

PRESS RELEASE

STARTING BLOCK SHORTLIST ANNOUNCED

Launched across Scotland in May this year 'Starting Block' is a new filmmaking training and production scheme which invited first time filmmakers aged 16yrs and over from diverse communities to submit ideas for short films based on the theme of 'Diversity'.

Diversity Films and their key project partners are delighted to announce that 15 ideas have now been shortlisted from open submissions received from across Scotland to be developed at residential film schools in August in Fife and Dumfries & Galloway.

The 15 short dramas, documentaries and mixed format films, reflect an exciting range of subject matters, characters and experiences.

The shortlist (please note these are all working titles)

- **'Shaun'** by Andy Gregor: Dunfermline, Fife
A drama about a young man on an eventful night out in town.
- **'Living on the Edge'** by Samantha Fernando: Kirkcudbright Dumfries & Galloway
Drama about idyllic rural life turning sour for newcomer Sasha.
- **'The Village'** by Tracey Patterson, Billie Duffy, Sophie Watson & Toni Peacock: Kelloholm, Dumfries & Galloway
Documentary about growing up in a tiny village without necessarily growing apart.
- **'The Brain and the Tongue'** by Shug Kennedy: Barrowfield, Glasgow
Music video about the regrets of a gang fighter.
- **'The Great Divide'** by Tania Grant: Aberdour, Fife
Drama about friendship and love conquering cultural gaps.
- **'The Final Chapter'** by Laurence McNicholas: Pollokshields, Glasgow
Documentary observing defiance and lust for life of three friends in their twilight years.
- **'I Alive'** by Thomas Simpson: Bridgeton, Glasgow
Drama following Kevin who relies on his brother Paul to have a life.
- **'Running Wild'** by Pete Rennie: Cairneyhill, Fife
Documentary tracking the life of ultra-distance runner Fiona and her family.
- **'Asperger's and I'** by Derek Wilson: Glenrothes, Fife
A biographical film about DT Wilson and his life with Asperger's Syndrome
- **'Lamb Chops'** by Michael Venter, Yen Hongmei Jin, Stas Sindov & Jihad Diab: Dumfries (Various)
One day David invites Jihad and Stas to his house for a meal. Drama.
- **'The Turning Point'** by Agnes Wasike: Scotstoun, Glasgow
Drama documentary about the stigma of domestic abuse in different cultures.

- **'Taxi for Henderson'** by Ian McLaughlin and others: Provanhall, Glasgow
Drama/ documentary examining the "seven ages" of alcohol abuse.
- **'The Green Man'** by Bijan Sheidaei: Dennistoun, Glasgow
Documentary on how the Green Movement in Iran connects with Bijan in Scotland.
- **'Time'** by Kate Shenton: Lockerbie, Dumfries & Galloway
Artistic documentary about the concept of time.
- **'The Casanova King'** by Lucy Elliot: Woodlands, Glasgow
Will 17-year-old Alex make the Drag King Extravaganza Grand Prix on time? Drama.

Diversity Films will actively encourage people to collaborate across communities and generations, and will work with people to form teams around each production. Starting Block will also offer training to people who would like to produce one of the films.

After being developed and resubmitted, six films will be selected in September to go into production, with each project having a professional filmmaker attached as a mentor to guide the new filmmakers through the process. Furthermore, a series of additional specialist workshops will be offered, which will be tailored to meet the needs of various individuals on the scheme. The films will be completed and delivered by mid December.

Notes to editors:

Starting Block is funded by a mixture of national and regional funding with Creative Scotland (formerly Scottish Screen) and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation as the key backers. Other regional funders include The Holywood Trust, LEADER in Fife, Dumfries & Galloway Community Learning & Development Department, Celebrating Fife 2010 and North East Glasgow Area Committee.

Additionally, region-wide cultural partnership teams and venues have offered in-kind support. These include Fife Women's Technology Centre and the Royal Oak Community Club in Lochgelly, the Blairhall Community Centre, the Tayside Institute Centre in Newburgh, the Auchmuty Learning Centre in Glenrothes, the Northwest Resource Centre in Lincluden, Youth Buzz Roadshow in Dumfries, the Agnew Park Pavilion in Stranraer, the Newton Stewart Community Centre, the Kingsway Health and Wellbeing Centre, AIS at The Connie and Platform in Glasgow.

Diversity Films has, since its inception, worked with over 200 people who have produced dozens of films between them. Most recently they ran Brand New, which used the same model of community based outreach work to help people, who might be otherwise excluded from this type of training, to make films that matter to them on their doorstep.

Starting Block is eligible to those aged 16yrs to 60yrs+, who are not in fulltime media-related education, are not recent media graduates or working in a media-related job, and who have not had a film previously funded or commissioned.

**For further information please contact Sarah Young or Marie Olesen on:
0141 357 7288 or email mail@diversityfilms.org.uk**

To be sure you get the latest news first, sign up to the newsletter on the website or by emailing mail@diversityfilms.org.uk.

