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Port Talbot – ‘Home’ of Welsh Filmmaking Talent
Film Agency for Wales announces support for ‘Nocturne’

A Port Talbot film producer is following in the steps of local legends Anthony Hopkins and Richard Burton as he gets ready to start filming ‘Nocturne’, a horror film that will star Welsh-born Richard Brake, who found fame in ‘Hannibal Rising’ along with Patrick Bergin who starred alongside Julia Roberts in the 1991 hit ‘Sleeping with the Enemy’.

Based in Port Talbot, Antony Smith will film ‘Nocturne’ later this year in and around South Wales. The film tells the story of protagonist Caleb, a man lost on the road to nowhere. One night he discovers that he has entered a brutal and savage world; he has staggered into a secret lost war where he must find the faith and courage to save his own life as he is hunted by the Silure Sect who will stop at nothing to slaughter him.

Financially supported by the Film Agency for Wales, ‘Nocturne’ is one of five films on the development slate of Port Talbot-based Tornado Films. Antony is also overseeing a slate of 12 films as senior producer for Boom Films where he is working closely with Sioned William, former controller of ITV Network Comedy and Marc Evans, the internationally recognised Director of films including ‘My Little Eye’, ‘Trauma’ and ‘Snow Cake’. The Boom Films slate is financially underpinned by S4C.

‘Nocturne’ is the debut feature of Cardiff-born writer/director Christopher Nurse. Christopher has created a number of well received shorts before moving on to a feature.

“The screenplay was derived from my childhood obsessions with Celtic myth and tribal society. I brought some of these ideas to a contemporary, horror arena and Nocturne was born. I am dedicated to delivering a high-octane, atmospheric, and visually stylish film, that I feel can work on an international level,” explained Nurse. The Executive Producers are Paul Higgins and Huw Pennalt Jones.

The cast include Patrick Bergin, who starred alongside Julia Roberts in the 1991 drama/thriller ‘Sleeping with the Enemy’ and for which he was nominated for the

Saturn Award for Best Supporting Actor at the 1992 Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films. Born in Dublin in 1951, he also took the lead role in the 2006 Western 'The Far Side of Jericho' written by Rob Sullivan and James Crumley.

Having appeared alongside Rhys Ifans in the 2007 horror 'Hannibal Rising', written by Thomas Harris and directed by Peter Webber, Ystrad-Mynach born Richard Brake will take the role of Frost. His earlier credits include the 2003 drama 'Cold Mountain' starring Jude Law, Nicole Kidman and Renee Zellweger.

Joseph Millson is also confirmed to appear in the film having just finished shooting alongside Mackenzie Crook in Wyndham Price's new drama 'Abraham's Point', which is also funded by the Film Agency for Wales.

"Nocturne is based on the idea that by using history and mythology as a tool to ground our stories, then, you can build something with a real sense of purpose. However, it is difficult to define the genre as horror contains such a diverse range of films that it is a microcosm for an industry by itself," commented Antony Smith.

"We have simply allowed our imaginations to take us on a journey and this is the key to the story development from the original one liner that said 'The origins of the werewolf'. All myths and legends start somewhere – our job has been to get hold of it and grow it into something different and bigger to feed the appetite of the audience."

Having begun his career with HTV Wales Drama Department in 1998, Antony established Tornado Films in 2002. He has produced or co-produced more than 15 short-films along with being involved with several feature-length films including 'Reaching Higher' and 'The Testimony of Taliesen Jones'. He was also the creator of BAFTA Cymru nominated drama 'Life and Debt'. In 2007 Antony was shortlisted as one of 25 producers from all over the UK to pitch in front of a Dragons Den style panel. He was then selected to the final 13 who went on to pitch to world film financiers at the first ever Film London Production Finance Market (PFM).

"At Tornado Films, we pride ourselves on providing high quality programmes that communicate their objectives in a creative and entertaining way. 'Nocturne' is a great example of what we can offer an international film market. This is an extremely commercial film that has the utmost potential. UK distribution has already been taken by Optimum Releasing," said Antony Smith.

Peter Edwards, Chairman of the Film Agency said: “We operate our lottery finance as a talent fund rather than a location fund, placing a particular focus on Welsh born and/or resident writers, directors and producers. We have been involved in the development of ‘Nocturne’, and we are delighted to additionally contribute significantly to the production financing to help get this film made. This story has, in our opinion, the potential to travel at an international level and put Antony on the talent map for filmmakers of international repute.”

“This is one of seven features that we’re currently supporting with production finance – each of which is distinctive, and we have a further 15 features in development, each of which have key Welsh talent that we’re keen to platform to the wider film industry.”

The Film Agency for Wales is funded by the Arts Council for Wales, the UK Film Council and the Welsh Assembly Government, via Creative Business Wales, the latter of which was set up to support, encourage and increase the range and number of films being produced in Wales and to foster the abundance of creative talent in Wales.

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