



TALENT SPOTTING

FOCUSING ON TOMORROW'S GENERATION OF MOVERS AND SHAKERS



LYNNE RAMSAY

Her debut feature *Ratcatcher*, a gritty rites-of-passage tale about a troubled 12-year-old boy, wasn't strictly autobiographical but had, writer-director Lynne Ramsay has admitted, elements of her own life in it.

Of its success, the 29-year-old Glasgow native says, "I feel lucky. You never know what the response is going to be to your film, but I try and keep my feet on the ground." That's all well and good, but surely this graduate of the National Film and Television School must love talking about her film?

"I don't want to be spokesperson for my film. Other people are much better at doing that than me. I like to hide behind the camera and my ideas." And she also despises everyone's need to categorise.

"I hate being pigeonholed as either Scottish, a woman - or having a wooden leg or whatever," she laughs. "I see myself as more open-minded than that." Which is why she is keen to move on to her next project.

"I definitely always look to move on as a filmmaker - take new risks, make myself new, scary challenges." Her new movie will be an adaptation of Alan Warner's novel, *Morvern Callar*, which should begin shooting in the autumn. "I'm excited because it's a contemporary project with lots of issues that are really interesting for young people now."

The awards attention - notably BAFTA's cash-laden Carl Foreman Award for the Most Promising Newcomer in British Film - is "fantastic because *Ratcatcher*'s a small film. But at the moment I'm just more concerned about getting out another draft of my script" ■



DOM JOLY

For those lucky enough to catch 31-year-old Dom Joly's skits on the Paramount Comedy Channel, the arrival of Trigger Happy TV on C4 earlier this year couldn't have come soon enough.

Like Beattie's *About on acid*, the West Londoner's brand of prank-pulling was never less than compelling, though making the series was far from easy. "It took nine months to get," raves Joly. "It's a rolling production."

The success of the show has opened several new doors for the comedian, who only became the front-man because "we couldn't afford other people. I never really intended to be in front of the camera."

Now he's branching out, including directing the new video by former Stone Roses singer Ian Brown and there's an idea for a current affairs show. "I'm an indie Alan Whicker, riding around on a Vespa in the Third World, that sort of thing."

Joly's fully aware of the limited lifespan of the current format. "The second series, which should be out in November, will definitely be the last one," he admits. "The secret is anticipation - you should get out before people tell you to get out." ■

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EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

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HANNAH TAYLOR-GORDON

Remember that scene-stealing mopet talking sex under the table in *Four Weddings And A Funeral*? Six years on, Hannah Taylor-Gordon is a striking teenager playing the young Fanny Price in a classy film adaptation of *Mansfield Park*.

Thankfully, she has managed to remain self-effacing and down-to-earth, a far cry from your average brattish Hollywood child actor. And though she admits she has "always liked drama and falling about", she is clued up enough to realise the value of her studies, remaining a pupil at boarding school.

If she has eventually to choose between university and "a really good film," uni is likely to win out "because I like to spend time on work."

Nevertheless, she was happy to take time off to film the Holocaust drama *Jacob The Liar*, a role which required her to play a young Jewess. It provides some fond memories. "I love doing accents. It's not difficult for me to just get an accent and do it."

And she took acting opposite Robin Williams in her stride too. Not surprising considering her role model. "I idolise Christina Ricci, I think she's totally amazing. Oh - and Winona Ryder [whom she played as a younger self in *The House Of The Spirits*]. If I continue acting, I'd really like to be like them and do the same sort of films as them."

But that *Four Weddings* memory lingers on and the 13-year-old Londoner's performance in latest Jane Austen merely confirms the promise she showed way back then. ■



SIMON RUMLEY

With his acclaimed first feature *Strong Language* in rep at the National Film Theatre, and now available on video and DVD, writer-producer-director Simon Rumley, 31, is currently putting the final touches to its follow-up, *The Truth Game*.

Shot on a shoestring for just \$32,000, *Strong Language* features an ensemble of 17 London-based actors talking directly to camera about issues ranging from drug-taking to Oasis. Interspersed is the tale of a nameless narrator. Cleverly, the cast and voice-over become inextricably linked.

But while *Strong Language* was shot by Rumley with a just skeleton technical back-up, *The Truth Game* has a full crew and a comparatively massively budget of \$1 million. This time round an ensemble of seven (upcoming but mostly unknown) actors - playing six friends and one outsider - interact together on screen in a twist-packed story set across one evening.

Explained Rumley: "After completing *Strong Language*, I applied for a Lottery grant to make *Club Le Monde*, another part of the trilogy. Nobody in the British film industry would take the bait when we showed them the script."

However one of the assessors, Piers Jackson, was keen to work with Rumley and so he and his partners in Screen Productions Associates instead green-lighted *The Truth Game*. Said Jackson: "We liked the dialogue-led script and with seven characters and one location, the story was very self-contained. We liked Simon's acute observation and refreshingly impish sense of humour... and also the fact there were no explosions." ■



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