

## **DARK WATER PRESS INFORMATION**

### Innovative cross-media collaboration presents an arresting short film merged with an unexpected opera soundtrack

Writer/director Oscar Van Heek and composer Malcolm Lindsay present a ground breaking, cross-media project combining opera and film, which has been conceived and executed in a highly original manner.

**DARK WATER** the resultant short film was created 'back to front' with Lindsay writing an operatic score based on Van Heek's script prior to filming, so that aspects of the film-making were influenced by the music. In addition the score was influenced by the subsequent further development of the film script and by how the film was then shot and edited.

The collaboration also involved Scottish Opera Director Alex Reedijk and the Orchestra of Scottish Opera, PJ Moore (formerly of The Blue Nile), soprano Marie Claire Breen, Tenor Jamie MacDougall, and Matt Swodoba. Young Scottish actors Alice McMillan and Daniel Cahill led the film action.

The film narrative has an 'operatic' theme presenting a highly emotional story of tangled desires and fears as Toni, a young girl, loses her sight while falling in love. Played out in an ordinary town where opportunities and the chance to find love seem limited, there is a sense that Toni's world is becoming darker not just through the loss of her sight.

The operatic score coupled with the arresting imagery has created a compelling film that tells this story in an unexpected way, with Toni's emotions conveyed through the power of Marie Claire Breen's often astonishing vocals.

The project also made use of the exciting 'demoscene' (a semi underground movement where programmers and artist create computer generated video and music clips). Matt Swodoba, a leading light from the demoscene, collaborated on visual effects, to express Toni's loss of sight, resulting in some beautiful imagery where effects have been combined with the under-water footage (Toni is a swimmer).

*The project was supported financially by Creative Scotland and was a collaboration with Scottish Opera, without whose support Dark Water would not have been possible.*

## Further information

Collaborator biographies:

### **OSCAR VAN HEEK**

Oscar currently works as a screen-writer and director.

He has written five feature film screenplays including the adaptation of Bizet's opera *Carmen: Carmen's Two Wedding's*; the adaptation of the multi award-winning Booker prize nominated novel *Reef* and has recently written and directed the original short screenplay *Dark Water*.

Oscar also works as a producer, having producing the feature film *Blinded* starring Peter Mullan and Jodhi May, as well as various pilots and shorts. He was Director of Development for Creative Scotland from 1997 to 1999, commissioning and script editing screenplays by both new and established writers, producers and directors, and executive-producing fifteen short films including the award winning 'Gasman' by Lynne Ramsay, and *Little Sisters* by Andy Goddard.

He recently set up Lo-Fi, a low budget feature film initiative, financed and supported by the BBC and Creative Scotland. Oscar also teaches at Screen Academy Scotland and works as a photographer and visual artist.

### **MALCOLM LINDSAY**

Malcolm is a composer, producer and musician. His work encompasses film and television scores, contemporary classical music, jazz and pop. His classical scores have been performed by, among others, the Scottish Chamber Orchestra Quartet, Scottish Ensemble, Mr McFalls Chamber, Moscow Contemporary Music Ensemble, BBC Concert Orchestra and Dunedin Consort.

His feature film credits include *Exodus* (Artangel, Ch4 Films), *16 Years of Alcohol* (Tartan Works), *Blinded* (OscarFilms) and *Scotland on Film: The Movie* (BBC Scotland). He also created the string arrangements and orchestrations for David Byrne's score for *Young Adam*, starring Ewan McGregor and Tilda Swinton.

His television music credits include ITV and BBC dramas such as *Harry Price: Ghost Hunter*, *Unforgiven*, starring Suranne Jones, *Whitechapel Series II*, *Mysterious Creatures* starring Tim Spall and Brenda Blethyn, *The Children* starring Kevin Whately and Geraldine Somerville, *The strange case of Arthur Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes*, and *In love with Barbara* (about Barbara Cartland). He has also composed music for a range of documentaries and for radio, including the 12 part BBC4 series *A Map of British Poetry*, written by the Poet Laureate, Andrew Motion.

## CREDITS

Written & Directed by	Oscar van Heek
Composer	Malcolm Lindsay
Libretto	PJ Moore
Producer	Lindsay Goodall
Executive Producer	John McKay
Toni	Alice McMillan
Kieran	Daniel Cahill
Jamie	Alfie Stark
Nurse	Janet Coulson
Doctor	Scott Bevan
Swimmer 1	Liam Robertson
Casting Director	Simone Pereira Hind, CDG
Director of Photography	Simon Vickery
1st Assistant Camera	Alkisti Terzi
Camera Assistants	Marta Rodriguez, Sergiu Timar, Jacopo Meneghin
Stills Photography	Emma Lindsay, George Cameron Geddes
Lighting Gaffer	Robbie Gray
Production Designer	Laura Donnelly
Standby Art Director	Imogen Toner
Art Department Assts	Chirstel Fruehøj, Anna McCahon, Aimee Wilemse Fiona Donnelly
Storyboard Artist	David Newbigging
Sound Recordist	Petros Tsafaridis, Katie Revell
Sound Assistant	Alex Choudhary
1st Assistant Director	Kath Wishart, Wendy Ashman
Floor Runner	Garry Fraser
Script Supervisor	Lucas Kao
Script Editor	Frances O'Neill
Choreographer	Charlotte Jarvis
Costume Designer	Trish Kenny
Hair and Make Up Designer	Sarah Cairncross

