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# ENGAGE

CELEBRATING SEVEN YEARS OF EUROPEAN COLLABORATION FOR  
PRODUCERS, SCREENWRITERS AND WRITER/DIRECTORS 2008-2014

# 2014



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“  
 ENGAGE  
 exceeded my  
 expectations.  
 It was an  
 invaluable  
 experience.”

# A worldwide ENGAGEMENT

Another 20 producers, screenwriters and writer/directors completed the final ENGAGE programme in 2014. And as we reflect on the past seven years of ENGAGE we are delighted that we have helped to steer over 170 participants towards the next stage of their filmmaking careers.



*Jüri Sillart (1943-2011)*

Twenty-four European nationalities in total have been represented over the life of the programme, along with our Chinese and Canadian participants from ENGAGE Plus. And with some of our recent participants potentially co-producing their projects in countries as far flung as Australia, Hong Kong and Chile (to name but a few), we can be proud that one of ENGAGE's key achievements has been to establish a network with real opportunities for valuable international collaboration.

Professor Robin MacPherson, Screen Academy Scotland Director, looks back at the successes, achievements and milestones of seven years in his review of ENGAGE from 2008 to 2014 on pages 42-43; highlights from the 2014 workshops in each partner country are featured

on pages 6-9; and we focus on the projects developed throughout the most recent nine month programme on pages 12-41. Taking feedback from mentors, and revising, re-writing and successfully pitching at the final session is no small feat and the work put in by the 2014 participants to develop and strengthen their projects throughout the year was as impressive as always.

To encapsulate a sense of the ENGAGE network of filmmakers, and to find out what participants have achieved, we feature a selection of highlights from alumni across the seven years of ENGAGE on pages 44-57. We hope that this legacy, and the work that will continue to develop among this new generation of filmmakers, is also a fitting memorial to Jüri Sillart (1943-2011), one of the co-founders of ENGAGE.

# ENGAGE 2014

Bringing talented people together to learn, create and collaborate

A training and project development programme, ENGAGE was designed to foster international creative collaboration amongst emerging producers, screenwriters and writer/directors.

Since its inception in 2008, ENGAGE has brought together over 170 participants from more than 20 European countries to develop new fiction, documentary and animation based feature film and television projects. Through the ENGAGE workshop-based programme each year, those participants have benefited from the expertise of over 100 highly experienced and talented staff and industry practitioners to gain a better understanding of collaborative development and international co-production.

Four educational institutions have been involved in delivering the ENGAGE programme: Screen Academy Scotland (SAS) at Edinburgh Napier University, Scotland; National Film School at Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT), Ireland; Baltic Film and Media School (BFM) at Tallinn University, Estonia; and School of Art and Design at Aalto University, Helsinki, Finland.

# OUR ENGAGE PARTNERS

The Big Pitch Prize  
Winners & Panel



**Screen Academy Scotland (SAS) in Edinburgh, Scotland** is a Creative Skillset Film Academy. A collaboration between Edinburgh Napier University and Edinburgh College of Art, the Screen Academy is recognised by Creative Skillset as a UK centre of excellence, and by CILECT as an international centre of excellence, in film practice education. Established in 2005, it has helped over 400 filmmakers to make their mark on the page, set and screen. The Academy's postgraduate programmes offer specialist tuition and collaborative projects in screenwriting, producing, documentary and fiction directing, cinematography, sound and editing.

**National Film School at Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT), Ireland** is a centre of excellence for education and training in film, animation, broadcasting and digital media. Launched in 2003, it provides creative, technical and academic education of an international standard and is the only Irish full member of CILECT, the International Association of Film and Television Schools. IADT offers a broad range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses encompassing film and television production, animation, screenwriting, design for stage and screen, model making and broadcast production.

**Baltic Film and Media School (BFM) at Tallinn University, Estonia** is an international higher education provider at BA and MA levels. It offers hands-on university degree courses in Film Arts, Crossmedia Production and Audiovisual Media. With over 400 students from more than 20 countries worldwide, BFM is one of Europe's largest – and Northern Europe's only – English-language film and media school.

**School of Arts, Design and Architecture at Aalto University, Helsinki, Finland** has been a leader in art and design education for almost 140 years. Housing the Department of Film, Television and Scenography, it is an international postgraduate university with students from over 50 countries. The university offers Doctorate, Masters and Bachelor degrees in a wide range of disciplines including fine art, design, new media, art education, visual culture, film and television. The school is a pioneer in research and in developing interdisciplinary study programmes.

The thing that will stay with me from ENGAGE is the engagement, enthusiasm, excitement and passion shown by participants on the course. The relationships and collaborations across a mind-blowing range of nationalities and cultural backgrounds, the projects and – more importantly – the working relationships developed, are the real success of ENGAGE. Its legacy too. Watch this space.

*James Mavor, Programme Leader MA  
Screenwriting, Screen Academy Scotland*

For me, one of the highlights of ENGAGE was helping to prepare the participants to pitch their projects in the final workshop: calming fraught nerves, supporting the final collaborations, then beaming with pride when they presented those projects so well at The Big Pitch.

*Brian McGill, Screenwriting Lecturer at Örebro University,  
Sweden and ENGAGE Mentor*

# FOSTERING COLLABORATION, INCUBATING IDEAS

Highlights of  
the workshops  
attended by  
ENGAGE 2014  
participants



## Workshop 1 Dublin, Ireland

The National Film School at IADT  
5-day workshop (March/April 2014)

With the official welcome and dinner of the first workshop of 2014 taking place on the last Sunday of March, the first challenge was to successfully negotiate changes in daylight saving across Europe! Fortunately everyone was well prepared and arrived in time for the meet and greet in Dún Laoghaire.

The now famous 'speed-dating' event, always a popular icebreaker session, was followed by a screening of participants' previous work and an afternoon excursion to Ardmore and Ashford film studios for a behind-the-scenes look at some current production sets and facilities – great inspiration for both the workshop and the ENGAGE year ahead.

“ENGAGE was a fantastic opportunity to meet young film makers from all over Europe and exchange ideas and experience.”

## Key events

### Case study and screening

**Fiction Feature:** *Out of Here* (Ireland 2013)

**Presentation:** Donal Foreman – Writer/Director and ENGAGE 2008 participant

Donal is an alumnus of the Irish National Film School, the Berlinale Talent Campus and the first ENGAGE programme in 2008. In 2013 he completed his first feature film, *Out Of Here*, which went on to win several awards and achieve critical acclaim. Donal's experience of making his first low budget feature film provided both knowledge and inspiration to the participants; he offered candid and invaluable insight into his approach and techniques in relation to script, cast, getting the best from your actors, and maintaining focus and creative vision within an intense shooting schedule.

### Case study and screening

**Documentary Feature:** *The Pervert's Guide to Ideology* (Ireland/UK 2013)

**Presentation:** Katie Holly – Co-Producer

Katie Holly is Managing Director of Blinder Films, where she produces documentaries, scripted comedy, web-series, shorts and feature films. Previously, Katie was Head of Development and Production at Treasure Entertainment. She co-produced *The Pervert's Guide*, directed by Sophie Fiennes, with Jim Wilson and Martin Rosenbaum. The film premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival to widespread acclaim and has gone on to screen at other international festivals and to receive both cinema and VOD distribution. Katie discussed aspects of developing documentary concepts and the practicalities of shooting one central character over multiple locations. She also highlighted the importance of developing your network across the industry and revealed how good working relationships and successful projects often spring from shared interests and relationships which have been established over time.

## Workshop 2

### Edinburgh, Scotland

Screen Academy Scotland  
at Edinburgh Napier University  
4-day workshop (June 2014)

The second ENGAGE workshop in Edinburgh was extended from three to four days to encourage the participants to strengthen their collaborative partnerships with each other and to further develop their projects. After an intense but invaluable pitching training session, hosted again by Julian Friedmann, the participants travelled to nearby Jupiter Artland, the celebrated sculpture park on the outskirts of Edinburgh. The artwork and location proved inspiring and, with the sun shining, the tone was set for a great week of sessions and collaborations. Staff and industry experts provided individual project surgeries and consultations, and participants had additional opportunities to present their development plans and receive feedback. The second workshop was rounded off with the opening night screening of *Hyena* followed by the opening night party of the Edinburgh International Film Festival.

ENGAGE gave me the valuable experience of working closely with a director and screenwriter on the development of two very different kinds of feature length films, in an international setting. //

## Key Events

### Case study and screening

**Fiction Feature:** *For Those in Peril* (UK 2013)  
**Presentation:** Paul Wright – Writer/Director

Paul Wright studied at Glasgow's Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and at the National Film and Television School in London. His 2011 short film *Until the River Runs Red* won a BAFTA for best short film. *For Those in Peril* is his debut feature film and has won several awards including Scottish BAFTA awards for Best Film and Best Actor. Paul's powerful drama packed a punch at this screening and was followed by a Q&A session with the participants, hosted by Professor Robin MacPherson. Paul's experience, creative inspiration and approach to his material and work were both insightful and practical, providing great encouragement to participants to follow their own original passions in their filmmaking careers.

### International Distribution Seminar

**Presentation:** Philipp Hoffmann

Philipp Hoffmann is an International Sales, Distribution and VOD Consultant, offering strategic consultation and online exploitation advice to production companies and filmmakers across Europe.

Philipp shared some of his comprehensive knowledge of the Marketing, Sales and Distribution sector across the international market, giving participants an understanding of how to think about approaching a sales and marketing strategy for their feature films from the earliest stages of their projects. He also offered insight into what the various models of distribution, including newer online models, can offer producers and filmmakers.

## Workshop 3

### Helsinki, Finland and Tallinn, Estonia

School of Arts, Design and  
Architecture at Aalto University,  
Helsinki and Baltic Film and Media  
School at Tallinn University  
4-day workshop  
(September/October 2014)

The third workshop brought some mixed feelings as it got underway in Helsinki: anticipation and more than a little apprehension relating to the impending pitching session, along with a sense of occasion and some nostalgia at this being the final workshop of the seven years of the ENGAGE programme.

The focus in Helsinki was on the participants' projects with staff and industry experts providing feedback in preparation for the pitching panel. There was still some time for relaxation however, with the group visiting a restaurant on the picturesque and historical Suomenlinna Island, a short ferry ride from Helsinki. In Tallinn there was a panel presentation and discussion on funding and co-production opportunities across Europe, while the Irish Ambassador's reception in his residency in the heart of the old city provided an additional networking opportunity with industry and staff.

At the closing ENGAGE 2014 pitching forum, three projects were awarded prizes (see page 10). And when all the hard work was over, the final workshop of ENGAGE, in its current guise, ended with a top class meal, Estonian music and dancing!

## Key Events

### Helsinki: Project Surgeries

Alongside sessions with ENGAGE staff, these one-to-one sessions with industry experts enabled participants to receive both detailed feedback on their projects and practical advice ahead of the final pitching session. Each project benefited from a minimum of three sessions with a variety of producers, directors and writers from the Finnish and Estonian Film & TV industry (see detailed list of experts and mentors on page 60).

### Tallinn: The Big Pitch

The final pitching session was held in the BFM's film studio for this last year, setting an appropriate scene under the spotlight for the 15 project pitches. Each project included a combination of collaborating participants pitching to seven film commissioners and experts from across Europe. The work put into each project was evidenced by a great selection of entertaining and well-prepared pitches. Each project received constructive and positive feedback from the panel with all of the participants commended for their successful pitching and focus. (See full list of panellists and awards on page 10).





# PRIZES

ENGAGE was once again able to provide cash prizes to a selection of projects to assist with their further development. The final ENGAGE workshop concluded with The Big Pitch, when participants presented their projects to a panel of industry practitioners.

## The panel

### Anneli Ahven

Producer, Exitfilm, Estonia

### Jukka Asikainen

Writer and former Film Executive at Finnish Film Foundation

### Jan Erik Holst

Executive Editor, Norwegian Film Institute

### Kaarel Kuurmaa

Documentary and Development Consultant, Estonian Film Institute

### Ross McKenzie

Development Officer, Creative Scotland

### Bernd-Gunther Nahm

former Executive Director, Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein, Germany; Founder, First Motion

### Brendan McCarthy

Co-founder and Head of Development, Finance & Distribution, Fantastic Films, Ireland

## The prizes

Three projects were awarded cash prizes totalling €6,000. The Jüri Sillart prize was again awarded to the project with best visuals, in memory of our friend and colleague who passed away in 2011.

### €3,000 prize

#### Run Run

Feature – Drama/Fiction (Sweden)

**Gabriela Salazar** (Writer/Director, Sweden/Norway) See page 32

### €1,500 prizes

#### Candy Girls

Feature – Drama/Fiction (Germany/UK)

**Gerlind Becker** (Writer, Germany)

**Violetta Palak** (Producer, UK) See page 22

#### Addicted to Benedict

Feature – Drama/Fiction (Finland/UK/Italy)

**Saana Rântilä** (Writer, Finland)

**Gabriel Bagnaschi** (Director/Co-writer, Italy)

**Alexia Fernández Frasset** (Co-writer, UK)

See page 16

### Jüri Sillart prize 2014

#### The Snow Queen

Feature – Drama/Fiction/Animation

**Anastasia Lobkovski** (Writer/Director, Finland)

**Edina Csüllög** (Co-writer, Estonia) See page 38

# PARTICIPANTS & PROJECTS

## PRODUCERS

<b>Simon Doyle</b>	Ireland	<i>Delirium; Attack of the User Friendly Devices; Duty</i>
<b>Maria Kljukina</b>	Estonia	<i>Spotless</i> (during ENGAGE)
<b>Violetta Palak</b>	UK	<i>Candy Girls</i>
<b>Saana Rântilä</b>	Finland	<i>Addicted to Benedict</i>
<b>Liina Tiido</b>	Estonia	<i>Duty</i>

## SCREENWRITERS

<b>Ilona Ahti</b>	Finland	<i>Village of Women</i>
<b>Gabriel Bagnaschi</b>	Italy	<i>Tauros; Addicted to Benedict</i>
<b>Gerlind Becker</b>	Germany	<i>Candy Girls</i>
<b>Alexia Fernández Frasset</b>	UK/Spain	<i>Spotless; Addicted to Benedict; Duty</i>
<b>Anna Lappalainen</b>	Finland	<i>Village of Women</i>
<b>Lauri Lippmaa</b>	Estonia/UK	<i>Duty; Tauros</i>

## WRITER/DIRECTORS

<b>Fergal Costello</b>	Ireland	<i>Delirium; Tauros</i>
<b>Edina Csüllög</b>	Estonia	<i>Almost Blind; A Lovely Life; The Snow Queen</i>
<b>Anastasia Lobkovski</b>	Finland	<i>The Snow Queen</i>
<b>Urmás Nimetu</b>	Estonia	<i>Attack of the User Friendly Devices</i>
<b>Gabriela Salazar</b>	Sweden/Norway	<i>Run Run</i>
<b>Richard Scobie</b>	Ireland	<i>Plan Z</i>
<b>Andi Sinkovics</b>	Hungary	<i>A Lovely Life</i>
<b>Laura Sistero</b>	Spain	<i>Jeena</i>
<b>Katri A Vanhatalo</b>	UK/Finland	<i>A Knock on the Door</i>

# A KNOCK ON THE DOOR

## Writer/Director:

Katri A Vanhatalo

## Additional Collaborator:

Alan McLaughlin, DOP

## Synopsis

*A Knock On The Door* examines the life of Katri's uncle WESA, a recovering alcoholic and ex-Jehovah's Witness. His alcoholism breaks up his family and, following his renouncement of Jehovah he is exiled from the Watch Tower Society, becoming homeless and losing his family and friends.

Only now, at 69 years of age, is Wesa starting to find a balance in his life through art therapy and AA meetings. To rejoin the Society he will have to start to regain their trust. But if he is unsuccessful, he will remain alone.

## Status

Seeking development funding  
Seeking producer



## KATRI A VANHATALO

Writer/Director, UK/Finland

Katri's debut short as writer/director was *LOMA – A Family Holiday* (UK/Finland 2013). This stylised, humorous and mostly improvised fiction film has done well on the UK festival circuit. It features two families stuck in a double booked summer home and led Katri to think about stories in her own family. She started to record her uncle's life as an ex-Jehovah's Witness and found out, to her surprise, that he wanted to go back. Now she is developing the feature documentary as a writer/director.

As a producer and assistant director, Katri has worked on several short films in Europe. Most recently she produced a drama about a mafia boss in Sicily – *Mura* (UK/Italy, 2012) – which was screened at festivals around Europe. She is currently producing a feature documentary called *World With No Colours* which is due for completion by September 2015.

## Contact

[katri.a.vanhatalo@gmail.com](mailto:katri.a.vanhatalo@gmail.com)

ENGAGE introduced me to people at a similar stage in their filmmaking careers. It created not only partnerships for the duration of the programme but also lasting friendships. The support I received from peers and mentors has been invaluable to my project's development and in building my confidence to pursue it.

# A LOVELY LIFE

## Writer/Director:

Andi Sinkovics

## Co-Producer:

Edina Csüllög

## Synopsis

*A Lovely Life* is a romantic mystery set in a dystopian world under an oppressive dictatorship. An extremely shy young photographer and a quirky, happy-go-lucky girl embark on an

adventurous quest to solve the mystery of the girl's missing godfather, yet end up finding self-appreciation and the courage to open their hearts to each other.

## Status

2nd draft of treatment in development  
Seeking lead writer  
Seeking development funding

Seeking co-production partner in the UK or the US



## ANDI SINKOVICS

Writer/Director, Hungary

A Hungarian filmmaker born in Serbia, Andi attended the University of East London's (UEL) Media, Film and Culture Studies course and received an honours degree in Media and Creative Industries. She went on to work in the film industry as a producer's assistant and later as Head of Development at Ant Media Production Company. On her first film project at Ant, *What the Mind Forgets*, she was an Associate Producer. In 2010, Andi joined The London Film School (LFS) where she directed three fiction short films, one of which – *Kyoto Rain* – was screened at Palm Beach and Arizona Film Festivals in 2013.

In November 2014 Andi completed her thesis film at LFS, *A Lovely Life*, and she is currently developing her next short film, *Lost & Found*, as well as the feature film based on her graduation short.

## Contact:

andi@sinkovics.eu



ENGAGE offered a framework and support system for writing my very first feature film project. The people I met on the programme, both staff and participants, inspired me – and the deadlines motivated me!



## EDINA CSÜLLÖG

Co-Producer, Estonia

See *Almost Blind* (page 18/19)

# ADDICTED TO BENEDICT

## Writer/Producer:

Saana Rântilä

## Co-writer:

Alexia Fernández Frasquet

## Director/Co-writer:

Gabriel Bagnaschi



## Synopsis

*Addicted to Benedict* is a full-length drama/comedy that follows the adventures of four retired Finnish people who become Pope groupies. Super-healthy and Mr Always Right, PAAVO (70), has always dreamed of meeting the Pope. Now, in his old

age, the closeted Paavo realises that he might die without ever meeting his idol. He drags his chubby best friend OLKKU (70) and Olkku's ubiquitous red mobility scooter, plus both of their wives, on an incredible voyage across Europe to see the Pope.

## Status

Treatment

1st draft script available summer 2015

Demo being produced 2015-2016

Seeking co-production partners



## SAANA RÄNTILÄ

Writer/Producer, Finland

Saana is a Finnish producer/screenwriter and the co-owner of production company Empire Pictures. She is currently in the development stage of an historical TV series about Catherine Jagiellon as well as her feature film, *Addicted to Benedict*. A love of writing got Saana into the film business while the 'mind of a master planner' got her into producing. The stories that thrill her are the ones that other people say are crazy, but Saana's mantra is 'the bolder the better'! Saana has also worked in production in Switzerland and Cuba, producing the multiple award-winning short film *Oslo*, as well as programmes for Cuban TV.

ENGAGE is a good platform from which to reach to the industry and a great opportunity to develop a project from idea to a script!



## ALEXIA FERNÁNDEZ FRASQUET

Co-writer, UK/Spain

See *Spotless* (page 34/35)



## GABRIEL BAGNASCHI

Director, Italy

See *Taurus* (page 36/37)

# ALMOST BLIND

## Writer/Director:

Edina Csüllög

## Additional Collaborator:

Anfi Naulainen, Co-writer

## Synopsis

ANGELA (50) is an almost blind, no longer young, erotic dancer and animal rights activist. She cannot fall in love, she cannot stand boredom and she cannot make a commitment to anybody. One day she is

imprisoned while protesting against the factory farming of chickens. In prison she meets ARTHUR, a young inventor. Although they dislike each other intensely, they decide to escape from prison together.

## Status

Treatment  
In development



## EDINA CSÜLLÖG

Writer/Director, Estonia

Edina graduated from Baltic Film and Media School as a film director in 2013 and has participated in different script development workshops including ENGAGE, Four Corners and POWR Pitch at PÖFF. She is currently working on a short film, *The Butterfly Man*, which was supported by the Estonian Film Institute and won the Baltic Short Pitch competition.

Edina has directed several short films that have been shown in many film festivals, with two of them winning awards. She is also working as producer on a full-length documentary film set in Estonia and, at the same time, organising the Finno-Ugric film festival FUFF, of which she is a co-founder ([www.fuff.ee](http://www.fuff.ee)).

## Contact:

[sara.kisari@gmail.com](mailto:sara.kisari@gmail.com);  
[www.fuff.ee](http://www.fuff.ee); [www.plankfilm.ee](http://www.plankfilm.ee)

“The whole process made me understand better what I want, and what the film wants from me. I learned how to develop other people’s material and how to pitch ideas in an effective manner.”

# ATTACK OF THE USER FRIENDLY DEVICES

## Writer/Director:

Urmás Nimetu

## Producer:

Simon Doyle

## Synopsis

This is an absurd action comedy about IT-geek TOOMAS BERGMANN who has to stop the attack of household appliances. He joins heavily armed NATO soldiers in a top secret NATO base, where he is sent to investigate

suspicious files captured from a probable Russian spy. Toomas accidentally releases a computer virus that traps people in the NATO base and turns all electronic devices into bloodthirsty killing machines.

## Status

Writing the first draft script  
Seeking co-producer



## URMAS NIMETU

Writer/Director, Estonia

An Estonian writer and filmmaker, Urmás is internationally recognised for sharp, short and frisky films including *Snatcher of Old Men* (2005), *No Fishing* (2009) and *The Butterfly Man* (2015). In all of these stories he mixes elements from folk tales with elements from the contemporary world to shift the story to a more metaphorical level. As a director, Urmás likes to work with visual effects – in a couple of shorts he has faced live actors with characters generated by CGI and, more recently, stopmotion.

## Contact:

urmas@plankfilm.ee

ENGAGE started by destroying my brilliant idea and ended by putting it into a shape that looks brilliant not only for me but others as well. I feel very thankful for that – for all the tutors, staff, and of course, the co-participants. At the end of the day the participants were the most important part of the experience: ENGAGE gave the time and space to get to know other emerging filmmakers – and to seek out the ones I hope to work with in the near future.



## SIMON DOYLE

Producer, Ireland

See *Delirium* (page 24/25)

# CANDY GIRLS

## Writer:

Gerlind Becker

## Producer:

Violetta Palak



## Synopsis

After 30 years of silence, dutiful wife and grandmother IRENE teams up again with her self-centred, free-spirited former musical partner RITA to re-launch their jazz duo 'Candy Girls'. Rita finally forgives Irene for encouraging her to have an abortion and then

starting a family herself while Rita stayed childless. Their friendship blossoms again on a musical tour that culminates in a music festival in Scotland where they finally gain the recognition they've always longed for.

## Status

Treatment

Seeking development funding

Seeking German Production Company



## GERLIND BECKER

Writer, Germany

Gerlind graduated from London College of Music & Media with a BA Hons in Media Arts & Video Production in 2003 and from Bournemouth University, UK, with an MA in Screenwriting in 2012. She attended MEDIA's script development programme, Four Corners, in 2011 and received funding for the production of a teaser. In 2014, Gerlind received a scholarship from MFG Filmförderung (German film funding organisation) to attend a screenwriting workshop in Freiburg, Germany; she participated in a funded screenwriting retreat in Kitzbühel, Austria; and she completed a further training course in script editing at Skript Akademie Drehbuch in Berlin.

### Contact:

gerlindbecker@hotmail.com



## VIOLETTA PALAK

Producer, UK

Violetta is CEO of Flyboy Creative, having joined the company in 2012, and has comprehensive experience of producing corporate and music videos as well as short films. She received a BA in English Philology from Jagiellonian University in 2004 and an MA in Culture and Creative Enterprise from Queen Margaret University in 2014. Violetta has a professional background in creative areas including photography, music and fashion and continues to increase her skills in film production by attending numerous workshops by BECTU, BBC and ENGAGE.

# DELIRIUM

## Writer/Director:

Fergal Costello

## Producer:

Simon Doyle

## Additional Collaborator:

Brendan McCarthy, Fantastic Films,  
Executive Producer

## Synopsis

Following a horrific car accident in which their son lost his life, TINA and her boyfriend RICHARD retreat to a house in the country. JOHN, their new neighbour, invites them

over for dinner but what they don't know is that John is a psychopath who has poisoned their food with hallucinogenic drugs. Tina and Richard have been set up for one very wild night.

## Status

Treatment

In development

Aiming to shoot in 2016



## FERGAL COSTELLO

Writer/Director, Ireland

Fergal has just graduated from The National Film School at IADT with First Class Honours. Specialising in Directing and Editing, he has made three short films, each of them receiving festival screenings and featuring on the hugely influential website: *Ain't It Cool News*. He is currently acting as Assistant Producer on RTE's flagship comedy show, *Republic of Telly*, writing and directing comedy sketches and is also in pre-production for his next short film as well as development for *Delirium*.

ENGAGE was a terrific exercise in the importance of collaboration and the process was invaluable in developing my storytelling skills. I have developed lasting friendships as well as professional colleagues and my project has come on leaps and bounds thanks to ENGAGE – from a mere paragraph of an idea to a full treatment with a complete sizzle reel.



## SIMON DOYLE

Producer, Ireland

Simon is a film producer based in Dublin who studied TV & Film production at the National Film School. He set up his own production company, Fail Safe Films, in 2011, after graduating. Since then he has produced numerous short films and is always looking to meet new writers and directors in the hope of developing their scripts.

# DUTY

## Writer/Director:

Lauri Lippmaa

## Producers:

Simon Doyle  
Liina Tiido

## Story Editor:

Alexia Fernández Frasquet

## Synopsis

A rebel college dropout, CHRIS (25), is forced to work in a nursing home where his duty is to care for the blind, deaf and mute WILLIAM STERLING. William's mind is stuck in the day, half a century ago, when a tragedy on board a Soviet submarine confined the then 25-

year old secret agent to a physical and emotional prison. Now, 50 years later, Chris discovers that Morse Code is the way to communicate with William. Will Chris be able to break Mr Sterling's psychological and tragic state in order to learn how to knock down his own prison walls?

## Status

Revised treatment  
Seeking production funding/partners



## LAURI LIPPMAA

Writer/Director, UK/Estonia

Lauri is an Estonian screenwriter with a Masters in Screenwriting from the Creative Skillset accredited Screen Academy Scotland. Currently he leads a life between two cities, London and Tallinn, and is developing several television drama series projects in Estonia plus some film and shorts projects in active development for 2015.

**Contact:**  
lippmaa@gmail.com



## SIMON DOYLE

Producer, Ireland

See *Delirium* (page 24/25)



## LIINA TIIDO

Producer, Estonia

Liina graduated from the Baltic Film and Media School in Tallinn in 2013, where she studied Film Production. During her studies she became interested in assistant directing and since 2012 has worked on several short films, TV series and commercials both as a first and second AD.



## ALEXIA FERNÁNDEZ FRASQUET

Story Editor, UK/Spain

See *Spotless* (page 34/35)

# JEENA

## Writer/Director:

Laura Sisteró

## Synopsis

One day, the lonely life of microbiologist MARY (40) is interrupted by a series of strange and intriguing email messages which appear to be hoaxes. Mary begins to investigate and finally finds a website where

she discovers that she is famous through viral videos of the hoaxes. This parallel virtual world in which she is named JEENA threatens her integrity and, ultimately, may endanger her life.



## LAURA SISTERÓ

Writer, Spain

Laura gained her Filmmaker degree from ESCAC Film School, Barcelona, in 2012. She has directed several short films and documentaries including *El Desayuno* (notodofilmfest award winner 2011) and *La Finestra* (Jury Prize at Festival Julius 2011). She has also directed several music videos. For two years she worked at production company Petra Garmon SL as an advertising director and director's assistant. She is currently working freelance as a visual filmmaker and advertising director for clients including Movistar, Fundació La Caixa and Adidas.



The whole ENGAGE programme has been extremely useful both personally and professionally. Working with fellow participants, tutors and professional guests has provided me with the intense feedback needed to shape my projects and has helped me to learn how and when to take feedback from numerous sources.



## Status

In development

# PLAN Z

## Writer:

Richard Scobie

## Producer:

Edwina Forkin, Zanzibar Films

## Additional Collaborators:

Stephen St Leger &  
James Mather, Directors

## Synopsis

When a trawler's nets become caught on something ominous at the bottom of the ocean, it

sets in motion a series of events which will potentially put the entire crew, if not the world, in danger.

## Status

Since *Plan Z* was first introduced to ENGAGE, highly regarded directing duo Stephen St Leger and James Mather have signed on to direct the film.

The screenplay is now with Zanzibar Films in Ireland who are working with a prominent Australian film company to co-produce *Plan Z*.



## RICHARD SCOBIE

Writer, Ireland

Richard holds a First Class Honours MA in Screenwriting from the National Film School of Ireland, winning the prestigious Thesis Award for Academic Excellence in Writing from the Writers' Guild of Ireland 2014. He began his filmmaking career writing music for films including Ben Stiller's *The Suburbans* and Rodney Dangerfield's *The Godson*, as well as Richard Dreyfuss' TV show *The Education of Max Bickford* before turning to producing, directing and writing.

One of Richard's screenplays, *66 Degrees North*, was a top ten finalist of the Nicholl Fellowship in Screenwriting and one of the 2010 winners at the Producers Guild of America CoProShow. Scobie wrote, produced and directed the acclaimed short film *Afhjúpunin (Blindsided)* which was screened at the Reykjavik International Film Festival in 2012 to rave reviews. He also directed *Deadbook*, which won the prestigious Van Gogh Award for Best Drama in 2014 at the Amsterdam Film Festival. His latest project, a feature film called *The Boneyard Boys*, is slated to begin production in 2015.

## Contact:

info@arcticmonkeyproductions.com

Participating in the ENGAGE programme was a great way to connect with other emerging talent within the European film community, to find out what others are working on and to forge current and future working relationships based on those ideas. ENGAGE was an important link between burgeoning filmmakers for future co-productions who may not have had the opportunity or means to come together otherwise.

# RUN RUN

## Writer/Director:

Gabriela Salazar



## Synopsis

*Run Run* is a road movie without a car, beginning in Sweden and travelling throughout Chile, in which we meet AMÉRICA, a woman in her late twenties, of Chilean birth but raised in Sweden. She is unable to move on with her life following the death of

her boyfriend. When she discovers his running shoes, she remembers the dream that he had – to run from the north to the south of Chile. With 4,200km ahead of her and an address for the father she hasn't spoken to in 17 years, América starts her journey.



## GABRIELA SALAZAR

Writer/Director,  
Sweden/Norway

Born in Argentina, made conscious in Chile, raised in Sweden and currently living in Norway, Gabriela studied Film Production at the University for the Arts, Sciences and Communication (UNIACC) in Santiago, Chile. She works as a freelance screenwriter/director at Look Akira Films based in Norway (a production company that Gabriela established to bring life to the stories that 'get stuck in her curly hair'). At the moment Gabriela is working on the script of her feature film *Run Run* and is also seeking funding for her short film, *The Soapbox Race*, together with Swedish award winning director/screenwriter Cattie Edfeldt.



ENGAGE gave me the chance to bond with other filmmakers and reopen my eyes with fresh ideas that expand my creativity. I found renewed confidence in my project and new market places to explore. And I learned how to work with feedback.



## Status

Treatment  
Research trip to Chile planned

Making contact with potential producers, cast and crew

# SPOTLESS

## Writer:

Alexia Fernández Frasquet

## Producer:

Maria Kljukina (during ENGAGE)

## Synopsis

Twenty-something best friends, LAURA and ANDREA, immigrate to the UK from Spain in a desperate attempt to navigate Europe's recession, only to end up working as crime scene cleaners for

the mob. As they venture deeper into an untraceable world of crime, they see their dreams and hopes finally within reach. Their friendship, however, dilutes after every unspeakable scene they scrub away.

## Status

3rd draft script  
Series bible  
In development



## ALEXIA FERNÁNDEZ FRASQUET

Writer, UK/Spain

Born in Valencia, Alexia attended the ESCAC (Escola Superior de Cinema i Audiovisuals de Catalunya), where she majored in film directing. After working as a runner and production designer for a couple years in Canada and London, she moved to Scotland and studied for an MA in Screenwriting. At the moment she is co-writing two feature films, one of them fostered through an ENGAGE collaboration, and show-running and co-producing a web series that she aims to premiere later this year. Alexia's 'one true love' is TV development and she is honing her storytelling skills in order to be part of a writers' room one day.

ENGAGE provided us with a safe, yet very practical working space. Having to meet deadlines, as you would in a professional context, gave me the necessary motivation to push myself to deliver a project to the best of my abilities. Also, pitching in front of a panel of professionals in the sector was a very valuable practical experience.



## MARIA KLJUKINA

Producer (during ENGAGE), Estonia

Maria graduated with a BA in Film Production from Baltic Film and Media School (Tallinn, Estonia) in June 2014. During her studies she took part in the production of a variety of different projects – short and feature films, corporate videos, music videos, stand-up comedy, DVD production, TV commercials, cinema trailers for Black Night Film Festival, live TV shows, promotional campaigns and film premieres. She is currently working as first AD on two different TV-series premiering on TV3, the most viewed TV channel in Estonia.

# TAUROS

## Writer/Producer

Gabriel Bagnaschi

## Co-writer:

Lauri Lippmaa

## Director:

Fergal Costello

## Synopsis

*Taurus* is a low budget survival thriller set on cargo ship that's run adrift. Despite insufficient provisions and no opportunity to raise help, a young sailor goes against his own crew in order to save a group of castaway illegal migrants. Brutality

takes over when the captain puts the newcomers under a cruel prison system and the ship's hands begin to abuse them. This situation drives the young sailor to lead a climactic mutiny, while struggling with the fact that his own father is on the opposing side.

## Status

Treatment available

Seeking development funding

Seeking co-production partner



## GABRIEL BAGNASCHI

Writer/Producer, Italy

Gabriel Bagnaschi is a Milan based screenwriter and producer. In 2013 he graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Film and Television Production at FM, the Film and Television School of Milan. His minor studies include directing actors and writing at the School of Dramatic Arts, Paolo Grassi, Milan. Gabriel also attended three years of acting labs with the Prova Theatre Company of Bergamo. After an internship at Rai, the national Italian television network, he now mainly works as an assistant director and in the production arena. Gabriel is in the process of completing the development phase of *Taurus*, including production of a demo reel with the director, to communicate the vision of the film to potential investors.

### Contact:

[gabriel\\_bagnaschi@live.it](mailto:gabriel_bagnaschi@live.it)



## LAURI LIPPMAA

Co-writer, Estonia

See *Duty* (page 26/27)



## FERGAL COSTELLO

Director, Ireland

See *Delirium* (page 24/25)

# THE SNOW QUEEN

## Writer/Director:

Anastasia Lobkovski

## Co-writer:

Edina Csüllög



## Synopsis

Winter is delayed because THE SNOW QUEEN can't freeze the ocean. She tries to hide the fact that she has lost her powers because her enemy, DUSTY O, has broken her magic mirror and its pieces are scattered around the world. A young boy, KAY, gets a piece of mirror stuck in his eye and from that day on is changed. Kay abandons his home and his best friend GERDA and follows The Snow Queen to her perfect Ice Kingdom. Gerda

sees The Snow Queen presenting her new beautiful son on TV. But Kay looks pale and exhausted so Gerda decides to go on a dangerous journey to save her best friend and bring him home. Meanwhile, The Snow Queen is fighting Dusty O who is trying to destroy her lands but she can't beat him alone. Gerda, Kay and The Snow Queen must unite their powers, otherwise the world will drown.

## Status

3rd draft treatment  
Seeking producers



## ANASTASIA LOBKOVSKI

Writer, Finland

Anastasia Lobkovski is a filmmaker and visual artist. She graduated in 2013 as MFA, from the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts, department of Time and Space, majoring in moving image. Her films, photos and paintings have been shown at art exhibitions in Finland. Previously Lobkovski did her BA degree at Tampere University School of Art and Media, majoring in directing and screenwriting. She is currently finishing her studies (Masters degree in screenwriting) at Helsinki Film School. Anastasia's short films have been broadcast on national television in Finland (YLE TEEMA, YLE TV1) and screened widely at film festivals in Scandinavia, Europe, USA, Russia and Asia. Her latest short film *The Boy Who Was Afraid of Nothing* was selected as the only Scandinavian short film for the official competition of Camerimage 2013 (Poland).

## Contact:

[anastasialobkovski@gmail.com](mailto:anastasialobkovski@gmail.com);  
[www.anastasialobkovski.com](http://www.anastasialobkovski.com)



The best thing for me was getting to know other filmmakers around Europe, with whom I want to work now and in the future. One thing that surprised me – pitching is actually not so scary at all! And working on your pitch can help develop and clarify your film idea.



## EDINA CSÜLLÖG

Co-writer, Estonia

See *Almost Blind* (page 18/19)

# VILLAGE OF WOMEN

## Writers:

Iona Ahti & Anna Lappalainen

## Synopsis

Finland, 1944. A distant village near the eastern border faces a series of violent attacks. The last few men have been conscripted into the army and the women have to deal with this criminal activity on

their own. A young war widow TIINA (22) takes the lead and goes into the woods to find the beast behind the attacks. As her search advances, the villagers' hidden demons start to resurface.

## Status

Treatment, final draft  
Seeking producer



## ILONA AHTI

Writer, Finland

Ilona is working on her Masters degree in screenwriting at Aalto University, Helsinki. She has written and directed several short films and is currently writing three feature scripts. She has also written a short film called *Verna* (2010) and directed two documentary short films – *Malaika* (2014) is about Tanzanian girls who come to Finland for a football tournament while *Radio Valo* (2014) is about two radio journalists who travel to Tanzania to interview local people with disabilities. *Radio Valo* was shown on YLE, the Finnish Broadcasting Company.

Two of Ilona's feature film scripts – *Elossa* (Alive) and *Maitotyttö* (The Milk Maid) – have been written in cooperation with the Finnish Film Fund.

ENGAGE was a mini tour of Europe. Four different cities, four different vibes, all shared with an amazing group of filmmakers. If I could, I would do it all over again.



## ANNA LAPPALAINEN

Writer, Finland

Anna is a Finnish screenwriter and producer who has recently established her own production company, Lumo Films Ltd. She is 'super excited' to be involved in creating new, fresh worlds on screen! Through her work, Anna wants to build a new Finnish filmmaking culture and bring her country's own unique stories to life.

She has just finished shooting her first short film, *The Inspection* and is also writing a television series for the Finnish Broadcasting Company as well as working with Ilona Ahti on *Village of Women*.

**Contact:** [anna.lappalainen@lumofilms.com](mailto:anna.lappalainen@lumofilms.com)

# GROWING A NEW GENERATION OF EUROPEAN FILMMAKERS

Professor Robin MacPherson,  
Director of Screen Academy Scotland,  
looks back over seven successful  
years of ENGAGE, 2008 – 2014



It doesn't really seem that long ago that Donald Taylor Black, Jüri Sillart and I first discussed the idea of a Scottish/Irish/Estonian

film-school talent programme, one evening during the 2006 CILECT international film schools conference in Madrid. The influence of Jerez and Rioja may have had something to do with it but we rapidly convinced ourselves that it was an excellent idea.

Back in our respective countries, the idea refused to go away so, in 2007, we resolved to approach the MEDIA Initial Training Programme for support. The first paragraph of the draft proposal described ENGAGE (European Network Growing A Generation of screen Entrepreneurs.) as:

*"A transnational collaboration between national film schools in Scotland, Ireland and Estonia which aims to grow a new generation of European filmmakers with the knowledge, skills and understanding required to work collaboratively across national cultures and industries."*

And that's exactly what we've been doing for the past seven years, with Finland expanding the group to four partners in 2009.

The initial format of ENGAGE was quite simple – three workshops in each of the three countries over a six month period augmented by online collaboration. We began the first year, 2008, in Dublin in April, had the second workshop in Tallinn in May and the final workshop in Edinburgh in September. However in the second year the addition of Aalto in Helsinki posed a challenge – add a fourth workshop, reduce the number of days at each and increase travel costs, or have one partner not play host. The short ferry crossing between Helsinki and Tallinn provided a perfect creative solution. We moved the Edinburgh workshop to June (to dovetail with the Edinburgh International Film

Festival) and hosted the longer September workshop in Tallin and Helsinki – two days in each venue linked by the now legendary evening cruise.

ENGAGE has relied from the start on the enthusiasm, expertise and commitment of all four film schools' highly experienced staff. Staff and participants alike benefited greatly from the diverse talents of myriad visiting experts from across Europe. Some, like the UK's Julian Friedman with his famously demanding pitching training workshop, have returned every year. Other regulars include Ireland's Brendan McCarthy and Andrew Meehan, Estonia's Tina Lökk, Piret Tibbo-Hudgins and Peeter Urbla, Scotland's Eddie Dick and Leslie Hills, Norway's Jan Erik Holst, and Germany's Bernd Gunther-Nahm and Charlotte Appelgren. But there are, of course, many, many more, too numerous to name check here, but to whom we are enormously grateful for helping to guide and mentor our annual crop of participants.

The support – financial and otherwise – of the national film funds of each of the four partner countries has been invaluable, initially in making it possible for us to award the ENGAGE prizes and, for the past three years, contributing to the core funding of the programme. To them and the dedicated professionals who represent them, we offer our gratitude. Similarly we thank all the 'behind the scenes' staff at Aalto, BFM, IADT and Screen Academy Scotland who have helped the workshops to run so smoothly. We'd like to say a big thank you to all the venues as well as the MEDIA Antennae in each country and the other organisations that have played a part in the workshops in Dublin, Edinburgh, Helsinki and Tallinn. Finally, we extend a very special thanks to the Irish Embassy in Tallinn and the City of Edinburgh Council for their consistently warm welcomes over the years.

Like any production, ENGAGE has relied heavily on some very dedicated and talented individuals who have coordinated everything from the

selection process and the schedule to the logistics of getting dozens of people from one part of Europe to another on time and on budget. (Not to mention soothing the brows of both participants and speakers when, for whatever reason, things have got the better of them.) A very special word of thanks must go to Tamara von Strijthem, our first overall ENGAGE Project Manager from 2007-13, who regularly went well beyond the call of duty to ensure everyone had the best possible ENGAGE experience. Ciara Barry provided maternity cover in 2011 and Tamara was succeeded by Elaine McElroy in 2013 who very skillfully saw ENGAGE through to the end. To all of them, a personal thanks from me, for making my job as Director so much easier.

In Dublin, country director Donald Taylor Black was ably supported in hosting the opening workshop of each ENGAGE by the characteristically cheerful Sadhbh Goodhew and then Sarah Gunn (herself a former participant). In Estonia, Edith Sepp initially acted as coordinator and, after the untimely death of our dear friend and colleague Jüri Sillart in 2011, she took over as country director, supported by Malle Whitcombe. Helsinki's country directors, Jukka Vieno, then Mika Ritalahti and finally Jarmo Lampela, all relied on their unflappable country coordinator, Ilona Virtanen.

So after seven editions it's finally time to say goodbye to ENGAGE but I have no doubt you will be seeing and hearing a lot more from the 170 or so participants in whom we put our faith and who put their own faith in ENGAGE and each other to help them connect and grow as screen practitioners and as human beings.

*"Only connect! That was the whole of her sermon. Only connect the prose and the passion, and both will be exalted, and human love will be seen at its height."*

From E.M. Forster (1910) *Howard's End*

# SHARED PASSIONS, DIVERSE CAREERS

Many ENGAGE alumni have gone on to pursue diverse careers across the film and television industry, building on their experiences before, during and after ENGAGE.

Some have seen their award winning short films screened around the world, others have won critical acclaim for their feature films; some have established their own production companies, and many continue to work and keep in contact with their ENGAGE network. Here is a snapshot of some past participants' current successes and their thoughts about the ENGAGE programme.



## ANNALISA SCHMUCKLI

Writer/Producer

Finland  
ENGAGE 2012

After winning at the ENGAGE pitching contest in 2012 with her project *Catherine*, and subsequently receiving script writing support from the Finnish Film Foundation in 2013, the project has now been granted substantial further development support from the Finnish Film Foundation. *Catherine* is being developed at Empire Pictures, a production company Annalisa founded in 2014 together with 2014 ENGAGE participant Saana Rantilä. They have previously produced a demo-trailer for *Catherine*, in association with Aalto University, and are currently preparing for participation at several financing events and forums, including MIPTV in Cannes in April.

“ENGAGE helped to push my project forward in its very early stage and also helped me to find great developing partners. ENGAGE was a very special experience for me and contributed greatly to my project’s success as well as my own career development. It was certainly the right kind of programme at the right time for me!”



## ANNE MILNE

### Documentary Director

UK

ENGAGE 2010

Since ENGAGE Anne has been busy with a number of commissions, several of which have been selected for international festivals, including IDFA, Imagine Science Film Festival and A Nous de Voir. In addition to directing, Anne is also producing and has lately been working with the Scottish Documentary Institute (SDI) on their short documentary series, *Bridging the Gap*. She has given masterclasses at Edinburgh Napier University and Gray's School of Art, and has taught documentary at Edinburgh College of Art. In addition she has taught documentary courses in collaboration with SDI and the British Council in Libya and Pakistan. She is currently doing an Artist Residency at the Centre for Immunity, Infection and Evolution, in collaboration with ASCUS, and will exhibit in Summerhall during the Edinburgh Science Festival 2015.

“The ENGAGE programme offered a bridge between student filmmaking and a professional career. With masterclasses and meetings with industry leaders, it helped me to put my work in a new perspective and to know what to expect when pitching my ideas in the future.”



## BASIL KHALIL

### Producer

UK/Palestine

ENGAGE 2008

Basil Khalil graduated from Screen Academy Scotland in 2006 with an MA in Screen Project Development. He moved to London to work freelance in TV after ENGAGE 2008 while developing his screenplay *A Gaza Weekend*, a comedy set in Gaza. The script was optioned by a German production company and received MEDIA slate development funding as well as development funding from the Doha Film Institute in 2012.

Basil's most recent short film, *Ave Maria*, has been selected from 4,550 submissions to reach the final nine in the 2015 Cannes Film Festival Short Films Competition. He now lives in Madrid where he is focusing on developing a new feature film.



“ENGAGE helped me connect with some really promising filmmakers from around Europe, with whom I am still in touch, and we have helped each other along the way. One of the most notable things I got from the ENGAGE workshops were pitching skills from Julian Friedmann's class, which have helped me a lot.”

## DAVID TYNAN

### Writer/Director

Ireland

ENGAGE 2009

“It's not hard to be a film student. It's hard to be a former film student when you're out of film school and nobody wants to know who you are. That's the measure of whether you can make it in film or not: can you stick out those years and get better when it feels like there's no incentive to get better? ENGAGE was a help for me at that point, in the first year after I left IADT. ENGAGE gave me

deadlines for almost a year when I didn't have any deadlines. And working to those deadlines made me a better writer. I won a prize at the end of the workshops, which also helped. It was the first money I'd made from writing. I still think that is the most difficult part of a career, where you need to be both encouraged and taken seriously. At that stage, ENGAGE was crucial for me.”

## DONAL FOREMAN

### Writer/Director

Ireland/US

ENGAGE 2008

Donal has been making films since he was 11. An alumnus of the Irish National Film School, the Berlinale Talent Campus, and of the first ENGAGE programme in 2008, Donal also won the title of Ireland's Young Filmmaker of the Year at the Fresh Film Festival in 2003. Since then his short films have screened all over the world, from the Cork Film Festival to the Irish Film Institute, from China to Chile, and from Argentina to Alaska. In 2013, he completed his first feature film, *Out Of Here*, which won the Dublin Film Critics Circle's Discovery Award and the CineTalent Award at the Dublin International Film Festival, and went on to a critically acclaimed theatrical release in Ireland. Since 2011 Donal has lived in New York City, where he has worked as a teacher for the Tribeca Film Institute and as a film critic for the *Brooklyn Rail* among other publications.



*Out Of Here* is an atmospheric and authentic vision of contemporary Dublin and Irish youth that *The Irish Times* has described as 'profound, humorous and touching' with 'plenty to say about the state of the nation, masculinity and identity'. Written and directed by Donal, the film premiered at the Galway Film Fleadh in 2013, coming second in the Best First Irish Feature category. It also played at the Jameson Dublin International Film Festival in February 2014 to a packed audience and was one of the *The Irish Times* '10 must-sees' of the festival.

## Some recent reviews of *Out of Here*

"A picture-perfect framing of a time and place... Pay attention. This is what can happen when a talented young director is allowed to make the film he really wants to make. One of a kind. What a debut."

Donald Clarke, *The Irish Times*

"It is refreshing to watch an Irish film that doesn't attempt to cram a square genre into a round hole, but instead forges a new direction in narrative and form... *Out of Here* is the closest our national cinema has come to expressing what it is like to be young, broke and scared in post-bust Ireland."

John Maguire, *The Sunday Business Post*

"Foreman's film has a confidence that is rarely seen in a first feature... *Out Of Here* is a gem of a film and one that will stand up to repeat viewings. Go see it and remind yourself that Ireland can still offer up top quality cinema on par with the rest of the world..."

An outstanding film."  
Jay Coyle, *scannain.com*

"Already an experienced shorts filmmaker, Foreman's talent is unmistakable here. With an oblique take on Dublin's familiar and unfamiliar landmarks, and a fresh portrayal of Irish masculinity, he patiently builds a rare and exceptionally true-to-life portrait of what it is to be young, educated and aimless in Ireland today."

Conor Dowling, *Irish Film Institute*



## ELINA POHJOLA

Producer

Finland

ENGAGE 2011

*Since my great experience at ENGAGE, many things have changed. This year my production company Pohjola-Filmi has premieres of four films: two feature documentaries, one short fiction and one feature fiction. Right now I'm improving my skills at EAVE, the European film producer development programme. ENGAGE was a great starting point for me for developing my international network.*

## JASMINA KALLAY

Writer

Ireland

ENGAGE 2012

Since taking part in ENGAGE 2012, Jasmina has been working on a number of projects including *Quantum Kids*, a sci-fi feature trilogy for which she has received development funding from the Croatian Audiovisual Centre. *United States of Europe*, the project with which she participated on ENGAGE, has recently switched producers and has split into two strands: the TV series, now in the hands of an Austrian producer, and a video game which is being developed by a Danish game developer. Jasmina also runs Game Noir, a workshop for screenwriters wanting to learn about gaming and apps, which is part of the Noir Festival, Zagreb.



*... just a couple of months ago, one of the ENGAGE mentors recommended me to an Estonian producer for a TV series project on which we are now collaborating, which shows just how far-reaching the programme's influence is.*

## KAISA 'KAIKA' ASTIKAINEN

Producer

Finland

ENGAGE 2013

Kaika participated in ENGAGE 2013, producing Alex Nevill's documentary *Ferroequinology*, which won a pitching prize. In 2014 Kaika lived in Berlin and worked for Blikfilm GmbH. After returning to Finland in 2015, she joined Lumo Films Oy in Helsinki where she is currently producing a short film, *The Inspection*, funded by YLE, AVEK and the Finnish Film Foundation. The film will premiere in May 2015.

During 2013-2014 Kaika completed an international producer-training course at the IFS Internationale Filmschule in Cologne, mentored by Simon Perry. In the future she hopes to work in both Finland and Germany, making fiction and documentary films that are high in artistic value and that have both reason and heart. She also dreams about opening her own restaurant and producing an opera some day!



“ENGAGE made me realise two things: that I can call myself a producer and that it is actually possible to have an international career. Since the workshop I have worked outside Finland, produced my very first professional short film and completed postgraduate studies in international production. The future is wide open and I have high hopes!



## MAURICE CALDERA

### Screenwriter

UK/Italy/Spain  
ENGAGE 2013



Since completing the ENGAGE Programme in 2013, Maurice's first feature film as a writer, *Io Arlecchino, (I, Harlequin)*, co-produced by Rai Cinema, premiered at the Rome Film Festival in late 2014. It is due for release in Italy in the spring of 2015 and has secured US distribution. The film was co-directed by Matteo Bini and the actor Giorgio Pasotti (last seen in Paolo Sorrentino's *The Great Beauty*).

Maurice has several projects currently in development including the English language thriller *Coast*, set in a Spanish resort in the aftermath of the financial crisis. It is being developed with UK based producer Tom Stuart, fresh from the success of *The Patrol*. Maurice's London-set estate agent thriller *Maisonette* was invited to participate in Film London's Microschool in Batumi, Georgia in late 2013. Following his award for *Our Lady of Czestochowa* (at ENGAGE 2013) and the feedback from the industry professionals present at ENGAGE, the script has changed dramatically. It is now titled *The Grand Scheme of Things* and a second draft has just been completed.

Maurice's first short film, *Our Name is Michael Morgan*, was one of the award winners at the 2013 Cambridge Film Festival and his second short, *Camilla in the Looking Glass*, was recently completed and is due to start its festival run.

The ENGAGE Programme provided a framework that went beyond mere networking and actually built lasting relationships with likeminded and ambitious future industry professionals from all over Europe. The workshops were both constructive and playful and allowed us to further our own projects, our understanding of the co-production world, and to get an insight into how our fellow participants work.

The prize money awarded for the project *Our Lady of Czestochowa* and the feedback from the industry professionals allowed me the time and confidence to take the project to another level. “

## MIA YLÖNEN

### Writer

Finland  
ENGAGE 2011



Having previously worked as a news journalist in Finland, Mia was awarded an MA in Screenwriting from Screen Academy Scotland in 2011. Mia's ENGAGE project, *Frost Island*, was optioned by Blinder Films in Ireland, and is now in development.

Mia has since written several feature screenplays, including feature-length animation, *The Gnome*, by commission. She is also working as the Development Editor on an Estonian-Finnish crime series commissioned by the award-winning production company Helsinki-Filmi and she is developing a feature documentary about the Finnish-speaking community in Canada for Dakar Films.

“ Personally and professionally, ENGAGE has been a joy for me. I've made lifelong friends (bad jokes tend to bring like-minded people together) and got an Irish production company attached to my script through a fellow ENGAGE alumna, the lovely and talented Rioghnach Ní Ghrioghair. I've been lucky enough to attend two of the alumni seminars organised during the Berlinale Film Festival. I believe the contacts you make are the currency of ENGAGE. ”

## RONNIE MACKINTOSH

Screenwriter

UK

ENGAGE 2009

When he embarked on ENGAGE, Ronnie's first short film was in postproduction. Now he has four produced short films under his belt, with another in post and three more with directors, two of whom hope to be filming later in 2015.

Ronnie also has two feature scripts optioned by production companies (one in London, the other in the USA). The script he took to ENGAGE was optioned by an Estonian producer following development but unfortunately he could not raise sufficient funding. Amazon Studios recently selected it for inclusion on their Notable Projects page at <http://studios.amazon.com>.

At present, Ronnie is working on a fresh short with a new collaborator, and further developing one of his optioned scripts. He also has a short film script that he's holding on to in the hope that he can direct it, if not this year, then possibly in 2016.

"I have very fond memories of my time on the 2009 ENGAGE programme and the people that I met, both fellow participants and tutors, many of whom I maintain contact with."



## SARAH GUNN

Writer

Ireland

ENGAGE 2010

*ENGAGE was such a valuable experience for me – I embarked on the course as a writer and left with an aspiration to produce. I'm now Development Executive at Treasure Entertainment. After my participation on the programme I was lucky enough to be given the opportunity to co-ordinate the subsequent Dublin workshops and so have had the pleasure of getting to meet so many filmmakers from all over Europe – a truly wonderful experience.*

## VIVIEN MULLER-ROMMEL

Producer

Germany

ENGAGE 2008

Vivien started her career as an independent producer based in Cardiff, producing several award-winning short films and a low-budget feature film. She co-founded the Cardiff-based pop-up distribution venture 2Dcinema, specialising in outdoor pop-up screenings at university campuses around the UK. Vivien worked in acquisitions and international production in London, for both The Weinstein Company and Universal Pictures International, playing a key role in developing the latter company's German slate.

Vivien joined the BFI Film Fund in 2011 and currently works across all things international. She is English/German bilingual and an alumna of the Women in Film and TV mentoring scheme 2012 and Berlin Talents at the Berlin International Film Festival 2014.

*ENGAGE is a fantastic breeding ground for international collaborations. Seven years after I 'engaged', I am still in touch with many of my former course mates – they have become important international colleagues and friends.*

## TOMÁS SHERIDAN

### Documentary Director/ Producer

UK

ENGAGE 2009

Since taking part in ENGAGE 2009, Tomás Sheridan has produced and directed several films through both international co-production and commission.

*Radiostan*, a short experimental piece shot in Central Asia and Russia, was optioned to Canal + and taken to over thirty festivals worldwide in 2010. In 2011, his first TV hour, *Babytrapped*, was pre-bought by Current TV, UK and in 2012 his personal film on charity and our effect on the world, *Finding Josephine*, was shot in Uganda as part of *Why Poverty*, a global co-production project run by Steps International in South Africa and involving broadcasters from all over the world.



During 2013-2014, Tomas was commissioned to direct a film on Livingston New Town to celebrate the town's 50th anniversary and he was also selected for Creative Scotland's Document 24 artist residency at the British School at Rome where he shot two short films that are currently in post-production: *Roman Postcards* and *Bread and Circuses*.

At present, Tomás is developing a feature length documentary as part of the Interdoc producer mentoring scheme.

*ENGAGE. Was there ever a more aptly named programme for the development of relationships between budding filmmakers in small but vibrant filmmaking nations in Northern Europe?*

*Those sessions, workshops and one-to-one meetings really forced us to engage, not only with fellow participants but also with our own film ideas! It is the most difficult of steps to bring an idea, which is safely nestled in your mind, out into the real world and deal with the feedback and observations of other film practitioners. At the same time, it is the most useful step towards realising that idea.*

*It's hard to believe that only six years have passed since I took part in ENGAGE. Back then I had two short documentary shoots under my belt and the notion of living off my filmmaking was pure science fiction. Since then I've started Polifilm Media Ltd, my own production company, and have had three of my films broadcast all over the world, as well as taken part in dozens of festivals on four continents.*

*As ever I struggle to combine the need to balance market realities with the desire to find creative fulfilment in my work and in a way ENGAGE was the first place where these two desires collided, a place where the need for co-productions became apparent and where, at the same time, we could share experiences with other young creative practitioners who had the same hopes and concerns about staying true to their art.*

# ENGAGE 2014

## Guest speakers and mentors from the film and TV industry

We wish to thank the following industry practitioners for sharing their insight, experience and advice with our participants:

<b>Anneli Ahven</b>	Producer, Exitfilm	Pitching Panel (Tallinn)
<b>Helge Albers</b>	Producer/Co-founder, Flying Moon Productions	Production & Distribution Seminar (Berlin)
<b>Robbie Allen</b>	Portfolio Manager (Screen), Creative Scotland	Panel discussion: Film financing and co-production (Edinburgh)
<b>AJ Annila</b>	Director, Mangaani Motion Pictures	One-to-one consultations (Helsinki)
<b>Charlotte Applegren</b>	Secretary General, Cine-Region	Panel discussion: Co-production opportunities in Northern Europe (Tallinn)
<b>Jukka Asikainen</b>	Writer	Pitching Panel (Tallinn)
<b>Zaida Bergrooth</b>	Director	One-to-one consultations (Helsinki)
<b>Donal Foreman</b>	Writer/Director	Case study (Dublin)

<b>Julian Friedmann</b>	Co-Director, Blake Friedmann Literary Agency	Pitching training workshop (Edinburgh)
<b>Sonia Henrici</b>	Co-founder & Director, Scottish Documentary Institute	Panel discussion: Film financing and co-production (Edinburgh)
<b>Philipp Hoffmann</b>	International Sales, Distribution & VOD Consultant	VOD & Distribution Models (Edinburgh)
<b>Katie Holly</b>	MD, Blinder Films	Case study (Dublin)
<b>Jan Erik Holst</b>	Executive Editor, Norwegian Film Institute	Panel discussion: Co-production opportunities in Northern Europe; Pitching Panel (Tallinn)
<b>Antti Karumo</b>	Writer	One-to-one consultations (Helsinki)
<b>Kaarel Kuurmaa</b>	Documentary & Development Consultant, Estonian Film Institute	Pitching Panel (Tallinn)
<b>Brendan McCarthy</b>	Co-founder/Head of Development, Finance & Distribution, Fantastic Films	Pitching Panel (Tallinn)
<b>Ross McKenzie</b>	Development Officer (Film & Broadcast), Creative Scotland	Pitching Panel (Tallinn)
<b>Ronnie Mackintosh</b>	Writer	ENGAGE Alumnus Introduction (Edinburgh)
<b>Pierre Menahem</b>	Sales Agent & Film Executive	Production & Distribution Seminar (Berlin)
<b>Orla Murphy</b>	Writer/Director	ENGAGE Alumna Introduction (Dublin)
<b>Bernd-Günther Nahm</b>	Former Executive Director, Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein	Panel discussion: Co-production opportunities in Northern Europe; Pitching Panel (Tallinn)
<b>Elina Pohjola</b>	Producer	One-to-one consultations (Helsinki)
<b>Lauri Randla</b>	Writer/Director	ENGAGE Alumnus Introduction (Helsinki)
<b>Edith Sepp</b>	Estonian Film Institute	Mentoring & One-to-one consultations (Dublin, Edinburgh, Helsinki & Tallinn)
<b>Karen Smyth</b>	Producer, La Belle Allee	Panel discussion & One-to-one consultations (Edinburgh)
<b>Piret Tibbo-Hüdgins</b>	Producer/Co-owner, AllFilm	Mentoring & One-to-one consultations (Dublin, Helsinki)
<b>Peeter Urbla</b>	Writer/Director/Producer, Exitfilm	One-to-one consultations (Helsinki)
<b>JP Valkeapää</b>	Director	Case study (Helsinki)
<b>Paul Wright</b>	Writer/Director	Case study (Edinburgh)

# OUR HEARTFELT THANKS

ENGAGE owes its success to the enthusiasm, commitment and energy of the many people who steered and supported the programme and the participants, among whom our special thanks goes to:

## MEDIA

Cristina Fernández Estrada, Arnaud Pasquali, Piedad Rivas Lopez, Emma Valentine

## IRELAND

Donald Taylor Black, Jean Rice, Barry Dignam, Paul Freaney, Anne O'Leary, Celine Blacow, Linda Doyle, Thelma Gill, Kate Travers-Hannon, Sarah Gunn (IADT); James Hickey, Teresa McGrane, Keith Potter (Irish Film Board)

## ESTONIA

Katrin Saks, Elen Lotman, Malle Whitcombe (BFM); Edith Sepp, Piret Tibbo-Hüdgin (Estonian Film Institute)

## FINLAND

Jarmo Lampela, Anna Heiskanen, Lenka Hellstedt, Marja-Riitta Koivumäki, Alekski Bardy, Iiro Kuttner, Ilona Virtanen, Matti Nieminen, Hanna Eranka (Aalto); Finnish Film Foundation

## SCOTLAND

Professor Robin MacPherson, Paul Holmes, James Mavor, Brian McGill, Oscar Van Heek, Nigel Smith, Elaine McElroy, Michele Marcoux, Carol Devlin, David Griggs, Nina Hakanpaa (Edinburgh Napier University); Robbie Allen (Creative Scotland)

### Editing:

Allison Traynor

### Edinburgh photos:

Eoin Carey

### Ireland photos:

J Keogh

### Tallinn photos:

Emils Skrvelis

### Design:

Fraser Docherty, Artworkers Alliance

### Print:

Print Services, Edinburgh Napier University

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