

Horatio

Directed by Louis Neethling

Find magic where
you least expect to.



Mutt & Jeff Pictures

Present

Horatio

Director	Louis Neethling
Co-Producers	Alison Lynch
	Louis Neethling
Writer	Alison Lynch
Director of Photography	Alex Ryle
Editor	Louis Neethling
Composer	Dave Low

Bora Tukenmez
Heike Brunner
Steven Webb

LOGLINE

Find magic where you least expect to

There are signs of magic everywhere

SYNOPSIS

Horatio is a mystical, ghost-like character who briefly touches the lives of two people - signs appear and tokens are left.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Original Format	High Definition
Screening Format	Widescreen
Aspect Format	1:2:35
Sound	Stereo (L+R)
Duration	9'34
Accessibility	Captioning and Sign Language
Tape for screen	DVcam, Minidv, DVD PAL/NSTC, Digibeta

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

I made a conscious decision with this film to get out of my comfort zone. Firstly, by making an Art film and secondly, by seeing if my film will satisfy both a mainstream audience as well as a Deaf audience. Mainstream audiences generally don't like sub-titles or understand Sign Language and Deaf audiences want to see their culture in their own language and never the twain shall meet. The story has almost no dialogue and I wanted to think of a way of creating a visually stimulating and atmospheric picture that would satisfy both audiences. I asked Dave Low (Composer and Final Mix on Coming Out) what was and was not possible using special effects and together we came up with some ideas. We then worked together on the storyboard to make sure that everything was clear before the shoot. The Director of Photography, Alex Ryle (D.O.P on Coming Out) did some test shots in the location so that we could decide on the format and lighting. We were mindful of the limitations of the size of the book shop and also the need for non-flammable lighting (the shop is absolutely crammed full of second hand books). We shot using JVC HD and this is my first time using 1:2:35 format.



ACTOR BIOGRAPHIES

Bora Tukenmez (*Horatio*)



Bora was born on 27th July 1977 in Istanbul, Turkey. He has appeared in a number of short films, including Louis Neethling's *Dis?ABLE* (2001) that scored him a Remark! Film and TV Awards nomination in the category of Best Actor. He starred in the role of Mark in the BBC TV drama series, *Switch* (2001-2006), directed by Louis Neethling. He travels widely and works as a designer.

Heike Brunner (*Pam*)

Heike hails from Johannesburg, South Africa. After obtaining her Dramatic Arts degree, she gained experience in television by writing and presenting *Fabusopes*, a daily comic



horoscope show and acting in a TV series performed in Sign Language (directed by Louis Neethling). Since leaving South Africa, Heike has lived and performed in London, Berlin, Vienna, Los Angeles and Paris on stage and in film. In an attempt to expand her horizons, Heike co-produced & co-wrote a stage play in French for the Avignon Festival. She also translates plays and screenplays for French

authors and is a weather announcer on the international news channel, *France 24*. She is a passionate blogger with a weakness for mint-chocolate meringues and cats. In her spare time she paints irregularly and rather badly.

Steven Webb (*Young Man*)

Steven graduated from Reading University with a degree in theatre studies and also a BETC National Performing Arts at Barking College. He spent one year with Theatre Resource, a Community Theatre Company based in Ongar, Essex as part of his additional theatre



training. His acting credits include Unicorn Children Theatre 'Spirit of the Clown' 1996, Tandem Theatre 'Mountain Language' 2000, Deafinitely Theatre 'Loss' 2002, 'Two Chairs' 2003, 'Motherland' 2003, 'Children of a Greater God' 2005'. His TV Credits include BBC 2 'Switch' and Channel Four 'Rush'. He was one of the co-founders of Deafinitely Theatre, which is still the only professional, Deaf-led theatre company in UK today. His professional

theatre-directing debut came in March 2004 with Deafinitely Theatre's production, 'Dysfunction' at the Oval House. He later developed the play into a full length script which he directed at Soho Theatre in July 2006 and later on a national tour in November 2006. After leaving Deafinitely Theatre on mutual terms, he co-founded Deaf Youth/Children Theatre Company called DRoots Theatre in March 2007, the only professional, Deaf-led theatre company that specialises in Children and Youth Theatre. Steven will be directing DRoots' new play; inspired by the Grimm Brother's 'Shoemaker and the Elves' at the end of 2008.

FILMMAKER BIOGRAPHY

Louis Neethling – Director/Co-Producer



Louis is an award winning director who co-founded Mutt & Jeff Pictures. His work has appeared on television and film festivals around the world. Credits include: *Switch* (5 series of an award winning, ground-breaking Deaf continuing drama on BBC2) *Coming Out* (most recently shown at X'08 London International Disability Film Festival and on See Hear BBC 2) Louis's passion as a director is for translating stories into pictures that connect and resonate with the audience. Described as "a natural communicator and problem solver", he transcends being labelled as one type of director.

Alison Lynch – Co-Producer/Writer

Alison has worked in film, theatre and television in a variety of roles: dancer, assistant choreographer, communication support worker (CSW), writer and producer. This is Alison's second production in the role of producer for Mutt & Jeff Pictures.

Alex Ryle – Director of Photography

Alex began his career in drama as an assistant cameraman before graduating to operating and second unit photography, subsequently studying under Brian Tufano BSC at the NFTS. Selected Short Films:



2007

Horatio – Short Art Film in association with Mutt & Jeff Pictures. Dir. Louis Neethling – 10 mins HD

Out of Order – A young man with Asperger's Syndrome discovers his independence in a new friend. Dir. Catriona Mac Innes – HDCAM. Screen Academy Scotland.

2006

Coming Out – Short Comedy in association with the British Deaf Association. Dir. Louis Neethling – 5 mins, HD.

The Summer House – Short drama set in France in 1969. Dir. Daisy Gili – 12 mins, Super 16mm

Lillie – Short Drama set in Southern Cyprus with Hettie Baynes. Cranberry Films. Dir. Christiana Askanis – 25 mins, Super 16mm

Freshwater – Short drama set on the Isle of Wight. Dir. Nigel Taylor – 20 mins, HDCAM

Church Going – Short Drama about faith and religion starring David Haig. Dir./Prod. Ashley & Russell Inglis – 20 mins HDCAM

Award Nominations

2007 - Nominated for Broadcast Young Talent Award (Best Lighting/Camera)

2004 - Nominated for Young Talent Award (Best Lighting/Camera)

2002 - Nominated for B+/Broadcast Young Talent Award (Lighting/Camera)

Dave Low – Composer/Special Effects



Dave works as a freelance multimedia designer in NW London. After training as a student in Worcester and then Cheltenham, the start of his career saw him drawing maps of the North Sea for the petroleum industry. He then went on to designing print-based media such as brochures, signage, leaflets and corporate logos. After moving to London in early 2001, he concentrated on screen-based projects using 2D and 3D animation, DVD authoring, videography, motion graphics, sound and music production. He has authored DVD cover disks for the Sun and Times newspapers, produced video compilation DVDs for chart-topping dance acts Chicane, Rozalla and Agnelli & Nelson as well as designing and producing a 55 disc DVD series "Images of War" for Marshall Cavendish. In November 2007 Dave started his own company, IDO, offering design, 2D and 3D animation and video services. IDO has provided Art Direction, music and digital effects for the short film "Horatio" from Mutt & Jeff Pictures

PRODUCTION COMPANY

Mutt & Jeff Pictures was founded in 2007 by Louis Neethling and Joel Kellhofer. Louis and Joel have used self-deprecation as a way of people remembering their company. So, in honour of his adopted home town, London, Louis decided on using Cockney Rhyming Slang - Mutt & Jeff =Deaf. The remit of the company is to specialise in high-quality drama for both film and television which draws wholly or in part, on the huge range of professional production and acting talent that just happens to be deaf.

To date Mutt & Jeff Pictures have produced two short films on shoestring budgets: *Coming Out* and *Horatio*. Mutt & Jeff Pictures are also in the process of looking for development funding for the feature, *Stoned Love* by Jenny Lecoat.



MAKING HORATIO

Getting the production off the ground

The starting point for this film was that Louis was owed £250. “We have two possible scripts, £250 – let’s make a film!” Two storylines were developed to try out new genres and techniques. However, it soon became apparent that only one of the scripts could be made with next to no money. Begging emails were sent out – about fifty emails in total and Louis eventually heard back from five companies who donated £250 each. The original script was set in a library but when it came to booking the location it became apparent that nearly all of the public buildings in Hillingdon belong to a film location agency. Plan B. An amazing second hand bookshop was found and it proved to be a source of inspiration. The script was adapted and it became an entirely different



project. The new script contained hardly any dialogue and it was decided that it was important to find deaf actors who could carry this off. Three of the actors travelled over from Europe; Bora Tukenmez from Denmark, Carola Wisny from Norway and Heike Brunner from France. The biggest worry once all the actors had been booked was finding accommodation for them all (many thanks to family and friends who helped with accommodation and transport.) All props and art work were done by Dave Low from IDO and friends, Tracey Clark and Jane Hamilton. The West London Film people were great in helping to get all the proper permission and parking sorted before the big day. A local café agreed to do the catering and Eileen May from The Eastcote Second Hand Book Shop was phenomenal in allowing the crew to be in her shop from 7am until 8pm at night, moving her books about and not complaining once! It was a great team for the production – many of whom had worked with Louis before. In fact without Alex Ryle, Billy Brooks and Dave Low from IDO coming on board, there wouldn’t have been a film at all.



Script

“My fingers emit sparks of fire in expectation of my future labours”

The starting point for the script was this quote by William Blake. The lead character, Horatio, a mysterious, silent, tramp like creature, evolved from this quote. Later on when the location was moved from a library setting to the wonderful second hand book shop the script took on another life. There were so many amazing books in the shop, literally floor to ceiling - Horatio would use poetry as a means of communicating, touching and influencing the two stranger's lives.



An eclectic mix of poetry from: William Blake, William Shakespeare, John Clare, John Donne, Rumi and Sri Chinmoy helps shape Horatio as a man out of time for all time.

Production

The focus of this production was on making a 'different' type of film. Louis trying out stuff that he doesn't get to do in his 'bread and butter' work. Louis wanted to make this sweet and simple story into a visually rich film that would leave the audience thinking about the



had been beautiful. Louis discussed his ideas on the style of the film with Alex.

film afterwards. So, once Alex Ryle agreed to come on board as DOP, Louis and Alex spent time discussing which format to use for the shoot.

Alex had shot Louis's previous short film, 'Coming Out' on his JVC HD 101E and the results



Alex: "You're a TV person and you like to use 16.9. We should try something different if you want it to feel like film."

Alex then did several test shots inside the book shop using different formats and then Louis sent them over to Dave Low at IDO for testing the special effects he wanted.

Louis and Dave worked together on the storyboard and decided only to storyboard for the special effect scenes.



A day before the shoot, Louis had a rehearsal with the actor Bora Tukenmez. Louis wanted to try out something new for a film using Sign Language -he didn't just want a translation of the poetry into British Sign Language (which is difficult enough).

He wanted the messages of love and hope in the story to be accessible to as many people as possible. Bora worked on the poems in International Sign Language to convey the emotion and atmosphere needed for the role.

Louis decided to edit this film on AVID Xpress HD and then hand over to Dave's FINAL CUT PRO for the special effects.

The Cast

Louis knew who he wanted for the lead character of Horatio, Bora Tukenmez. However, Bora is not an easy guy to get hold of (his freelance designing work in Denmark keeps him busy) It was also not definite whether Bora could even get in to the UK until a week before the



scheduled shoot because his work- permit in Denmark and his visa entry to the UK were up for renewal. Why didn't Louis use a British Deaf actor? The pool of Deaf actors in the UK is incredibly small and Louis wanted an actor who would complement the rich visual style he



had planned for the film. There was no plan B as far as the role of Horatio was concerned. The role of Pam was taken by Heike Brunner. Louis had worked with Heike in South Africa and was delighted that she agreed to travel over from Paris for the shoot. The role was not specifically written for a Deaf or hearing actor but it was important for Louis that whoever took the role understood Deaf culture and Sign Language. The Young Man in the story was more difficult to cast because although his character doesn't say anything it was important to find someone who would be convincing reading the message from Horatio. Louis had worked with Steven on Switch and was happy that Steven agreed to come on board.

The Shoot

The shoot took place in the second week of December. On a freezing morning at 7am, Alison Lynch and the runner, Josef Baines prepared the shop for the crew to set up in. They had to move at least 800 books before there was room enough for Billy Brooks to set up his lights. Louis and Joel Kellhofer (who had driven down from Newcastle the night before) picked up the actors: Heike (who was suffering from Flu), Bora and Carola. The make up artist, Samantha Pearce set up the wardrobe and make up department between bookcases in the far end of the book shop. As the shoot began, it became apparent that book shifting would be the order of the day. Louis's skills as a problem solver were pertinent because the space and time was so tight he decided to use only 2 areas of the shop rather than the 3 original intended areas. Alex, Billy and Helen McGovern (sound) were absolute saints concerning the lack of space. At one point, Alex had his camera half in the loo to get the angle he wanted. To add to this cramped mix was Billy's smoke machine, Tracey Clark, who managed yoga type movements to capture the shoot in stills and Jean Breeze (interpreter), who climbed

over and around books to ensure there was effective communication on set. A memorable part of the shoot was Louis improvising with a leaf blower on Field End Road, Eastcote, to lift cascading paper dolls from Horatio's trolley and some Hitchcock type moments when most of the crew became extras in a street scene. It soon became apparent by tea time that Louis was going to be pushed for time. It was originally thought that the shoot would be wrapped by about 7pm, however, many of the scenes with Bora had yet to be shot by then. With energy reserves running low but morale still high the shoot eventually was all over by 8pm. 50 slates later the film was in the can.



Post Production

This was Louis's first time editing his own film on AVID Express Pro HD. It took him 3 days to complete the first cut. Louis went back to the edit after Christmas with 'fresh eyes' and re-cut it. In total there were 5 cuts. Louis then handed the final cut to Dave Low (IDO) for the special effects. The 35 effect shots were all created in Adobe After Effects and they range from subtle lighting enhancements to dramatic sequences using motion-tracked particles and light glows. Louis showed the film complete with special effects and music to his friends the director, Lesley Manning and the writer/special effects designer, Andy Walker. Louis trusts Lesley and Andy's judgement with the sound/audio aspects of his film making absolutely and it is important for a Deaf director to have such a friend and mentor. There were only a couple of notes from Lesley and Andy concerning the music and a visual effect at the end of the film. Louis went back to Dave and they completed the film in early February 2008.

Crew



The project was blessed by having a great crew on board. Everyone, apart from Helen McGovern, had worked for Louis before. What is so heart warming is that they still agreed to work for Louis knowing that there was a minute budget and not much financial reward at the end of the day. Louis would like to pay tribute to the crew's enthusiasm and sheer hard work.

INCLUSION

This project was a 50% Deaf and 50% hearing team effort. (All effortlessly done thanks to the interpreting skills of Jean Breeze and the fabulous personalities in the crew)

Full Credit

Directed by.....Louis Neethling

Horatio.....Bora Tukenmez

Pam.....Heike Brunner

Young Man.....Steven Webb

Love.....Carola Wisny

Sign Language Interpreter.....Jean Breeze

Director of Photography.....Alex Ryle

Sparks.....Billy Brooks

Sound..... Helen McGovern

Art Director.....Dave Low

Contiunity..... Joel Kellhofer

Stills.....Tracey Clark

Make Up.....Samantha Pearce

Runner.....Josef Baines

Editor.....Louis Neethling

Special Effect.....IDO

Music.....IDO

Producers.....Louis Neethling

Alison Lynch

Executive Producer.....Louis Neethling

Joel Kellhofer

Excerpts from

The Bait.....John Donne

Auguries of Innocence..... William Blake

Time Stands Still.....Sri Chimnoy

First Love.....John Clare

The Untold Want.....Walt Whitman

Sonnet 29.....William Shakespeare

There is A Candle in Your Heart....Rumi

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