



BETTY BANNED SWEETS



PRESS KIT

Sometimes the best party is the one you don't want

PRODUCTION NOTES

I N T E R N A T I O N A L S A L E S

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N E W Z E A L A N D F I L M

Writer / Director: Michelle Savill
Producer: Michelle Savill
Production Company: Paint-by-Numbers Collective
Screening Format: HD Cam/Digibeta
Length: 14 mins
Date of completion: 2008
Country of Production: New Zealand
Language: English
Sales: Juliette Veber, New Zealand Film Commission, juliette@nzfilm.co.nz
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LOG LINE

Sometimes the best party is the one you don't want.

ONELINER

While Benjamin obsessively dreams of escaping to South America, his mother plans his unwanted birthday party- but sometimes the best parties are the ones you don't want.

SYNOPSIS

Twenty three year-old Benjamin and his mother have a strangely co-dependent relationship, much to Benjamin's growing disdain. To escape it he retreats into his studio and his shoe-boxed sized models of the places he is desperate to visit.

While Benjamin obsessively creates dioramas and makes plans to get away, his mother obsessively plans an unwanted birthday party for him.

By the day of the party, Benjamin's decision for the immediate future will have been made, but not necessarily by him.

FESTIVAL SCREENINGS/AWARDS

2008 Melbourne International Film Festival, Australia
2008 Brisbane International Film Festival, Australia
2008 46th Gijon international Film Festival for Young People, Spain
2008 Show Me Shorts, New Zealand
2009 International Film Festival Rotterdam- New Arrivals, Netherlands
2009 In Competition- 31st Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival, France
2009 Aspen Shortsfest International Competition, USA
2009 IndieLisboa, Portugal
2009 Best Du Best- Brussels Film Festival, Belgium
2009 63rd Edinburgh International Film Festival, Scotland
2009 Expresion en Corto, Mexico
2009 Sao Paulo International Short Film Festival, Brazil
2009 Vladivostok International Film Festival, Russia
2009 La Casa Encendida, Spain
2009 St Tropez Antipodes International Film Festival, France

2009 Mill Valley Film Festival, USA
2009 12th Short Film Night, Switzerland
2009 Prague Short Film Festival, Czech Republic
2010 Istanbul Short Film Festival, Turkey

DIRECTOR / WRITER'S BIOGRAPHY: MICHELLE SAVILL

Michelle Savill is from New Zealand but spent a large part of her childhood living in the Philippines. She is now 24 and has just completed a postgraduate year in Film Studies at Waikato Institute of Technology in Hamilton, New Zealand. It was during this year that she wrote and directed her first short film drama *Betty Banned Sweets*.

Michelle is interested in films that are narratively spare but allow the world of the characters to unfold through silence and space within the frame. Her films have a carefully studied naïve beauty. They are lonely yet hopeful, playful yet painful all at the same time.

Michelle Savill now lives in Wellington. She is rewriting her next short film script, which she aims to produce early next year.

DIRECTORS NOTES

The idea for a mother and son film popped into my head after reading a newspaper article about an Indian boy who married a girl at his mother's request. The boy claimed that he had no regrets about doing so. The devotion he must have had for his mother amazed me and I decided to adapt it into a New Zealand setting.

I also wanted to make a kind of frustrated film about someone who really wanted to travel but never quite gets to. I have many friends who dream about travelling but never quite get around to it. It seems like a lot of people in New Zealand are waiting for their lives to start with a trip overseas.

Betty Banned Sweets is a production filmed in Hamilton. I was lucky to find such talented actors who had an ability to express the characters in a natural and subdued tone. This film is Matt Scheurich's first time acting, and while Lee Hutson has theatre experience; this was her first short film. Matt Scheurich was not originally cast to play the part of Benjamin, I asked him to do it a week before we started filming because the original actor pulled out. Matt had the exact look that I wanted, and I was overjoyed to discover that he could act really well. I now can't imagine anyone else in that role.

We filmed over six weekends in September and although Hamilton has very unpredictable weather but we were fortunate to have clear skies every weekend.

Each room was filmed in a different house and the rooms were completely refurbished and decorated for the shoot. As a result there was no chance for pick ups and thankfully we did not need to do any.

CAST AND CREW

PLAYERS

Benjamin – Matt Scheurich
Betty – Lee Hutson
Sister – Sandra Jensen
Car Park Man – Michael Easther
Shoestore Girl – Miss Pip
Bicyclist – Leyton Geezer
Spanish Voice - Simon Acarapi

CREW

Writer / Director / Producer

Michelle Savill

Director of Photography

Chris Tan

Editor

Tracey Egerton

Sound

Isaac Dean

Set Design

Heather Diprose

Wardrobe

Gradon Diprose

Titles

Luke McPake

Music

Mike Crook

Mild America

Tilly and the Wall

On-set Assistants

Natalie Good

Natalie Rufener

Jason Hanson

Rosie Percival

Nadine Lee

Kate W

Tamar Dorfliger

Special Thanks

The Diorama Makers

Wendy Richdale

Angela Grimmer

Zena Elliott

Rebecca Newhaven

Wilson Parking

Collins Footwear

Colin Hancock at Treck'n'Travel

Our Grandparents

This is a Paint-by-Numbers Collective film

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