

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a light-colored lace-trimmed blouse and a long dark skirt, stands with her back to the camera on a rocky, grassy hillside. She is looking towards a small, rustic stone building with a thick thatched roof. The background is a vast, misty valley with rolling hills and a large mountain peak in the distance. The overall atmosphere is somber and desolate.

THE
WIDOW'S LAST

A TALE OF HUMANITY, IN A TIME OF GREAT HUNGER.

SYNOPSIS

LONG VERSION

Set in Ireland, during the third year of The Great Hunger, *The Widow's Last* tells the story of Kathryn Healy, a hardened widow who fights to keep her young son alive during one of the darkest times in human history.

Starving from lack of food and with her son stricken by fever she stumbles across an English landlord, wounded and himself on the edge of death. This encounter with the enemy sets her on an unexpected path where she is forced to confront her own inhumanity and make choices...

Can she find it within herself to help a man she considers the enemy? Then faced with a neighbour bent on vengeance against the English, can she hold to her newfound convictions without putting herself and her son in further danger? And will the choices she makes lead to destruction or might they ultimately save her?

With her debut short, director Vanessa Perdriau has produced a powerful, moving film that examines the nature of our humanity, anchored by outstanding performances. At its core, this is a profound story of forgiveness, sacrifice and redemption, poised to keep you on the edge of your seat.

SHORT VERSION

Ireland, 1847. A destitute young widow desperate to save her dying son, must make a choice but is the cost of survival worth the price of her humanity?





DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT



I've always been moved by human stories and lives from bygone eras, especially ones that grapple with real issues that we can all relate to, which is perhaps how this story was born...

When I first began reading about the famine, I was deeply moved by personal accounts of Irish suffering and loss... I was outraged! Why didn't people do more? How could so many be left to die? The following day I was at CNN, editing a news piece where I was confronted with present day images of death, hunger and desperation and it struck me - How am I any different today, I turn a blind eye to the need I see? It was this thought that became the fuse which lit the flame for our film.

The past has this beautiful way of posing essential questions of our humanity in a way that is removed from the muddied waters of the present but encourages us to see things from a new perspective.

The Widow's Last is very much a story of the past that resonates with our present. It poses the question – how will we respond to need we see through the life of a destitute Irish widow who encounters a wounded Englishman and must decide if she will be hardened by hatred or moved in compassion? The film employs a parallel narrative, to sharply counterpoint the paths of forgiveness and hatred. When we meet Kathryn and Sean, they are both in a place of hardship, they both blame the English for their suffering but as the story progresses and their choices diverge, we see with painful clarity the downward spiral of Sean's character as he seeks vengeance and the redemptive nature of Kathryn's path as she chooses compassion.

The Great Hunger is perhaps one of the darkest times in history and I wanted our film to reflect that. It needed to feel raw, gritty and personal and everything from the set design, to costumes, locations and cinematography went into building this tonally.

My goal cinematically was to create a sense of the intimate and epic - to feel up close and personal with our characters and yet very aware of their isolation. We used the stunning and visceral landscape of rural Ireland as a character within the film, it became an isolating presence, a cold and barren force of nature infusing the narrative throughout. Then in sharp contrast to this, the camera stays relentlessly close to the characters and the claustrophobic cottage works to build a sense of oppression and entrapment. This contrast between intimacy and isolation was a key feature of the piece.

It is my hope is that this story and these characters would light a path for us in turbulent times. That it would speak of the freedom found in forgiveness, the beautiful paradox that in giving we gain and the redemptive power of compassion.



KEY TEAM



VANESSA PERDRIAU

WRITER | DIRECTOR | EDITOR

Vanessa grew up on the coast of New Zealand, where the dramatic landscape inspired her with a love for photography and great story. After graduating with First Class Honours from Met Film School, she worked with the BAFTA award winning Feature Doc Director, Jerry Rothwell as the Assistant Director on his films.

Vanessa has since gone on to set up her own production company and has over five years of directing experience across a variety of formats and genres, including: fiction, documentary, short films, music videos and corporate films. Also an accomplished editor, she freelances for CNN, crafting industry leading content within the features department. Her short 'The File Room' played at Oscar and BAFTA Qualifying festivals and in 2016 she went on to win the Pitch at Pinewood with her ambitious historical drama 'The Widow's Last'.

Working with actors, bringing scripts to life and crafting poignant cinematic moments are among her greatest passions and overarching all of her work is the desire to create powerful, story driven films.



LUKE WALTON

PRODUCER

Luke Walton is founder and director of The Pitch Film competition. Developed in 2008, The Pitch has focused on nurturing and developing emerging talent, adding additional benefits for participants including master classes and residential film study courses. The Pitch invites filmmakers to submit a two-minute video online, pitching their idea for a short film. This can be in any genre and emerge from any perspective but must demonstrate skills in adaptation as it draws on any story, passage, character or theme in the Bible. The competition is currently developing a new hub in South Africa.

Luke is also director of RIF (Reel Issues Films) who support the winner and produce the winning concepts as completed films. He has exec produced 2 short films ('The Walk' & 'One'), produced 9 others ('Unscripted', 'Derelict', 'Rahab', 'The Black Scholes Conspiracy', 'The Light', 'Pulsar', 'Only Child' (nominated for a BAFTA Cymru), 'The Widow's Last' and 'Promise' (currently in post-production). He is currently working on a short horror film 'Leash'.

Luke has degrees in law and in theology, and was an actor with Riding Lights Theatre Company.



JACKIE SHEPPARD

PRODUCER

Following collaboration with Mark Blaney and Footprint Films on projects in development over several years Jackie joined Footprint as Joint Managing Director of the company in June 2004. Footprint produced the drama feature and international co-production 'Africa United' (Pathé, BBC Films, UKFC (UK release Warner Bros/Fox)).

With producing partner Mark Blaney and Kurdish director, Kae Bahar, she also produced the multi-award winning short film (48 Festival Awards to date) 'I Am Sami', filmed in Kurdistan, Northern Iraq and the short film 'A Special Guest'. Jackie has also produced the funded shorts, 'Home' (Reel Issues Films), 'Curfew' (Screen South/UKFC), and 'Supraman and the School of Necessity' (The Doorpost) with Mark Blaney. Together they exec produced four short films for the UKFC/Screen South's Digital Shorts programme ('Hammer and Flame', 'Out of Water', 'Plenty of Spoons', 'The Karmic Wheel of Doo Doo').

As part of Footprint's consultancy to The Pitch Film Competition Jackie has produced, alongside Luke Walton, the short films 'Derelict', 'Rahab', 'The Black Scholes Conspiracy', 'The Light', 'Pulsar', 'Only Child' (nominated for a BAFTA Cymru) and 'The Widow's Last'. Footprint Films have a number of feature films in development including 'Escape from Pretoria', 'Sumo Girls' and 'Chasing the Dragon'.



CHRISTOPHER GRAY

PRODUCER

Christopher has produced award-winning work seen at the cinema, on major television networks, at film festivals and online, including the BAFTA and VES nominated 'Black Mirror' (Netflix) and the forthcoming 'Look Away' (New Regency) starring Chloe Sevigny, Matthew Broderick and Aidan Turner.

After graduating from film school, Chris went on to work for Warner Bros Studios on the Harry Potter franchise, later going on to set up his own film production company Badland River, focused on developing a slate of feature film projects, including the epic mythological saga 'Age of Erin'.

His latest work includes commercials production for dozens of leading global brands including Sony, Fox, IMAX and Sky, alongside television work for Netflix and National Geographic. He continues to write and develop film and television projects alongside his commercials work.



KEY COLLABORATORS

ANDY CATARISARNO

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Cinematographer Andy Catarisarno derives his experience from a multidiscipline background in filmmaking. For the first ten years his initial focus was in developing a strong sense of narrative as an editor. This transitioned into occasional bouts in directing, primarily in documentary and music formats. Through this he remained an avid shooter, continuing to develop what he considered his first love, and in 2013 he transitioned entirely to cinematography.

His narrative core has lead to having a unique voice in his visual language and crafting emotionally charged images in support of story. Andy is based in New York City.

STEFFAN PERRY

COLOURIST

Steffan leads Framestore's Grading Department as Head of Color, and has been an integral member of the team since joining as a junior TK op in 1997.

Steffan is a constant fixture on Televisual's poll of the UK's Top Colorists, and has picked up numerous nominations for Best Colorist at the D&AD and Cannes Lions for brands such as Audi, Nike, Lynx, Sony and Stella Artois. His work on the ground-breaking commercial for Galaxy, featuring a CG Audrey Hepburn TM, won him multiple plaudits globally as well as an army of new fans.

LUKE ATENCIO

COMPOSER

Luke Atencio is a composer whose focus is creating an emotional understructure for audio / visual storytelling. Luke has provided original and licensed music for thousands of projects some of which include a Super Bowl spot, ads for Lexus, Reebok, Oakley, McLaren etc. and orchestral music for Susan Boyle etc.

In addition to commercial work Luke has a profound interest in creating music for art films and passion projects, which allow exploration in uncharted musical territory and discovering unique methods of storytelling.

ROS & JON HUBBARD

CASTING DIRECTORS

With almost forty years in the industry John & Ros Hubbard are highly respected casting directors, and have built strong relationships with actors, actresses, producers and directors worldwide over their glittering careers.

They are known for their work on 'The Hobbit', 'The Bourne Series', 'King Kong', 'Angela's Ashes' and most recently 'Dracula Untold'. They were recent recipients of the coveted Oscar Wilde Award: Honoring the Irish in Film in Los Angeles.

RICHARD ADDIS

SOUND DESIGNER

Rich graduated with an MSc in Professional Sound and Video Technology from Salford University in 2010 and spent a year with Dolby as a student before starting at halo as a runner in October 2011.

He's a talented and popular mixer/sound designer and also runs halo's Audio Operations department. Rich is an RTS winner and BAFTA nominee.



CAST



CHARLOTTE PETERS

KATHRYN HEALY

Charlotte Peters is an Irish actress who starred alongside Jean-Claude Van Damme in 'Pound of Flesh'. She was also in 'The 39 Steps', a National Theatre touring production in which four actors played dozens of roles. Playing over 130 shows in a six-month period, her performance was praised by the critics.

Set for release in summer 2017 is 'Interlude in Prague', in which Charlotte plays Mozart's wife, Constanze. When she's not on stage or set, she works on 'Charlotte's Compass', a fascinating series of films, images and writings in which she meets people from all walks of life and explores the human condition.

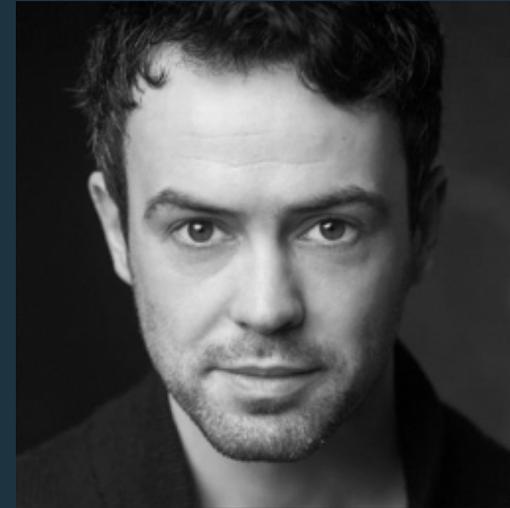


MATTHEW WOLF

EDMUND KINGSTON

Matthew Wolf's film credits include 'The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo', 'Pirates of the Caribbean 3', 'Mars Needs Moms', 'You Don't Mess With the Zohan', 'Skid Marks', and the Oscar short-listed French film 'La Premiere'.

On television, he plays recurring character Jeffrey Stuart on the popular show 'The Royals', and has recurred on 'Hart of Dixie', 'Eastenders', 'Grange Hill', 'Family Affairs', and made guest appearances on '24', 'Scandal', 'Major Crimes', 'Alive', and others. He has appeared in many London stage productions.



DAMIEN HADDON

SEAN O'CONNOR

Damien is an actor originally from the North of Ireland. He has appeared in a wide variety of theatre, film and television roles. Damien's most recent theatre credits include: 'A Clockwork Orange', the title role in 'The Unquiet Grave of Garcia Lorca', 'Plasticine & The Bacchae', 'La Dispute', 'Anatomy of a Seagull', 'Resistible Rise of Atruro Ui and Philadelphia' and 'Here I Come!'.

Previous Film & TV credits include 'A Belfast Story' (Jolt Me Features); 'Hollyoaks' (Channel 4); 'Marú' and 'Saor Sinn ó Olc' (Stirling/TG4); 'Agnes' (UTV); 'Facing the Truth' (BBC) and 'Autopsy: The Last Hours Of' (ITV).



SAM HARDY

MICHAEL HEALY

Sam Hardy started acting in October 2015 at the age of 8 on 'All the Time in the World'. In 2016 he filmed 'Groundless' and starred in a television commercial for Aldi and the IRFU. Later that year, he went on to do a number of radio and Internet commercials for the same brand. In 2017, Sam began work on his first feature film called 'Muse' with director Jaume Balaguero in Barcelona starring alongside Christopher Lloyd.

From February to March 2017 Sam worked again with Aldi and the IRFU on Irish television on an all children's punditry panel shown before the Irish RBS Six Nations rugby games.



CREDITS

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY
VANESSA PERDRIAU

PRODUCED BY
JACKIE SHEPPARD, LUKE WALTON
& CHRISTOPHER GRAY

CAST

KATHRYN CHARLOTTE PETERS
EDMUND MATTHEW WOLF
SEAN DAMIEN HASSON
MICHAEL SAM HARDY
MARY CAOIMHE O'SHEA

CREW

CINEMATOGRAPHY ANDY CATARISANO
1ST AD NOUR WAZZI
PRODUCTION DESIGNER FELICITY BOYLETT
CASTING ROS HUBBARD, CSA
JOHN HUBBARD, CSA
EDITORS ANDY TOOVEY
VANESSA PERDRIAU
MUSIC LUKE ATENCIO
SOUND RECORDIST TRIS VOCATURO
COSTUME DESIGNER ELLEN OAKLEY
HAIR & MAKE UP MICHAEL BROWNE
SCRIPT SUPERVISOR GRAHAM NEALE
CAFFER ANDREW 'TANK' RIVARA
SCRIPT CONSULTANTS LAURIE HUTZLER
DAVID BABOULENE
AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY 2V STUDIOS
ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY ANDY TOOVEY & JOE O'HARE
VFX PHOTOGRAPHY SYLVAIN DUMOND
FOCUS PULLER DAVID EAST
ASSISTANT CAMERA/DIT ANTHONY GIBBES
2ND AD GERTRUD GODDARD
CASTING ASSISTANT SOPHIE PEARSON

VISUAL EFFECTS BY FRAMESTORE

VFX PRODUCER CHRISTOPHER GRAY
VFX COORDINATOR TAYLOR KENNARD
VFX SUPERVISOR VANESSA DUQUESNAY
COMPOSITORS JACK FISHER
SHERRINE BYFIELD
MATTE PAINTER INGO PUTZE
VFX EDITOR LAWRENCE GLEW
COLOURIST STEFFAN PERRY
TITLE DESIGNER EMILE FREEMAN

SOUND POST PRODUCTION AT HALO POST

SOUND EDITOR AND MIXER RICHARD ADDIS
FOLEY RECORD & EDIT MAHONEY AUDIO POST
FOLEY ARTIST CLARE MAHONEY

ART DEPT. ASSISTANT & SPARK DAVID STONE
PRODUCERS ASSISTANT & DRIVER BARRY PIERCE
CHAPERONE AMY HARDY
HORSE WRANGLER SIMON MACDERMOTT
HORSE SUPPLIED BY WINFRIED BASTIAN
PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS BETH LANE
LYNWEN MORGAN

CATERING

IAN WHITWORTH
TRIS PERDRIAU
CHRIS JOHNSON
TERESA SMITH
DANIEL BENNETT
EOGHAN HAND
IAN KENNELLY
ESSEX INSURANCE

TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATORS

RUNNERS

INSURANCE

CAMERA & GRIPS SUPPLIED BY FAVA
LIGHTING SUPPLIED BY PIXIPIXEL
ADDITIONAL GRIPS SUPPLIED BY HALO

WITH THANKS TO

DONAL & MARGARET CORKERY AT
GLENINCHAQUIN PARK
CLARE HEARDMAN AT GLENGARIFF WOODS
NATURE RESERVE

JOHN O'CONNOR,
PETER WOOLSTENHOLMES, RITA MAHONEY

MICHAEL & MARJORIE CAVANAGH
EDEL DAHM, SUZANNE GRAY, STEVE TILL,
HEATHER COOMBS, JANET HAWKER
AT ALL ST PATRICK'S CHURCH OF IRELAND,
KENMARE
PAUL WATSON AT ELLEL MINISTRIES
PIERREPONT

PATRICK FOLEY, PAT HURLEY,
MARTIN EVANS, BRIAN NOLAN AT
KERRY ETB TRAINING CENTRE,
GIOVANNI GALANTI

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO

ANNE RUNECLES & PINEWOOD STUDIOS
DEBS PATERSON, LAURIE HUTZLER,
NEV PIERCE, LUCY SCHER, ALISON STERLING,
ANNA COX, MARK BLANEY

FINANCED BY

THE PITCH SHORT FILM COMPETITION
THE WIDOW'S LAST - WINNER 2016

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REPRESENTATION

PRESS

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