

THE SHANG REVIEW

OUTSIDE IN SINCE '24

X

Clapham International Film Festival



The View from Venn Street.

(Trip Liveras)

Flyering: Beau Travail

Benjamin Lewis

The 23rd of November was frightfully cold. It was 9am or a little after on a Saturday—I run late on Saturdays—and I was on Venn Street flyering for the festival. Normally there's a market on Venn Street at 9am or a little after on Saturdays, but on that day there was only half a market because it was frightfully cold. I stood amongst sellers of various meats, pies, meat pies, and confectioneries, all of which sell because they are tangible and of definite worth. Selling tickets to a film festival proves difficult because film festivals possess few, if any, of those qualities. A flyerer realises eventually that he must first sell the all-too-busy, all-too-serious, nose-skyward Londoner on the very idea of cinema. This is lofty work.

I left my post to buy gloves from a corner store and upon returning was met with a man—occupying my post—dressed as a can of Mitchum deodorant. He was giving out free Mitchum deodorant to passersby from a Mitchum-branded bucket. A flyerer does not need to look capitalism in the face, as I was presently doing, to realise cinema is not such an immediate commodity. How does a flyerer compete?

With verve. Everyone has their angle. Simon's an eccentric—he assumes many characters: the cockney 'Come one, come all' showman; the silent, brochure-offering contortionist; the proprietor of the 'Mystery Box' and other elaborate discount schemes. I've seen them all. I, the straight man, offered a simple 'Film festival?', but I know Tim Carlier opts for the cooler 'Movies?'—I'm yet to find the gusto for this. Leon, with a flair and confidence I'd honestly forgotten he possesses, would show up my 'Film festival?' with a 'Festival of film?', and then laugh at me when it worked, which was every time. SEJ would scare people with his Northern imposition. We each do our best in service of cinema, our great love.

I know few who love deodorant.

A Note on Places and People

Benjamin Lewis

Film festivals are situated, yes? Where? You can't pry them from places; Cannes, Berlin, Milan, Clapham. Simon would tell you that Clapham was a village before London engulfed it. Simon's our head honcho. I am CIFF's chief lackey. In a feat of I-don't-know-what I managed to coup festival coverage and assemble a team of voices that owed me a favour. Leon and SEJ are fellow sons of Guernsey, albeit not native, and I met Trip last year when we were pretending to look at the same shelf of DVDs.

Leon is an idea more than he is a man. The idea of good conversation, a good idea, sparks something in you, and—and it's gone. Leon was in my English class. He lost his timetable the second week so he'd just turn up where he thought his classes were. I found this very funny and if he ever didn't quite make it to English I would go find him and our teacher would let me because it was always better with him there.

SEJ is a bit younger than us and I helped him with his English GCSE. He wrote how he spoke and the exam board didn't like that but I did. He is singular—a whirlwind in a flat cap—and he doesn't like that no one in London says hello to you.

I owe Trip a lot. He welcomed me into his life when I needed a new lease on it and either actually enjoyed or pretended to enjoy my short film. The DVDs incident was at a screening of it, we'd both come alone and needed to look busy. I'm glad he called me out on it. He's a talent with a pen and I thank him for finally letting me look in his sketchbook.

Anna and Anna and Eliza are volunteers. Anna is Norwegian and runs the artist lounge. Anna is Canadian and seems far more useful than the rest of us. Eliza is Australian and happy to entertain SEJ.

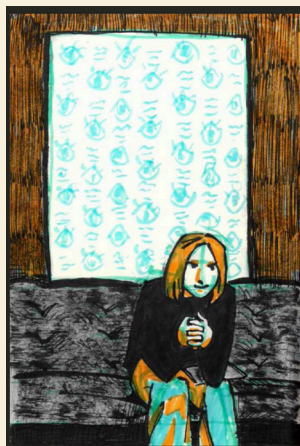
I met Simon at one of CIFF's short film nights. I'd gotten there an hour early because—despite rejecting my submission—he had replied to my email and, that being the furthest I'd ever gotten, invited the rattle of my cup.

'Great opportunity for exploitation!' is how I signed off my response.

'Noted,' is how he started his.

The rest is history. Insignificant history, yes, but not for me. That night Simon tells me that no one cares about shorts so he's given people somewhere to put them. This colours him well; frank, but charitable. You might mistake his frankness for cynicism, I have, but I don't think film festivals can run on cynicism. Look at him giving me a chance. He's funny too, in the way that makes you hope you're in the audience for his asides and never sharing the stage with him. An Anna thinks he's too laid back but the festival does seem to happen. Maybe he's good on his feet.

Maybe he just has Ieva. I've spent less time with Ieva but look at anything CIFF and you'll see Ieva's touch. She was kind enough to give the magazine a once over and whether that was sincere or not she still did it. Ieva edited the former festival publication, *Circa*, which has a cooler name than us. We pay respects to her and all the CIFF lackeys.



Eliza. (Trip Liveras)

So, where? Where is CIFF? Maybe I've already answered that. It's in Clapham, I suppose. It's also in the kitchen of my second-floor Limehouse flat—we would write on the table Leon slept beside drinking bad tea—and it's in Bank station too. Bank was our gateway to the South and we would talk about the films as we pushed through it and one night we ran into Anna there and then she would talk about the films with us as we pushed through it. On the District Line she asked me if I knew much Tarkovsky and instead of shaking my head I found myself just looking at Leon who you can bank on knowing much Tarkovsky.

Our opening nights were in the Picturehouse on Venn Street, which Leon points out is a great name for a street. I felt like a nuisance at the Picturehouse but I think Simon actually likes being a nuisance and leant into it. To say we put up posters would be true but not reflective of just how many posters we put up. We ended the festival at the Omnibus Theatre, on the way to which I saw both the assembly of a pig zipline and an infant Christmas concert. The festive spirit is alive in Clapham. The artist's lounge was in the Brew and Barrel and the festival sounded like *Pink Moon*.

It's true that I can't talk about CIFF without mentioning the Half Moon, where we ate breakfast most days and ended them all. Bazin talks about film festivals and rituals, this was ours. She's known by many names—Stepney Green Spoons, the watering hole, an oasis, pub—but she served us well. Long live the £2 pint and the passion it encourages for cinema.



Last Call.

(BJ)

Opening Night

Leon Russell

A twist of wrist and the blinds dropped down on a dreary Wednesday—dreary, teary, and full of weary. Last words uttered and a rush to the ground—spreading my mat out on the floor and myself upon the mat, of course—up since the early hours so best to get some snooze before evening. And all the while the blind cord's still slip slipping away, stirring up the air that whirs in blurs above the windowsill where Bennie keeps his treasures—pamphlets and posters reminding you of what they once promised—ONLY THIS FRIDAY—books from Chaney all squat and square and squeezing out dusty words—misty postcards of Friedrich paintings with evening air all aglow; set ablaze by the light of a thousand German sunsets—Untergang, Untergang! All aglow for the go-under—due a dip since dawn. Somewhere across town, a man is rolling out a red carpet beneath a crimson Clapham sky.

The washing machine spins to the slipping of the blinds, sending out its metronomic groans—the groaning tones bringing the already sleeping Sej to wakeless life; replying to every one of the machine’s mumbles by offering up grumbings of his own—aye ‘twere, aye ‘twere and a word that sounds like a woman’s name. His sleeping voice is no different from his waking voice—musical but unwavering; no vibrato—a man of few voices, but all the richer for it. It’s three o’clock in the afternoon and I can’t close my eyes—we, the three of us, had set out to nap with the hope of arriving at the picturehouse with the energy of benny addicts—in the end, I arrived with the energy of that spent duracell double A you find at the back of a junk drawer. Now I don’t even wanna sleep—just listen to the clocka clock cloggle of Sej’s unravelling mind—mad and musical—blowing a mad tune and spitting his truths into my ears. Some thirty minutes later, and the overhearing was over—yawning my way through a second morning with Bennie by my side—shaking the dust off a mournful dusk and shaking the ghost out of Sej as we woke him, pulling the rug from beneath his dreamy feet—silent eyes pound-coin-wide and Oyster-card-blue, waiting on a word—rise and shine mad one; spread your light across the London night.

We take the northern line south some seven stops or so, tunnelling our way down into Clapham—Bennie points out that I’ve changed into my evening denim and I bite my lip and nod my head all nervous—this is the world premier of Shoulders movie and a lighter wash would have been improper. Some square next to us takes to talking ‘bout how he used to work for Levi’s once he did you know, and how there’s actually only one Levi’s blue and that the different washes are just different shades of the same timeless colour and that if you really wanna—Bennie shoves him off the tube, the doors closing behind him as we zoom away—“the next station is Elephant and Castle”. My head is still bob bobbing away like an apple—waiting on some teeth all bright and white to descend in a single brilliant flash and pull me up outta this place—budda budda budda bamf POW. We’d been shooting a short that morning—short and sweaty; erecting tripods and gloomy concepts all over the King’s campus—and discovering that I had what they call screen presence (what is he doing in the frame? Yes him—the one standing all wrong on the right-hand side)—the best actors actually have screen-absence.

Sej has won a box of chips, all hot and herby, off a man across from us on the tube—all smiles and witticisms, he’d struck up an easy conversation and was soon having chip after chip thrust upon him—by the time we were rolling out of Oval, he had the whole box on his lap and was blanketing its contents with his own satchet of H.P. pulled from his coat pocket where it had been waiting all the while—pockets of sauce and sinks of honey haunt me, squeezing their sweet innards into the gaps between my daydreams—I begin helping myself, chip chipping away, pecking at potato pieces with my toothpick—Bennie asks where I got it from and I tell him how I was born with it between my lips, on account of which the gap ‘tween my two front teeth came to be: each tooth having to grow around the obstruction—fleeing their gummy nonage.



Harvest? (SEJ)

We ascend into the Clapham night, leaving our tubular days and ways beneath us and making for Venn Street, where Sej and I are introduced to Simon (Bennie doing the talking and leaving us to all that other stuff)—everything I knew about him had been gleaned from Bennie’s occasional descriptions, and he was no less elusive in the flesh; about as tangible as a winter breath—bright-eyed and sharp-witted and soft-spoken, sending out tones that didn’t cut through the mix, but weaved around its obstructions with tact and delicacy—same way a train of ducklings will navigate a weir, ducking and diving in and out of eddies, and riding flows even when heading upstream. Simon briefs us for the evening—the director will arrive at six, however, he will also be late. I like Simon—I’m glad I wiped the chip grease off my fingers before receiving his handshake.

We head inside the picturehouse where we are met by Anna, a Canuck who comes over all smiley and moony and with a voice like maple syrup—from the jump, she takes to calling Bennie by Sej’s name, and Sej by Bennie’s—me she calls Liam, which if you squint your ears is close enough really—no one seems to mind anyhow, on account of the confidence and genuine affability with which the names are misused. Sej and Bennie are sent back outside to plaster the street with posters—putting out breadcrumbs for the public—graphic eel traps that’ll funnel them into the theatre—CUT—to back inside, where Anna and myself are putting the lanyards (that’ll be worn by the talent later on) together—threading cuts of cord through cardboard discs so that they can be hung around the neck all loose and noose-like. I take to this task like a man with rubber gloves for hands, all slipshod prods and pokes and drops—before long, I’ve been rewarded for my clumsiness with blue fingers, the ink rubbing right offa the card discs—I make for the bathroom to clean my hands with, well, my hands—this is a problem. In washing blue hand with blue hand, I’m only left with even bluer hands—even Sisyphus excuses himself and runs back to his boulder. I wipe my hands against the sink, leaving streaks of blue across the porcelain—my fingers are now clean, but I could never leave the picturehouse bathroom in such a state, and thus the piteous cycle begins: cleaning hands on sink, cleaning sink with hands; whiling away the evening as wasted time splash splashes down the plughole—ticka tocka ticka. After a half-hour I’m forced to flee the scene, making my great albeit late escape—by now the bathroom is blue from wall to wall (hot and dripping cerulean blue); urinals overflowing with the stuff.

I stagger outside to seek refuge in the red of the carpet that lies in front of the picturehouse, all spread out and ready to receive the talent—by now the street is filling up with people: fur coats on their shoulders, Shoulders movie on their minds—clogged and trampled on, Venn Street squeals under the weight of a hundred high heels. Earlier that week we’d been stationed here (here, on the very same cobblestones), tasked with putting festival flyers into the reluctant hands of passers-by—“Cling to this good Sir! Here Madam—something to dig your nails into!”—and slipping them into any basket or unbuckled handbag that might sail past—filling space, filling holes; squeezing our message into whatever gaps we could find.



Shoulders movie. (BJ)

To my left, Sej, all puffing and rushing, is erecting a hurried ladder—by the time it’s in position he’s already halfway up the thing, pasting a poster (upon which a single unwinking eye is printed) to a patch of wall he spied from down below—unlit and twenty feet up, it’s unlikely that anyone will even raise their eyes this high, but Sej don’t care because that’s not why he’s doing it—makes no difference if no one looks, no difference at all. Just as he’s reaching out to glue down the final corner of the poster, the ladder gives way beneath him, crashing to the floor with a rusty howl—with his weaker left hand, Sej clings to the partially pasted poster; swinging off the side of the cinema, with a leg-breaking fall awaiting him below. And then the poster begins to slide, and Sej begins to fall—right on down, down to that ever-nearing ground, awaiting the pound, that pounding thumpy sound! Everyone averts their eyes, listening out for the crack of bone—no knee should bend in such a way—but no noise comes, only a biblical hush—he’s here.

Standing, backlit, in front of the picturehouse, with Sej cradled all newborn-like in his arms, is the director of Shoulders movie—Jamie Flatters has arrived. He holds Sej to him tightly (as if holding for a dissolve) and a third hand appears from somewhere to straighten his hair, which is messy but in an organised way. Floating halo-like above his head is Sej’s poster, dancing in the glowing air like a Monroe dress—Flatters plucks it out of the night: “I think you dropped something mate”. The crowd loses it, and the director is showered with roses and knickers—he glances at his wristwatch: “Looks like it’s Shoulders-movie-world-premiere-o’clock.” With that, he pulls out a pipe and starts blowing a merry tune as he leads us into the light—out of the wintry dark of Venn Street and into the auditorium.

After the screening, Bennie disappears to interview Flatters, leaving me to fend for my lonesome self—a woman asks me whether or not I see a future in film? I tell her I see a past in it and we start talking about our previous lives—I'm not sure which one of us is humouring the other. A non-American man comes over, peddling his wares: "So, you wanna make it in the movies kid?"—it would've been a good accent (darned good), were it not for the obvious pride with which it was pulled out—he says to fire away (reaching for his imaginary holster whilst whistling some Morricone theme) if I have any questions about the industry—I ask him whether a memory is something you have or something you've lost and he leaves—whatta bummer man. Needing out, I sneak around the corner to Sedley place and sit down on some unknown person's doorstep—a small group of foxes scuttle over and we start talking about nature and stuff until they're finally scared away by a Fast-Ice van—the city's premier suppliers of highest quality crystal clear ice cubes. When I get back to the picturehouse, it's time-up-time-to-go-home—me and Bennie find Simon in the dying crowd and bid him the fairest of wells—"Same time tomorrow?"—"Yeah, but an hour later"—we slip into the night, making for the tube station—Stepney Green Spoons is on our minds.

Halfway into our first pint, a drunkard comes over to us, leaning on our table and spitting his crazytalk in our faces—we ask him what the best gig he ever went to was—"Status Quo, the Status Quo, here we go, you know don't ya, no, well now you do so so"—then starts mutter-spluttering away 'bout how he's the voice the line and the receiver—the only one who can receive the message that'll save us all forever (and ever). His words falling on sanity-clogged ears, he stumbles off all souly and holy, singsonging his way into tomorrow—"Here we go, rockin' all over the world! Here I am n' here I go! Just look at me go ma! Rockin' all o'er this rollin' world!"—won't anyone join in? Not even on the choruses?—the bell for last orders rings out through the funereal barroom and we head for home.

Jamie Flatters on *Shoulders*

Benjamin Lewis

Jamie Flatters' *Shoulders* sits in the wilderness with eight young men as they watch for invasion. Armed with nothing but sticks, they're left to unravel. Its world premiere was on the opening night of the 3rd Clapham International Film Festival.

I catch Jamie in the hubbub of Venn Street after Shoulders' premiere. Our conversation has moments of pause as he fields well-wishers and rolls a cigarette.

BJ: The depth in the shots and the blocking. What was the intent? What was the construction?

JF: Well, it actually came from a disagreement me and the cinematographer and the editor had, who I work with a lot and I love dearly—Clara and Manny. They were like 'If you've got eight characters, why shoot in 4:3?', and I thought it'd be really interesting to do that sort of like 1960's—or even earlier, 1950's—Kurosawa thing and really try use depth of focus 'cause that's just the hardest thing to do on low-budget.

I thought, if you've got low-budget how can you confuse people to make it seem like you've got loads of money—and, yeah, blocking people Wes Anderson style and then, yeah—shooting deep.

BJ: Is that the black and white, too? Part of the con?

JF: Of course, yeah. More dystopian feel. And I like the idea of, like, using Wes Anderson style symmetry to, like, sort of explain the army uniform...ality as well.



L.W.R. (Trip Liveras)

BJ: Is he a big influence?

JF: Eh, not massively in the tone but in the cinematography—for sure. On the wide shots definitely.

BJ: Was it hard to find good sticks?

Flatters is elated I've asked this. He perks up.

JF: That's such a good question—that's such a good question! Every actor found their own stick.

BJ: Yeah?

JF: And actually, with three people I went 'That's not a good enough of a stick'.

BJ: Wonderful.

JF: So they had to find a new stick. But there was a full day.

Flatters now has to mingle. Even I'm approached by a woman I'd flyered the week prior. There is a veritable buzz. He returns shortly after, apologetic.

BJ: Your characters make a gun with their hands and we believe it's a gun. It has power. Why do you think that is?

JF: Well, I think it's justified by the idea of play—play is a necessity in order to try and stand up against a sort of unknown threat, and if the negativity and the enemy is conspiracy itself then you can sort of conspire beautifully in order to—uh— attack back. And I think that's kind of my anti-war stance. It's like, a lot of young people need... they always say about the anti-war bit but they never talk about actually how you can have this idea of like—positive—you can positively conspire something beautiful in order to fight back as well.

BJ: Wonderful. Enjoy your cigarette.



Chat under the Eye.

(BJ)

Tim Carlier on *Paco*

Benjamin Lewis

Tim Carlier's *Paco* wanders with sound recordist Manny as he drifts through Adelaide, Australia (as Leon muses, like a leaf—but perhaps more like a freelancer) in search of a lost radio mic. The film had its UK premiere on the second night of the 3rd Clapham International Film Festival.

Tim stays in the cinema for a while and talks to everyone. Sam liked the soundtrack, Tim tells him to listen to The Empty Threats. Tim follows me outside. I apologise for bringing him outside.

TC: That's all good.

We begin.

BJ: Are you a serious filmmaker, Tim?

TC: I think—uh—yes. I would say that now. I would say serious in that I am a filmmaker but not serious in terms of what I make.

BJ: They didn't roll out the red carpet for you. Are you aggrieved by that?

He laughs.

TC: That's fine. That's fine.

BJ: Flatters got one yesterday!

TC: Uh, I think—I had a screening of *Paco* that was like—when we first released it, or when we first finished it, to—uh—in Adelaide where it was made. And that was, like, a really beautiful moment, like a big community moment, like—'cause everybody was on-screen. And I think a similar thing happened here yesterday with Shoulders so like, nobody—

He laughs again.

TC: Nobody in London was in the film, I don't think. So yeah. That's absolutely fine. I think I'm done with red carpets for a while.

BJ: I've seen the film described as a 'friends make a film' film. Would you embrace that moniker?

TC: Yeah! Absolutely.

BJ: Is that unfair?

TC: It is very much a 'friends make a film' film. Um, I think—yeah, some people might take issue with that, I don't know, but, like—uh, I—through the course of working in the film industry, like, that is where a lot of my friendships come from. Most of my friends work in film. And, that—like—is the sense of community that I was kind of trying to get across in *Paco*. So... yeah. Friends make a film, that's what every film should be. Every film should be friends making a film—um—by whatever means they can.

BJ: I—Yeah. I think the community thing really comes across. Could you, like—I mean you've brought a small corner of Adelaide to London—could you make a case for the niche in filmmaking? Is that something you'd embrace?

TC: The niche? Hundred percent. I think—uh—people get really caught up, and I'm guilty of this as well, in like—you have to make films in a specific way, you have to—like—get funding in a specific way or do this or that. And I think we're at a point where you can just... make a film. You have the equipment, everybody kind of has the stuff to do it. It's just, like, having an idea and a means to do it. And I think, *Paco*, part of it, the funding we got was experimental screen funding so we kind of went into it with, like, an experimental mentality—like, these are the rules of how we're going to make it, this is how we're going to achieve that. So, yeah. That was like—I would say, like, there are so many ways to make a film. Don't let money or anything else stop you. You can just kind of do it.

BJ: Awesome. Okay, to conclude—you have, like, a hundred names on your poster.

TC: Yep.


BJ: If I just read a few—

TC: Yep.

BJ: Could you tell me a bit about each person?

TC: Yeah absolutely.

BJ: Olivia Carletti.

TC: Uh—Liv—um—is in the second band scene when they—when the music video director, Connor, finally bursts through the door, she's the one who says 'You're so late! We only pay them for the hour!'. Liv is another friend from Adelaide who is kind of in the music scene but—kind of just, like, a friend who was around and she was like 'You're making this thing let me be in it!'.


BJ: Yoz Mensch?

TC: Yoz Mensch is the time traveller!

BJ: Awesome!

TC: Yeah! Yoz is one of the greats. Yeah. I love working with Yoz. And Yoz, recently, was in London for the Edinburgh fringe—well, was in Edinburgh for the Edinburgh fringe but, like, was passing through London—and, at the time of making the film—uh—we didn't know each other super well, we've kind of, like, been bouncing around each other in Adelaide for years but—um, yeah—since the film we've become very very close friends.

BJ: Cheryl... Cheryl Crabtree?

TC: Cheryl Crabtree is one of... the people... at the... uh... at the boom in the stone sequence. Um, so thankfully we had a lot of people turn up that day which was really lovely and then we asked them again to come to the—to the big band scene at the end. Uh, not all of them did come—

We both laugh. Been there.

Manny!

(Trip Liveras)

TC: A lot of people couldn't make it that day. But Cheryl came and she brought her husband, Barry Crabtree, who's also in the credits—uh—and so he is one of two people throughout the film who only appear in that sequence.

BJ: Um, and Tim Carlier.

TC: Tim Carlier is me—uh—and I'm...

He thinks.

TC: A guy from Adelaide.

BJ: You going anywhere? Any final thoughts?

TC: Um, no, this has been lovely. It's always nice to show the film—um—I really like watching it. I think—uh—for me it's a really special experience to kind of—watch—it's almost like a time capsule of a very specific moment in time, a very specific group of friends, and a very specific city. So um, it's always nice to, kind of, be brought to that and I'm really glad we captured it the way that we did.

BJ: Tim Carlier, guy from Adelaide. Thank you.



Tim 'Adelaide' Carlier. (Trip Liveras)

Percy Manthey on ZIPWHARF

Benjamin Lewis

Percy Manthey's *ZIPWHARF* cannot be described. At least not well. I know this because I wrote its copy for the festival. I said something about London and shallow aspirations and e-cigarettes and rot and that's fair but Leon and I spent about three hours in the Half Moon reciting lines from the film in a delirious (but uproarious) game of remember-when-this-happened. No other film has possessed us like this.

Where camp is endeared to things that have been discarded because they've gone out of fashion (and thus benefit from elements of romanticism and nostalgia), *ZIPWHARF* is endeared to things that have been discarded because they're single-use, instantaneous, and shit. It's a cinematic vape. But it is such a great comment on the times, for however many seconds those times are relevant in our churning digital hellscape. I am enamoured with it. *ZIPWHARF* had its UK premiere on the closing night of the 3rd Clapham International Film Festival.

I catch Percy at the screening's afterparty; DJ Saz is playing the Omnibus Theatre's café and bar. He's entertaining guests outside but lets me drag him to a nearby table. He's surprised that I prepared for the interview.

BJ: First of all, congratulations.

PM: Thank you.

BJ: My friend, midway through, leaned over to me and he said ‘You didn’t warn me!’—and I said... ‘How could I?’—

He laughs.

BJ: Could I get your thoughts on that as a description of the film?

PM: ‘You didn’t warn me’—

I laugh.

PM: Wow. Uh—that’s a good description of the film, I suppose. Um, hang on, let me collect my thoughts here.

BJ: Yeah, yeah.

PM: ‘You didn’t warn me’... So, I worry that this film is sort of—um—too scary for old people. I think—watching it I sort of realise because I know what’s happening it makes sense to me, but I think it’s sort of a lot of people talking really fast and then something weird happens and then they all move to the next scene. It’s sort of, you know... ‘You didn’t warn me’—Jesus.

BJ: It doesn’t wait for anyone!

PM: It’s good, it’s good! I’m a—I—some people say the film is—this—I guess by most measures the film is a little offbeat. Um... to me it’s normal, actually. But, um, no—‘You didn’t warn me’, God, I’m sorry, I’m wrapping my head around that, um—

BJ: It’s okay.

PM: I really appreciate that as a descriptor—honestly I really appreciate that as a descriptor. I think—um—I want to make, uh, films that sort of frighten people in that way.

BJ: That require warning.

PM: That require warning. Um, speaking of, we probably should’ve done a—um—epilepsy warning at the beginning. I made a mental note to do that and then I forgot and I got worried that we killed someone.

BJ: Yeah. Uh, I think the audience was okay.

PM: It’s on the festival if that happens.

Calm
before
the
ZIPSTORM.

(Trip Liveras)



BJ: Yes, yeah yeah. We're liable. Okay. As a man who lives in East talking to a man who lives in Hounslow, what was it about Canary Wharf that spoke to you?

PM: Canary Wharf is a disgrace. It should be demolished.

BJ: Too right.

PM: Um, it's like—Jesus—they just, like—you know—demolished, like, everything that was there and they built, you know, a completely artificial financial centre which we now see is completely failing; all the companies are moving back into central London 'cause why would you want to go to Canary Wharf—it's like, totally fetishising—it's like owned by a like—it's like—they've got like private security guards escorting you, just harassing you if you do anything... it's like we've tried to build our own Dubai, like on the Docklands. It's, like, a disgrace. Um, and when we were making the film, uh, Rishi Sunak—then Prime Minister—he announced he was gonna build twelve new Canary Wharfs across the country, and I was—I was so excited to hear that! Because I want that to happen. We deserve that sort of punishment.

BJ: Too right. Things ended well for Rishi Sunak, so, all's well that ends well.

PM: Remember him?

We laugh. Someone laughs in the background, but not because of us.

BJ: Okay, on that note, something I loved about *ZIPWHARF* since I first saw it—um—it seems like it's filmed flagrantly in violation of all of London's—uh—codes of filming and regulation—

PM: Oh, you noticed?

He laughs, hard. He does—however—seem genuinely flattered.

BJ: I appreciated. As a man who's also done it.

PM: Yeah, there was a lot of—um—guerilla filmmaking. And what you learn about, um, London—especially central London—is that everyone is sort of, um, king of their own little 1m² patch of ground. You film outside a—we filmed out, this is true, we filmed outside a building, a guy came out, he started threatening to call the police, he said 'Usually I charge a hundred quid to film outside my house and you lot are just doing it here making all this noise!'—and, you know. It's just, like, constant. We had a whole—we started a massive beef between the British Film Institute and the Southbank Centre 'cause we were filming—are you familiar with the Southbank? You know there's that skatepark there?

BJ: Yeah absolutely.

PM: We were filming the oldhead's scenes there—security came out, and you know, I pushed back a bit I was thinking 'If we were—if these guys in the skatepark are filming with their phones—you're not stopping them, we have a decent camera, you're stopping us' and then he was getting annoyed—guys in suits started coming out and, luckily, Vic (who plays the oldhead) worked at the BFI and he got us some space over there—and they thought we were still on their land and they—BFI suits came out, Southbank suits came out—they're having an argument, it's a nightmare.

BJ: Turf war.

PM: Yeah, um, we lied to the guys at Canary Wharf also. We told them we were students.

BJ: Nice.

PM: It was a lot of lies—lies and deceit, that's how you get around that.

BJ: Yeah too right. Um, okay. Can you talk me through that Lynchian nightmare of a party sequence?

PM: Lynchian? Oh, interesting. Um, so, interestingly the party scene was something I conceptualised way before we had any idea what the film was going to be. It was—the character of Caleb is based mostly on a guy I got stuck with at a party one time—

BJ: Awesome.

PM: And he kept—he kept saying the same joke which I could tell he'd rehearsed which was, uh, 'This guy's sweating more than a whore in the Churchhouse'. Uh, and he was—I was going to do an American accent for this character but, uh—I've seen that guy since, I don't think he knows this film was about him. But, uh, hopefully it stays that way.

But no, that was—um—that was a bit of a nightmare, um, to film as well as to actually—uh—what the actual scene is. It was a very stressful night, I was yelling—which I do regret. But, uh, you know. It was a nightmare.

BJ: Well, that's—yeah—

PM: Which is good. Yeah. I guess the inspiration was just bad drug experiences. Not that I've ever done drugs.

BJ: No, never.

Percy's cinematographer has gone missing. He sees to this. When he returns he expresses concern that he's given a poor interview. I seek to ease his concern by asking a poor question.

BJ: *ZIPWHARF* dares to ask: What if the premise for a scene was 'a man eats celery'? Uh, comment?

PM: Say that again?

BJ: *ZIPWHARF* dares to ask—

PM: What if a man ate celery?

BJ: What if the premise for a scene was 'a man eats celery'. Comment?

PM: Um, we wanted to have—so that character, uh, Mickey, is played by my friend Jake who unfortunately is studying in America right now. But, uh—he—we wanted to have him eating in every single scene.

BJ: Strong.

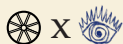
PM: Uh, because, you know, he's a bit of a slob in real life. And Mickey was more or less just based on how he acts in real life. Uh—the celery we thought, you know, it was kind of funny, kind of awkward, and then—yeah, we'll just have him choking at the end. Why not? You wanna end your scene on a bang.

BJ: Yeah. Too right.

PM: That's what kung-fu movies do.

BJ: Okay, um, second last. Love the through-line of the wise WowVidder and your climax in the field—the view from Olympus.

PM: Oh, um, Dr. Philip Pholborn.



BJ: Yes.

PM: Yeah, that's played by one of my parents' friends—a guy called Gareth. And he shocked me, he was—he cut through the air when he spoke. He was impressive. Um, that character is based, I guess, on like—Jordan Peterson style pseudointellectuals.

BJ: Mhm.

PM: Hopefully that came through. But in the end he was more of a positive force. It was a lot of fun writing his dialogue, the—the monologue he has where we're just—on him—on WowVids, um—

BJ: The one about the dogs?!

PM: It goes on, we have an un—we have a full take that goes on about twice as long—

BJ: Awesome.

PM: And I kind of regret cutting it down 'cause I really like that bit—um—but yeah, he was great. He's a mentor figure.

BJ: Okay, to conclude. Thoughts on London and its people? Are you as cynical as the film? Are we more than e-cigarettes and rot?

PM: That's a good question. Um—I love London, I think. I don't think I'd ever leave this place, but there is a really deep evil here.

I laugh.

PM: Um, you know. Like, everyone is, you know, a wannabe, sort of, petit bourgeois, master of his domain, you know—you're not allowed to have fun. If you ever do anything out of line people tell you to get back down, but—if you do anything people take it as a personal attack. We're sort of a nation of misery and this city is where it all centers. Um, there's sort of a grey cloud that'll never go away, I suppose. But, um, I love this city. It's my home.

BJ: Nice. Nice note to end on.



Aftermath.

(BJ)

Interview With Man Who Slept Through Film

Benjamin Lewis

Identities have been obscured to protect our staff.

BJ: Enjoy that one?

[REDACTED]: Absolutely!



Culprit line-up. (Ieva Ball)

Editor's Note

Shoutout to all the festival's shorts which we were too mesmerised by to record or comment on in any way. Rest in peace ODEON Surrey Quays. Thanks to anyone who's pushed this along. — BJ



Leonardo. (Trip Liveras)



Punter. (Trip Liveras)

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