Rogue Director Pens Open Letter to BBC

Thursday 18 June, 2015

Fed up with a litany of rejections and stonewalling, writer/director Dan Hartley decided to offer his multi-award winning debut film to the BBC for free, see open letter below:

Rona Fairhead

Chair – BBC Trust

180 Great Portland Street

London

W1W 5QZ

Dear Ms Fairhead June 17th 2015

As an independent filmmaker striving to distribute my debut feature film in the UK the one question I'm continually asked is 'have you tried the BBC?'

To this question I usually rattle out an answer along the lines of TV-isn't-what-it-used-to-be-they-don't-programme-films-anymore- parroting what I have been told myself during the various overtures to the BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and BSkyB.

But as an avid user of iPlayer and occasional viewer of your broadcast channels I've concluded that rumours of films demise are in fact unfounded. This week you have the wonderful 'Sweet Sixteen' By Mike Leigh and the stunning 'An Education' featuring Carey Mulligan in her breakout role. You have; The History Boys, Great Expectations, Quartet. All great films worthy of representation.

So it made me realise that I needed a better answer to the question. I needed to understand *why are there not more independent films on the BBC?*

It could be that my film *Lad: A Yorkshire Story* is poorly made or badly told, or perhaps of limited appeal but having won over twenty international film festival prizes and with five star ratings across iTunes, IMDB and Amazon there's plenty to suggest significant appetite for the film.

The problem seems to be understood by Ben Roberts Head of the Film fund at the BFI who states that the industry should '*rally around really great films.. so films like Boyhood can open well, build a strong foundation, and grow*'. Sentiments I entirely agree with though I'd rather the emphasis from the BFI had been made with a British film as oppose to an American one.

Perhaps the issue is one of affordability? A quick look at the commissioning guidelines indicates that low to mid-budget dramas are commissioned at £500,000 to £700,00 per hour. If the BBC is willing to take a risk on an unproven film to the tune of a million pounds, why would they not wish to premiere a film with a slew of awards and proven appeal for a fraction of that cost?

So I've taken the decision to offer all UK broadcast rights to Lad to the BBC for free in perpetuity on any of its channels.

As a champion of the BBC and an avid consumer of its websites, TV channels and radio, I believe a great deal more can be done to support and encourage British independent films and as such I hope this gesture helps towards that aim.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely,

Dan Hartley

Writer/Director

Media:





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Scan Me:

Lad: A Yorkshire Story

Editors notes:

Lad : A Yorkshire Story is available to buy and rent on iTunes, Amazon and Vimeo from June 15th.

Please contact dan@roguerunner.com or on 07887 548640

For a trailer of the film:

https://vimeo.com/46761203

Winner of 21 International film festival prizes including:

WINNER Best Film - Anchorage Film Festival 'Golden Oosikar'

WINNER Best Film - Houston WorldFest 'Gold Remi'

WINNER Best Actor - Houston WorldFest 'Gold Remi'

WINNER Best Supporting Actor - Houston WorldFest 'Gold Remi'

WINNER Best Cinematography - Houston WorldFest 'Gold Remi'

WINNER Best Child Actor - Hollywood Int'l Family Fest

WINNER Best Film - Mexico Int'l Film Festival

WINNER Grand Jury Prize Best Film - Kids Eye Film Festival

WINNER Best Film Audience Award - Rhode Island Film Fest

WINNER Best Cinematography - Breckenridge Film Fest

WINNER Best Actor - Breckenridge Film Fest

WINNER Best Film - Leeds Youth Film Festival

WINNER Best Film - Audience - Leeds Youth Film Festival

WINNER Best Film - Audience - Keswick Film Festival

WINNER Best Family Film - Edmonton Film Festival

WINNER Best Director - Niagara Film Festival

WINNER Best Director - Prescott Film Festival

WINNER Best Debut - Braunschweig Film Festival

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