

# Press Release



Monday 28 June 2010

## **Nick Whitfield's SKELETONS scoops Edinburgh's top prize**

**Derbyshire writer/director Nick Whitfield's debut feature film SKELETONS has been awarded the Edinburgh International Film Festival's prestigious Michael Powell Award for Best New British Feature Film. The award marks a hat trick of Michael Powell Award wins for Screen Agency EM Media with SKELETONS joining Anton Corbijn's CONTROL (2007) and Louis Pepe and Keith Fulton's BROTHERS OF THE HEAD (2006).**

The Edinburgh International Film Festival is renowned for discovering and promoting the film world's brightest new talent and the festival's jury, headed by veteran actor Sir Patrick Stewart, was unanimous in its selection for Best New British Film commenting: "The Michael Powell Award goes to writer/director Nick Whitfield whose debut feature SKELETONS best exemplifies the spirit of Michael Powell in its original vision and dark humour".

A passionate advocate and spotter of new British film talent, EM Media has been supporting long-standing Derbyshire resident and former actor and theatre director Nick Whitfield since his self-financed debut short film, SKELETONS which formed the basis of his feature. Whitfield's second short film REBECCA was developed and produced in 2007 through EM Media's DV Shorts Scheme – the digital short filmmaking scheme backed by the UK Film Council. SKELETONS the feature was developed by Forward Films in 2008 with support from EM Media.

EM Media is continuing to support Nick Whitfield with development investment for his second feature with Forward Films, TRENCHMEN, a comedy about five men returning to an English village after WWI. When the pressure of normal life becomes too much, they build their own trench to live in out on the moors. This second feature has inspired producers Forward Films to establish a permanent base in the East Midlands through new company Forward East with the producers hoping to capitalise upon the East Midlands' reputation as home to the UK's most exciting new film talent.

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Nick Whitfield comments:

"I'm very, very happy. It's an incredible honour to return to EIFF with my first feature and to win this wonderful award. Michael Powell was a magical filmmaker and true master, and we who follow can only aspire to the heights he reached and hope to get somewhere near, on those occasions when we're on top form and lucky as Hell. I owe a huge debt to EM Media who developed and financed this film and Scottish Screen who came on board to co-finance. I'm delighted to be developing my next feature with the lovely folk at EM Media, with Kate Myers & Tracy Brimm at Forward Films once again producing."

Debbie Williams, Chief Executive of EM Media comments:

"Local talent, global reach; that's the principle which informs all our work. We know the East Midlands is home to the UK's most exciting film talent, Nick's just helped us prove that with his remarkable achievement in Edinburgh. He has moved from shorts to features in just three years, and his debut has just been named the Best New British Film of 2010. He is a talent to watch, and we very much look forward to continuing our work with him and his producers at Forward East."

Kate Myers/Tracy Brimm of Forward Films and Forward East comment:

"Nick is one of the most exciting and original new voices in British cinema and we are thrilled that Nick's vision and the film have been recognised with this prestigious award. We are looking forward to continuing our successful collaboration with Nick and EM Media on TRENCHMEN."

SKELETONS is released at selected UK cinemas on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2010 [www.skeletonsthemovie.com](http://www.skeletonsthemovie.com)  
Visit the EIFF website for a full list of 2010 award-winners <http://www.edfilmfest.org.uk>

For further information please contact Emily Lappin, Head of Communications, EM Media on 0115 993 23 33 or via email at [emily.lappin@em-media.org.uk](mailto:emily.lappin@em-media.org.uk).

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## Notes to editors

### SKELETONS

SKELETONS the feature film is the tale of a mismatched pair of salesmen travelling across Britain cleaning skeletons out of closets. Developed and produced by Tracy Brimm (FAR FROM HEAVEN) and Kate Myers (BIRTH) of Forward Films the production was co-produced by Paul Welsh of Edge City Films (BIG THINGS) and was financed by EM Media with European Regional Development Fund finance and Scottish Screen.

### EM Media

EM Media is the Screen Agency for the East Midlands region of England. The agency secures finance, nurtures talent, invests in success and stimulates growth and innovation across digital content industries.

EM Media has invested in the development and production of more than 60 British feature films. These include: Jim Loach's *Oranges and Sunshine*, Paddy Considine's *Tyrannosaur*, Shane Meadows's *This Is England 86*, Nick Whitfield's *Skeletons*, Karl Golden's *Pelican Blood*, Tim Pearce's *AnDa Union*, Justin Molotnikov's *Crying With Laughter*, Samantha Morton's *The Unloved*, Brian Percival's *A Boy Called Dad*, Alexis Dos Santos's *Unmade Beds*, Nicolas Winding Refn's *Bronson*, Kenny Glenaan's *Summer*, Duane Hopkins' *Better Things*, Steven Sheil's *Mum and Dad*, Jeanie Finlay's *Goth Cruise*, Shane Meadows' award-winning *This Is England* and Anton Corbijn's award-winning *Control*.

EM Media has co-financed the first six films from Warp X, the low-budget digital studio including *Bunny & the Bull*, *She*, *A Chinese* and *All Tomorrow's Parties*.

EM Media has also financed games and virtual worlds including the soon to be launched *Space Ark and Hunter's World*, as well as *mixm8*, *Beauty Salon*, *Geon: Emotions*, *Bugs of War*, *Manifest* and *Spell Souls*.

Visit [www.em-media.org.uk](http://www.em-media.org.uk).

### Forward Films

Forward Films is a London based film development and production company set up by producers Tracy Brimm and Kate Myers. Forward's first feature, *TORMENTED*, directed by Jon Wright (BBC Films/Screen West Midlands/Slingshot) was released in 2009 through Warner Bros. Forward's ' upcoming projects include *THREE MILE HORIZON* by Richard Warlow with Saul Dibb (*THE DUCHESS*) directing for Paramount Vantage, *GRABBERS* by Kevin Lehane, the company's second collaboration with director Jon Wright; Andrew Bovell (*LANTANA*)'s adaptation of *THE BRIDE STRIPPED BARE*; an adaptation of the bestseller *SHARP OBJECTS* for Pathe and Nick Whitfield's second feature *TRENCHMEN* with EM Media.

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