

A Blazing Griffin Film in association with
Parkhouse Pictures
Creative Scotland
Constellation Creatives



ANNA AND THE APOCALYPSE

Directed by John McPhail
Written by Alan McDonald and Ryan McHenry
Produced by Naysun Alae-Carew, Nicholas Crum & Tracy Jarvis



FANTASTIC FEST WORLD PREMIER AUSTIN TEXAS SEPTEMBER 2017

ANNA AND THE APOCALYPSE
A BLAZING GRIFFIN PRODUCTION

SITGES FILM FESTIVAL ESTREMOZ EUROPEO OCTUBRE 2017

Starring
Ella Hunt, Malcolm Cumming,
Sarah Swire, Christopher Leveaux, Marli Siu, Ben Wiggins
with Mark Benton and Paul Kaye

In cinemas October 2018

Quote

“ANNA AND THE APOCALYPSE is the best musical zombie Christmas comedy ever made” - Birth.Movies.Death.

For further info, interviews and stills please contact:

Barry Waldo: barrywaldo@blazinggriffin.com
Claudia Fiorillo: claudia@blazinggriffin.com

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Introduction

Anna and the Apocalypse stars Ella Hunt (*Cold Feet, The More You Ignore Me, Robot Overlords*) as Anna, and Mark Benton (*Waterloo Road, The Halcyon, Eddie the Eagle*) plays Anna's Dad, Tony, with Paul Kaye (*Game of Thrones*) playing Savage, the deputy headmaster. These three star alongside a breakout group of emerging talent including Malcom Cumming, Ben Wiggins, Sarah Swire, Christopher Leveaux and Marli Siu.

Embraced by fans and critics alike, the film's world premiere at Fantastic Fest was met with critical acclaim. It also played at Sitges Film Festival, where it won the Jury Prize for *Best Midnight X-Treme* Feature Length Film.

Anna and the Apocalypse is based on the 2010 BAFTA winning short film *Zombie Musical* written and directed by the late Ryan McHenry (*Ryan Gosling Won't Eat His Cereal*). The feature film is co-written by McHenry and Alan McDonald and directed by John McPhail (*Where Do We Go From Here?*) with original music by Roddy Hart and Tommy Reilly. The film was produced by Naysun Alae-Carew and Nicholas Crum for Blazing Griffin and Tracy Jarvis for Parkhouse Pictures.

Anna and the Apocalypse is a Blazing Griffin Film in association with Parkhouse Pictures, Creative Scotland and Constellation Creatives

Synopsis

T'was the night before Christmas... when a zombie apocalypse threatened the sleepy town of Little Haven.

Anna and her friends must fight, slash and sing their way to survival, facing hellish snowmen, an undead santa and bloodthirsty elves in a desperate race to reach their loved ones hiding out at their local high school.

But the lucky few that make it find out that the human threat they face there is the most terrifying of all... With civilisation falling apart around them, the only people they can truly rely on are each other.

About the Production



The Origin of the Story

When director John McPhail was approached with the script for Anna and the Apocalypse, he fell for it immediately – and not just because of its hilarious, original premise. **‘There’s such heart in it – I really love films that have good characters and heart and story. When I read the script, I was bowled over by the jokes too. I felt like I could have written it and I instantly wanted to be part of it.’**

Star Ella Hunt was equally won over. **‘I heard about a zombie musical set in the holidays and thought: this sounds awesome! Then I read the script! It was abundantly clear right from the first read that, despite all the craziness in the world, Anna was a completely authentic, relatable and complex character. I went in and auditioned, we did some chemistry reads, met the whole team, it felt very natural and real. We all just clicked together so quickly, it was an absolute dream.’**

McPhail was welcomed to the project by producers Naysun Alae-Carew and Nic Crum. **‘They got me on board and, though they didn’t know me from Adam, they championed me from day one, and when it came to the shoot, they stood back and let me do my thing. It’s been so enjoyable to be part of this project and to be so supported.’**

The Shoot

The team assembled a strong crew for the shoot, which took place on location in Port Glasgow, East Lothian and Falkirk. Much of the action was shot in a real working school, temporarily vacated for the winter months. **'We had the run of the place,'** says McPhail. **'Our first three weeks were based entirely in the school. When the actors all first arrived they very much felt like they were back at high school again hearing people running and joking down corridors.'** The location's exteriors had a sense of authenticity as well as a bleak beauty set against the backdrop of the Clyde River. **'That's part of the charm of it. It's a really rough part of town but the rolling hills are quite picturesque.'**

Paul Kaye, who plays the comically controlling and increasingly sinister headmaster Mr Savage, said the school setting aided his performance. **'The fact we were based solely within the confines of a condemned secondary school was absolutely perfect, really. It meant that wherever I was going throughout the day, the toilet, cafeteria, wardrobe etc, I could march through the corridors with my footsteps echoing around the building and prowl the stairwells like a maniacal fascist. It didn't feel like a set at all, it felt like MY school!'**

The five-week shoot demanded absolute commitment from everyone involved. **'All of my Heads of Department were incredible,'** says McPhail. **'Their support throughout was invaluable, and the crew we had were so quick, nothing was a bother. When we were up against it everyone would grit their teeth and get on with it. It was tough but everybody enjoyed themselves, and I think that's very telling.'**

His cast also suffered the Scottish winter with a smile. **'It was freezing cold and whenever we were outside my cast were great. Ella, in particular, always felt the cold, wearing three jackets and holding two hot water bottles. In-between takes she'd say, "I'm so cold!", but once the cameras were rolling you could see her shrug it off and focus; such professionalism.'**



Ella Hunt has praise for her director too. **‘I adored John. I want to work with John for the rest of my life. We were totally on the same page.’** The Devonshire-raised actress did take some time getting used to his accent, however. **‘He’s extraordinarily Glaswegian, the most Glaswegian person you will ever meet. When we first started shooting I would have to wave to slow him down while he was talking, and sometimes he’d just resort to sign language,’** she says with a laugh. **‘But we were really connected in our vision for the character and he always took the time to listen to me. I felt like he’s a wonderful balancer, everyone felt able to voice ideas and opinions – there was no hierarchy.’** Paul Kaye agrees: **‘John McPhail did a great job, he had such a clear vision as to what he wanted.’**

Speak to anyone who worked on Anna and the Apocalypse and they will tell you how much they bonded over the experience. **‘I’d give everyone a handshake or hug at end of every day because genuinely they were incredible,’** says McPhail. **‘It was quickly evident that everyone involved in the film were unified in a vision to see it fulfil its huge potential. This machine is filled with hundreds of cogs and no matter how big or small, if they don’t work then the machine doesn’t operate at full capacity. You need everyone to be working together towards the same end and that’s exactly what I got, from the runners through to the Heads of Department.’**

With such a short shoot, the cast had to be quick learners. **‘Sometimes we would have a maximum of an hour to learn a dance routine,’** says Hunt. **‘Often I was having to learn the fight choreography ten minutes before we shot the scene. It**

required us to be top of our game, we didn't have time to not be. It was a cool working environment.'

Action is a key part of *Anna and the Apocalypse*, and there was one particular challenge for Ella: 'I'm extremely clumsy. There was a day where we'd been doing a scene where Anna is angry, upset, crying and gone through a particularly emotionally exhausting ordeal. She picks up a candy cane and there's a slow-motion sequence where she's moving through the zombies, taking them out one by one. We rehearsed it once, then, just as we're going for a take they said, "By the way, once we go we will be spraying blood at you from either side so you might not be able to see." OK! On the fourth hit, I swung the candy cane around my head and the blood splattered right into my eyes. Instead of hitting the zombie mark I hit the camera and it fell out of the DP's hand. There's a great blooper of me putting my hand to my face and going "f**k!"'

The Characters and Cast



The characters in *Anna and the Apocalypse* are crucial to its success, and the script takes its time building them up. McPhail says, 'They all feel like really well-rounded characters. I was very careful with each act's progression. The first act is a teen comedy; we're getting to know our characters and the world they inhabit. The second act is a horror comedy with a bit of danger in there - we do lose some

characters here. Then you hit the mid-point and everything shifts, and you start to really feel what these characters are going through and dealing with. I wanted to make sure that when you enter the third act people were fully committed to, and understand, our characters. I'm a big believer that if you can make people laugh you can make them cry.'

There are many moving moments in the film, in part thanks to the themes it tackles. **'Kids growing up and having to deal with death is the major part of it,' says McPhail. 'All zombie films are a social commentary in some way: what are we leaving for our kids? Where is next generation headed? It's about growing up, a coming of age film about leaving high school and facing life's responsibilities, but also having to deal with the world your parents have left you.'**

To play such well-rounded and complex characters, McPhail had one key quality he was looking for in his cast. **'They're all thinkers. One of my favourite things about Ella, when we were doing the auditions, is that I asked her to try something and she challenged me on it. "I want to know why." Questioning. I really liked that. We always had an open conversation about character and dialogue for everybody in the cast. I wanted them to be as much a part of it, their thoughts. I'd push back sometimes but it was always an open dialogue and they all had their different quirks about them.'**

Paul Kaye is another big thinker, says the director. **'I loved watching him. He wouldn't go into the green room, he'd pace back and forth and do his lines. He really brought that character to life. I wanted my Willy Wonka meets The Joker and I got it. He threw himself into it, working with the costume department and make up to get the right look – he had a lot of input.'**

Kaye says: **'I loved playing him. Savage is this wonderfully old fashioned micro-managing control freak with a surname to die for. He was loosely based on an old teacher of mine and there's a little bit of my Dad thrown in there for good measure. I was brought up from a young age with the phrase "retail is detail", and power and detail turn Savage on in equal measure. I still have a major problem with authority figures so playing them can only be good therapy. I think with his personality traits the man is a time bomb. He goes a bit Alec Guinness in Bridge Over The River Kwai towards the end where he forgets who's side he's on.'**

The character of Anna has many action scenes, so Ella's physical training was a priority. **'I had no idea how to even throw a punch, so I had to really work on physicality,' she says. 'I had an amazing fight co-ordinator and after our first session she sent me home to practise throwing punches at myself in the mirror. Every time, I would laugh at myself and she said, "you're going to have to start believing in yourself as a fighter". I ended up taking inspiration from women around me. It was quite an equal set; they are usually male dominated, and this film had a female cinematographer, Sarah Swire did choreography... I did have all these women around me encouraging me to be kick ass version of myself.'**

The Music – Roddy Hart & Tommy Reilly

The music in Anna and the Apocalypse also plays with genres and was composed by Roddy Hart and Tommy Reilly. **'When I first joined the production, there were six songs that had been written and we went through them, the boys and I,' says McPhail. 'I could trust them with my life and not have any concerns, they are such a good team bouncing off each other. Roddy's the thinker, Tommy's the buzzy one and watching them work in tandem is just great. We started a thing called Friday Music Club - we'd meet on a Friday to talk about the script, the scenes, the songs and where they were all going. Then they'd play their most recent ideas and we'd talk about them. It was a very collaborative process.'**

For practical reasons, the musical numbers were recorded in a studio before the shoot. **'It was great to be thrown into it, it started me on this crazy journey,' says Ella Hunt. 'Music is a massive part of my life; I sing and songwriter and I adore musicals, *Meet me in St Louis, The Sound of Music...* a musical was something on the bucket list. Because we recorded the music before we shot, there had to be some forethought into what was going on in Anna's head at all times. I had to put movement into the songs. There's a song at the end, she's fighting while she's singing. When you fight you're more out of breath and it was about getting the balance between that and getting it to sound nice. We split them up into sections then went OK, so this take is slightly sadder, and looked at emotions in each take. We had plenty of time with the music which was a luxury.'**

As for Paul Kaye's take on the musical element: **'I love the fact he has the only punk number in the film. That's a very punk idea.'**

Director John McPhail swotted up on his classic musicals to prepare for the film. **'I haven't seen *High School Musical*, and before I did this film my favourite musical was *South Park: Bigger, Longer and Uncut*. But I went to see *Wicked* and got every musical I could find on DVD – I love *West Side Story* now, there's a wee nod to that in the film.'**

John hopes that *Anna and the Apocalypse* will be enjoyed as an alternative festive musical. **'I would love, in five years from now, for people go to tiny cinemas to do the singalong and put it on as a Christmas favourite. That would be my dream.'**

Cast Interviews

Interview with Ella Hunt



Q What did you think when first read the script/heard the pitch?

I was like – a zombie musical set in the holidays, right this sounds awesome! And then I read the script and it was just abundantly clear from the first read that, despite all the craziness around Anna, she’s completely authentic and relatable. Right from when I started acting I was really conscious of how young people are represented on screen and I was actively looking for roles that were relatable and real and complex and she’s all those things, so I was immediately like yeah, I’d like this one!

Q How did the audition process go for you?

So I went in and auditioned, quite a few months passed, and then we did some chemistry reads and I got to meet the whole team and it felt very natural and real, we all just clicked together and I was very excited when I got the part. We went up to Glasgow to do the music recording. We recorded the music way before we started shooting because I was going on to do another film right before I shot An. I was shooting two film feature leads back to back; I’d shot a film called *The More You Ignore Me* and then went on to filming *Anna* straight afterwards, exhausted. It was a bit mad, but it was great to just be thrown into it and then started on this crazy journey of me having to learn how to fight. I literally had no idea how to even throw, as much as I related to her as a character, I had to really work on the physicality.

Q What kind of training did you have?

I had an amazing fight co-ordinator called EmmaClaire Brightlyn. After our first session she sent me home to practise throwing punches at myself in the mirror, because every time I would pick up some sort of weapon I would laugh at myself. She said, “you’re going to have to start believing in yourself as a survival fighter”, so it took quite a lot of practice. I ended up taking inspiration from the women around me, it was quite an equal set - usually sets are quite male dominated, but we had a female director of photography, we had EmmaClaire which is quite cool to have a female fight co-ordinator, and Sarah Squire did the choreography. I did have all those women around me, kind of encouraging me to be my most kick ass version of myself. I think what was helpful with Anna was, yes, she’s kick ass, but she’s real, she’s afraid and she wants to find her father, so that made it slightly less frightening.

Q. I was impressed at how moving it was.

It’s a film that really has a very clear message, it’s about the kind of world we leave for our kids and I think Nic and Naysun, our producers, even from before we had John McPhail attached, they wanted to ground the story in reality and play the emotion for real. That’s what really attracted me to the project - to play it for real, to show these characters as real people. They are not stereotypes, I think it’s what sets the film apart from other teen musicals.

Q. When your friends ask you about it how do you describe it to them?

I always start off by saying it’s zombie musical set at Christmas but that actually, at the heart of it, it’s a coming of age story. It’s about a group of young people who don’t know what to expect in their last year of school. They all have aspirations and dreams outside of the conventional wheel and it’s about their loss of innocence when a zombie apocalypse hits and they have to survive without their parents.

Q Have you done much singing before?

Music is a massive part of my life. I have sung and songwritten since I was a little girl so that’s another one of the many things that attracted me, the musical element, it combines my two loves and I just adore musicals like *Meet Me in St Louis* and *The Sound of Music*. That was really something on my bucket list of things I wanted to do and really it was a fun challenge because we recorded the music before we shot - there had to be some forethought into what was going to be going through her head at all times and learning how to put the emotion and the movement into the songs that

was the trickiest bit. The song at the end, she's fighting while she's singing and when you fight, there are obviously breaths and sounds you make when you're fighting so getting the balance between getting it to sound nice and playing the reality of the situations was a really fun challenge and a lot of work.

Q How many takes did you tend to do for one song?

We split them up into sections and then sort of went, OK, so this take is slightly sadder, we looked at the emotions in each take - with different songs there was a different amount of takes. We had plenty of time with the music, that bit we had the most time with, then when we got onto set it was very restrictive. Usually I'd have an hour max to learn a dance routine, often I was having to learn the fight choreography 10 minutes before we shot the scene, we were really, really pushed for time. It really required all of us to be on top of our game all day because we didn't have time to not be. It was a cool working environment; we were all exhausted but we were all in it together.

Q How was working with John?

I adored John, I want to work with John for the rest of my life. We were totally on the same page.

He's the most extraordinarily Glaswegian, the *most* Glaswegian person you will ever meet. When we first started shooting he had to give me sign language if he was speaking too fast - I'd have like a wave of my hands to slow him down, sometimes I was like, sorry, you're going to have to do that all again, but slower - but we really connected in our vision for the character. What was lovely was he really listened to me, I felt like he's a wonderful balancer; he listens to everyone. It's a really cool environment to work in because we all felt able to voice ideas and opinions. There was no hierarchy on set, if you had idea you were allowed to voice it - John's an awesome director.

Q Any fun stories?

I'm trying to think of funny anecdotes - if you're talking about me learning fight coordination - I'm extremely clumsy and there was a day where we'd been doing a scene, she's angry, upset, crying and she's just gone through this really emotionally exhausting thing and she picks up this candy cane for a slow mo moment. She's walking through, with zombies either side of her, and I'd only had about 10 mins to

learn choreography which was quite complicated. When we actually had the camera in front of me we didn't have the zombies there, so I was hitting at nothing and we'd only rehearse it once with the camera in front of me before going for a take. And they said, just before we go for a take by the way, once we go we will be spraying blood at you from either side, so you might not be able to see. And I was like OK! OK! I can do this! So I go for the first hit and I get a spray of blood of my chest and I go cool, that's cool, let's just go for it - and then I get a spray of blood on my shoulder and we get to this fourth hit and we do this thing where I swing my candy cane around head and across into a zombie and as I swung, the blood splattered right into my eyes and instead of hitting the zombie that was supposed to be to the right of the camera, I hit camera and it fell out of DP's hand. There's a great blooper of me putting my hand to my face and going fuck! It was such a wonderful shoot and we all adore each other, I would happily go back and do the whole thing again.

Q Maybe there will be a sequel.

You never know! I think our aim with the film was to leave people thinking, but there to be some optimism as to where the next generation is going - it's not entirely bleak, although it's a bit of a shock, it doesn't shy away from diving into the dark as well.

Q. Yes at first it seems quite light and you think that's going to be the tone throughout but it really dug deep.

Yeah, John was really clear when we were making the film, about the sections, there are parts to it. There's a beginning, middle and end. The beginning is like this zingy teen comedy and then the next section is more like diving into the music and into the characters slightly more deeply, getting to know them and feeling the horror more. Then by time we've got attached to these characters we're in the third act, it's out and out horror, it's really dark and we love them. Throughout the entire shoot John was like, if we can make people laugh we can make people cry, you need to be funny, he really encouraged humour in the first two sections, then, at the end, to play the emotions for real, play how difficult it is. It's certainly ambitious.

Q. I can't wait to see the reception.

Already it's blown all our minds, the response, especially the response in Austin. I had a lot of men that came up to me and said it's so cool because she doesn't run away with a guy at the end, she's a real kick ass! I was like, yeah! Women and men alike.

My whole family have seen it and I've got a brother that's 15, another brother that's 25, my parents they enjoyed it - hopefully it appeals to more than just young people.

Interview with Paul Kaye



Q- What appealed to you about your character?

I loved playing him, Savage is this wonderfully old fashioned, micro-managing control freak with a surname to die for. He was loosely based on an old teacher of mine and there's a little bit of my dad thrown in there for good measure. I was brought up from a young age with the phrase 'retail is detail'. I still have a major problem with authority figures so playing them can only be good therapy. I love the fact he has the only punk number in the film. That's a very punk idea.

Q- What do you think motivates him?

Power and detail. They turn him on in equal measure.

Q- Were you interested in the way he reacts to a terrifying event somewhat differently to other people?

I think with his personality traits, the man is a time bomb. He goes a bit Alec Guinness in *Bridge Over The River Kwai* towards the end where he forgets who's side he's on.

Q- Did you hit on any particular key to developing him as a character?

Well the fact we were based solely within the confines of a condemned secondary school was absolutely perfect really. It meant that wherever I was going throughout the day, the toilet, cafeteria, wardrobe etc, I could march through the corridors with my

footsteps echoing around the building and prowl the stairwells like a maniacal fascist. It didn't feel like a set at all, it felt like MY school!

Q- Tell me about working with the rest of the cast - any highlights?

The cast are all brilliant, particularly the kids, they were having the time of their lives. Christopher Leveaux was my fave, he's got such a great personality and he injected it all into his character.

Q- What do you love about the finished film?

I haven't seen it yet, unfortunately, but I've read some great reactions to the film from Fantastic Fest in Austin. The bits I saw when I did my ADR looked fantastic. The director John McPhail did a great job, he had such a clear vision as to what he wanted.

The Team

About the Cast



Ella Hunt – plays Anna

Ella Hunt recently wrapped the new season of Mike Bullen’s award-winning comedic-drama **Cold Feet**. She also has the lead opposite Sheridan Smith in the independent feature **The More You Ignore Me** which will receive a significant release in 2018.

Previously Ella has been seen opposite Ben Kingsley, Gillian Anderson and Callan McAuliffe in Jon Wright’s feature **Robot Overlords**, which premiered at the London Film Festival to strong reviews. She also had roles in the Clive Owen horror **Intruders** and the smash-hit film adaptation of **Les Miserables**.

Ella plays leading roles in two upcoming feature films, starring alongside Victoria Justice in **Summer Night** followed by Boudica Films’s **Kat and the Band** with McFly’s Dougie Poynter.

Malcolm Cumming – plays John

Malcolm Cumming is a Highland-born actor, currently based in Glasgow. He is completing his studies at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Cumming has worked as an actor and Musical Director across Scotland with Eden Court Theatre, in the Edinburgh Fringe and in writing and devising his own work. *Anna and the Apocalypse* is his feature film debut.

Mark Benton - plays Tony

Mark Benton is one of the UK's most-loved actors. Hailing from Middlesbrough, he trained at RADA and went on to work with Mike Leigh on **Career Girls** and **Topsy-Turvy**. His most recent film credits include Richmond in **Eddie the Eagle** opposite Taron Edgerton and Hugh Jackman and David Walliams's **Ratburger**.

Mark has been leading many TV series for over 20 years, including **Clocking Off**, **The Street**, **Land Girls**, **Waterloo Road** and **The Halcyon** and comedies like **Early Doors** and **Outnumbered**. He also led the **Northern Lights** series for four years. Mark is about to be seen as a title role in new BBC drama **Shakespeare and Hathaway**.

Paul Kaye – plays Savage

Paul Kaye is a multi-award winning leading British actor. Originally training in theatre design, Paul came to prominence via his creation; the celebrity interviewer **Dennis Pennis** who adorned the television screens during the 90s, a character he finally killed off in the feature film '**Dennis Pennis R.I.P**'.

He is known for his work in the feature films **It's All Gone Pete Tong**, **Blackball**, **Cass**, **Waz** and **Dracula Untold**, to name a few.

In television Paul has had extensive success playing leading roles in shows such as **Two Thousand Acres Of Sky**, **Kingdom**, **Pulling**, **Stella**, **Jonathan Strange and Mr Norrell**, **Doctor Who** and **Fungus The Bogeyman**.

More recently Paul has been seen internationally as Thoros of Myr in the HBO smash hit series **Game of Thrones** and as Duncan Hammer in **Lilyhammer** for Netflix.

Paul's performance in BBC's harrowing drama **Three Girls** was met with critical acclaim in 2017, when he also joined the cast of BBC and Netflix's drama '**Wanderlust**', opposite Toni Collette.

Sarah Swire – plays Steph & Dance Choreographer

Sarah Swire is a Canadian actress, choreographer and composer/musician. She is a graduate of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Her feature and short film credits include **Listen Up Emily**, **God Help the Girl**, **Acres** and **Some Other Place**. Recent

theatre credits include **Love Song** (Dundee Rep Theatre), **The Caucasian Chalk Circle** (Edinburgh Royal Lyceum), **The Den** (Barbican Theatre), and **Little Red Riding Hood** (Nonsense Room Prod.) She has worked as a choreographer and performer in music videos such as **Messiah by Prides** and **Perfect Couples, Allie and Nobody's Empire by Belle and Sebastian** as well as choreographing Belle and Sebastian's 2015 tour across America and the UK.

Chris Leveaux – plays Chris

Chris trained at ArtsEd in London. He has appeared in films including **The Wicker Tree, Love me Till Monday, Writer's Retreat** and **The Greatest Living Englishman**. His theatre credits include the lead role of William in **Punk Rock**, directed by Emily Moir, the lead role of Julian in **The Green Bay Tree**, directed by Tim Luscombe and roles in **Peter and Alice** and **Privates on Parade**, both directed by Michael Grandage. Television credits include **When Boris Met Dave, Well Funny, Dark Matters, 37 Days, The Crimson Field, Theresa vs Boris, The Halcyon** for ITV and most recently **Murdoch Mysteries** for CBC.

Marli Siu – plays Lisa

Marli graduated from Edinburgh Napier University with a First Class BA Hons in Acting and English Literature. Prior to that she was a member of the National Youth Theatre. Her television credits include **Dixi** and **Still Game**, while her film credits include **Grimm Street, Day Again, Scoring, Run** and **7 Minutes**. Siu has performed in the stage plays **Misalliance** (Orange Tree Theatre), **Much Ado About Nothing, Little Red** and **The Wolf, The Witness For The Prosecution** (Dundee Rep Theatre), **Dead Letter Office** and **Emma** (New Celts).

Ben Wiggins – plays Nick

Ben's film appearances include **Mary Queen of Scots** and **Cam2Cam**, while his theatre credits include **Henry V** (Regent's Park Open Air Theatre), **A Midsummer Night's Dream** (Middle Temple Hall), **Son of a Precariat** (Southwark Playhouse), **Two Gentlemen of Verona, Hayfever** and **Romeo and Juliet** (all for Changeling Theatre), **Here: The 99%** (Lyric Hammersmith), **Proof** and **Lord of the Flies** (Sell A Door Theatre Company), **Motortown** (Edinburgh Fringe Festival). He has been seen on TV in **Will, Doctors, Casualty, Rules About Making Money, Which is Witch**.

About the Crew

Director: John McPhail

After nearly six years of working in the camera department, John made his first short film; a romantic comedy called **Notes**. The film picked up the Best Scottish Film award at the Bootleg film festival in Edinburgh. Notes has gone on to screen all over the UK and North America, picking up awards including Audience Choice, Best film, Best Director and Best Actor and Best Editing. Later that year, he released **V for Visa** and **Doug & Steve's Big Holy Adventure**. V for Visa went on to win the Best Director accolade at TriBeCa Film Centre in New York as part of the Bootleg Film Festival. John's next short **Just Say Hi** was entered into to the Virgin Media Shorts Competition, winning two out of the three awards, making him the only director in the competition's history to win multiple awards. The film was later picked up by the Très Court International Film Festival where it was screened in over 100 cities in 23 countries. John's crowdfunded feature film **Where Do We Go From Here?** had its world premiere at the Sydney Indie Film Festival in Australia where it was nominated for eight awards and won Best Film, Best Score and Best Supporting Actress.

Producer: Naysun Alae-Carew

Naysun is a Co-Founder and Executive Director of Blazing Griffin, focusing on business development and building its film production and post-production departments. By bringing together three distinct companies: Blazing Griffin, Picturelock Media and Haphazard Media, and structuring substantial investment into the new Group, Naysun propelled the new Blazing Griffin Group into the prime position of one of Scotland's major media companies.

Between 2010 and 2013 Naysun worked as a junior producer with Black Camel Pictures, where he developed and helped deliver **Outpost 2**, **Outpost 3** and **Sunshine on Leith**. He was also Transmedia Producer for the Outpost films, as well as editing the third film. In 2011 he won a **New Talent BAFTA for Best Producer** for the short **Zombie Musical**, which was also nominated for Best Director and Best Original Music. His other shorts have won numerous festival awards.

Naysun is a graduate of the University of St Andrews with a first class MA(Hons) in Economics and International Relations. He won the William Blair Memorial Prize for Best Academic Performance in Economics because he loves spreadsheets so much.

Producer: Nic Crum

Nicholas is a Film Producer at multimedia studio Blazing Griffin, focusing on building a slate of projects across film and TV.

Before moving to Blazing Griffin, Nicholas was a Producer at Haphazard Media developing new and exciting commercially oriented film and television projects.

In 2014, Nicholas produced the feature film **All The Ordinary Angels**, based on the 2005 award winning play of the same name, for the British Youth Film Academy.

In 2013 Nicholas produced two concept shorts, **City** starring David Hayman and **Exodus 21:24** starring Dom Watters. From November of 2010 to December 2011 Nicholas was Development Associate with Leo Media & Entertainment Group, working closely with writers on story and script for numerous international TV and feature film projects, as well as helping to develop their financial packages.

In 2010 Nicholas was recognised as one of the top 6 emerging producers in the North West and subsequently supported through the Produced By scheme, run by North West Vision and Media and Forward Films.

Producer: Tracy Jarvis

Tracy is the Founder and Executive Director of Parkhouse Pictures, a British film company dedicated to making high quality feature films and television for audiences in the UK and around the world. Tracy has gone on to produce a modern adaptation feature film of **Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream**, which was shot in Austria and is currently in Edit.

Tracy has decades of experience in the world of media and finance having spent over 10 years working for a top International Bank and is also the co-founder and executive director of renowned UK Theatrical Agency Beresford Management. She has years of experience working with major film companies including **Walt Disney, HBO, Sky, BBC**

and **ITV** and has an expertise and passion for casting, particularly when discovering new talent.

Writer: Ryan McHenry

Writer/Director Ryan McHenry burst into internet fame in 2013 with his **Ryan Gosling Won't Eat His Cereal vines**. The weird, high concept 6.5 second videos captured a huge audience on the nascent social media platform, with journalists claiming his videos validated the existence of Vine. Within a couple of months of Ryan's success, he was diagnosed with a rare kind of bone cancer. The Vine community rose up in support around him, launching a successful crowdfunding campaign. His fans and the media followed his treatment until he sadly passed away on 2nd May 2015. *Anna And The Apocalypse* is based on Ryan's **original BAFTA-winning short film Zombie Musical**, and was being developed as his debut feature.

Writer: Alan McDonald

Alan has written extensively across multiple media and has a number of projects in development with Blazing Griffin as well as several spec television pilots in industry circulation. He is currently working on the upcoming CBBC show, **Fear Falls**. He was narrative writer on video game **Distant Star**, which won a Best Video Game BAFTA in 2015. His supernatural television pilot **Bastion** was a quarter-finalist in the Screenwriting Goldmine competition 2012, and was recognised in the Channel 4 Screenwriting Course in 2013.

Composers: Roddy Hart & Tommy Reilly

Roddy Hart and Tommy Reilly are a Film and TV songwriting partnership from Glasgow, Scotland. Independently of each other they have released a number of critically acclaimed solo albums and met in 2009 whilst touring across the UK. The music for *Anna and The Apocalypse* combines a love of film with their diverse indie background.

Alongside his band **The Lonesome Fire**, Hart has worked with **Coldplay/Morrissey producer Danton Supple and Mogwai/Arab Strap's Paul Savage**. In 2014 he was nominated for the **Scottish Album Of The Year Award**, which was followed by a six-night residency performing on CBS' **The Late Late Show in the USA**. Hart acted as Associate Musical Director on the motion picture musical **Sunshine On Leith**, and

also works as a broadcaster, presenting **The Quay Sessions for BBC Radio Scotland** every week. His most recent record, **Swithering**, was released late 2016. Tommy Reilly has a Masters in Sound For The Moving Image from Glasgow School of Art, and received a **Scottish BAFTA New Talent nomination** for his composition work in 2016. He first rose to prominence after **winning the Channel 4 TV show Orange Unsigned**. Shortly after, Reilly's first single **Gimme A Call reached number 14 in the UK Singles Chart**. He is currently published by BMG Music and is due to release a new record in 2018.

Post Production Producer/ Co-Producer: Charlotte Walsh

Charlotte started dabbling in post production by editing short films whilst at university. After graduating, she joined Glasgow based production company Black Camel Pictures as an intern, and assisted in completing delivery on their feature film **Outpost: Black Sun**. She joined Shed Media on **Waterloo Road** as their post production secretary before moving to London to work for the BBC on **EastEnders**.

Charlotte then joined Picture Lock Media as a post production coordinator working alongside Managing Director David Frew on Series 2 of the ITV Studios/BBC Drama **Shetland**, taking on the role as Post Production Supervisor.

Walsh was instrumental in the growth of Picture Lock Media in the early years leading up to its transformation into Blazing Griffin. Although she continues to oversee and develop aspects of the company, she spends much of her time supervising external drama and comedy projects. Her recent credits include **Our Girl Series 2, Shetland Series 3 & 4, Fried Series 1 and Outlander Series 1 & 2**.

Line Producer/ Co-Producer: Steven Little

Steven graduated from the University of Strathclyde with an honours degree in physics, after which he gained a Private Pilot's Licence. Steven started in TV as a runner in documentaries and has risen through the ranks. He worked on BBC comedy productions like **Life of Riley** and then as a researcher on **X-Alps – The World's Most Extreme Race?** and **The ONE Show**. Steven then moved into film and joined Sigma Films, he worked on numerous features including **Starred Up, Perfect Sense, You Instead and Citadel**. Returning to the freelance market as a co-ordinator on Jonathan Glazer's **Under the Skin** before co-ordinating productions such as **River**

City, Shetland and Waterloo Road. However, it was at Waterloo Road that Steven made strides into Production Management and Line Producing where he was the Line Producer on the final series. He then went onto Line Produce a host of film and TV productions such as **Scot Squad, Eve, Tommy's Honour** to name a few. Over the last couple of years Steven has Produced his own feature film, **Matriarch** and after co-producing Anna and the Apocalypse, he joined Blazing Griffin on a full-time basis.

Director Of Photography: Sara Deane

Sara has been working as a DOP for nine years after graduating from the NFTS, shooting 14 features and numerous shorts since. Her work has screened in festivals such as Berlin, Locarno, Sitges and London, winning best cinematography at the Van d'Or Independent Film Awards 2012. She has shot documentaries in the Grand Canyon, mountains in Mexico, on boats in the Atlantic and settlements in the Philippines. Her commercial work has been nominated for Best Cinematography at Milan Fashion Film Festival and Underwire, as well as Best Branded Content for Shots. Prior to becoming a DOP she worked as a clapper loader for many years.

1st Assistant Director: Jonathan Farmer

Jonathan is from Edinburgh, lives in Glasgow and regularly works on projects across the UK and Ireland. He studied Film & Media Studies and Psychology at Stirling University in Scotland. His early work included Scottish TV staples such as **Taggart** and **Monarch of the Glen**. Jonathan has worked on a variety of feature film genres, demonstrated by a diverse slate of credits, such as the comedy **Festival**, the romantic comedy **Not Another Happy Ending** several horror films such as **Hush, Book of Blood and Dread**, and the musical **Sunshine on Leith**. Recently he has worked on the **Netflix series Black Mirror** and the film **Farming**.

Production Designer: Ryan Clachrie

Hailing from Dumfries and with a strong interest in art and design, Clachrie's film career began in his teens, making shorts with Ryan McHenry and Naysun Alae-Carew. He has a degree in Animation and Design, designed the BAFTA New Talent Award winning **Zombie Musical Short Film** in 2010, before heading to Glasgow to pursue a career in the Art Dept and Props Dept in Film and TV. Since then, he has worked in a variety of positions within Art and Props on projects ranging from short films to

blockbuster feature films such as **Trainspotting 2**, **Avengers: Infinity War** and **Outlaw King**.

Make-Up Designer: Maxine Dallas

Maxine Dallas has had a varied and exciting career in Film & Television for over 15 years. She worked with many respected and award-winning designers in her career before stepping up to make-up designing herself.

Recently she has been Make-up Designer on Warp Films feature **For Those In Peril**, Black Camel feature **Outpost3: Rise Of the Spetnaz**, BBC drama **Shetland II, III and IV**, BBC's **Jonathan Creek** and ITV's **Benidorm**. She was the make-up artist on feature films **Filth** with James McAvoy, **The Wife** with Glenn Close, **Legacy** with Idris Elba and **Valhalla Rising** with Mads Mikkelsen.

Costume Designer: Fiona Morrison

Fiona is a graduate of Edinburgh College of Art and has been working in the Scottish Film and Television industry since 2011. Independent short films provided an excellent training ground to develop her design aesthetics and on-set skills. Following that she worked as standby and supervisor on a variety of contemporary and period drama filmed in Scotland, including the recent remake of **Whisky Galore**, BBC's **Rillington Place** and **The Replacement**. She has recently returned to education at Glasgow University to pursue a Masters degree in Dress and Textile Histories, and further her interest in costume and dress as a tool for studying identity and social history, while continuing to work as a Costume Designer.

Sound Recordist: Cameron Mercer

Cameron has been a Sound Recordist for 18 years during which time he has worked on a diverse range of production genres. Starting out recording local bands, he moved to TV and Film through a job with a camera facilities company. After becoming freelance in 1999 he worked largely in documentary. Over time, he took on more drama work and larger broadcast jobs, becoming Sound Supervisor for larger TV productions and Production Sound Mixer for several features. He continues enjoying varied and exciting work in all genres of TV and Film as well as artist projects and theatrical/film collaboration.

Editor: Mark Hermida

Mark has spent the last six years as a freelance editor, working in features as well as television drama and comedy after spending his formative years training as an assistant editor on British police drama *The Bill*.

His notable credits include **Cuckoo** for Roughcut/BBC, starring Taylor Lautner and Gregg Davies, **Home From Home** for the BBC starring Johnny Vegas and Emilia Fox and **Suspects for Newman St/C5**, starring Damian Maloney, Clare-Hope Ashitey and Faye Ripley.

VFX Supervisor: Matt Cameron

Matt Cameron has been active in the world of visual effects since 2008. He studied at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design before making a name for himself as a Digital Artist on films such as **Dunkirk**, **Star Wars: The Force Awakens** and **Interstellar**. He first worked with Blazing Griffin on the short film *City* before joining Anna and the Apocalypse as Visual Effects Supervisor in 2017. Matt is currently in London, working on an upcoming Netflix show as well as advising on a number of upcoming Scottish productions.

Fight Director: EmmaClaire Brightlyn

Originally from Canada, EmmaClaire Brightlyn is a freelance actor, fight director and instructor based in Glasgow, Scotland and Toronto, Canada. Theatre fight directing credits include: **Dragon** (Vox Motus/NTS/Tianjin Children's Art Theatre); **West Side Story**, **Festen**, **Brigadoon** (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland); **The Maids**, **Miss Julie**, **The Libertine**, **Rapunzel**, **This Restless House Parts 1, 2 and 3** (Citizens Theatre); **The Lonesome West** (Tron Theatre); **The Seafarer**, **Macbeth** (Perth Theatre); **Hamlet** (Wilderness of Tigers); **Slope** (Untitled Projects); **Titus Andronicus** (Dundee Rep). Most recently EmmaClaire has been Fight Arranger on the Scottish feature film **Beats** (Sixteen Films).

Location Manager: Barry Laird

Laird has been in the film and television industry for over 13 years and has worked in a variety of different scale productions ranging from large blockbusters such as **The Fast and the Furious** and **World War Z**, to more independent features such as **Only**

You and **Tell it to the Bees**. He studied at Cardonald College before getting his industry break on a Bollywood TV Production called **Meet the Magoons** in 2004. Laird was working on **Trainspotting 2** when he was approached to work on Anna and the Apocalypse.