

ENGAGE

2010

An abstract graphic featuring vibrant, multi-colored light trails (red, green, blue, yellow) that sweep across the frame from the bottom left towards the top right. Overlaid on this background are three thick, horizontal red bars of varying lengths, creating a sense of depth and structure.

Opening doors to European collaboration
for producers, screenwriters and writer/directors

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It's time to ENGAGE

Making great ideas better

THE third year of ENGAGE has again proved an outstanding success. In 2010, this nine-month training programme for writers, directors and producers gave 24 emerging filmmakers from all over Europe the chance to develop their skills and projects in a nurturing and stimulating environment.

As we move towards ENGAGE 2011, we are delighted that the programme is continuing to prove a success with participants, industry speakers and partner institutions. Over the last three years, ENGAGE has brought together 74 ambitious filmmakers from 16 different countries; 50 projects have been developed and 84 trainers from around the world have passed on their knowledge and insights.

CREATIVITY AND DIVERSITY

The product of collaboration between four of Europe's leading film schools (the Screen Academy Scotland at Edinburgh Napier University; the National Film School at Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology in Ireland; the Baltic Film and Media School in Tallinn, Estonia and Aalto University's School of Art and Design

in Helsinki, Finland), ENGAGE makes for an exceptionally ambitious training and development programme.

The four ENGAGE partner institutions and all contributors to the workshops strive to ensure that ENGAGE participants get as much out of the programme as possible. Their projects, achievements and thoughts about the programme are detailed in the Projects & Participants section, which provides a stimulating snapshot of the creativity and diversity nurtured across European film schools.

Are you ready to ENGAGE? Find out more at www.engage.eu.com

“Our success at ENGAGE has already opened doors for us to develop and finance our first film. Get on ENGAGE and get your film made.”

Paul Ryan, PRODUCER

Inspiring ideas

ENGAGE brings together talented people to learn, collaborate and create

Launched in 2008, ENGAGE is a training initiative for screenwriters, directors and producers which aims to foster creative collaborations and spark innovation across borders – pooling talent, ideas and innovative approaches to co-production.

Three institutions were involved in the launch of ENGAGE: the Screen Academy Scotland at Edinburgh Napier University, Scotland; the National Film School at Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT), Ireland, and the Baltic Film and Media School at Tallinn University, Estonia. In 2009 they were joined by the University of Art and Design Helsinki (TaHK), now known as Aalto University.

The MEDIA-funded programme lasts nine months, offering its 24 participants – drawn from the four partner institutions and other countries across Europe – a three-stage programme of workshops delivered by expert staff and industry professionals. This expertise was not lost on the 24 participants who undertook the ENGAGE journey in 2010. Their talent, determination and engagement are among the key driving forces that have made the programme such a success.

ENGAGE PARTNERS

The **Screen Academy Scotland** in Edinburgh, Scotland is one of only three dual-status Skillset Film & Media Academies in the UK. A collaboration between Edinburgh Napier University and Edinburgh College of Art, the Screen Academy is recognised by the industry

as a UK centre of excellence in film practice education. Established in 2005, it has helped over 200 writers, directors, producers and animators to make their mark on the page, set and screen. Having added a broadcast and interactive focus in 2008, it now offers an integrated suite of programmes, ranging from undergraduate film, photography, journalism and television to specialist postgraduate programmes in screenwriting, production and direction.

The 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

“The one-to-one sessions with staff were fantastic. Their ideas and knowledge were very encouraging, and are vital to steer our projects on course.”

Luke Leslie, WRITER/DIRECTOR

DID YOU KNOW:

Over the last three years, ENGAGE has brought together 74 participants from 16 different countries.

range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses that encompass film and television production, animation, screenwriting, design for stage and screen, model making, and broadcast production.

The **Baltic Film and Media School (BFM)** at Tallinn University, Estonia, is an international higher education provider at BA and MA levels. It places a strong emphasis on practical training in a fully digital, purpose-designed audiovisual environment. BFM also offers training courses targeted at professionals already working in the field.

Aalto University's School of Art and Design in Helsinki, Finland has been a leader in art and design education for over 138 years. Housing the Department of Motion Picture, Television and Production Design, it is an international postgraduate university institution 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, motion picture and production design. The school is a pioneer in research and in developing interdisciplinary study programmes.



ENGAGE aims to foster creative collaborations

An eruption of creativity

Professor Robin MacPherson, Director of Screen Academy Scotland, looks back on another successful ENGAGE

During 2010, thanks to the continued support of the EU MEDIA programme and despite the best efforts of an Icelandic volcano to prevent them returning home from their first workshop, the ENGAGE collaboration between the national film schools of Scotland, Ireland, Estonia and Finland once again produced a dynamic new cohort of networked and 'internationalised' filmmakers.

In its third year ENGAGE extended its contacts, collaborations and expertise to help produce creatively and commercially stronger, more diverse, and more internationally integrated screen professionals and projects across Europe. At the same time, ENGAGE continues to help strengthen screen training and professional development within our respective nations, adding to the opportunities open to new talent and bringing a vital international dimension to our institutions.

NURTURING NEW PROJECTS

Following the model of the first two years, ENGAGE 2010 brought staff, students, graduates and industry professionals together through a series of three intensive, project-based workshops. From Dublin in April via Edinburgh in June to Tallinn and Helsinki in September, and thanks to the alchemy of collaboration, embryonic ideas became fully fledged projects and those projects became exciting, promising proposals and pitches.

The diversity of people and projects amongst this year's group of 24 participants

was mirrored in the wide range of skills and experience brought by the 40 experts from seven different countries. Among the highlights were Mia Bays's session on development, sales and distribution for low-budget features, Estonian producer Katrin Kissa's case study on long-time collaborator Veiko Õunpuu's *The Temptation of St Tony* and acclaimed American producer Christine Vachon's master class at the closing workshop in Helsinki.

LOOKING AHEAD

The third cycle of ENGAGE consolidated the improvements introduced in 2009 and, as we plan the fourth year of ENGAGE in 2011, we continue to refine elements of the programme, taking into account participants' and experts' feedback, which is a vital element in the process. A significant new feature for 2011 will be the introduction of an animation strand, which we believe will add an important dimension to the previous emphasis on live action film and television projects.

Of course European screen production does not exist in isolation from the wider world - either culturally or economically - and we are hopeful that during 2011 we may be able to introduce a 'third country' element, with the addition of participants and projects from other continents. This will complement the existing national and European dimensions, whilst maintaining our focus (in audiovisual capacity terms) on the needs of smaller nations.

DID YOU KNOW:

Since 2008, 50 projects have been developed.

"A significant new feature for 2011 will be the introduction of an animation strand, which we believe will add an important dimension to the previous emphasis on live action film and television projects."

Professor Robin MacPherson
DIRECTOR, SCREEN ACADEMY SCOTLAND

Collaboration is the purpose of ENGAGE but also its foundation, and I would like to thank all of my colleagues at Edinburgh Napier, IADT, BFM and Aalto for the energy, creativity and commitment which they have continued to devote to ENGAGE, particularly our indefatigable Project Manager Tamara Van Strijthem. Similarly, our thanks go to all our industry experts, listed on page 54, who provide that vital link between our participants and the ever-changing realities of the audiovisual marketplace. Thanks also to the national film agencies who continue to support the ENGAGE prizes and to MEDIA for continuing to help us ENGAGE Europe's new screen talent.



ENGAGE 2010 Participants and staff at the first workshop in Dublin

Pushing back boundaries

24 filmmakers, three intensive workshops, four European cities
→ unlimited potential

Dublin, Ireland

The National Film School at IADT
4-day workshop (April 2010)

The four-day workshop in Dublin brought the ENGAGE participants together for the first time. It introduced them to each other and their projects through small breakout groups and brief one-to-one intros (although, thanks to volcanic activity at Eyjafjöll, some stayed together for weeks, sharing an epic road trip across northern Europe on their way home). These were complemented by case studies on two recent Irish feature films: the fiction *Wake Wood* and the documentary *His & Hers*.

KEY EVENTS

Case study and screening: *Wake Wood*
Presentation: David Keating / Director,
Brendan McCarthy / Writer / Producer

David Keating began his career as Assistant Director, working on features by directors such as John Boorman and Michael Radford. He went on to work as a writer and documentary filmmaker. *Wake Wood* is his second feature as a director. He discussed the film's development journey with screenwriter and producer Brendan McCarthy.

Case study and screening: *His & Hers*
Presentation: Andrew Freedman / Producer
Alan Maher / Irish Film Board

A graduate of the National Film School at IADT, Andrew Freedman established his



An ENGAGE workshop in action

Dublin-based production company, Venom Films, in 2004. Together with Alan Maher, Production Executive at the Irish Film Board with responsibility for documentary and ultra-low-budget features, Andrew discussed the development journey of *His & Hers* and his ongoing collaboration with director Ken Wardrop. The film premiered at Sundance in 2010, where it was awarded the documentary cinematography award (one of the DoPs being none other than Michael Lavelle, who took part in the very first ENGAGE programme in 2008 as a Writer/Director).

“It was all good – fully packed with information and sessions, very interesting and energetic. I really loved it.”

Aaron Rookus WRITER/DIRECTOR

“Mia Bays’s session was very useful; her way of thinking was new to me.”

Paula Mononen SCREENWRITER

Edinburgh, Scotland

Screen Academy Scotland at Edinburgh
Napier University
4-day workshop (June 2010)

The second workshop, timed to coincide with the beginning of the Edinburgh International Film Festival, provided a stimulating mix of master classes, project surgeries, panel discussions and case studies. Participants took part in a pitching training session delivered by Julian Friedmann; benefited from Mia Bays's insight into development and distribution for low-budget movies and learned from director Morag McKinnon's experience on her first fiction feature, *Donkeys*, and her first documentary feature, *Breathing*.

Workshop: Pitching and presentation
Tutor: Julian Friedmann / Literary Agent

Pitching and presentation skills are vital at any stage in your career. This workshop helped participants get to grips with the dos and don'ts of this often nerve-racking experience. Julian Friedmann is Joint Managing Director of Blake Friedmann Literary Agency in London. He was the first UK Coordinator of MEDIA's EAVE producer-training programme and lectures on the business of screenwriting and on pitching.

Development, sales and distribution for micro-budget films

Presentation: Mia Bays / Producer

Mia Bays founded Missing In Action Films in 2003. She worked in some of the top sales, distribution and exhibition companies in the UK before becoming a producer in 2004 and was formerly Head of Distribution at The Film Consortium. As an experienced marketing and distribution consultant who has overseen the production, marketing and distribution of numerous UK micro-budget features, Mia's tips proved particularly pertinent for ENGAGE participants.

Panel session:

Film financing – Europe and Scotland
Guest speakers: Carole Sheridan / Scottish Screen, Eddie Dick / Producer

Carole Sheridan, then Head of Talent and Creativity at Scottish Screen, discussed the opportunities available to smaller nations and regions in the current European audio-visual landscape with Scotland-based producer Eddie Dick.

Case study: *Donkeys* and *Breathing*
Presentation: Morag McKinnon / Director

Ahead of the world premiere of *Donkeys* at the Edinburgh International Film Festival, director Morag McKinnon considered the specific challenges she faced with this second instalment in the Advance Party Trilogy (following Andrea Arnold's *Red Road*). She also discussed her work on the feature documentary *Breathing*, a project co-directed with Emma Davie and still in development at the time.

Producers' workshop: Film finance
Tutor: Terry Ilott

Terry Ilott was formerly CEO of Hammer Film Productions, European Editor of Variety and Editor of Screen International. He has provided business planning, financial modelling and corporate finance advice, as well as project and general management services, to clients including Warner Bros, Merchant Ivory Productions and uniFrance. This workshop, devised specifically for the producers on ENGAGE, delved into the nitty-gritty of film financing. It took into account the structure of the industry in the UK and the current state of European and US markets, as well as exploring different business models.

Tallinn, Estonia and Helsinki, Finland

Baltic Film and Media School at Tallinn University and School of Art and Design at Aalto University, Helsinki
6-day workshop (September 2010)

The final workshop saw participants receive intensive, detailed feedback on their projects from ENGAGE staff and international industry experts. On the final day of ENGAGE 2010, 22 participants pitched a total of 17 projects to a distinguished panel of key industry players, which included representatives from two key Finnish broadcasters and the Estonian, Irish and Scottish film boards, as well as the renowned US indie producer Christine Vachon.

Three projects were awarded cash prizes - find out more on page 12.

KEY EVENTS

Panel discussion: European co-production: Baltic countries and beyond



Participants get to hear about each other's projects

Chaired by Karlo Funk, Head of Production at the Estonian Film Board, the panel brought together some of the most active, successful and resourceful talent in the region. Lithuanian documentary producer Rasa Miskinyte (who also presented a case study of her production company, ERA Film), Estonian writer/director/producer Peeter Urbla and Estonian producers Marje Jurtshenko, Katrin Kissa and Riina Sildos discussed the specific challenges faced by filmmakers in the Baltic countries and the opportunities open to those willing to innovate.

Case study and screening:

The Temptation of St Tony

Presentation: Katrin Kissa / Producer

Katrin Kissa made a great impression on the participants with her uncompromising approach to bringing a unique vision to the screen, as well as her resolve to avoid the creative pitfalls too often inherent to co-production negotiations. Her collaboration with writer/director Veiko Õunpuu dates back eight years and incorporates the award-winning *Autumn Ball* (which was screened to ENGAGE participants at the first Tallinn workshop in 2008) and the recent *The Temptation of St Tony*.



Marje Jurtshenko, Riina Sildos and Karlo Funk take part in a panel discussion in Tallinn

DID YOU KNOW:

So far ENGAGE has involved 84 trainers, from as far afield as Australia and the US to neighbouring countries such as Lithuania, Norway and Belgium.

Master class: Christine Vachon / Producer

Undoubtedly one of the most influential producers in the American independent sector, in which she has been active since the early 1990s, Christine Vachon provided a stimulating overview of her prolific output, her dedication to the maverick writers and directors she has championed at early stages of their careers and her famous no-nonsense attitude. Christine Vachon runs Killer Films alongside business partner Pamela Koffler. Her first feature, Todd Haynes's controversial *Poison*, premiered at Berlin, Locarno and Sundance, where it won the Grand Jury Prize in 1991. Alongside debut features by Larry Clark (*Kids*) and Fenton Bailey and Rando Barbato (*Party Monster*), her filmography also includes the Oscar-nominated *I'm Not There* and *Far From Heaven*, as well as the Oscar-winning *Boys Don't Cry*. She is the author of two books, 'Shooting to Kill' and 'A Killer Life'.

"Christine Vachon's master class provided invaluable industry insight and context, vital case-studies, real world experience for indie productions on an international level."

Luke Leslie WRITER/DIRECTOR

Project surgeries

Alongside sessions with ENGAGE staff, these one-to-one sessions with industry experts enabled participants to receive detailed feedback on their project in advance of their pitching session. Each project benefited from a minimum of three sessions with the following: Estonian producers Katrin Kissa and Marje Jurtshenko; Lithuanian documentary producer Rasa Miskinyte; film aesthetics expert Jarmo Valkola; Finnish screenwriter/producer Aleksis Bardy; Estonian writer/director/producer Peeter Urbla and Finnish producer Jarkko Hentula.

The Big Pitch

(See the full list of panellists and awards on page 12.)

"Just a really great week and a fine end to the whole ENGAGE adventure."

Anne Milne WRITER/DIRECTOR

Prizes

Three projects awarded development funds worth €7,000

For the second year running, ENGAGE was able to provide three winning projects with cash prizes for further development. The third and final workshop of ENGAGE culminated in a pitching forum, in which participants presented their projects to a panel of six industry practitioners, broadcasters and national film foundations' representatives.

The panel consisted of:

Pirjo Airaksinen, Director of Programming at Channel Four Finland

Leena Kemppi, Dramaturg (co-productions) at YLE (Finland's national broadcaster)

Andrew Meehan, Head of Development at the Irish Film Board
Leslie Finlay, Development Executive at Creative Scotland

Christine Vachon, Independent US Producer

Karlo Funk, Head of Production and Development at the Estonian Film Foundation

Three projects were awarded cash prizes totalling €7,000:

1st prizes:

Duet for Cello

(France/Lebanon/Scotland/Ireland) see page 24.

Nature of Things

(Finland/Czech Republic) see page 38.

Runner-up:

From Dublin with Love

(Poland/Ireland/Finland) see page 30.

National screen agencies renew their support:

The national screen agencies of Scotland, Ireland and Estonia each contributed to the cash prize shared by the three winning projects, alongside Aalto University. Their generous support, itself an excellent example of international collaboration, demonstrates their confidence in the value of ENGAGE in promoting new talent.

“Creative Scotland is delighted to continue its support for the ENGAGE programme this year. International collaboration is increasingly important for our industry and ENGAGE offers a fantastic opportunity for new talent to develop ideas and cooperative working.”

Morgan Petrie
PORTFOLIO MANAGER, CREATIVE SCOTLAND



“ENGAGE has become a firm date in my calendar and ENGAGE 2010, in particular, was a good year. I was impressed by the ambition and viability of many of the projects and reassured by the professionalism of all the participants.”

Andrew Meehan
HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT, IRISH FILM BOARD



“The value of ENGAGE lies in its international approach. It is important for film students from small countries to see and learn the logic of development and production in countries with more business-minded industries. And perhaps appreciate that if you have a brilliant idea, size does not matter.”

Karlo Funk,
HEAD OF PRODUCTION & DEVELOPMENT,
ESTONIAN FILM FOUNDATION



Projects & Participants

Find out about the people and projects that made ENGAGE 2010 such a success

The 24 participants selected for ENGAGE in 2010 brought a wealth of experiences, ideas and dedication, as well as an exciting range of ambitious projects. They crossed many borders – not just geographically, but creatively and intellectually.

During the intensive and stimulating nine-month programme, partnerships were forged, ideas were fine-tuned and truly collaborative projects were developed. The next 36 pages showcase the projects and passion of ENGAGE participants.

PRODUCERS

Shehzad Afzal	Scotland	<i>Fracture</i>
Jana Bebrová	Czech Republic	<i>Nature of Things</i>
Patricia Flood	Ireland	<i>Fracture</i>
Elari Lend	Estonia	<i>Love is Energy</i>
Lotta-Kaisa Riistakoski	Finland	<i>From Dublin with Love, Love is Energy, School of Sex, Ugri Tales</i>
Maie Rosmann	Estonia	<i>Infaust, Ugri Tales</i>
Paul Ryan	Scotland/Ireland	<i>Duet for Cello</i>

SCREENWRITERS

Russell Davidson	Scotland	Untitled Calais project, <i>Fracture</i>
Jelena Grigorjeva-Pazilina	Estonia	<i>Being a Mother</i>
Paula Mononen	Finland	<i>Nature of Things</i>
Maarit Murka	Estonia	<i>A Muse</i>
Jenni Toivoniemi	Finland	<i>Cat Trap, The Wind and the Fire</i>

WRITERS/DIRECTORS

Majja Hirvonen	Finland	<i>Cat Trap</i>
Anne Milne	Scotland	<i>The Inheritors</i>
Joasia Goldyn	Ireland/Poland	<i>From Dublin with Love</i>
Sarah Gunn	Ireland	<i>Wheels of Destiny, Infaust</i>
Wafa'a Halawi	France/Lebanon	<i>Duet for Cello</i>
Luke Leslie	Ireland	<i>ARK</i>
Robert Manson	Ireland	<i>Finding Another</i>
Eva Riley	Scotland	<i>The Wind and the Fire</i>
Aaron Rookus	Netherlands	<i>Infaust</i>
Salla Sorri	Finland	<i>Praying with Donald, Untitled Calais project</i>
Kristo Viiding	Estonia	<i>Ugri Tales</i>
Barbara Zemljč	Slovenia	<i>Love is Energy</i>

A Muse

WRITER/DIRECTOR: Maarit Murka

SYNOPSIS

A Muse delves into the ethics of artistic practice. Who is whose muse? And who needs whom more? How deeply can a human being intrude into another's life? Which is more immoral - to send someone unsolicited, perverse images of oneself naked or for the recipient to use these images for their public art performance?

STATUS

- 1st draft treatment
- Seeking development funding

Maarit Murka WRITER / DIRECTOR / ESTONIA

Maarit studied painting at the Estonian Art Academy and has a Masters in the same discipline from the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts. She has been working as a freelance artist since 2001 and has taken part in dozens of exhibitions. Over the last couple of years, an increasing interest and involvement in video art led to her taking a Masters at the Baltic Film and Media School.

Maarit is keen to combine art and film in her practice. Her most recent arts projects, which involved short films she directed, have been touring arts festivals all over the world - from France to Cuba. She has several new projects in development.



CONTACT:
www.murka.ee

“Every day I understand more clearly what I am meant for...”

“Comparing yourself with your peers and getting to hear what other people are thinking; how they're approaching their work and what their hopes are gives a lot of confidence. Every day I understand more clearly what I am meant for, and that I must do different things and follow different paths.”

1 ENGAGE 2010 BY NUMBERS:
65 applicants from 16 different countries

ARK

*A story of two
star-crossed lovers*

WRITER/DIRECTOR: Luke Leslie

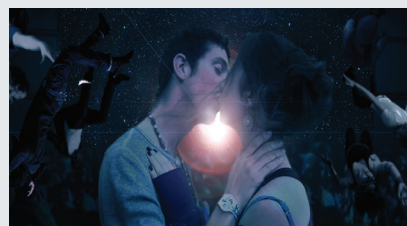
ADDITIONAL COLLABORATOR:

CO-WRITER: David Lester Mooney, Ireland
(ENGAGE 2009)

SYNOPSIS

ARK is a vast interstellar ship, a city in space, a lifeboat from Earth, sailing across the heavens on a 200-year-long journey to humanity's new home. We're midway, observing a generation who will live their whole lives on board - and never see their new home.

As the clock ticks down to Mid-point, a revolution kicks off, forcing two families back into claustrophobic proximity. A spark ignites when Sun - the daughter of one of the most powerful men aboard - falls into the arms of Ryan, a rebel without a cause.



STATUS

- 1st draft
- Trailer available
- Seeking creative co-producers and development funding

Luke Leslie **WRITER / DIRECTOR / IRELAND**

Luke first picked up a video camera at the age of six, when he shot a version of *Jurassic Park* using Tonka trucks and plastic dinosaurs on location in his sandpit and his grandmother's greenhouse. His recent work is less ambitious.

Alongside ARK, a love story set aboard a spaceship on a 200-year-long trip to humanity's new home, Luke is currently developing *TakeStock*, a comedy series set at an environmentally-minded music festival that goes disastrously wrong.



CONTACT:

www.buckledcranium.com

**“ENGAGE creates a framework
for your creativity...”**

“ENGAGE empowered me with the skills, language and tools necessary to live up to the potential of our concept. I walked in with a half-baked, underdeveloped tagline, and walked away with a fully-fledged narrative, a trailer, and a pool of friends and contemporaries spread across the continent ready to collaborate, create and develop new stories.

“ENGAGE creates a framework for your creativity: it surrounds you with feedback, ideas, and knowledge from industry professionals. ENGAGE is an opportunity – to be seized or squandered. My advice is to make the most of ENGAGE – and your ideas.”

Being a Mother

SCREENWRITER: Jelena Grigorjeva Pazilina

SYNOPSIS

Ingrit's relationship with her daughter, Grete, turned sour ten years ago when Ingrit forced the then 16-year-old Grete to abort; the two women rarely talk. Having graduated from University, Grete is now a successful professional, running her own dental practice in Helsinki.

Narva-Jõesuu, Estonia, 2012. Local police are fighting various Russian mafia groups trafficking drugs into Estonia via a secret tunnel under the river Narva. Ingrit has been missing without trace for three weeks and Grete has travelled from Helsinki to look for her, accompanied by her 10-year-old niece, Kornelia. They manage to find Ingrit in a convent, but she suffers from amnesia.

Kornelia, still a fervent believer in fairytales, is convinced that Ingrit's soul is trapped in the enchanted woods that surround the town of Narva-Jõesuu. Spurred by her niece, Grete goes in search of her mother's soul, determined to return it to the real world so that Ingrit may recover her memory. Upon entering the woods, the young woman and the little girl discover a universe peopled only by men - and soon the world of fairy-tales and reality collide, as the police's investigations overlap with Grete and Kornelia's quest.

STATUS

■ In development

Jelena Grigorjeva Pazilina

SCREENWRITER / ESTONIA

Jelena comes from a small town on the border between Russia and Estonia. After leaving school, she attended the Estonian National Defence Academy and went on to work for two years as a prison officer in Tartu, monitoring inmates with addiction disorders. She graduated from Tartu University in 2009 with a degree in Russian and Slavonic philology and semiotics.

Jelena is currently studying screenwriting at the Baltic Film and Media School. Her first short film, *The Shot*, is currently in post production and she has been prepping her next short project - an erotic tragi-comedy called *Another 'New' Year*. She has been developing the script of mockumentary feature *Earth Attacks!* (a project developed on ENGAGE 2009 by writer/director Andrew Bond and Czech producer Peter Badač), alongside her own project, *Being a Mother*.



“... a great opportunity to meet with potential collaborators...”

“ENGAGE demands a lot from its participants: you have to be able to adapt quickly and work hard. It provided a great opportunity to meet with potential collaborators and engage in meaningful dialogue with people from the film industry.”

2

ENGAGE 2010 BY NUMBERS:

24 participants, 9 nationalities

UNTITLED Calais project

WRITER: Russell Davidson

DIRECTOR: Salla Sorri

ADDITIONAL COLLABORATOR:

PRODUCER: Selena Darke (Darkeye Films), Scotland

SYNOPSIS

Calais is the story of Illegal immigrants trapped in a Calais detention centre at Christmas. Zena, a young West African woman and Ade, a voodoo priest, are both detained at Calais trying to cross to England. Ade is consumed by a demon, following an exorcism in Benin. The demon's presence sparks a riot and security breach at the centre. The demon passes from person to person and finally to Zena. CCTV footage from the centre alerts a French minister and a diplomatic incident ensues when Zena escapes to England.

STATUS

- In development
- 3rd draft treatment (1st draft script in progress)
- Seeking development funding and European co-producers

Russell Davidson WRITER / SCOTLAND

Russell Davidson recently graduated with an MA in Screenwriting (with Distinction). In summer 2010, he wrote and directed *Mix at Six*, a short crime drama. Russell is currently completing an MFA Advanced Film Practice in Directing at Screen Academy Scotland.



“... new friends and colleagues from across Europe...”

“ENGAGE has brought new friends and colleagues from across Europe into my life, and the chance to draw on the experience of industry professionals in developing my projects.”



Salla Sorri DIRECTOR / FINLAND

» See *Praying with Donald* (page 40)



ENGAGE 2010 BY NUMBERS:

18 projects developed

Cat Trap

*A film about
compassionate
obsession*

WRITER/DIRECTOR: Maija Hirvonen

PRODUCERS: Jenni Toivoniemi and Robert Manson

ADDITIONAL COLLABORATOR:

PRODUCER: Elli Toivoniemi (Tuffi Films Ltd), Finland

SYNOPSIS

Hannele Viskari (64) worked for 16 years as a voluntary animal agent and pet detective. Anyone who had lost a cat could turn to her and she would find the missing animal through 'fetching sessions' that could last for months.

Hannele's mission led her into the strangest situations. It also became a burden that drove her close to a burnout, as her daily life was constantly interrupted by a pet in need of rescue. The decision to quit turned out to be harder than it seemed, since even vacations at tourist centres would lead to major rescue operations.



STATUS

- In development (2nd draft; trailer in production; key scenes shot during summer and autumn 2010)
- Seeking development funding

Maija Hirvonen **WRITER / DIRECTOR / FINLAND**

Maija graduated from Aalto University (then University of Art and Design Helsinki) in 2008 and has since been working as a documentary filmmaker. She has been enthused by the Finnish documentary filmmaking scene over the last few years, especially its open-mindedness, which has enabled filmmakers to test the limits of the documentary genre and push its perceived boundaries. In her own practice, she is most interested in the absurdity of everyday life and in the relationships humans develop with animals. Maija is currently busy financing *Cat Trap* and has started shooting key scenes and a trailer.



"I met inspiring people I'll never forget."

"I found collaborators who pushed me forward with my project. I got more familiar with production cultures in other European countries and met inspiring people I'll never forget."



Jenni Toivoniemi **PRODUCER / FINLAND**

» See *The Wind and the Fire* (page 48)



Robert Manson **PRODUCER / IRELAND**

» See *Finding Another* (page 26)

Duet for Cello

(WORKING TITLE)

WRITER/DIRECTOR: Wafa'a Halawi

PRODUCER: Paul Ryan

SYNOPSIS

Jad, a handsome young writer, returns home to Beirut after a long absence. Over the course of one week, he changes the lives of three people he encounters: an old school friend with marriage problems, an eccentric festival director held back by the expectations of family and, most importantly, a grief-stricken cellist who has stopped playing. Against a backdrop of broken buildings, while Jad searches for inspiration and the cellist for her lost passion, they slowly fall in love.

STATUS

- 2nd draft
- Teaser trailer available
- Seeking additional development funds, co-producer and co-production funding



Wafa'a Halawi

WRITER / DIRECTOR / FRANCE / LEBANON

Wafa'a is a French/Lebanese director currently living in Beirut. She started acting at age five and pursued an acting career until she directed her first film and became a filmmaker. In 2004, Wafa'a graduated from the Lebanese American University in Beirut with the film *Act 1 Scene 10*. She then went to the New York Film Academy, where the one-year program allowed her to direct various films, including *Very Rough Draft*, as well as winning two commercial pitches, including one for Stella Artois.

After directing commercials and corporate videos in West Africa (for Saatchi and Saatchi) and working extensively as a 1st Assistant Director - mainly in the UK (Pinewood Studios) and Lebanon (*Falling from Earth* by Chadi Zeneddine) - Wafa'a attended University College London where she graduated with an MA in Film in 2008.

Wafa'a is currently developing the fiction feature *A Girl Made of Dust*, adapted from the novel by Nathalie Abi Ezzi, as well as the fiction feature *Duet for Cello*, with which she has attended development and screenwriting workshops such as the Scene Insiders, Gothenburg Film Festival and of course ENGAGE. She is also a part-time film teacher at the Lebanese American University.

"Thanks to ENGAGE I now have a producer and a 2nd draft..."

"ENGAGE gave me the opportunity to broaden my contacts within the industry, get advice and guidance from involved and passionate tutors, and be exposed to industry professionals. It allowed me to identify the needs, strengths and weaknesses of my film and put me on the right track to get it made.

Thanks to ENGAGE I now have a producer and have completed a second draft of my script."



PHOTOGRAPHY: CHADI YOUNES

Paul Ryan **PRODUCER / SCOTLAND / IRELAND**

Paul, an award-winning producer based in Scotland, attended film school at Ballyfermot College in Dublin and recently graduated with an MA in Screen Project Development from Screen Academy Scotland. Paul has over 20 broadcast credits, including *RAW CUTS* for Teebster/Channel 4, for which he was nominated as Best Producer at the BAFTA Scotland Awards in 2008. His other credits include *Entente Cordiale* and *IDEASFACTORY: Real*, also broadcast on Channel 4.



As well as developing the feature project *Duet for Cello*, Paul is currently producing a 30-minute documentary on stem cell research in Belgium, *Diabetes: The Search for a Cure*, and developing a number of factual and drama projects with new talent. He also runs a co-working centre for filmmakers in Edinburgh, Edinburgh screenWORKS.

CONTACT:
www.paulryan.tv

"Get on ENGAGE and get your film made."

"ENGAGE is the best launch pad in Europe for new producers, writers and directors looking to develop their first co-production feature. Our success at ENGAGE has already opened doors for us to develop and finance our first film. The ENGAGE programme is for any new filmmaker serious about getting a co-production off the ground. Get on ENGAGE and get your film made."

Finding Another

WRITER/DIRECTOR: Robert Manson

ADDITIONAL COLLABORATOR:

PRODUCER: Ruairi McKenna (Annville Films), Ireland

SYNOPSIS

Finding Another is a feature drama set in Dublin and the south of France. In this coming-of-age story, a young man rediscovers his past as he tries to forge his own path in life to protect what matters most: his sense of family and home.

The story centres around Johnny Fitzgerald, a frustrated 17-year-old kid who leaves his home in the East Wall, Dublin, to find his estranged father in the south of France. He has never left Ireland or travelled alone before and has little money, information or advice to work with. A collection of letters and pictures from his mother's past form a cryptic map that guides him along his turbulent journey.

STATUS

- Treatment, outline and bible
- Seeking development funding and co-writer

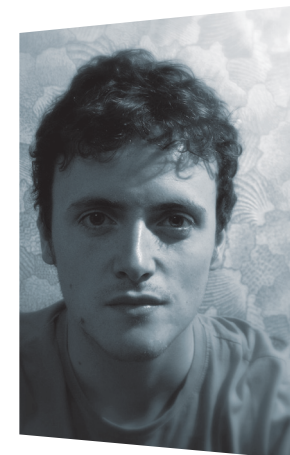
Robert Manson WRITER / DIRECTOR / IRELAND

Robert Manson was born in Wicklow in 1985. He has directed and co-produced six shorts, three documentaries and a host of commercials and music videos. In August 2008, he was awarded The Taylor Art Award by the RDS for his film *The Silver Bow*. His work has been screened both nationally and internationally, and has won awards in Ireland and on the international festival circuit.

“... a great platform to develop my project further...”

“ENGAGE provided a great platform to develop my project further with the help of a selection of industry professionals and mentors.

It can be difficult, as a writer, to find and enforce deadlines and structure during the initial stages of a project when you're working on your own. Given that this script is the biggest idea I have worked on to date it was invaluable to have the support and structure that ENGAGE offered to keep me disciplined and constantly revising. Visiting such a diversity of cities with such a unique group of filmmakers made this an exciting and challenging process that has enhanced my approach to my own projects.”



CONTACT:
www.annvillefilms.ie

4

ENGAGE 2010 BY NUMBERS:

176 individual project surgeries, amounting to almost 90 hours of one-to-one meetings

Fracture

WRITER: Russell Davidson

DIRECTOR: Shehzad Afzal

PRODUCERS: Shehzad Afzal and
Patricia Flood



Shehzad Afzal

DIRECTOR / PRODUCER / SCOTLAND

Shehzad was born in Dundee, Scotland, and works as a writer/director/producer. He trained in screenwriting at Abertay University and graduated from the Screen Academy Scotland at Edinburgh Napier University with an MA in Screen Project Development. *The Full 10 Yards* (2004), Shehzad's debut short fiction film as a writer-director, won best short film award at the Fairport Film Festival. His follow-up project, *Bo Kata*, a half-hour documentary, went on to screen at numerous film festivals and was screened theatrically in the UK.

Shehzad also works as a multi-arts practitioner on digital formats such as video game design and prototyping. He was selected to take part in the world's first think tank on video game narrative development at the world-renowned IC-CAVE Video Game Development research facility at Abertay University, Dundee. His video game designs and concepts have won international awards and recognition.

SYNOPSIS

Gregor witnesses a brutal murder by a Belfast drug gang and flees for his life. Hiding in Glasgow, he is drawn to the local street art scene, through which he encounters Gillian, an art lecturer who takes an interest in him and his art. A relationship develops between them, but Gregor's past comes back to haunt him - forcing him deeper into the shadows.

STATUS

- 3rd draft treatment
- Seeking development finance

Patricia Flood

PRODUCER / IRELAND

Patricia is a creative producer working both in short films and corporate video. She is currently in the process of starting a production company and busy completing her studies in Production and Scriptwriting at the National Film School at IADT.



“... the chance to receive fantastic feedback from experts...”

“The exciting part of this programme was the chance to develop live feature film projects; receive fantastic feedback from industry experts and pitch to a panel of industry professionals. The other highlight was the chance to meet new filmmaking talent from across Europe, with a real possibility of future collaboration. ENGAGE is a great way to learn about the process of European film financing and co-production from the best of Europe's filmmaking gurus.”

CONTACT:
www.filmedup.com



Russell Davidson

WRITER / SCOTLAND

» See Untitled *Calais* project (page 20)

“... a great opportunity to meet people with the same interests...”

“ENGAGE was a great opportunity to meet people with the same interests as me, and also to extend each of our networks even further. Hopefully, with the connections we made, we will aspire to work together again in the future.”

From Dublin with Love

WRITER/DIRECTOR: Joasia Goldyn
PRODUCER: Lotta-Kaisa Riistakoski

SYNOPSIS

From *Dublin with Love* is a contemporary drama set in Poland and Ireland. A young mother, Malgorzata, suspects that her husband Marek, her college sweetheart and father of their 5-year-old son, may be having an affair while working abroad. She challenges herself to a confrontational trip to Dublin, where she learns the truth about her marriage and discovers her new self. But this comes at a price of broken relationship with her son.

STATUS

- Treatment
- Seeking development funding, co-production partners

Joasia Goldyn

WRITER / DIRECTOR / IRELAND / POLAND

Joasia moved from Poland to Ireland in 2004. She studied in Dublin, gaining a diploma in journalistic techniques: TV, radio, print and photography. She recently graduated from the National Film School at IADT, Dún Laoghaire, where she specialised in Directing, Writing and Production. In 2009, her short film *Fantabulous* won the Dublin Pride Short Film Festival and was shortlisted for the Galway Film Fleadh. In her final year at IADT, she took part in Film Spring, a European project for young directors and cinematographers, through which she co-wrote and co-directed a 40-minute drama, *Hell Hotel*. In 2010 she wrote and directed her graduation film *Distant Voices*, which premiered at the Galway Film Fleadh.

Alongside *From Dublin with Love*, Joasia is in development with multiple short film projects in both Ireland and Poland.



CONTACT:

joanna.goldyn@gmail.com

“ENGAGE surpassed my expectations.”

“ENGAGE surpassed my expectations. It was an intense few months of project development sessions, with a stream of invaluable feedback from many industry professionals. ENGAGE was also a fantastic opportunity to meet and work with other young filmmakers from across Europe.”



Lotta-Kaisa Riistakoski

PRODUCER / FINLAND

» See *School of Sex* (page 42)

Infaust

WRITER/DIRECTOR: Aaron Rookus
CO-WRITER: Sarah Gunn
CO-PRODUCER: Maie Rosmann

SYNOPSIS

The young, once-celebrated writer Tristan finds out he has cancer and only has several months to live. He feels his position is unfair and, in anger, writes a series of brutally honest letters in which he blames others for his unfortunate fate. The letters come into the hands of his closest, and Tristan has to face his family and himself. In coming to terms with his mortality, Tristan learns the true meaning of life and is finally able to embrace the notion of greatness without ego, love in all its ugliness - and the flawed beauty in all those around him, including himself.

STATUS

- 1st draft treatment
- Seeking producing partners and development funding



Aaron Rookus

WRITER / DIRECTOR / NETHERLANDS

Aaron graduated from the Utrecht School of the Arts in 2008. His graduation film, the award-winning *I Wish I Could Share the Happiness of Being Alone with Someone Else*, has enjoyed wide festival distribution. Since 2009, Aaron has been working as a freelance director, directing several music videos and commercials, while also developing his writing skills. He has written several shorts and a children's book, 'Walle & Joep', in collaboration with Linde Faas. Aaron is currently taking a second MA, this time in film theory, at the University of Amsterdam. He is due to graduate in 2011. Aaron has been busy developing several short films alongside his feature project, *Infaust*.

“...a fantastic step forward...”

“ENGAGE bridges the gap between college and the industry. You get to understand how business is done and what it's really about in terms of co-production. You also get exposed to the way things are done in other countries, which helps both to broaden your views and become more realistic in your expectations, which is no small feat.

“And because you get to know people and how they - and certain institutions - work, the industry seems much more approachable. It's a fantastic step forward in terms of professional development.”

CONTACT:
www.aaronrookus.com



Sarah Gunn

CO-WRITER / IRELAND

» See *Wheels of Destiny* (page 46)

Maie Rosmann

CO-PRODUCER / ESTONIA

Maie will soon be starting her fourth year on the BA Film and Video at the Baltic Film and Media School. She has been busy collaborating with fellow students to produce various shorts, with budgets ranging from a few hundred pounds to several thousands.

In parallel to her studies, Maie is working for Tallinn-based production company MustFilm, currently developing the screenplay for a youth drama, *Zero Point*, based on a successful novel by Margus Karu.



“... a unique opportunity...”

“ENGAGE has given me the opportunity to work with talented people from all over Europe and has enabled me to develop my understanding of the co-production process. I would recommend the programme to anyone with a strong desire to develop their project as a co-production, because ENGAGE provides a unique opportunity to find the right people with whom to collaborate.”

The Inheritors

A 21st - Century Western

WRITER/DIRECTOR/PRODUCER: Anne Milne

SYNOPSIS

How can a small, independent town in the Californian desert survive against the competing interests of an unscrupulous mining speculator and the US military? Who will inherit Darwin after the ageing population passes on? A documentary about hope, the future and the diverse group of people who call this isolated desert town home.

STATUS

- In development (initial research complete; trailer available)

Anne Milne

WRITER / DIRECTOR / PRODUCER / SCOTLAND

Anne is an award-winning Scottish filmmaker whose debut film, *María's Way*, has gained international success and has been shortlisted for the 2010 European Film Awards. In addition to being a director and editor, Anne has produced web-based content and video games, and taught New Media for a number of years in California. Her passion is meeting people in obscure places who are doing interesting things.

In 2010 she completed a two-year MFA in Film Directing at the Edinburgh College of Art (Screen Academy Scotland). That same year, she was selected as a Trailblazer during the Edinburgh International Film Festival, a scheme highlighting up-and-coming British filmmaking talent. She currently lives in Edinburgh and works as a freelance filmmaker/editor.

With several projects currently on the go, Anne is developing a short documentary through Bridging the Gap, a commissioning series run by the Scottish Documentary Institute. She is the recipient of a WorldView Broadcast Media Scheme grant that will enable her to go and shoot a short in Nepal, to be broadcast by the Community Channel.



CONTACT:

www.annemilne.com

“... I highly recommend this programme...”

“ENGAGE was a great opportunity to begin to understand the nature of international co-production, financing and development. It gave me an opportunity to focus on a project's development phase. I met a diverse and talented group of filmmakers from seven European countries, people I will remain in contact with and hopefully work with one day. I highly recommend this programme to any filmmaker who wishes to meet and receive feedback from mentors in the field of filmmaking and to further their own skills.”

Love is Energy

WRITER/DIRECTOR: Barbara Zemljč
PRODUCERS: Lotta-Kaisa Riistakoski
 and Elari Lend

ADDITIONAL COLLABORATORS:

PRODUCERS: Branislav Srdić (Aatalanta) and
 Klemen Dvornik (Filmserve), both Slovenia

SYNOPSIS

Absurd and edgy love story with a lot of comic relief. Lucky is a pretty ordinary guy who acquires a special ability as he falls madly in love with eco-scientist Evica: he can suddenly produce electricity by masturbating. All he wants is to start a family and never masturbate again but his body cannot produce energy through sexual intercourse. Evica decides the two of them must sacrifice their relationship in order to help the Earth and humanity. They set up a factory to harness more energy, but Lucky is the only one with the special ability. He shoots to fame, only to lose his powers, which puts Evica's love to the test. Does she love the ability or the person?

STATUS

- In development (3rd draft treatment)
- Seeking development funding and co-producing partners



Barbara Zemljč

WRITER / DIRECTOR / SLOVENIA

After graduating in Philosophy from the University of Ljubljana, Barbara took a BA in Film and Television Directing at the city's Academy for Theatre, Radio, Film and Television.

She has been working for RTV, Slovenia's national broadcaster, since 1999 as an assistant director and, since 2005, as a director and screenwriter. She has written and directed several shorts and directed ten documentaries. Her live television output is vast, with directing credits for more than 20 different formats, ranging from one season to six years. In 2010, while attending ENGAGE, Barbara wrote, stage-managed and directed Slovenia's premier award show, *The Victors*, and also found the time to co-write and act in a supporting role in the feature comedy *Panem et circenses*, which is due for release in April 2011.

Alongside her work at RTV, Barbara is in preparation for a short film shoot, *Play it Again*, while continuing to work on the development of her feature project, *Love is Energy*.

“The programme has helped me tremendously...”

“The programme has helped me tremendously, especially in terms of script doctoring and feedback on my feature treatment. I have also gained a lot of knowledge about co-production and micro-budget feature productions, not to mention meeting many extremely talented mentors, writers, directors and producers with whom I am still engaging in both a social and professional capacity.”

CONTACT:
www.barbarazemljic.com



Lotta-Kaisa Riistakoski **PRODUCER / FINLAND**

» See *School of Sex* (page 42)

Elari Lend **PRODUCER / ESTONIA**

Elari is currently finishing his studies at the Baltic Film and Media School in Tallinn. Over the last two years, he has produced a number of shorts and commercials and worked as 1st Assistant Director and Production Assistant on several short and feature films in Estonia.

Outside of his ENGAGE activities, Elari is busy developing a creative documentary about people who were deported from Estonia to Siberia in 1941, a project scheduled for production in the summer of 2011. Elari is hoping to put his ENGAGE experience to the test in his quest for other European production and financing partners.



“Inspiring and encouraging...”

“ENGAGE made me realise how big and yet how incredibly small the (film) world is. On the one hand going out there and being successful feels completely hopeless, yet on the other you never know when you might bump into the one industry representative who has power to make your projects happen. It made me realise how important it is to have fresh ideas and to be able to pitch these well at any time. The meetings with professionals and sessions with fellow participants were very inspiring and encouraging. Most of all, I feel that this is just a beginning...”

Nature of Things

WRITER: Paula Mononen
CO-PRODUCER: Jana Bebrová

SYNOPSIS

Aino is an overweight 18-year-old girl who feels the world is against her. Her family ties are strong, but her parents focus on Aino and her little sister to escape from their own marital difficulties.

What Aino wants is to be loved. She posts an ad on a dating site and gets a reply from Daniel, a handsome 26-year-old Nigerian student. Aino overcomes her doubts and falls in love with Daniel – despite her friends and family's encouragement to stay away from a man whose motives they all question. The only problem is that the people who doubt Daniel are right. But when is love ever true?

STATUS

- 2nd draft treatment
- Seeking director, Finnish-based production company, development funding



Paula Mononen

WRITER / FINLAND

Paula is a screenwriter working in both film and television. Based in Helsinki, she is about to graduate from Aalto University and has a previous degree in Finnish Literature from Helsinki University. She is interested in telling stories about complex characters and developing her skills in thinking cinematically.

Roadmarkers (2007), one of the shorts Paula wrote while at university, was selected for the 2008 Cannes Film Festival, where it won 3rd Prize in Cinéfondation. Her work in television includes co-writing three episodes for the third season of the series *Easy Living* (*Helppo elämä*), which will air in March 2011, and a stint as a storyliner and dialogue writer for the 2009-10 season of the daily drama series *Salatut elämät*.

Alongside working on the first draft of *Nature of Things*, Paula has obtained a grant from AVEK (the Centre for the Promotion of Audiovisual Culture) to write a three-episode mini series for television.

“... gives you a chance to challenge yourself and to grow professionally...”

“ENGAGE gave me the opportunity to meet some wonderful and talented people and discover the cities they live in. It's amazing how much a project can develop if you really commit to ENGAGE and to the deadlines it imposes. ENGAGE gives you a chance to challenge yourself and to grow professionally. I don't even hate pitching anymore.”

CONTACT:
paula.mononen@gmail.com

Jana Bebrová

CO-PRODUCER / CZECH REPUBLIC

Jana studied at FAMU in Prague and took on a variety of film-related jobs during her studies. These included working for film companies such as animation and postproduction studio Tobogang, at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival and on a Czech-Canadian feature film co-production. Since her graduation, she has been involved as Executive Producer with Athanor, the production company behind Jan Švankmajer's films.



CONTACT:
jana@janabebrova.cz

Alongside *Nature of Things*, Jana is also in development with *Binderiana*, a Czech feature film that combines animation and live action.

“... industry professionals from all over the world...”

“ENGAGE was a great opportunity to meet industry professionals from all over the world and participants from other European countries, but also to extend my knowledge and understanding.”

5

ENGAGE 2010 BY NUMBERS:
 40 trainers, 7 nationalities

Praying With Donald

WRITER/DIRECTOR: Salla Sorri

ADDITIONAL COLLABORATOR:

CO-WRITER: Ville Kerimaa, Finland

SYNOPSIS

A runaway schoolgirl hitchhikes towards the mythical Arctic Ocean to meet her father and falls in love with an older truck driver. Lili tastes the freedom she was after, but finds herself being a stranger at her own wedding.

STATUS

- Treatment
- Seeking development funding

Salla Sorri **WRITER / DIRECTOR / FINLAND**

Salla is a Helsinki-based filmmaker with a background in dance and communication studies. In recent years Salla has worked on several international film projects, in both documentary and fiction, in various capacities (gaffer, camera, producer and screenwriter).

Salla graduated in 2009 from Aalto University (then University of Art and Design Helsinki) with a BA in Documentary Directing. She is particularly interested in subjects with societal themes that reveal the points where different discourses meet and in forms that blend the border between documentary and fiction.

Det Dolda Rummet (2009), Salla's latest short as a director and cinematographer, followed the journey of two artists aiming to paint the hidden into view. It was commissioned and screened by Amos Anderson Art Museum as part of their Gottberg-Kåhre exhibition. She is currently working on two short documentaries and will soon be heading out on a recce for her first feature project as a director.



“... a chance to share one’s experience and collaborate...”

“I came to ENGAGE to develop my own project and learn how to present it well, but what I got in addition to this was a unique chance to meet other young enthusiastic film makers and to discover from up close the pleasures and difficulties they faced with their own projects. Outside of actual film shoots, working on a film project can get too lonely sometimes, so this chance to share one’s experience and collaborate on each other’s projects is significant.”

School of Sex

WRITER/PRODUCER: Lotta-Kaisa Riistakoski

SYNOPSIS

A romantic comedy about recently retired sex worker Vicky, 54, who sets up the School of Sex to earn a living. While teaching the secrets of sex Vicky gets a lesson of love herself.

STATUS

- Treatment
- Seeking director, development funding and co-production partners

Lotta-Kaisa Riistakoski

WRITER / PRODUCER / FINLAND

Lotta-Kaisa is a freelance producer working in both fiction and documentary. She has produced several short films, documentaries and radio drama. Lotta-Kaisa is completing her MA studies at Aalto University in Helsinki, majoring in Film and TV Producing. Her aim is to create delightful and touching stories with and for people who share the same passion for moving characters and gripping storylines. Lotta-Kaisa was by far the most prolific ENGAGE participant, attached to no less than three projects beside *School of Sex: From Dublin with Love* (see page 30), *Love is Energy* (see page 36) and *Ugric Tales* (see page 44).



“... an excellent stepping stone to the world of co-productions...”

“I engaged with absolutely talented film makers, met inspiring tutors and developed really useful contacts. ENGAGE is an excellent stepping stone to the world of co-productions.”

CONTACT:

lottakaisa.riistakoski@gmail.com



ENGAGE 2010 BY NUMBERS:

6 feature film case studies
(**2** documentary films, **4** fiction films)

Ugric Tales

WRITER/DIRECTOR: Kristo Viiding

PRODUCERS: Lotta-Kaisa Riistakoski and Maie Rosmann

SYNOPSIS

A series of short films based on myths, fairytales and runic songs, dealing with the human soul's controversial, untouchable, timeless nature. Those themes are portrayed through the everyday life of a family, the main heroes being the children. Travelling through time and space, gaining knowledge of their roots and ancestors, the children gradually understand the world around them – as it was, and as it is today.

STATUS

■ In development

Kristo Viiding WRITER / DIRECTOR / ESTONIA

Kristo trained as an actor at the Estonian Music and Theatre Academy and has recently completed an MA in Directing at the Baltic Film and Media School. He is currently studying at the Escola Superior Artística do Porto (specialising in directing, cinematography, and black and white photography) and working as a freelance director and actor.

As a director who also acts (or an actor who also directs), Kristo has been able to develop a more balanced point of view from both sides of the camera.

He recently completed the short film *Amontillado*, an adaptation of Edgar Allan Poe's 'The Cask of Amontillado' and is currently in post-production with the no-budget feature *Melody of Melancholy*. In addition, he is developing an experimental film based on *Silence and Cries* (winner of the PRIX EUROPA 2010 for Best European Radio Drama) and is carrying on with his acting work in theatre, television and film.



CONTACT:

v.kristo@gmail.com

“... great to meet students and young filmmakers from other countries...”

“It was great to meet students and young filmmakers from other countries who share the same struggle to survive as independent and original artists within mainstream filmmaking, but ENGAGE made me reflect on whether working in the film industry – international co-productions, shuffling budgets, etc. – is really for me. I prefer to see cinema as an artist's reflection of the world.”



Lotta-Kaisa Riistakoski

PRODUCER / FINLAND

» See *School of Sex* (page 42)



Maie Rosmann

PRODUCER / ESTONIA

» See *Infaut* (page 32)

Wheels of Destiny

WRITER/DIRECTOR/PRODUCER: Sarah Gunn

SYNOPSIS

Murt and John, two 30-something best friends are about to embark on the ride of their life: cycling 2,100km around the coast of Ireland. They must complete this feat in 132 hours to qualify for the Race Around Ireland; they must do it in less if they want to win.

A motley crew of friends and family join forces to help two friends through one of the world's toughest cycling events. Completely unprepared, they pull together on seeing the amazing physical feat their two friends are accomplishing: climbing over 17,000ft of mountains and battling 60mph headwinds; achieving what no-one ever really thought possible... actually winning the race.



STATUS

- In post-production: currently editing the 35 hours of footage captured and cutting a 23-min short to approach TV channels
- Seeking completion funding (final edit expected February 2011)

Sarah Gunn

WRITER / DIRECTOR / PRODUCER / IRELAND

Sarah Gunn is a writer/director who is quite new to the world of film. After graduating with a BA in German and Russian in 2004, she moved to London to study at the London College of Fashion. One evening, while trying to validate the point of studying the philosophy of a projected fur revival (which actually came true!), Sarah watched *Trzaskalski's Edi*. She then spent most of the year watching films instead of cutting mood boards.

Leaving London, she led the life of a typical Arts student, wandering aimlessly from temp job to temp job, until she decided to go on a cycle tour. It was during these three months, 4,000m above sea level in the Andes and being constantly mistaken for a man on her bike, that Sarah resolved to start something she would finish. The following year she was accepted onto the MA in Screenwriting at IADT. Sarah had just embarked on a documentary project on endurance cycling when she applied for ENGAGE; she used the programme as the perfect guide for her first ever feature project.

She is currently editing *Wheels of Destiny* while working as Assistant Director on a short documentary. She has also entered pre-production on a feature documentary about the Race Across America. The film follows the partner and crew chief of a solo competitor attempting to cycle 3,000 miles in under 12 days. This is a much larger, international endeavour for which Sarah is seeking production partners in the UK, Germany and the USA. She will begin shooting in May 2011.



“ENGAGE has given me the confidence to pursue the projects I want to make.”

“I came to ENGAGE with a project I was definitely making, but had no idea how to go about making it. ENGAGE gave me the opportunity to think about my project on a much larger scale than just a personal pet project, it allowed me to think bigger and supported me at every stage of the process (I finished filming just two days before the final workshop). It was also an opportunity to learn so much about the industry in its entirety and to meet wonderful and creative people. It has given me the confidence to pursue projects I want to make.”

The Wind and the Fire

WRITERS: Eva Riley and Jenni Toivoniemi

DIRECTOR: Eva Riley

SYNOPSIS

Martin Reid leaves prison on parole after serving 13 years for the death of his father. He moves in with his devoted and emotionally scarred younger sister Marianne, who dotes on him. Marianne's caring side soon turns to control as she tries to keep Martin to herself. He struggles to cope with her demands and tries to create a new life for himself, rekindling friendships and starting a tentative relationship with an old school friend. Grappling with the complexities of the world outside prison, Martin struggles to find redemption.

STATUS

- In development (1st draft treatment)
- Seeking development funding and UK-based producer

Eva Riley

WRITER / DIRECTOR / SCOTLAND

Eva is an Edinburgh-based writer and director who graduated from Edinburgh Napier University in 2009 with a BA in Film and Photography, specialising in film directing. Alongside her work on *The Wind and the Fire*, Eva is currently working on the development of two short films as a director and as a script developer/producer on a short animated film.



“... a new opportunity to focus...”

“ENGAGE gave me the rare opportunity to make lasting relationships with filmmakers from overseas whom I may otherwise have never met. It also gave me a new opportunity to focus on the development of a feature film project. Without the framework of ENGAGE this process would have taken double the amount of time and would have been a much more lonely and less enjoyable experience!”

Jenni Toivoniemi

WRITER / FINLAND

Based in Helsinki, Jenni is constantly on the lookout for innovative ways of developing feature films (fiction or documentary) with a strong personal touch. She enjoys working with a co-writer and sees this collaboration as crucial, since the very essence of film is communication. For Jenni, a script born from a collaborative process is easier to communicate to all the other people who will have a hand in making the film happen - and to those who will eventually get to see it.



CONTACT:
www.tuffifilms.com

Jenni's first feature, *Korso*, co-written with Kirsikka Saari, is now in pre-production with Finnish production company Oy Bufo Ab. Their former collaboration, *Gorilla*, a short film for children, has been selected by numerous international festivals and recently won a Special Jury Prize at the Hamedan Film Festival.

Jenni is also working with fellow participant Maija Hirvonen on the feature documentary *Cat Trap* (see page 22).

“I have found important collaborators...”

“ENGAGE was a great opportunity to meet new filmmakers from all over. I have also found important collaborators with whom I look forward to working on current and future projects.”

Balancing training, education & industry

The Project Directors from each partner institution review ENGAGE's success so far and look forward to the future

"For the third consecutive year, we, the ENGAGE family, have succeeded in improving and refining our project. Taking into account feedback from both our participants and staff, we are continually making improvements, however small, for the following year of the programme. It's always gratifying for us to see how Europe's future filmmakers progress over the three workshops, culminating in the final pitching session in Helsinki.

"The development funding, generously provided by our film finance agencies, has once again rewarded the hard work and commitment of the emerging producers, writers and directors taking part in ENGAGE. Building relationships is crucial and we are convinced that we have an excellent balance between training, education and industry. The staff now know each other so well that it not only assists ENGAGE as a training initiative but also helps grow the co-operation between the four film schools; we are all learning from one another. As far as IADT is concerned, our daily work in Dún Laoghaire feeds into ENGAGE, and ENGAGE inspires what we do back home in Ireland. Long may it continue!"

Donald Taylor Black
CREATIVE DIRECTOR
THE NATIONAL FILM SCHOOL AT THE
INSTITUTE OF ART, DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY
DÚN LAOGHAIRE, IRELAND

"I am delighted that, throughout the last three years, ENGAGE has continued to evolve, reaching its maturity and finding its proper dimension and content. This is most evident from the meaningful relationships that have been built between the partner schools, participants and the partner countries' film industries. The scope of these links reaches further and further, to the extent that we can now see a community of ENGAGE alumni maintaining and developing their contacts and benefiting from the continued support of staff and industry.

"ENGAGE has also become an important part of our school's curriculum, as a goal for our students and graduates to aspire to. To take part in the programme is a privileged opportunity to develop a specific project and access master classes by renowned experts. It is difficult to imagine our production, screenwriting and directing programmes without this ENGAGE component.

"The truly international dimension of ENGAGE is its most crucial aspect and, should we be in a position to extend the programme further through MEDIA MUNDUS, this would give ENGAGE a truly global significance - and reflect the nature of the actual filmmaking community at large."

Jüri Sillart
HEAD OF THE FILM DEPARTMENT
BALTIC FILM AND MEDIA SCHOOL AT TALLINN
UNIVERSITY
TALLINN, ESTONIA

"ENGAGE is a great opportunity for our students to learn international co-operation in screenwriting and in developing a film project. This collaboration between four European universities that are among the best in their field provides the students - not to mention the staff - with positive experiences in overcoming the various problems and challenges always involved in developing film projects. Such positive experiences can grow into lifelong partnerships and, as far as the schools are concerned, we certainly keep learning from one another.

"The ENGAGE workshops offer nonsense, straight-forward sessions that encourage hard work and creativity, through which screenwriting and filmmaking practice and education keep evolving into something we could call 'the art of making the best of good company and wise advice'. For the students and staff of Aalto University's Film Department, ENGAGE has become one of the highlights of the year."

"ENGAGE is a great opportunity for our students to learn international co-operation in screenwriting and in developing a film project."

Professor Jukka Vieno
PROFESSOR OF SCREENWRITING
AALTO UNIVERSITY
HELSINKI, FINLAND

"Now ENGAGE has passed its third birthday it has begun to feel like an established part of the landscape for Screen Academy Scotland students and graduates. It has become one of the additional opportunities they can look forward to - though they know that places are highly sought after and they will need to put their best ideas forward and clearly demonstrate their commitment to working internationally to be selected. That in itself is something of a vindication of the ENGAGE project: it has put European collaboration firmly in the mainstream of our graduates' aspirations.

"Our staff too have continued to benefit from the opportunity to share experiences and compare notes with their counterparts in Ireland, Estonia and Finland and to network with their professional peers from across Europe. As in many cases they are themselves veterans of MEDIA-supported programmes, they know very well the value of structured professional development and get as much out of ENGAGE as they put into the participants' learning. We are all grateful for the insights taking part in ENGAGE has provided us with and look forward to continuing to engage in 2011."

Professor Robin MacPherson
DIRECTOR
SCREEN ACADEMY SCOTLAND
EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND

ENGAGING success

As ENGAGE passes its third birthday, previous participants share their success stories

Simon Arthur ENGAGE 2008 / **WRITER / DIRECTOR** / SCOTLAND

Simon has just completed his first feature film. Shot in New York in December 2009 by DoP Josh Silfen, *Silver Tongues* was edited by Simon over the ensuing months. The film follows a couple who drive across America, using their talent for acting to wreak havoc and ruin the lives of people in their path. But each manipulation and false persona begins to take its toll: soon the performances spiral out of control and the lovers set out to destroy each other.

Actors include Lee Terjesen (*Oz, Generation Kill*) and Enid Graham (*Margot at the Wedding*). The film was produced by Jared Moshé (*Beautiful Losers*) and Leda Nornang (*Ghost Town*) through Sidetrack Films.

Eva Pervolovici ENGAGE 2008 / **WRITER / DIRECTOR** / ROMANIA / SCOTLAND

The project Eva developed on ENGAGE, now titled *Ileana* (previously *Down the Rabbit Hole*) obtained development funding from the Romanian National Centre for Cinema. Strada Film, the Romanian company whose recent *If I Want to Whistle, I Whistle* won the Silver Bear at the 2010 Berlinale, are attached to produce. The project has been selected for the Thessaloniki Film Festival Balkan Fund and Eva is hoping to shoot in 2013. Eva's had a very active year, directing four short films, one of which, as part of the Berlin Today Award, will open the 2011 Berlinale Talent Campus. She is also developing another feature project with a French production company, planned for production in February 2012.

Peter Badač PRODUCER / SLOVAKIA AND **Andrew Bond** WRITER / DIRECTOR / ESTONIA / BOTH ENGAGE 2009

Earth Attacks!, the mockumentary project Peter and Andrew collaborated on as part of ENGAGE 2009, is going from strength to strength. Since attending the Mannheim Meetings at the Mannheim Heidelberg Film Festival (a prize the pair were awarded on ENGAGE), the project has attracted development funding from the Czech Film Foundation, the Slovak Audiovisual Fund and the Estonian Film Foundation. The film is currently in pre-production, with Peter and Estonian producer Piret Tibbo-Hüdgins (who was a feted guest trainer at ENGAGE 2008) attached and an August 2011 shoot planned. To complete the ENGAGE connections, Andrew is collaborating with ENGAGE 2010 participant Jelena Grigorjeva-Pazilina on the script.

Prize fund update: the 2009 winners

Runner-up: Babel's Market

Tomás Sheridan WRITER / DIRECTOR / SCOTLAND / ITALY

The first thing Tomás did with the prize money was to attend Sheffield Doc/Fest, the largest Documentary forum in the UK and one of the most important yearly hot spots for commissioning editors from all over Europe.

"Sheffield was a real reality check," says Tomás. "Approaching commissioning editors

in a relaxed atmosphere gave us the chance to see how to adapt the story to the current needs of the market thanks to their honest and encouraging feedback.

"The development aspect of the ENGAGE workshops proved to be invaluable. It was a rare luxury to have experienced lecturers and professionals offering one-to-one meetings, advice and support. The seminars and master classes also gave me a clear understanding of how international co-productions work, what we could expect from them and most importantly that sometimes the down sides can outweigh the advantages."

"Having deadlines to aim for really encouraged us to push forward with this ambitious project and the feedback from tutors and fellow participants helped us focus on the driving forces of the story."

Babel's Market is still in development and seeking co-production partners.

Second prize: The Ropes

David Tynan WRITER / DIRECTOR / IRELAND

Thanks to the ENGAGE Prize Fund award, Dave was able to devote some considerable time to developing his TV series project *The Ropes*, completing a pilot treatment, character bible and new series outline. David is seeking interest from commissioners.

"It was, in hindsight, a strange choice to choose to write a television pilot ahead of a feature," says Dave. "I don't regret that - *The Ropes* is interesting material and television drama is its natural medium. Furthermore, I enjoyed educating myself about the rigours of television drama. ENGAGE has unquestionably been one of the more progressive things I have participated in during the two years since I graduated: the development prize remains one of the most impressive credits on my CV. And, of course, just the practice of writing to deadline and pitching has made me better at both for the future."

First prize: Down the Hatch

Jenny Dahlström WRITER / FINLAND
David Lester Mooney PRODUCER / IRELAND

The ENGAGE Prize Fund award gave Jenny the opportunity to concentrate on writing full time during the winter months. She carried out further research, conducting interviews with people whose life stories were related to the issues tackled in her script. The prize money really helped push the project forward: Jenny and David both attended the Mannheim Meetings, which enabled them to garner interest from one of Finland's most successful art-house production companies. Jenny has since been awarded a grant from the Finnish Film Foundation and has been in discussions with a promising Finnish director interested in the project.

Jenny says: "*Down the Hatch* is progressing slowly but steadily thanks to ENGAGE, without which I wouldn't have had the opportunity to learn so much at the Mannheim Meetings, and without which I wouldn't have found a Finnish producer so easily."

ENGAGE 2010 guest speakers

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

Ms Tiina Lokk / Founder and Programming Director / Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival / Estonia
Mentoring, project development, one-to-one consultations

Mr David Keating / Director / Ireland
Case study: *Wake Wood*

Mr Brendan McCarthy / Screenwriter / Producer / Ireland
Case study: *Wake Wood*

Mr Andrew Freedman / Producer / Ireland
Case study: *His & Hers*

Mr Alan Maher / Production Executive / Irish Film Board
Case study: *His & Hers*

Mr Julian Friedmann / Literary Agent / UK
Pitching skills workshop

Mr Terry Iltott / Film Finance expert / UK
Film Finance workshop for producers

Ms Morag McKinnon / Director (documentary & fiction) / Scotland
Case study: *(Donkeys; Breathing); project surgeries*

Ms Mia Bays / Film Distributor and Production Development / UK
Development, Sales and Distribution for low-budget features

Mr Eddie Dick / Producer / Scotland
Film Financing - EU & Scotland

Ms Carole Sheridan / then Head of Talent and Creativity at Scottish Screen
Film Financing - EU & Scotland

Mr Karlo Funk / Head of Production, Estonian Film Foundation
Panel discussion (Baltic opportunities); pitching panel

Mr Jarmo Valkola / Film Aesthetics expert / Estonia
One-to-one consultations

Mr Jarkko Hentula / Screenwriter / Finland
One-to-one consultations

Mr Aleksi Bardy / Screenwriter / Producer / Finland
One-to-one consultations

Ms Rasa Miskinyte / Documentary Producer / Lithuania
One-to-one consultations, panel discussion (Baltic opportunities)

Ms Riina Sildos / Producer / Estonia
Panel discussion (Baltic opportunities)

Ms Katrin Kissa / Producer / Estonia
One-to-one consultations, panel discussion (Baltic opportunities)

Ms Marje Jurtshenko / Head of Programming, ETV2 / Estonia
One-to-one consultations, panel discussion (Baltic opportunities)

Mr Peeter Urbla / Producer / Estonia
Project development, one-to-one consultations, panel discussion (Baltic opportunities)

Ms Pirjo Airaksinen / Director of Programming, Channel Four Finland
Pitching panel

Ms Leena Kempfi / Dramaturg (co-productions), YLE / Finland
Pitching panel

Mr Andrew Meehan / Head of Development, Irish Film Board
Pitching panel

Mr Leslie Finlay / Development Executive, Creative Scotland
Pitching panel

Ms Christine Vachon / Producer / USA
Master class on US indie film production; pitching panel

“ENGAGE successfully brings together creative talent, in film and screen, of four European nations – Scotland, Ireland, Finland and Estonia – with strong ambitions for their creative sectors.”

Michael Russell MSP, CABINET SECRETARY FOR
EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING / SCOTLAND

Thank you

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MEDIA

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Ireland

Donald Taylor Black, Barry Dignam, Paul Freaney, Anne O’Leary, Jean Rice, Sadhbh Goodhue, Celine Blacow, Linda Doyle, Thelma Gill, Kate Travers-Hannon and Andrew Meehan at the Irish Film Board

Estonia

Jyri Sillart, Katrin Laur, Kadi Murr, Tiina Lokk, Edith Sepp and Karlo Funk at the Estonian Film Foundation

Finland

Jukka Vieno, Anna Heiskanen, Marja-Riitta Koivumäki, Ilona Virtanen

Scotland

Professor Robin MacPherson, Paul Holmes, James Mavor, Brian McGill, Oscar Van Heek, Tamara Van Strijthem, Michele Marcoux, Carol Devlin, David Griggs, Colette Pemberton and Leslie Finlay and Morgan Petrie at Creative Scotland

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ENGAGE

Contact:

Tamara Van Strijthem
Project Manager
Screen Academy Scotland
School of Arts and Creative Industries
Edinburgh Napier University
2a Merchiston Avenue
Edinburgh EH10 4NU
Scotland

+44 (0) 131 455 2615
t.vanstrijthem@napier.ac.uk

www.engage.eu.com
info@engage.eu.com

