



FATHER'S Day

Winner, Best Short Film (<10 minutes), Home Brewed 2005
Interview with Director Simon Blyth

What inspired Father's Day?

I'd just become a Dad for the first time and that year I saw a documentary on paternity tests, it showed Dads finding out they were suddenly the father of teenage children or worse finding out they weren't the father of children they had raised. I thought the story of a ten year old boy meeting his Dad for the first time would make a good short film. I was lucky to receive funding for the film from Metro Screen's Raw Nerve scheme.

If you could offer one tip to aspiring short filmmakers, what would it be?

Just pick up a camera and get some mates together and shoot something, it doesn't have to be perfect but will give you an idea of what it's like to make a film. If you are still interested after that then look around at what courses are available. The Australian Film Television and Radio School runs short courses as well as full time courses and Metro Screen offers great training courses and funding initiatives as well as an opportunity to meet other filmmakers.

What success has Father's Day had?

Since winning Homebrewed Father's Day has screened at 5 festivals across Europe and the US including Los Angeles International Children's Film Festival and Mill Valley Film Festival in California. In Australia it has screened at 12 festivals including Flickerfest, St Kilda, Brisbane International Film Festival and Snowyfest and has been nominated for best film a number of times.

What is your next project?

I'm currently working on two short film scripts which I'm hoping to shoot next year and also co-writing a low budget feature which I hope isn't too far off either.

How did you get into filmmaking?

I'd always been creative growing up, I was always putting on shows for Mum and Dad and then became interested in photography and drawing comics. One night my Aunt who is an Art teacher dragged me along to Tropfest, it was still really small and just on at the cafes in Victoria Street, I didn't know what it was. I came away thinking I could make a better film than that. So that year I got some mates together and we made a film and I entered it in Tropfest. It was terrible and I'm pretty sure it finished last. But I'd caught the bug for filmmaking and I've been making shorts since then.

Favourite Film?

Its hard to pick just one but I'd have to say Paris, Texas by Wim Wenders. It was the first film I saw which was so different to all the Hollywood blockbusters I'd seen when I was growing up. Around the same time I starting watching films by Mike Leigh and Luc Besson and that's when I started to become really interested in films and filmmaking. Also actress Samantha Morton's first film Under The Skin and Kenneth Lonergan's You Can Count On Me would be at the top of my favourites list.

Favourite Director?

I'd have to choose Michael Winterbottom, his films are all very different from each other and he is always experimenting and taking risks. His films Wonderland, 24 Hour Party People, Code 46 and In This World are strong influences for me. Steven Soderberg and Mike Leigh would be a close second.