



The ROAD DANCE



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A FILM BY RICHIE ADAMS

OFFICIAL WEBSITE | OFFICIAL STILLS

117 minutes | Drama | United Kingdom | English | Not Rated

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LOGLINE

In a small Scottish village at the dawn of World War I, Kirsty yearns for adventure and another life across the ocean. When the village hosts a road dance for departing soldiers, an unspeakable incident changes Kirsty's life forever.

SYNOPSIS

In a small, remote village in the Outer Scottish Hebrides, Kirsty (Hermione Corfield) yearns for adventure and another life across the ocean. Though she finds comfort in time spent with her mother and younger sister, she sees hope and a future with Murdo (Will Fletcher), an intelligent, curious poet. The two fall in love as World War I looms, and Murdo is soon conscripted to join the other men of the village to fight. As a gesture of farewell, the village hosts a road dance, a celebration attended by every resident, but this sense of community is soon shattered by an unspeakable incident that changes Kirsty's life forever. Sensitively adapted from John MacKay's 2002 novel, this sweeping tale of adversity and resilience captures the attitudes of the time while offering a moving melodrama for audiences of any time period.

RICHIE ADAMS — DIRECTOR

Richie Adams is an award-winning filmmaker/title designer ('Babel,' 'CREED,' 'Ad Astra') who cut his teeth under the mentorship of iconic title designer, Richard Greenberg ('Alien,' 'Superman,' 'The Matrix'), and has since worked with many of the giants in the motion picture industry including Alejandro Gonzalez Iñárritu, James Gray, Doug Liman, and newcomer Ryan Coogler.

As writer/director, his 2016 feature 'Of Mind and Music' (Joaquim De Almeida and Oscar-Nominated Ruth Negga) was released to critical acclaim, winning many juried/audience awards, including best director. Adams was also the co-writer, director, and producer of the 2018 award-winning, critically-acclaimed short film 'American,' starring George Takei and Leonardo Nam.

Adams is currently involved in the development of several feature film projects, including: An original script based on the life-story of one of the NFL's most lauded Hall-of-Fame quarterbacks, Jim Kelly and his wife Jill, surrounding the life and loss of their only son against Jim's battle with cancer.

An adapted screenplay based on the book 'Mr. Townsend & The Polish Prince' which tells the story of Joe Purzycki, the first white football coach ever hired at an HBCU college in 1980, and the controversy and racial conflict en route to eventual triumph following his hire by Delaware State athletic director Nelson Townsend.

An original screenplay titled 'Pedro Pan,' inspired by the true events of Operation Pedro Pan, the mass evacuation of over 14,000 unaccompanied Cuban children to the U.S. between 1960 and 1962.



RICHIE ADAMS | DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

After being presented John MacKay's novel, what intrigued me most against the reality of war-torn 1916 was the innocence of characters on a remote Scottish island, the idyllic yet Spartan life they led, the harsh seaside environment with its thick-walled stone habitations that deflected wind and cold, and of course the first love shared by Kirsty Macleod and Murdo Macaulay. I was captivated by the excitement and escape they found in stories and poetry, their dream of a better life, perhaps in a place called America—and not suspecting the vile act that would come and tear Kirsty's world apart.

As a writer, my first job was to translate the rich story and characters John MacKay created in his novel into film. But for me, directing is when those characters truly come to life, meeting the actors who will breathe life into each role, and them educating me on “back stories” they've created, informing every decision they'll make throughout the story.

I fondly recall my conversation with Hermione Corfield—the actress who would become ‘Kirsty.’ She said, “I think Kirsty keeps what happened to her a secret from those she loves, not out of shame but more to prevent them from carrying the burden that she has to . . . which is what makes her such a strong character.” I knew then we were in good hands.

I was further blown away by the rest of the cast assembled by Colin Jones—veterans like Mark Gatiss and Morven Christie, and newcomers such as Will Fletcher, who plays Murdo, and who I daresay will amaze people when they learn this is his first film.

And a character that will truly mesmerize audiences is the Isle of Lewis. My jaw dropped when I got off the plane and finally arrived at the humble blackhouse village that would be the film's setting, juxtaposed against the Atlantic Ocean where it collides with the jagged coastline of the Outer Hebrides.

Part of my process and that of Petra Korner's—our fearless DP, was to map out each location, roughly blocking out scenes in order to wrap our heads around where to put the camera, constrained by the tight schedule we were up against. Some of the stills Petra took during pre-production were so beautiful, each location dramatically framed against back-lit sun. Then, of course, once we started filming, the sun waved goodbye and gave way to heavy winds and gusting rains. But the film is the better for it. All the wind and rain endured by the cast and crew those five weeks of filming truly drove performances and underscored the drama on screen.

I couldn't be prouder of ‘The Road Dance’ and the hard work of our amazing cast and crew, and I'm really excited for audiences to see the film.

CHAPTER ONE – ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

In 2002, news presenter turned author, John MacKay, saw his acclaimed debut novel ‘The Road Dance’ become a bestseller in his native Scotland. Set on the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Scottish Hebrides, it’s a place close to his heart. He has family there, in the actual Gairrannean Village where the film was shot. And he spent childhood summers romping through its picturesque, remote landscape. His tale is profound and powerful, set amidst the devastation of the First World War. Two decades after being published, the story is finally making its way to the big screen, thanks to producer Jim Kreutzer, who optioned the novel off the back of an opportunist phone-call.

JIM KREUTZER. *“I cold-called John and said, I have a small production company, I don’t option books unless I make the movie, unlike other big studios that option and re-option and never make them. I told him I’d done it once with Tommy’s Honour and I made the movie. John believed me and came on board.”*

The Chicago-based Kreutzer, of Sheridan Road Productions (SRP), then turned to his colleague Maryilene Blondell, who lent an indelible and essential touch to this female-led story.

Jim then shared the project with Uinta Productions, who had been the principal financier of *Tommy’s Honour*. After reading John’s book, Uinta loved the story that was centered around a strong young woman dealing with an issue that was very relevant to the current times. However, Uinta had reservations about the current draft of the script. After working with the producers, and struggling with several redrafts of the script, Uinta sent the book to Richie Adams, who they were collaborating with on several projects, including the award-winning short film, “American,” starring George Takei.

RICHIE ADAMS. *“I was sent the book, and once I read it, I thought the blackhouse community was incredible and the characters that MacKay brought to life so vivid. As readers and audiences, we want to be transported to places we’ve never been or seen before. That’s what initially drew me to the story. And as I read the story, I could see a movie unfolding.”*

After more than a year of working with the producers on finalizing a script that everyone was supportive of, Richie sent the draft to John McKay.

“It was great to hear that John MacKay really liked the script and was happy with the liberties I took and understood why I took them. That was really important.”

Having MacKay’s blessing was imperative, but what was even more beneficial was the author’s willingness to collaborate with Adams.

RICHIE ADAMS. *“He was my authenticity expert. If I had questions about Scotland or anything tied to the Isle of Lewis, John not only had the answer, but responded immediately. I was blessed with our relationship.”*

Steven Shapiro, another of the producers on the film, also commented on MacKay’s personal affiliation to the tale, and now to its cinematic adaption.

STEVEN SHAPIRO. *“John’s family actually grew up in the village that we shot in, so there’s a lot of history there. This project is a combination of John’s imagination and Richie’s interpretation of John’s imagination. But when it comes to making a movie, once we’re financed and we’re putting actors in the movie and we’re going to shoot on location, it’s what is on the page of the script that counts.”*

Adams, who has a background in designing title graphics, working on the likes of ‘Babel’ and ‘Creed,’ was drawn in by the resilience and inner strength of his female protagonist, Kirsty MacLeod, played by the impressive Hermione Corfield.

CHAPTER ONE – ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

RICHIE ADAMS. *“I'm attracted to stories where a character has to overcome something big in their life. Sometimes a person's journey is riddled with events that you couldn't even imagine happening, but when they do, the most beautiful thing is to see them rise above the adversity and find a way to overcome what's happened.”*

Embarking on the most challenging, yet rewarding role of her career, Hermione Corfield stepped forward to play the complex protagonist Kirsty MacLeod. She admitted that the book was a mere reference point for her, that it was Adams' script that she truly studied.

HERMIONE CORFIELD. *“I did read the book, and I took what information I needed, and then focused on the script. After a certain point, you have to just tend to the script.”*

Morven Christie elaborated on what it was about this tale that drew her to the project.

MORVEN CHRISTIE. *“I really thought the bones of this story were so pure and it was very beautiful. I could see the bones of something special. I also wanted to go to the Isle of Lewis, a very remote, very isolated place way out in the middle of the sea, during a pandemic. I was really into the idea of a bunch of people getting together and working really hard to get this ambitious thing done.”*

She wasn't the only cast-member drawn in by the prospect of the experience of shooting in such a mystical landscape, especially in the midst of a year when the entire world was drifting through lockdowns, as Mark Gatiss – who plays the Island's resident doctor – explained.

MARK GATISS. *“It came at an incredibly good time, when everyone was going crazy with boredom. And I have an incredible soft spot for anything set in the mystical islands. ‘I Know Where I'm Going!’ is one of my favourite films. ‘Whiskey Galore!’ and ‘Local Hero’ too. I've always wanted to go up there. So it was a no-brainer.”*

Of course, it's not just the cast who have to spend time on location, crafting and creating the art we eventually immerse ourselves in. Austrian cinematographer Petra Korner spoke of her initial contact with the production team, and what attracted her to getting involved in telling the story.

PETRA KORNER. *“The script came to me in the midst of the pandemic slump, and it was completely and exactly what I had been looking for. I was aching for something more character driven, where the director would be more of an auteur rather than an employee. This felt like the perfect project.”*

“As to creating the indelible look we see on screen and what we used as inspiration, we really took the screenplay as the reference. We looked at a lot of films that evoked certain feelings that we wanted in our film. I looked at photojournalism of fishermen and farmers to get more of a feeling of the people and the environments they were in and how they blended into their environment.”

CHAPTER TWO – FINDING THE RIGHT CAST

‘The Road Dance’ is a film that is very driven by the strength of the characters that make up the story. Several of the most gripping scenes are dialogue-heavy, emotional two-handers, requiring the perfect cast to bring this tale to life. None more so than lead character Kirsty MacLeod, but it’s a challenge that young actress Hermione Corfield rose to – and strikingly so.

HERMIONE CORFIELD. *“Playing Kirsty is terrifying because this is such a precious story, and I didn’t want to mess it up. You want to do it justice, and you want to give this woman’s story every inch of yourself. You never know what your dream role is going to be until it’s put in front of you.”*

Though of course this story is set during the outbreak of World War One, Corfield said that she was able to connect to the character of Kirsty, primarily in her longing to leave home and achieve her dreams.

HERMIONE CORFIELD. *“She’s a dreamer. She is someone that aspires to leave and go and find a new life. She wants big things for herself and seems to think bigger than most people in the village. These huge aspirations are quite rare, and they’re not necessarily connected to marriage and men, which is quite unusual in that era. I too grew up in the countryside. We had no phone signal. I had to walk for an hour to the top of the hill just to get a text. I definitely did imagine what my life could be.”*

This feels like something of a breakthrough role for the actress, which could well do what Lady Macbeth did for Florence Pugh, and it’s not just audiences who will be stirred and impressed – Corfield’s colleagues were too.

MARK GATISS. *“She was marvellous. She is absolutely luminous on screen, just a joy to be around. She carries so much heavy stuff so lightly. It’s a very moving performance, and completely committed. I was hugely impressed by her.”*

PETRA KORNER. *“Hermione is really quite something. She was so real and fresh. It could’ve gone so wrong had they got the casting wrong. It could’ve very easily slipped into a melodrama. But Hermione really pulled it off.”*

Richie Adams also sang the praises of his leading lady, who was the first and only actress considered for the part. *“I was thrilled when Hermione accepted the role,” he said. “She is a fiercely hard worker. She always came to set incredibly prepared. Her instincts were always right on the money, so helpful.”*

RICHIE ADAMS. *“I could sense from her that she knew exactly where she needed to be throughout the entire arc of the film, and she did. There was an incredible level of subtlety in her range of emotion, and not all actors have the ability to dial in that level of emotion. She had an enormous task because the story largely centres around her. The way she was able to command the screen and make all of those intimate moments so captivating was quite incredible.”*

Corfield’s on-screen sister Annie was played by American actress Ali Whitney in her debut feature film – and she too spoke of her time collaborating – and living - with Corfield, and what she took out of that experience.

CHAPTER TWO – FINDING THE RIGHT CAST

ALI WHITNEY. *“Hermione has become one of my best friends now,” she explained. “We were flatmates, and she had the hardest schedule of all of us, I don’t think she had a day off. Because of a false Covid scare which pushed us back, we were then working six-day weeks. I was in awe of how easy she made it look. She’d come home, and we’d make dinner together and have a glass of wine, decompress, be normal twenty-something girls, and get up to go to work together at 6am the next morning. I feel really lucky I got to learn from watching her performance and how she carries herself as a leading actress. It’s very easy to find people who are not as generous and gracious with their time, especially if they’re the lead in such a demanding role, but she really was.”*

Whitney is one of a handful of impressive youngsters in a film populated by an array of talented young actors, many of whom were relatively inexperienced at this level of their craft. Whitney’s role was different from her co-stars, but no less challenging. While Annie didn’t have a lot of lengthy dialogues to work with, Whitney featured brilliantly in some of the film’s most dramatic sequences.

ALI WHITNEY. *“Annie really serves as the family anchor throughout the film. She doesn’t have many lines but she’s a steady and strong character throughout, and I felt power in her presence. It’s quite challenging stepping into a character who doesn’t speak much but is in almost every scene. I had to go into each scene thinking how best to make my presence felt.”*

Another hugely impressive newcomer is Will Fletcher, who plays Kirsty’s love interest, Murdo – and producer Steven Shapiro feels confident in the English actor’s potential going forward. “He is going to be a star. That guy is destined for great things,” he said simply. What helped, no doubt, was that Fletcher connected deeply with the character’s longing for something new, similar to Corfield’s connection with Kirsty.

WILL FLETCHER. *“When I was growing up, I was in a village, and there was always a thirst to get to the city. Kirsty and Murdo both share a thirst for adventure and optimism. They’ve also got an opportunity their parents never had. Travelling is more accessible. Going to America seems scary but it can be done.”*

Richie Adams admitted that the casting for the role of Murdo was one of the most arduous and time-consuming – yet he knew he landed his man when he saw Fletcher’s audition tape.

RICHIE ADAMS. *“Will chose to read the letters that Murdo sent to Kirsty when he was off to war. He didn’t do a scene. He just sat there reading to the camera. He was very passionate, very intense. And I was like, that’s our guy! However, Will is in very good shape. Murdo was meant to be more bookish. So that and the fact Will had never been in a film before took a little convincing when talking with the producers to get everyone on board. But I knew that if he gave a tenth of what he showed me on his tape, he would be “fireworks” on screen.*

When asked about this striking audition tape, Fletcher smiled and said humbly, “I’m very new to this.”
In fact, Fletcher’s performance was so convincing, that Mark Gatiss hadn’t even realised the young actor was English.

CHAPTER TWO – FINDING THE RIGHT CAST

MARK GATISS. *“I couldn’t believe Will wasn’t Scottish and I was a bit disappointed when I found out he wasn’t. He even looks incredibly Scottish. Like he was made in a Scottish factory. I said to him that whenever we meet, he’s got to keep it going, because it disappoints me otherwise.”*

For actress Morven Christie, who plays Kirsty’s mother Mairi, the experience working with a talented young cast was something to cherish.

MORVEN CHRISTIE. *“I love working with young actors, it’s one of my favourite things to do. Hermione is an incredibly unique being. She’s really mature, she’s really fun, and she works with such diligence and commitment. There’s very little ego involved in what she does. She had such a job on this film, morning until night in heart-tearing scenes, she just showed up and did them. Her performance is so gentle and yet so powerful, she doesn’t show you anything. She just lets it come. I think for her age that’s really unique. How hard she worked on this made everyone work hard. She set a tone, which is what leading actors do.”*

“Ali was also much fun, such a little firework, an absolutely blast to be around, and her energy was super needed at times because she’ll just break into song, or break into dance to lighten the mood. I think Ali has a great future. I have no idea what she’s going to do, she’s so different from that character. I see her high-kicking on a Broadway stage. But there’s such a feel of youth about this film, and it really hammers home the poignancy of the young people in it having it all robbed by the war, or by what happens to Kirsty.”

The challenges were not exclusive to the younger cast, each character comes with so much depth and nuance, and Mairi is as layered a role as they come – but that was music to Christie’s ears.

MORVEN CHRISTIE. *“Mairi lost her husband when her girls were very young, and she was just fossilised with grief. She is stern, closed-off and very lonely. Her relationship with her girls is quite damaged by that. What interested me in this character and this family was the idea of grief living in the house like another family member. Everything she thinks and does comes from this place of loneliness and loss.”*

Hermione Corfield, who has been on the receiving end of a vast amount of praise, was quick to dish it out too, and spoke highly on her on-screen mother.

HERMIONE CORFIELD. *“Morven is phenomenal. She’s very honest and powerful and her performance blew me away. I just needed to be in the moment with her.”*

Perhaps the most experienced of the leading cast is Mark Gatiss and the esteemed actor rose to the challenge of the role as the doctor, one of the more complex within this production.

MARK GATISS. *“As I was reading it I thought – I know how to do this. It’s that avuncular figure that we sort of grew up with. We had a doctor, and he was just so trusted. It has been somewhat eroded these days. But it was a real part of the fabric of growing up. There were certain establishment figures who had that kind of feel to them. They’re the person you’d go to if you were in trouble, no matter what it was, for advice. I thought it was interesting to play that.”*

According to producer Maryilene Blondell, Gatiss brought all of his experience and affability to the set in a profound and effective way.

CHAPTER TWO – FINDING THE RIGHT CAST

MARYILENE BLONDELL. *“I am forever grateful for Mark’s presence in this film. This was a gamble for him, make no mistake about it. When he arrived on the island, the entire dynamic of the production changed. The gravitas that he brought was extraordinary and you could see how everyone’s performance was elevated every time he was involved in a scene, it was a sight to behold.”*

It's a role you may not necessarily link to Gatiss, and with that in mind, Adams praises his casting director, the celebrated Colin Jones, for this inspired decision.

RICHIE ADAMS. *“Mark was incredible,” Adams begins. “He is the charming, funny soul that we've come to know and love. Doctor Maclean was written as charming, but not quite as humorous. Colin was the genius who thought Mark might bring that added element to the film.*

For Jones, it was just a thrill to have managed to secure the likes of Corfield, Christie and Gatiss, because as he says – it’s a rare thing to land all of your first choices.

COLIN JONES. *“We were really lucky with those three. They were our first choices, which is unusual. There was one project I worked on where the lead role was offered out 19 times before we cast. That’s my record. But these guys were our first choices. But you can see why they signed on, given their roles.”*



CHAPTER THREE – AN AMERICAN IN SCOTLAND

There are unlikely to be two more contrasting landscapes, than Baton Rouge, Louisiana and the Isle of Lewis in the Scottish Outer Hebrides. But visual storytelling transcends location, and Richie Adams had a deft, sensitive touch, and a clear and meticulous vision for his screenplay – and if anything, his outside perspective served the narrative at hand.

RICHIE ADAMS. *“I'd never been to Scotland, but I sometimes feel that coming at it from an outsider's perspective, you're able to glean things that maybe someone who grew up there takes for granted. They may not understand or comprehend exactly how beautiful and mystical it is. I think that was an asset. But being an American taking on the story, a big responsibility, “I wanted to make sure I did it justice.”*

Adams felt that despite the geographical distance, he could still connect to the themes at play.

RICHIE ADAMS. *“I grew up in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. And the moment I could get away after I graduated high school, I was gone. I moved out west to Boulder, Colorado, then moved to Los Angeles to pursue my interests in film, and ironically, now am back home in Baton Rouge!”*

Mark Gatiss agrees with the sentiment that often it can take an outside eye to bring out the best in a location.

MARK GATISS. *“Take James Ivory, an outside eye who could make the most English films in the world. I remember when I turned up. Richie had been there for months,” Gatiss recalled. “I think he'd gone slightly native; he bought all the tweed on the island, he'd gone completely Hebridean. I don't think he'd ever worn that much heavy clothing.” “But we had a really good time, he was very helpful and welcoming and open to ideas. I would say ‘that sounds a little American,’ the language or something, and I'd ask to say something else, and he would.”*

STEVEN SHAPIRO. *“What makes Richie the right man? He was involved from such an early stage and became so intimately familiar with and passionate about the material. He brought something out in the book and characters that I think was unique.”*

What makes Richie the right ‘man’ is in itself an interesting turn of phrase, as there may be some who feel this story would’ve been better left in the hands of a female filmmaker. But Morven Christie highlighted a point, which is the importance of having women in key jobs across departments. Of course, what also helps, is how collaborative Adams was in letting their ideas be heard.

MORVEN CHRISTIE. *“We had a female DOP in Petra Korner, which I think was really valuable because the female gaze is different. Being surrounded by lots of women making this story, Richie wouldn't have had a lot of opportunity not to be collaborative. Our gaze and our collective perspective was always going to fill the space because we're there and we're doing it.”*

“Plus, Hermione is such a beautiful force of nature, and has such a profound strength., But it comes from a totally non-combative place, and I think her energy facilitated a collaborative environment because she never let anything become combat. She's got a lot of grace. There was a lot of freedom and collaboration. We made a lot of script shifts and Richie was really open to that.”

It's this collaborative streak within Adams that his co-workers highlighted most when describing what it was like to work with him on this project.

CHAPTER THREE – AN AMERICAN IN SCOTLAND

ANNA MOULD. *“He’s very clear with what he wants and also very open to things as well. As much as possible we’d show him everything in advance, and if there was something that wasn’t quite right, he was open to alternatives.”*

COLIN JONES. *“I’ve really enjoyed working with Richie. He’s unusual because he’s from a background in credit sequences, and he produces his work so he’s much more across the operational side of it as well, and for something as ambitious as this, that’s a good thing. He seriously drove it through.”*

But above all, on a set like this one that encountered many logistical challenges, mostly thanks to the unpredictability of the weather forecast, Adams remained calm and level-headed. Perhaps that’s the Louisiana in him.

HERMIONE CORFIELD. *“He was very relaxed. He was really good at letting us bring what we wanted to bring. He respects and trusts the actors, which is a really lovely thing because it means you have the ability to be free and make choices. There was a really nice freedom there.”*

This sentiment was echoed by Ali Whitney, who smiles when recounting the director’s instruction to ‘keep jamming.’

ALI WHITNEY. *“He’s very visual and he has a vision for what he needs. You don’t think about all the little details, you’re just there to worry about your performance, but he does. There were times when we’d spend so much time on a specific shot, but then I watch the movie back and it all comes together. He was really trusting with his actors, once we rolled the camera, he would say ‘just keep jamming with it.’ That was his phrase.”*

While most of the actors and heads of department were working with Adams for the first time, there was one man who knew the director inside and out, and that was regular collaborator Carlos José Alvarez, the composer of the film’s quietly powerful score. Their working relationship goes back years, and it’s a friendship the composer holds very dearly.

CARLOS JOSÉ ALVAREZ. *“Richie is a true collaborator. He is truly a visionary director and knows and feels that his job is to bring the best out of his team. He really does know when to trust us and when to step out of the way, and when to jump in and guide the ship. I think it promotes the best work, and I would say out of all the films we’ve done, this is without question the best work I’ve done with Richie.”*

“The more we work together and the more he matures as a director, he was clearly born to do this. There is nothing else Richie should be doing in this life. He is a natural problem solver, and very much a commander-in-chief when it comes to making films. He just knows how to reel the team in and keep us inspired and keep us true to what we’re doing.”

High praise indeed – and it was given back, as Adams comments on what Alvarez brings to the project, working remotely back in the States during production. Though such a distance didn’t stop the composer working closely with those on the island.

RICHIE ADAMS. *“I was extraordinarily pleased that this is my fourth project with Carlos. He is a classically trained composer, very much a student of music. He had already done the research that he needed to do, and he reached out and found a music producer on the island, Keith Morrison. Then he found Alasdair White, who happens to be one of the foremost Scottish fiddle players. We got lucky there, as Alasdair lives in New York. But he was visiting his parents on the Isle of Lewis, because that’s where he grew up. And he was there when we were. But we only had a day before he left, so we knew if we were going to do it, we had to record it that day. So, we did.”*

CHAPTER FOUR – BATTLING AGAINST THE ELEMENTS

“Everyone thought we were crazy to shoot in the Outer Hebrides in October and November,” Richie Adams said, when looking back on the unique, and hugely challenging experience of making this movie in such a harsh, unpredictable environment.

RICHIE ADAMS. *“I had been warned to expect all four seasons in the same day, and that’s just what we got. We had lots of rain, a little hail and it was always windy and cold. But that’s what makes filmmaking so much fun. It’s such an organic process and everyone is affected. The actors are definitely affected by these things. The performances would have been different if we didn’t have all the wind and rain. Plus, it would get dark around 4pm every day, so we had to be incredibly methodical and incredibly efficient. The actors had to nail it. We were blessed if we got more than two, maybe three takes. But I come from the trenches as an independent filmmaker, so I’m used to the fast pace. But I definitely wasn’t used to all of the rain. It rained pretty much every day.”*

Rain of course is frustrating any given time, but in this instance, Adams explained that it could really have affected the shoot – if it wasn’t for a happy accident.

RICHIE ADAMS. *“There was this one set of ruins away from the village, and it was incredible, it looks right out on the bay. But it had no roof, and we knew we were going to be confronted with rain. So, the idea was to build off the stone remains—a set of roof timbers, to offer rain cover when we needed it, because we knew we wouldn’t have the luxury to shoot on a stage for those particular scenes. Of course we would need permission from the owner to do this—so I’m like, fingers crossed. Then someone piped up, ‘You know that’s John MacKay’s grandparent’s land.’ I smiled and had a hunch John would look favorably upon our plan.”*

The unpredictability of the weather affected all departments, and production designer Anna Mould spoke of how it caused issues with her work.

ANNA MOULD. *“The weather was so unpredictable. Some days we were walking around in t-shirts and five minutes later we’d be driving back through hailstones. It was quite a battle making sure that we had weather cover on sets, and additional pressure because we had to have both exterior and interior set built up, so if we’re out doing an exterior and it stormed, we could jump into an interior set.”*

But Mould admitted that while the weather was an issue, shooting on location, and in the exact same location the film is genuinely set, also came with some benefits.

ANNA MOULD. *“We were really lucky because there was a village museum and the woman who runs it has lived there her whole life, so she was the fountain of all knowledge. She was really helpful in all the historical stuff, a really helpful resource.”*

Meanwhile costume designer Gill Horn also commented on how incredibly taxing a shoot it was at times, and where she had to fall back on her own experience in this area.

GIL HORN. *“It was always going to be challenging. Being very remote, you are constantly exposed to the elements which can be gruelling at times. Thankfully I’ve filmed in various remote places in Scotland over the years and already knew we had to be prepared for all seasons each day. Mostly gale force wind and torrential rain and mud were our challenges.”*

CHAPTER FOUR – BATTLING AGAINST THE ELEMENTS

PETRA KORNER. *“The wind made everything impossible. I knew there would be extreme wind so we wouldn’t be able to have lights on stands. That wasn’t a possibility. So, I went with a very minimalistic approach and had to really schedule, right down to the minute, what our scenes would be, so that when the sun did come out, it would be in the perfect place.”*

“During the actual scene of the road dance, there was the biggest rainstorm ever, it was insane when we shot that sequence, it was pouring down and the wind was destroying everything, and I couldn’t set up any lights. Plan B was a firepit, I was planning to light a fire if we couldn’t get our lights up, but the storm was so strong it blew away the fire, and nothing stayed. We ended up lighting with LED tubes. Our gaffer was dancing around the camera, and I was trying to direct him so he wouldn’t show up in the shot. Everyone was such trooper; it was like a battle that had to be won.”

Mark Gatiss, who was very vocal in his desire to make a film in such a mystical, naturally cinematic location, unsurprisingly chose to embrace and celebrate the challenges that comes with such a unique shooting experience.

MARK GATISS. *“It was magical. The weather isn’t so much against you, there’s just literally no escaping it. The weather changes every five minutes.”*

“When I got the train back, I kept stopping off in places I’d only heard of in the Shipping Forecast. It really is so remote, it’s a different world completely. Obviously, we were filming in the last remaining Black House village, which is an open-air museum, and that really helped immerse us in what it must’ve been like, and how hard it was to live that life. We had our faces turned to the wind and the rain the whole time and it did immerse us all.”

MORVEN CHRISTIE. *“What was challenging about the Isle of Lewis, was if you film in Glasgow or Edinburgh or London, you’ve got so much around you. Lewis is far and it has a very unique personality of its own because of its remoteness and because of its landscape. If all the locations are unreachable by road, you had to carry the kit up there and hope for the best. And you can’t put an umbrella up while it’s chucking with rain; you’re stuck with coats over your head.”*

“Most of us live in cities, and there’s so much around you to entertain yourself and distract yourself, so much social life. In Lewis you spend a lot of time on the land, and you spend a lot of time by yourself, and that does connect you to a different part of yourself. I always feel like the place is a character in the story, and it’s also a character in the experience of making the story, so it definitely informs performance. It’s contradictory because on one hand it’s space everywhere you look, for miles and miles. But at the same time, it has this very small community feel, where everybody knows who you are. There’s so much freedom and yet so little freedom.”

For Will Fletcher, he too was blown away by the incredible landscape in which they were shooting this film on.

WILL FLETCHER. *“When I first walked onto the set, it’s like a million-pound movie set,” he said. “We were so lucky being able to work in the actual place it’s set. We all went and chose our houses and where we would’ve lived, where our parents would’ve lived, it was all playing a game and creating a world from this village.”*

RICHIE ADAMS. *“The location surpassed my imagination. It was so incredible.”*

The filmmaker did admit that the challenges did weigh him down at times – particularly when adding Covid-19 into proceedings.

CHAPTER FOUR – BATTLING AGAINST THE ELEMENTS

RICHIE ADAMS. *“Filmmaking is already hard enough. But now everything takes longer. Everyone's wearing a mask, except the actors who were allowed to take off their masks while filming. But I can't take my mask off, even while trying to communicate with the actors. I need to be able to run up to someone. That's my style as a director, getting right up there with them, talking with them. And that was a challenge. The wind was blowing and we're all wearing masks, and nobody could hear anyone.”*

In order to overcome such a myriad of different hurdles placed in their way, what was required, above anything else, was diligence and talent behind-the-scenes. Morven Christie believes that was the case, appreciating all of those who worked tirelessly to bring this story to the screen, come rain or come shine.

MORVEN CHRISTIE. *“We had some superstars, we really did. We had some magical people. Everyone's job was made so much harder by Covid. So, the fact they were able to be that brilliant was a miraculous, herculean effort. These were the toughest circumstances that I have ever shot in. It was so hard, and yet I just think what came out of it is really special.”*

HERMIONE CORFIELD. *“Everyone puts in such a shift, every single department. We were in such tough conditions. I just think everyone, every single day, stood up and did their job to the best of their ability. Every single person was so present and there for it.”*

“But it was very exhausting. I loved every second of the work, but it was freezing cold out, like my shoes were melting off my feet at one point, because they weren't proper period shoes, not built for the mountains. Physically it was exhausting. I'm not a method actor, but I definitely step into a world when I'm working, so the elements and the harsh weather and the bleak landscapes definitely informed all of our performances.”

When shooting on location, though the elements make things hard, it adds such a degree of authenticity to the whole project, and that extends not only to those working on the actual set, but also back in LA, with the realism of the film perpetuated by composer Carlos Jose Alvarez.

CARLOS JOSE ALVAREZ. *“This was an opportunity for me to dive into the ethnicity and the folk music of the era. I'm Cuban, and there's this thing called Latin music, and there is so much nuance from within a country itself. There's nuance from the East to the West, so I have a relationship to this idea that there is nuance from island to island, from country to country. I didn't want to do some bastardised version of their music, I wanted to stay true to it.”*

“Richie is doing this for the people of Lewis, and if they watch this film and they don't feel like they're being represented properly, it's “mission failed” for him, and for me too.”
Of course, that led into the next, vital point: are there bagpipes in this score?

CHAPTER FOUR – BATTLING AGAINST THE ELEMENTS

CARLOS JOSE ALVAREZ. *“We have some bagpipes,” Alvarez laughs. ‘But what is interesting about bagpipes is that the Highland pipes are very different from the Irish pipes, which have a very melancholic, melodic nature to them. These bagpipes have this military sound, used to scare other armies. I wanted to use it in a militaristic, traditional way. But it was more of a colour in the score rather than a melodic voice. I remember the musicians thanked me for not using Irish pipes on this score.’”*

RICHIE ADAMS. *“When you think of Scotland, you almost immediately think of bagpipes. What was really special is that John MacKay’s son plays a set of bagpipes in the film that he inherited from his great-grandfather which were played in the First World War.”*

It’s not just bagpipes that the Highlands are known for, as Will Fletcher found out.

WILL FLETCHER. *“I fell in love with black pudding. I went up there a vegetarian and I came back obsessed with the stuff. It’s amazing, from Stornoway.”*

Fletcher’s vegetarianism not lasting too long, wasn’t the worst thing for his colleagues on this shoot.

MARK GATISS. *“Will made us all a roast dinner. He’s a brilliant cook. He cooked us this brilliant meal before the end of the shoot. He’s the ideal husband, he just has to keep the Scottish accent.”*

Gatiss also smiled recalling another nod to classic Scottish culture, in the form of a hairpiece.

MARK GATISS. *“I wear Stanley Baxter’s toupee on the film. Like being crowned by Scottish royalty. It’s a really good fit, so I’m going to wear it for the rest of my life. Professionally, anyway.”*

It seems to have been these little moments that created such a magical shoot for all involved. Battling against the elements made this whole experience a truly special one - a project to be cherished.

PETRA KORNER. *“This really made me realise what filmmaking is about, and why I got into this business in the first place. It was a back to the roots kind of project that I long to do again. They don’t come often.”*

ALI WHITNEY. *“The biggest takeaway from me is that I walked away from this thinking that indie filmmaking is the best experience. It’s not glamorous, you really are a family roughing it together. But I felt like I had the best experience, come rain, come thunderstorm. I was so happy to be there. There was a day we had to go in the ocean, and I genuinely thought, whatever happens, happens. If you die of hypothermia at least you had a fun time doing it.”*

In hindsight, this independent production was able to be completed in the midst of the pandemic for two reasons. First, Richie’s script attracted a wonderful cast and crew, starting with Hermione Corfield. Uinta was clear from the beginning that they did not want to make this film without a strong lead in the role of Kirsty. Second, Uinta had the confidence in Steve Shapiro to be the lead producer on set, under these very difficult circumstances.

CHAPTER FIVE – CONNECTING TO THE PAST

Though set during the outbreak of the First World War, there are themes at play during ‘The Road Dance’ that offer a striking pertinence to the modern day. What Kirsty has to go through, and the subsequent shame that she is forced to feel, is something women are still going through today, giving this film a quietly powerful, feminist undercurrent – particularly in how strong the trio of female lead characters are in Kirsty, Annie and Mairi – who have to overcome some of the most tragic and devastating situations imaginable.

HERMOINE CORFIELD. *“I think the way that Kirsty overcomes this thing that happens to her was what drew me in. As a woman I've certainly experienced things that I could relate to in terms of this story. This still happens all the time, and there are still places around the world where you're considered a ruined woman if this were to happen to you, even though it's not your fault.”*

“Fault and shame are massive themes. This is still a big dialogue. The themes are incredibly relevant, as is the secrecy when something like that happens to you. When do you speak up? When's the right time to speak up? And who do you tell? These issues and stories like this are always going on.”

Morven Christie, who is involved heavily in some of the more dramatic, and difficult scenes during this film, ponders whether being in period setting can make some of the themes easier to digest.

MORVEN CHRISTIE. *“Take the series ‘I May Destroy You,’ there are lots of nuanced, modern conversations in drama about consent and about rape and abuse. But I think sometimes the closeness of that to our modern day-to-day life almost makes it harder for some people to watch, so sometimes just creating a little bit of distance, by it being in a historical time, or a remote place, creates enough distance for the audience to receive the nuggets of it without feeling like it's too personal.”*

Ali Whitney, who completes the trio of the MacLeod family – felt that when it came to depicting these themes, that are so powerful and personal to women, it was essential to have a female perspective behind the lens in Petra Korner.

ALI WHITNEY. *“The fact we had a female lens with Petra was so important and as a female actress I really appreciated having her there. There's some heavy material and some of these scenes are pretty dark and they depict some pretty tragic truths that many women in their lifetime face, and Petra did an awesome job of capturing it and making us feel comfortable.”*

“It's what drew me to this script because yes it took place in 1915 but the sad reality is, the subject matter is still very prevalent today. My hat goes off to Hermione, I am in awe of her, she did such an incredible job portraying the real struggle that women face when they deal with something like that, and it was so truthful, she handled it with so much grace. Actors are real people too. Every woman can, at some point or another, relate to that feeling of being scared or going through something traumatic, and I really felt like we all supported each other, and Hermione just led the way by being such a rock star. I really felt like the women supported each other on this set, and I felt really supported by the veteran actors who had done it before.”

Another vital female presence behind-the-scenes was that of producer Maryilene Blondell, and she admitted to feeling a great sense of responsibility in bringing this story to life.

CHAPTER FIVE – CONNECTING TO THE PAST

MARYILENE BLONDELL. *“For me this film has many personal themes, as an individual, and secondly I think the message is that you must overcome whatever life hands you, no matter how tragic that is or how difficult that is, you mustn’t ever give up. You must persevere and not let those experiences define you and I think that’s the story of Kirsty, and Hermione does an amazing job of capturing that.”*

This female-led production is something of a rarity too when it comes to stories from this particular period in time. So often films set during the First or Second World Wars, hone in on the male experience, set in the trenches or the war-rooms. But ‘The Road Dance’ is a reminder that the War was being fought by everyone.

HERMIONE CORFIELD. *“Particularly for a place this small, all the men leaving was half the village, the women were left to keep farming and keep everything working. This could have been the story from the battlefield, but I think it's a new angle and I think it's extremely important to see. It's a war drama, but it's less about the war. It's more about what happens when people are left behind.”*

RICHIE ADAMS. *“There's a song that is used in the film as source music, called ‘Keep the Home Fires Burning’. That's what the role of the women and those left behind was - to stay positive and keep life going. These women had to be strong, and this movie depicts that. So many communities were devastated by the effects of the First World War, especially villages such as on the Isle of Lewis.”*

“My family has a long military history. I am very much drawn to war movies. Shooting this, the one reference that was really helpful was Peter Jackson's film, ‘They Will Not Grow Old’. It happened to be playing for one night in Baton Rouge around Christmas time, the very week I was writing the battle scene—talk about a gift from God.”

To help bridge that emotional gap for the viewer and ensure that the themes are as powerful as intended, and as relevant as they are – it requires a sense of authenticity in bringing this time period to life, and costume designer Gill Horn had a huge job in that regard, in capturing the exact look of the characters that make up this story.

GILL HORN. *“I have to confess that the research and creation of the costume is my most favourite part of my job. I’ve designed for both period and contemporary drama - but my passion lies foremost with period. I spoke to a couple of uniform specialists in Scotland and England. The writer John MacKay had a couple of great family photographs which I was keen to make a nod to. Scottish soldiers wore kilts and the Seaforth Highlanders were a kilted regiment. I was able to get permission to use their tartan and the uniforms were sourced from ‘Angels’ the costumiers. Some pieces were original and authentic, for example the WW1 kilts and both the original and replica uniform tunics used. The featured Celtic brooch came from my personal collection.”*

Anna Mould, the production designer, was also very meticulous in her design of the trenches for the film’s vital, if somewhat brief scenes out on the battlefield. Her only disappointment was that they didn’t feature heavily enough.

CHAPTER FIVE – CONNECTING TO THE PAST

ANNA MOULD. *“I’m sad we didn’t see more of the trenches because we spent a good few days getting them ready and I loved the trench set that we built. We also had issues with that as we had such heavy rain for a few days and it literally filled them up to the top with water and we had to pump them out, but I was still really pleased with it. It was still quite a task because we had to go and find a big patch of empty land. But then every field looks the same as the landscapes that we see all over. So, we were trying to find a patch of land we could then say was the trenches but luckily we found this empty quarry so we had to get a number of diggers out to create that and with the help of SFX as well, they did a really good job adding all the smoke and everything, we really got the atmosphere.”*

Though the scene in the trenches is brief, Will Fletcher – who of course features in the aforementioned sequence as his character of Murdo, liked the fact that the war was a prevalent theme throughout, even if not always depicted on camera.

WILL FLETCHER. *“I loved the unseen terror of the First World War. We still have wars now, but we can see photos and video footage of where they are. But back then, you just hear the numbers come back, of the tens of thousands of people dead from Northern France.”*

Despite the tragic aspect of these scenes, he did admit to having some fun playing them.

WILL FLETCHER. *“It was the funnest day. We were all dressed in kilts, screaming in the mud, throwing ourselves around. I fell over and cut my knee. The blood was oozing out. It was also the coldest I’ve ever been in my life. The weather was particularly bad that day. But going to the trenches that day, I think it almost gave us an insight into how harrowing it actually was back in the day.”*

CHAPTER SIX – FINDING LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

There can be no escaping the fact that ‘The Road Dance’ is a moving and upsetting film at times, with several scenes that can be a real challenge to sit through. And yet despite this, what Richie Adams wants audiences to take away from the experience is a feeling hope, as he sought to try and find lightness amidst the dark story that unfolds.

RICHIE ADAMS. *“I try to find the light in whatever darkness there is. I knew that this story would have a tremendous amount of dark times. But in the community, the way people get beyond things and survive the harshness of the landscape, is with humour.”*

“I would say that was the same for all of our crew. Petra is a ray of sunshine, so optimistic. She's like a butterfly, gleefully bouncing around from setup to setup, and a fiercely hard worker. It was very much a happy, positive crew. Which was needed because ultimately this is a story of hope. I hope audiences will feel the same way. I think this is the beauty of life, being able to know where those glimmers of hope are and clinging to them. And then ultimately overcoming whatever is thrown at us, to achieve our dreams. It's the overcoming that drives me, not just the struggle.”

HERMIONE CORFIELD. *“I want a resounding feeling of hope. You have to feel hopeful watching how we experience exceptionally dark times in our lives but come out of them. We all have the ability to fight through.”*

Corfield also spoke about how there were certain personality traits of Kirsty’s, that rubbed off on her as a person.

HERMIONE CORFIELD. *“I always take something from each of my characters, and I'm taking away Kirsty’s strength and her resilience and her ability to be strong in situations. When I came back from doing pick-ups for ‘The Road Dance,’ my house had been broken into. I was very calm in how I reacted to that, and I feel like maybe it's her character. I didn't feel as afraid as I think I maybe would have been.”*

Morven Christie also enjoyed the experience playing a character with a great deal of inner strength.

MORVEN CHRISTIE. *“That’s what I love about what I do. The ability to explore parts of the human experience. When things happen to you in your own life, you got skin in the game. I think when you explore it in performance you can really begin to sense and feel and recognise the stages of these things.”*

“Everyone is flawed, we’re all flawed – that’s what being human is. With Mairi it’s very clear where her flaws come from. They come from grief and loss and being abandoned by the death of someone that she needed and loved and living in a place where to ever find that companionship again would be impossible. What I take from her, is that you’ve never died inside. It’s never over, we’ve all got the ability to reinvent and be reborn and realise and reawaken. But I do think that generally, acting is going inside yourself to find the qualities that are in the character, even if you don’t use them in your life. Because I kind of fundamentally believe that all of it is inside all of us. We just have to find it. Hermione is an incredibly strong woman anyway. She didn’t find that from nothing, that was in there already.”

Christie also admitted being one of the few actual Scottish performers in the leading cast, she felt a responsibility in doing the setting justice – in ensuring that the hope is felt.

CHAPTER SIX – FINDING LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

MORVEN CHRISTIE. *“There was a possibility of some characters being dour, Mairi being one of them, presenting the island and the islanders as a really negative place and with really negative people, and I was really focused on not allowing that to be the case. The way Kirsty feels is completely understandable, we all want to spread our wings when we’re young, and be free, and build our own life and our own world. But that doesn’t need to be a reflection on the people or the place. I also love female freedom stories. To have a young woman break free of the constraints around her and find her own way, in difficult circumstances, I want people to see that and find the Kirsty in themselves.”*

What helped ensure the film avoided a sense of being dour, was the fun the cast and crew had making the movie.

MORVEN CHRISTIE. *“Sometimes the heavier the material the more of a laugh you can have outside of it. When that scene is complete, and it’s done, and you can shake it off. You have to release it.”*

Partly what helps ‘The Road Dance’ avoid a sense of melodrama, is the score – the subtle composition by Carlos Jose Alvarez, bringing power to the narrative in how withdrawn it was at times, certainly living up to the notion that sometimes less can be so much more.

CARLOS JOSE ALVAREZ. *“The past films that I’ve done with Richie have called for more music. But when I saw this cut, Richie and I both had this thought that this one was going to be different than the stuff we’d done together before. The performances are so ridiculously powerful in this film, the actors deliver it on an epic level. With music you’re either supporting a scene or telling the audience something they’re not seeing in the psyche of the character, or band-aiding moments that need some love. There were a couple of moments where Richie wanted score and I said that he needed to trust what he had done, it’s powerful enough.”*

“We didn’t want it to feel really Hollywood, or overly manipulative. As they started editing scenes, we realised it didn’t need score. That’s a huge part of a composer’s job, to not be precious, because at the end of the day it’s about the audience. I’m not about the score shining. It’s about the movie shining. We were super careful and cognisant of any moments that felt manipulative. I’m very proud of the lack of music in this film.”

“I walked away from this a different musician, a different composer. Every now and then you score something, and it reminds you why you wanted to do this, and this film was one of them. I love telling powerful, beautiful stories that hopefully move and inspire people. To be able to contribute my talents to something like that is very fulfilling.”

The score manages to convey Kirsty’s strength to the viewer, and it wasn’t just the music that was vying to explore this theme, as the subliminal messages extend to the aesthetic too, as Petra Korner, the cinematographer, explained.

PETRA KORNER. *“What we did with Kirsty’s character is we tried to make her stand out a bit. I loved the notion of blue, and the way we connected Kirsty with the sky and the sea, and the freedom that they bring. Whereas her mother and her sister were more grounded with their colours and framed with a lot of soil, we played around with that a lot.”*

CHAPTER SIX – FINDING LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

GILL HORN. *“I was keen to use lighter colours and texture to represent her free spirit. Then darkened her pallet and made her more hidden post the events at The Road Dance, that threatened to squash her spirits.”*

Well it certainly seems to have worked, for hope emanates off the screen, and for Ali Whitney, this is what she wants audiences to take away, first and foremost.

ALI WHITNEY. *“I want audiences to feel the strength that comes through the female characters, and I hope that while it is a tragic story, they walk away feeling somewhat hopeful. I’d love an audience member to feel moved by the strength of women supporting women, and the strength women have in general. This shows what can happen if you open up with other people and share your stories, you don’t have to go through anything alone, even if it feels like that sometimes. The second she opened her heart to her sister and her mother they had her back. I hope that people feel moved by that.”*

Finally, Mark Gatiss also comments on finding that lightness in and amongst such a variety of dark themes and sequences, and he was pleased to report that even his mother-in-law enjoyed the film, and they can be somewhat difficult to win round, after all.

MARK GATISS. *“I watched it the other night when my mother-in-law was down. I think it has a very broad appeal, and this is the sort of film I always like to see myself. It has a nice, old-fashioned quality and yet it actually deals with stuff that obviously wouldn’t have been dealt with once upon a time. I think people will really enjoy the drama of it and the feel of it. For me personally it feels like it joins the ranks of those mystical Island films, and while not being whimsical, it’s actually quite a tough movie, you can really be drawn into the drama of the whole story and of Kirsty’s experience.”*

“I suppose Kirsty is from the first generation to have expectations of something better, that she can lift her eyes to the horizon and think, no I am going to go somewhere better.”



CAST

Kirsty Macleod	Hermione Corfield
Mairi Macleod	Morven Christie
Doctor Maclean	Mark Gatiss
Peter	Sean Gilder
Murdo Macaulay	Will Fletcher
Annie Macleod	Ali Fumiko Whitney

CREW

Richie Adams	Director / Writer
Jim Kreutzer	Producer
Maryilene Blondell	Producer
Steve Shapiro	Producer
Petra Korner	Director of Photography
Matt Mayer	Editor
Carlos José Alvarez	Music
Gill Horn	Costume Designer
Colin Jones	Casting
Ludovic Lasserre	Production Sound
Larry Zipf	Post Sound
Rick Chefalas	
Christine Cant	Make-up/Hair
Anna Mould	Production Design



CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Hermione Corfield

Hermione stars in ‘The Road Dance,’ which won the 2021 Audience Award at the Edinburgh Film Festival. In 2020, her feature film SEA FEVER was released, directed by Neasa Hardiman premiering at the Toronto Film Festival. She starred as Freddy in the Alibi and Showtime series WE HUNT TOGETHER which has just completed filming on for the second series. In 2019, Hermione completed filming the heist crime drama THE MISFITS alongside Pierce Brosnan, Jamie Chung and Tim Roth, which came out this Summer. She also starred in BORN A KING, the extraordinary real life story of a 14 year old teenage Arab prince, also starring Kenneth Cranham and Ed Skrien. In 2018, she led the cast of RUST CREEK directed by Jen McGowan. This same year, she played the female lead in SLAUGHTERHOUSE RULEZ, a Stolen Picture comedy with Michael Sheen, Simon Pegg and Nick Frost. Hermione previously starred in the ITV period drama series THE HALCYON, co-starring Olivia Williams, Jamie Blackley, and Kara Tointon. She also appeared in Guy Ritchie’s highly anticipated action-adventure film KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD with Charlie Hunnam, Annabelle Wallis, Jude Law and Aidan Gillen. In 2017 she also featured in Paramount Picture’s XXX: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE. The third film in the xXx series in 2017 also starred Vin Diesel, Samuel L. Jackson, Ruby Rose and Nina Dobrev. Hermione also appeared in Lucas Film’s STAR WARS: THE LAST JEDI (2017) as Tallie Lintra, an A-Wing pilot. In 2016, Hermione starred in the fantasy drama FALLEN, based on the popular young adult novel series by Lauren Kate. In the same year, she portrayed ‘Cassandra’ in the adaptation of Seth Grahame-Smith’s horror parody PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES, which starred Lily James, Sam Riley and Charles Dance. Hermione’s first role was in the 2015 mystery-drama MR. HOLMES (2015) alongside Ian McKellen, Frances de la Tour and Hattie Morahan. That same year, she appeared in MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: ROGUE NATION, the fifth instalment in the ‘Mission Impossible’ franchise, with Tom Cruise, Simon Pegg and Jeremy Renner.

Morven Christie

Morven Christie most recently featured in ‘The Road Dance,’ which had its world premiere at the 2021 Edinburgh International Film Festival. Christie’s prolific film slate also includes ‘Lilting’ and ‘The Young Victoria.’

She is widely recognised for starring in critically acclaimed television series including BBC’s “The A Word,” ITV’s “Grantchester” and “The Bay”, and Amazon Studios’ “Ordeal By Innocence”. Following her training at Drama Centre London, she has featured in numerous Royal Shakespeare Company productions, including “Much Ado About Nothing,” “Romeo & Juliet” and “King George.” She has also featured in Sam Mendes’ “The Cherry Orchard” and “The Winter’s Tale” at the Old Vic and BAM in New York.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Mark Gatiss

Mark Gatiss most recently featured in ‘The Road Dance,’ which had its world premiere at the 2021 Edinburgh International Film Festival. He has also featured in Academy-Award winning films The Father and The Favourite. He will soon be seen in the forthcoming Mission Impossible 7 and Operation Mincemeat.

He is the co-creator and executive producer of the multi award-winning Sherlock and more recently Dracula – both for BBC One. He also wrote and starred in several episodes of Doctor Who. His additional TV credits include Tycho Nestoris in HBO’s Game of Thrones and Stephen Gardiner in BBC Two’s Wolf Hall. He is also one quarter of the critically acclaimed comedy team The League of Gentlemen.

Will Fletcher

Will trained at RADA then at Bristol Old Vic Theatre school before graduating in 2019. He went on to star in The Girl Who Fell at Trafalgar Studios, directed by Hannah Price. Since then, he shot a pivotal one episode role in the new Lord of the Rings series in New Zealand. Currently he is shooting the lead in independent feature ‘The Road Dance’ alongside Hermione Corfield, directed by Richie Adams. The feature won the Audience Award at the 2021 Edinburgh International Film Festival. Up next Will will be featuring in the ITV adaptation of Tom Jones.

Ali Fumiko Whitney

Just wrapped the feature film, SNOWVALLEY, where she has a large supporting role. Ali just stepped off the set of the indie feature filmed in Scotland, entitled, THE ROAD DANCE which is headed to Edinburgh film festival. Most recently seen performing alongside Disney pop star AJ Mitchell as the lead female dancer at the MTV Video Music Awards live. Ali has worked all over SoCal in regional houses and is featured as a guest star in season 16 of Bones on Fox alongside Pentatonix. She is an original cast member in the world premiere of “Marilyn!” the New Musical at the Paris Casino, Las Vegas. Ali is a trained musical theater performer currently based in NYC.

MUSIC BOX FILMS

Music Box Films is the prestigious North American distributor of acclaimed international, independent, and documentary feature films. Recent releases include Eric Gravel's César nominated thrilling social drama *Full Time*, starring Laure Calamy; Rebecca Zlotowski's New York Times Critic's Pick adult drama *Other People's Children* starring Virginie Efira; and *The Unknown Country*, Morrisa Maltz's SXSW Road Trip Drama starring Lily Gladstone. Since its formation in 2007, Music Box Films has distributed award-winning films and art-house favorites that include Academy Award winner *Ida*, *Meru* (from Oscar-winning filmmakers Jimmy Chin and E. Chai Vaserhelyi), Christian Petzold's *Transit*, the popular Swedish comedy *A Man Called Ove*, and the original *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*. Music Box Films is independently owned and operated by the Southport Music Box Corporation, which also owns and operates the Music Box Theatre, Chicago's premier venue for independent and foreign films. For more information, visit www.musicboxfilms.com.

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