow* in the West End.

His first major TV roles included *Ballykissangel* and *Playing The Field* but it was playing Adam in *Cold Feet* that brought him to the attention of a wider audience. Based around the lives of three thirty-something couples; this critically-acclaimed drama won James a British Comedy Award in 2000 and a UK National Television Award in 2003.

Other major TV roles followed including *Murphy's Law*, the contemporary re-working of Chaucer's *The Miller's Tale*, *The Passion*, *Midnight Man* and *Jekyll* for which he received a Golden Globe Award nomination in 2008 for Best Performance by an Actor in a Mini-Series or Motion Picture Made for Television.

His film credits include *Jude* and *Welcome to Sarajevo* directed by Michael Winterbottom, *Waking Ned*, *Bloody Sunday*, which won him a BAFTA nomination and Best Actor award at the British Independent Film Awards and the Stockholm Film Festival, Danny Boyle's *Millions* and Woody Allen's *Match Point*. He has recently finished filming *Occupation* - a new three-part drama for the BBC written by Peter Bowker. *Occupation* traces the lives of three British soldiers from the invasion of Basra in March 2003 to the present.

Lalor Roddy (Smiley)

Lalor Roddy hails from Northern Ireland and for twenty years has been one of the Country's most versatile and distinguished actors. His theatre credits include *Measure for Measure*, *Amphibians* and *King Baby* for the Royal Shakespeare Company and several seasons with The Abbey Theatre in Dublin.

Lalor was the winner of The Irish Times Theatre Awards Best Actor for *In a Little World of Our Own* in 1998 and in 2002 won The Irish Times Theatre Awards Best Actor for *Blasted*, *Hard To Believe*, *Death And The Ploughman* and *Pentecost*; the first actor in the awards history to be nominated for four separate productions.

His film credits include: *5 Minutes of Heaven* (BBC Films), *City of Ember* (Playtone Films), *As The Beast Sleeps* (BBC), *The Escapist*, *Circle of Deceit*, *Arise and Go Now* for Danny Boyle, and *Chosen*. Lalor can also be seen in Steve McQueen's hard hitting and award winning film *Hunger*, winner of the Camera D'or at the Cannes Film Festival 2008.

Paul Kennedy (Chris)

Belfast born Paul Kennedy appeared in the award-winning television film *Omagh*, and his performance as the killer Ryan in the short film *Endgame* helped it on its way to a Kodak BAFTA among other awards.

2008 was an extremely industrious year for Paul. As well as *CHERRYBOMB*, in 2009 he will be seen on screen in *Fifty Dead Men Walking*, and *Five Minutes of Heaven*, one of 12 world cinema selections in competition at The Sundance Film Festival.

He will also appear on British television in *Occupation*, a three part drama about the lives of three soldiers stationed in Iraq, and *Best*, a feature length BBC drama about the lives of George Best and his mother Anne, and their battle with alcoholism.

A prolific comic actor, Paul regularly appeared in the long-running BBC sitcom *Give My*

Head Peace, and next year will appear in nine episodes of the new BBC sketch show *Teethgrinder*.

On stage Paul has performed in plays all over the United Kingdom and Ireland, and he is the artistic director of Belfast's energetic young Jigsaw Theatre Company, which he co-founded at the age of 25.

Also a gifted writer, in 2008 Paul sold the option on his first screenplay, a revenge Western entitled *Wanted; Dead*, to a production company in Los Angeles. It is scheduled to begin shooting in summer 2009.

Kathy Kiera Clarke (Emma)

Born in Belfast, Kathy is a founder member of Marrillac Theatre Company and has worked extensively in theatre. Her theatre credits include *Jekyll and Hyde*, *Riders to the Sea*, *Damaged Goods* and *Summit Conference* at Glasgow Citizens Theatre. And her other work includes *Borders of Paradise* at the Palace Theatre, Watford, *Torquato Tasso* at the Lyceum, Edinburgh, *Once a Catholic* and *Factory Girls* at the Tricycle, London, and *Brilliant Traces*, *Low Level Panic*, *The Coronation Voyage* and *Macbeth* all at the Lyric Theatre, Belfast.

Kathy was nominated for the RNT/Ian Charleson Awards Best Actress for the title role of *Medea* for The Glasgow Citizens Theatre. She played Connie in *Scenes From A Big Picture* at the Royal National Theatre and Neasa in Conor McPherson's *Shining City* at The Royal Court. She won critical acclaim for her portrayal of Ophelia in The Abbey Theatre Dublin and Lyric Belfast's production of *Hamlet*.

Her television work includes *Flash McVeigh*, *Chandler & Co*, Jack Rosenthal's *Eskimo Day* and *Take A Girl Like You* all for the BBC. She played Bernadette in the series *Head Over Heels* (Carlton), Una in *Pulling Moves*, Elizabeth Gibson in *Omagh* and Jennifer Gaghan in *Silent Witness*, all for the BBC.

Film work includes *Last Legs* directed by Amy Jenkins, *Hard Nut*, *Mad About Harry*, *The Most Fertile Man in Ireland*, and Kathy was nominated Best Actress at the Irish Film & TV Awards 2003 for her role in Paul Greengrass' *Bloody Sunday*. She played the leading role of Nicola in *Solid Air* and most recently Agnes in *Small Engine Repair* directed by Niall Heery.

Kat Kirk (Sharon)

20 year-old Kathryn (Kat) Kirk, was born in Belfast and currently lives in Bangor, Northern Ireland, where she is studying Performing Arts. CHERRYBOMB is her first film.

Niamh Quinn (Donna)

Since graduating from The Royal Welsh college of Music and Drama in July 2007, Niamh has appeared in *The Children's Hour* as Peggy and *Macbeth* as a Witch, both at the Royal Exchange Theatre Manchester. Her Television credits include Niamh in *Law and Order* for Kudos and Nurse in *Caerdydd* for Fiction Factory. Short film credits include Helen in *Dreamland* and she has also appeared in ITV's *The Trek*.

Paul Garrett (Bob)

Paul Garrett was born in Belfast and started acting at an early age. He went on to train at the renowned East 15 Acting School in London where he obtained an M.A in Acting for TV, Film and Radio.

Garrett was well reviewed in David Mamet's *The Blue Hour* for the Jigsaw Theatre Company and Derek Murphy's " *Miles Overman* for the Stray Dawg Theatre Company. He has recently finished *Five Minutes of Heaven* which is directed by Oliver Hirschbiegal where he worked alongside Liam Neeson and James Nesbitt. He is currently on tour as lead singer of Rock band The Screaming I-Pods.

Richard Orr (Uncle Joe)

Belfast born Richard Orr has extensive theatre experience including over 20 productions at the Lyric Theatre Belfast. He has also worked with renowned theatre companies such as 7:84 Scotland, Theatre Babel, Library Theatre Manchester Charabanc, and The Stanislavski Theatre Studio in Washington DC.

Television work includes: *Brookside, Made In Heaven, Sherlock Holmes, Give My Head Peace, I Fought The Law, The Vikings, Children's Ward*. While his work on feature films includes: *Five Minutes of Heaven, Crossmaheart, The Magnificent Ambersons, Titanic Town, On Dangerous Ground, Mad about Mambo* and *The Most Fertile Man in Ireland*.

Bronach Lawlor (Jessica)

Bronach Lawlor has been acting from the age of 10 at the YouthAction's Rainbow Factory School of Performing Arts, now 14 years-old and a pupil at Fortwilliam Grammar School, North Belfast, she continues to tread the boards for both. CHERRYBOMB is her first film role. She has also worked on the TV series *Just for Laughs* as well as numerous commercials and voice-overs.

Maggie Hayes (Aunt Maggie)

Maggie Hayes graduated from the Central School of Speech and Drama and has worked extensively ever since in Belfast, London, Paris and the U.S.

Recent Film and TV credits include: *Rapunzel* for Hat Trick for the BBC; *Buy Borrow Steal* for BBS Productions; *The Bill* for Thames Television; *Give My Head Peace* for the BBC and *The Most Fertile Man In Ireland* for Samson Films.

Recent theatre credits include: *Pumpgirl* (The Bush/ Lyric Theatre), *Midden* (Rough Magic), *Northern Star* (Field Day Theatre), *Translations* (Lyric Theatre), *The Blue Hour* (Jigsaw) and *The Plough and the Star* (O'Casey Theatre Co).

#

ABOUT THE CREW:

Glenn Leyburn (Director)

Glenn Leyburn was born in Northern Ireland and has worked as a graphic designer, establishing an outstanding reputation in this field, predominantly for his work in the music industry, and in particular his ongoing collaborations with soundtrack composer David Holmes.

Glenn's work has been shown at several group exhibitions including the recent Helvetica exhibition at the Design Museum in London, and has featured in international design journals such as *Creative Review* and *Eye Magazine*. He is regularly invited to lecture at colleges and graphic design events. He has directed and art-directed several music videos and has recently co-directed two short films, *The Groupies*, and *The 18th Electricity Plan*, as well as his co-directorial feature film debut with CHERRYBOMB.

Lisa Barros D'Sa (Director)

Born in Northern Ireland, Lisa Barros D'Sa studied English at Oxford University and has an MA in Screenwriting from the London University of the Arts. Since graduating, Barros D'Sa's short stories have been published, she has written extensive album sleeve notes and an anthology of Irish fiction. During this time she has also worked in feature film development and has written and co-directed two short films: *Groupies* and *The 18th Electricity Plan*.

Leyburn and Barros D'Sa's first short, *The 18th Electricity Plan*, screened at international film festivals including the LA Shorts Fest and Clermont Ferrand. The film won an award in the Best New Irish Short category at the Galway Film Festival and a Special Jury Mention in the Best New Director Category at the 2006 Cork International Film Festival, where the jury commented: "An extremely strong first piece from the two directors, we were incredibly impressed by their stylish treatment of the stark and surreal world they portrayed on screen."

Lisa's feature film screenplay *Canderblinks* is currently in development with Green Park Films and Canderblinks Film and Music Ltd., a production company recently formed by Barros D'Sa, Glenn Leyburn and David Holmes. CHERRYBOMB is her first feature film.

Michael Casey (Producer)

Michael Casey has been collaborating with fellow CHERRYBOMB producer, Brian Kirk, and writer, Daragh Carville for 10 years. Michael's previous films include the award-winning *Freeze Frame* (dir. John Simpson) and *Middletown* (dir. Brian Kirk, writer Daragh Carville). Together these films received twelve nominations at the Irish Film and Television Awards, going on to secure four awards and international distribution. In 2007 Michael produced the multi award-winning *My Boy Jack* (dir. Brian Kirk, writer David Haig) starring Dan Radcliffe and Kim Cattrall for Ecosse Films / ITV. In addition to a BAFTA, this film secured a FIPA in Biarritz for Best Screenplay and a Silver Magnolia in Shanghai for Best Drama. In 2008 Michael produced the Frank Deasy mini-series *Father & Son* (dir. Brian Kirk) starring Dougray Scott, Sophie Okonedo, Stephen Rea and Ian Hart for Left Bank / ITV.

Michael's co-producing film credits include *The Mighty Celt* (starring Robert Carlyle and Gillian Anderson), *Waz* (Stellan Skarsgard, Melissa George) and most recently *Kings* (Colm Meaney), which was Ireland's foreign language entry in the 2008 Academy Awards.

Brian Kirk (Producer)

Brian Kirk has been collaborating with fellow CHERRYBOMB producer, Michael Casey, and writer, Daragh Carville for 10 years. Their first film together was *Middletown*, which Brian

directed. Starring Matthew Macfadyen, this film received nine nominations in the 2007 Irish Film and Television Awards, including Best Film and Best Director.

Michael and Brian then partnered again in 2007 on *My Boy Jack*, in which Brian directed Dan Radcliffe and Kim Cattrall. In addition to a BAFTA, this film secured a FIPA in Biarritz for Best Screenplay and a Silver Magnolia in Shanghai for Best Drama. In 2008 Brian then directed the Frank Deasy mini-series *Father & Son* (prod. Michael Casey) starring Dougray Scott, Sophie Okonedo, Stephen Rea and Ian Hart.

Brian has directed critically acclaimed television drama in both the USA and the UK. His US credits are *The Tudors*, *Brotherhood* (Showtime) and *The Riches* (FX). His UK television career started with a BAFTA nomination for Best New Television Director. Credits include *Funland*, which was nominated for a BAFTA for Best Television Drama, and *Murphy's Law*, which received a Best Television Drama nomination in the Irish Film and Television Awards.

His short film work has won awards at film festivals internationally as well as a Fuji award and a Royal Television Society nomination. Titles include *Baby Doll* and *Do Armed Robbers Have Love Affairs?*

Mark Huffam (Producer)

Mark Huffam has been working in the film industry for over 24 years. He started producing films in 1997 with credits including Spielberg's Academy Award®-winning *Saving Private Ryan* (associate producer) and Academy Award®-nominee *Quills* (co-producer). In 2001 Mark produced *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* starring Nicolas Cage and Penelope Cruz and in 2002, he acted as executive producer on Stephen Daldry's Academy Award®-winner *The Hours*. He continued his relationship with Working Title Films, working as producer on *Johnny English* (2003), *Thunderbirds* (2004) and the award-winning Irish film *Mickybo and Me* (2005).

Recently, Mark has produced the football dramas *Goal!* (2005) and *Goal 2 - Living the Dream* (2006) and the box office sensation *Mamma Mia!* (2008) for Universal Pictures International, as well as *Freakdog* (2008) and *Ghost Machine* (2008) both for Generator Entertainment. Mark set up Generator Entertainment with Simon Bosanquet in 2007, and has just completed producing their third film, the supernatural thriller *Ghost Machine*.

Simon Bosanquet (Producer)

Simon Bosanquet's film career began in the 1980s working as location manager on Warren Beatty's Academy Award®-winner *Reds*, and as production manager on Hugh Hudson's Academy Award® and BAFTA winner, *Chariots of Fire*. Simon's additional production credits include the BAFTA-nominated thriller *White Mischief* for Columbia Pictures (co-producer), *Nuns on the Run* for 20th Century Fox (co-producer) and the 1992 adaptation of Emily Brontë's classic *Wuthering Heights* for Paramount Pictures (executive producer).

Simon also produced Eric Idle's *Splitting Heirs* for Universal Pictures, the award-winning *Onegin* (1999) starring Ralph Fiennes and the Emmy award-winning teleplay *Wit*, directed by Mike Nichols and starring Emma Thompson. More recent productions include *Ripley's Game* (2002), followed in 2004 by the HBO Emmy and Golden Globe winner *The Life and Death of Peter Sellers*. In 2006, Simon co-produced Mike Barker's *Shattered* starring Pierce Brosnan, and was executive producer on the successful Australian mockumentary, *Razzle Dazzle - A Journey into Dance*. In addition to *Freakdog*, Simon has also recently completed producing Generator Entertainment's next film *Ghost Machine*.

James Flynn (Executive Producer)

James Flynn began his career in the Irish film industry at John Boorman's Merlin Films International where he was Head of Development having previously worked for the Investment Bank of Ireland.

Between 1993 and 1997 Flynn worked as Business Manager of the fledgling Irish Film Board. His work involved the analysis of feature films and television drama projects for development and production finance loans. During his time at the Board he represented Ireland on several occasions in Brussels at the Media2 Management Committee.

In July 1997 Flynn together with Juanita Wilson established Metropolitan Film Productions with the aim of making strong, independent and resonant films for the international market. In-house projects developed and produced by Metropolitan Films include *H3* and *Nora*. Flynn went on to form a strategic alliance with Morgan O'Sullivan in August 1998 and through this partnership, they both provided Executive/Co-Production services to incoming productions.

In 2002 Flynn set up Octagon Films which developed and produced *Inside I'm Dancing*, written by Jeffrey Caine (*Goldeneye*, *The Constant Gardener*) and directed by Damien O'Donnell (*East Is East*, *Heartlands*). In 2007 Octagon jointly produced *Dorothy Mills* starring Carice Van Houten, which was released in Europe in Summer 2008. Flynn recently co-produced Neil Jordan's *Ondine* which stars Colin Farrell and was filmed in West Cork; it is due for release internationally in Autumn 2009.

Screenplay (Daragh Carville)

Daragh Carville is a playwright and screenwriter. His plays, which include *Language Roulette*, *Observatory* and *Family Plot*, have been widely produced in Britain and Ireland, and as far afield as France, Germany, Holland, and the U.S. He has also written for television and radio.

Daragh's first feature film, *Middletown*, premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival in New York in 2006. The film, which stars Matthew MacFadyen, Daniel Mays, Eva Birthistle and Gerard McSorley, was directed by Brian Kirk and produced by Michael Casey of Green Park Films. It was nominated in nine categories at the 2007 Irish Film and Television Awards, including Best Film and Best Screenplay, with Eva Birthistle picking up the award for Best Actress. Daragh's second film, *CHERRYBOMB*, starring Rupert Grint and James Nesbitt, has been selected as part of the Generations section of the Berlin Film Festival, and opens there in February 2009.

Daragh Carville has won the Stewart Parker and the Meyer Whitworth awards. He is currently working on a number of projects for stage and screen including a new play for Tinderbox Theatre Company, *This Other City*, which opens in Belfast in April 2009, and a pilot for a BBC TV drama series entitled *Generations*.

Production Design (David Craig)

David Studied Fine Art at Bristol and Theatre Design at Central School of Speech and Drama London. He has been designing for Theatre and Opera for the last fifteen years and more recently has moved into television and film. Craig's work in film includes *George Best* a feature drama for BBC Films directed by Colin Barr which is due for release this year. For Generator Entertainment he has worked on two supernatural thrillers, *Ghost Machine* directed by Chris Hartwell and *Freakdog* directed by Paddy Breathnach. Craig's first feature film *Kings* was nominated for an IFTA for best Production Design in 2008.

His television designs work includes *BelsBoys* for Endemol UK a 26 part series, *The*

Brendan Courtney Show for RTE and *Monkey Love* for Channel 4. David has designed numerous commercials including the Award winning D.O.E Drink Drive commercials.

His recent theatre designs have included, *A night in November*, *The Interrogation of Ambrose Fogarty* for GBL Productions at the Grand Opera House Belfast and London's West End, *After The End* for Primecut Productions, *Over The Balcony* for Balcony Productions, *Heroes With Their Hands in the Air* at The Playhouse Londonderry, *The Biggest Adventure in the World* For Barnstorm Theatre Co. Kilkenny, *Limbo* for Sneaky Productions, Belfast, *Megs Head* and *New Kid* for Replay Theatre Company and *The History of the Troubles (according to my da)* at the Belfast's Grand Opera House.

Most recent Opera designs have included, *The Barber of Seville* and *Bastien & Bastienne* for Opera Theatre Company, *Un Ballo Maschera*, *La Bohème* (nominated for Best Opera Production at the Irish Times Awards), *The Bohemian Girl* *Un Ballo Maschera*, *Carmen*, *The Magic Flute* and *Albert Herring* for Castleward Opera, and *L'Ocassione Fa Il Ladro*, *Dr Miracle* and *The Medium* at Wexford Festival Opera.

Previous opera work has included *Rigoletto* (Nominated for Best Production at the Irish Times Awards), *Tosca*, *La Rondine* (Nominated for Best Design at the Irish Times Awards), *Lucia Di Lammermoor*, *La Belle Helene* and *Madame Butterfly* for Castleward Opera, and *Alexander's House* for Opera Theatre Company Dublin.

Future work includes *Die Fledermaus* and *The rape of Lucretia* for Castleward Opera Company.

Director of Photography (Damien Elliott)

Dee Elliott is an Irish cinematographer and photographer. Prior to entering the film industry he worked across many areas of media: He produced visuals for clubs on video, Super8 and 16mm, set up a magazine, and assisted photographers, printmakers and designers - notably Glenn Leyburn, co-director of CHERRYBOMB.

Elliott was one of the founding members of Six Pack, a group of independent film-makers who kick started low budget film production in Northern Ireland in the 1990's where he continues to work primarily on commercials and drama. CHERRYBOMB is his second feature as Director of Photography.

Editor (Nick Emerson)

Nick began his editing career twelve years ago at Northern Visions, a Belfast-based community arts organization. After spending two years there as a junior editor helping out on documentaries, music videos and drama he moved to Acorn Film & Video in Belfast; where he cut news for Channel 4, BBC Newsnight, RTE and CNN. It was there Nick edited his first television documentary, *2 Day Coup* for BBC 4 (Mint Productions) and his first short drama - *Redrum* - directed by Hugh McGrory and starring Eva Birthistle. He also worked as assistant editor on Lab Ky Mo's feature film *9 Dead Gay Guys*.

After leaving Acorn in 2003 to pursue a freelance career, Nick began editing a wide range of material for television. Working with the top independent production companies in Belfast including Waddell Media, Hotshot Films and Doubleband Films, he edited programs for BBC, Discovery Channel, Sky and RTE. During this time he continued to gain experience working in drama and cut the short film *Rain* for director Ryan Kernaghan and *The 18th Electricity Plan* for directors Lisa Barros D'Sa and Glenn Leyburn.

From 2007 Nick has worked for Yellowmoon Post Production on a variety of documentary

films and television series, uniting once again with directors Glenn Leyburn and Lisa Barros D'sa for CHERRYBOMB, his first feature film as editor.

Music (David Holmes)

David's first solo record, *This Film's Crap, Let's Slash the Seats*, released in 1995, plugged immediately into what remains one of his most enduring and vital sources of musical inspiration – cinema. A distinctively eclectic set of references, both musical and filmic, continued to feed subsequent albums, bringing his work to the attention and acclaim of an international audience.

David now has an ongoing partnership with director Steven Soderbergh, developed on 1998's *Out of Sight* and 2001's *Ocean's 11*, and continued through the sequels *Ocean's 12* and *13*. And with Steve Hilton, his long-time collaborator on these and many other films, David had the opportunity to explore a wholly different filmic mood on Michael Winterbottom's *Code 46*.

An even deeper engagement with filmmaking was cemented when long-held plans to set up a film production company came to fruition: in 2006 Canderblinks Film and Music Ltd was born. Their first short film was a co-production called *The 18th Electricity Plan*, for which David created an original score. Soon the new company had several feature film ideas in development and these included CHERRYBOMB.

As has latest album, his fourth solo, *The Holy Pictures* emerges, David is looking outward to a series of exciting new ventures and collaborations in music and film. Last year he worked with Leo Abrahams to create the score for *Hunger*, the debut feature film from Turner Prize-winning artist Steve McQueen. And on the international front, David has just scored a new Apple iPhone advertisement featuring Robert Downey Jr and directed by David Fincher (*Seven, Fight Club*). More film projects are lined up for the next months; David is currently working on the soundtrack for *Five Minutes of Heaven*, a drama set in seventies Northern Ireland, which is the latest work by Oliver Hirschbiegel, director of the Oscar-nominated *Downfall*.

Music (Stephen Hilton)

Stephen Hilton's electronic work on movie scores comprises of some 20 Hollywood features including three James Bond films: *Quantum of Solace*, *The World Is Not Enough* and *Die Another Day*. Other credits include: *Oceans 11, 12 & 13*, *Moulin Rouge*, *Shaft*, *Zoolander*, *The Bone Collector*, *Plunkett & Maclean*, *Analyse That*, *Buffalo Soldiers* and Luc Besson's *Kiss Of The Dragon*. Stephen formed The Free Association with David Holmes. Together as a band of composers and producers they have scored the futuristic love story, *Code 46*, directed by Michael Winterbottom, and starring Tim Robbins and Samantha Morton. This resulted in a nomination for European Composer of the year at the European Movie Awards. The Free Association also scored Bronwen Hughes' film *Stander*, based on a true story about South African chief of police in 1979, starring Thomas Jane and Dexter Fletcher.

As composer, producer and programmer Hilton has worked with some of the most celebrated artists working today. He is a highly respected electronic musician on both sides of the Atlantic with a publishing deal secured at Universal Music. He has contributed to the works of Depeche Mode, Massive Attack, Moloko, Isaac Hayes, The Pet Shop Boys, Scott Walker, Pulp, David Holmes, Bomb the Bass, Mel C, The Divine Comedy, Dirty Vegas, Martina Topley-Bird, Natasha Bedingfield, Joy Zipper, The John Spencer Blues Explosion, Craig Armstrong, David Arnold, Trevor Horn, Rick Nowels, and many more.

Most recently Stephen co-wrote the track DRONE ZONE with Siouxsie Sioux for her long awaited solo artist album MANTARAY. Stephen also composed, produced and mixed the music for the National Movie Awards and is currently writing with David McAlmont.

#

CAST(IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

MALACHY

LUKE

CRILLY

DONNA

CHRIS

FANTA

BUN

SHARON

MICHELLE

EMMA

SMILEY

BOB

SWIMMING INSTRUCTOR

UNCLE JOE

JESSICA

AUNT MAGGIE

RUPERT GRINT

ROBERT SHEEHAN

JAMES NESBITT

NIAMH QUINN

PAUL KENNEDY

CONOR MACNEILL

GREER ELLISON

KAT KIRK

KIMBERLEY NIXON

KATHY KIERA CLARKE

LALOR RODDY

PAUL GARRETT

PAUL CADDELL

RICHARD ORR

BRONACH LAWLOR

MAGGIE HAYES

CREW

DIRECTED BY

PRODUCED BY

PRODUCED BY

SCREENPLAY BY

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

EDITOR

PRODUCTION DESIGNER

COSTUME DESIGNER

MUSIC BY

STUNT COORDINATOR

STUNT CO-ORDINATORS

LISA BARROS D'SA &

GLENN LEYBURN

MARK HUFFAM

MICHAEL CASEY

BRIAN KIRK

SIMON BOSANQUET

DARAGH CARVILLE

JAMES FLYNN

DAMIEN ELLIOTT

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MUSIC

Preparedness

Written By Greg Kurstin and Inara George

Performed by The Bird and the Bee

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Plan Retrieval

Written By James Smith

Performed by Exmagician

Cherrybomb

Written by Fowley/Larkin

Performed by flyKkIller

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Produced by Stephen Hilton

Mixed by Stephen Hilton & Pati Hilton

Recorded at flyKkIller HQ

No Girl In My Plan

Written by Andrew Weatherall and Keith Tenniswood

Performed by Two Lone Swordsmen

Published by House of Klart and Fabric Publishing

Courtesy of Rotters Golf Club Records

Sweet Love For Planet Earth

Written and Performed by Fuck Buttons

(P) and (C) 2008 ATP Recordings.

This River

Written and Produced By Kieran /Todd /Corrigan

Performed by Alloy Mental

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www.skint.net

www.myspace.com/alloymental

Sweet Love For Planet Earth (Andrew Weatherall Remix)

Written and Performed by Fuck Buttons

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Feathers

Written by Andrew Weatherall and Keith Tenniswood

Performed by Two Lone Swordsmen

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I Heard Wonders

Written by Holmes/Rev/Abrahams

Performed by David Holmes

Published by Universal /Island Music Ltd, Warner Chappell and Peacefrog Music Ltd.

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Hello Death My Old Friend
Written By Robyn Shiels
Performed by Robyn Shiels
Published by No Dancing Records
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Got The Time Sister
Written and Produced by David Holmes @ Drama Recording, Belfast
Published by Universal Music Publishing MGB Ltd.

Fear (David Holmes Remix)
Written by Stephen Hilton and Pati Yang
Performed by flyKiller
Published by Universal Music Publishing MGB Ltd.
Produced and Mixed by Stephen Hilton
Remix and Additional Production by David Holmes

Being Kong
Written By Twinkranes
Performed by Twinkranes
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Della Note
Written and Produced by Gary Irwin
Performed by The Vendetta Suite
Published by Copyright Control

She Brings The Rain
Written by Irmin Schmidt, Jaki Liebezeit, Kenji Suzuki, Michael Karoli &
Holger Shuring
Performed by Ruth
Published by Messer Music Ltd administered by the Bucks Music Group Ltd
www.spoonrecords.com
www.ilitchmusic.com

Goodbye Friend
Written By Daniel Todd
Performed by Cashier No 9

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