

Media Release

X-FACTOR OF FILM AWARDS CEREMONY IN NORTH EAST! AND YOU DECIDE WHO WINS!

www.the-big-pitch.com

From today you are able to go to www.the-big-pitch.com to check out the four finalists in the running to scoop the **largest feature film production prize in the UK** as The Big Pitch website launches.

The Big Pitch, dubbed "the X-Factor of Film", is an innovative **Skillset** supported competitive training programme that attracted over 200 applications from the UK's most exciting up-and-coming filmmakers when it was launched as part of Northern Lights Film Festival 2007.

After a series of elimination rounds four fantastic projects have been chosen. Check out each of the projects and the teams behind them at www.the-big-pitch.com as it is your votes that will decide which film gets made. Content will consist of documentary, previous work, current pitch and blog all of their activities and announcements including casting.

The four projects are:

- **Blackout**, a dark neo-noir thriller directed by award-winning short film director **Derek Boyes**
- **Different Shades of Graham**, a non-linear psychological thriller where **David T. Lynch, Keith Lynch** and **Brad Watson** will share the directorial duties and each direct one of the three acts
- **Til Jihad Do Us Part**, a romantic comedy written by **Shai Hussain** that tells the story of Meena and her growing suspicions that her new fiancé may be a terrorist
- **The Brightness**, a satirical-comedy set in 2012 on the eve of the apocalypse, written and directed by **Gary Reich**

On **December 6th 2008** the finalists will appear live at **Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art** with a final 15 minutes in which to sell their feature film. A panel of industry experts including **Clare Binns** (Programming Director at City Screen), **Jason Solomons** (one of the UK's most influential film critics and chair of the Critic's Circle) and **Denise Parkinson**, (Head of Film at Bauer Media) will give their verdicts but it is up to you, the voting public, to decide who wins the £250,000 prize! The event is part of the prestigious Northern Lights Film Festival 2008.

The project that receives the most votes will win **production finance from Moxie Makers for their film (minimum £150,000)** together with a post-production deal with **Molinare**, guaranteed UK distribution with **Soda Makers** and international sales representation with **Moxiehouse Entertainment**.

The film will receive its red-carpet Gala Premiere as part of the Northern Lights Film Festival in 2009 all of which brings the total award to a staggering £250,000!

For more information on the projects, the scheme and how you can purchase tickets for the live final visit www.the-big-pitch.com

The Big Pitch forms part of NewcastleGateshead's world-class programme of festivals and events in 2008 managed by culture¹⁰.

QUOTES

Christine Alderson – CEO of Moxie Makers, said:

"Moxie Makers launched this competitive training programme with Skillset in order to stimulate and find fresh creative talent. We're delighted to have been part of the development of these four amazing films and excited to see which one the audience chooses."

Janine Marmot - Skillset's Director of Film, said:

"I am delighted that Skillset is supporting The Big Pitch. It is a fantastic initiative that delivers dynamic training to filmmakers, honing their pitching skills and encouraging work with a real market focus."

Stella Hall, creative director of culture¹⁰ said:

"The Big Pitch provides a clear focus on breakthrough talent in the context of the exciting new direction of this year's Northern Lights Film Festival."

Simon Thomas – Producer of Different Shade of Graham, said:

"It means everything to us to be through to the final of The Big Pitch. The vote of confidence is massive and it's everything any filmmaker wants to hear at this stage of their career. In just one night our lives could change forever, that we could have everything we need to make and release our movie is truly amazing. It's the kind of package that would usually take years to put together."

Celine Haddad – Producer of The Brightness, said:

"Gary and I are delighted to be part of this exciting adventure and have tremendously enjoyed the process so far. We both know how difficult it is to get your first film made and are extremely grateful to Moxie Makers and Skillset for giving us such a fantastic opportunity."

Derek Boyes – Writer/Director of Blackout, said:

"It's incredible to be in the final, but you have to remember you're up against three very strong projects, so you know you have to work extremely hard. At the end of the day the audience will decide who wins. All I know right now is that I'm a Derek and Derek's don't run!"

Shai Hussain – Writer of Til Jihad Do Us Part, said:

"The best thing about The Big Pitch isn't just the opportunity to get a feature film made - it's the chance to go through the whole process in a really hands-on way, and not linger in development hell for years. Kudos to those who let a film with the title "Jihad" get this far."

Enquiries to:

The Big Pitch

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Images available to download from:

<http://www.the-big-pitch.co.uk/press/>

NOTES TO EDITORS

Four teams are available for interview – please contact Nicky Harrison or Lyn Spencer to arrange.

PARTNERS

Moxie Makers- A “micro studio” created with the express purpose of commercially showcasing the exciting new filmmaking talent burgeoning in the UK. www.moxiemakers.com

The company’s first two films Mad, Sad & Bad and Who Killed Nancy? are due for release in early 2009

Ipsos Facto Films

The management company for Moxie Makers and The Big Pitch. Ipsos Facto Films are also a producer and co-producer of feature films made for the international market.

www.ipsosfactofilms.com

Soda Pictures

London based independent UK theatrical and DVD distributor, with whom the new distribution label - "Soda Makers" has been created. Established in 2002, Soda Pictures has since acquired over 50 feature films.

www.sodapictures.com

Moviehouse Entertainment

An international sales company with a wealth of experience introducing low budget and digital films to the marketplace. With Moviehouse's expertise the micro-budget label "Moxiehouse Entertainment" will sell the winning film.

www.moviehouseent.com

Skillset

Sector Skills Council for the Audio Visual Industries (broadcast, film, video, interactive media and photo imaging). Jointly funded by industry and government, their job is to make sure that the UK audio visual industries have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time, so that our industries remain competitive.

www.skillset.org

Molinare

A front-runner in HD feature film post-production since Mark Foligno and Chief Executive Steve Milne's MBO in September 2003. They have propelled the company forward with a focus on film projects and have completed the HD & DI (Digital Intermediate) post-production on over fifty feature films in the past 3 years since their take-over. Molinare has a rich 35-year heritage and is now the largest, privately owned post-production company in the UK, they work across all story genres and distribution formats.

www.molinare.co.uk

Northern Lights Film Festival

Previously the UK's only film festival dedicated to screening work from Northern Europe, Northern Lights Film Festival (NLFF) is now expanding its remit to take in the entire world. The new focus is on breakthrough talent, and the festival has employed programmers to scout the globe for the hottest new filmmakers out

there, and to bring the most exciting and innovative debut features back to premiere in the North East.

www.nlff.co.uk

culture¹⁰

A curated programme of exceptional cultural events and festivals across the North East region which supports the development of the NewcastleGateshead and sub regional brands each year until 2010.

www.newcastlegateshead.com/1785/Culture_10_Overview.html

Arts Council England, North East

Arts Council England works to get more art to more people in more places. They develop and promote the arts across England, acting as an independent body at arm's length from government.

<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/regions/homepage.php?rid=4>