

TEAS

COFFEES

SNACKS

ICES

# HEAVEN IN DUNFERMLINE

*What if the gateway to heaven*

*was through the toilet door in a Scottish  
fish and chip restaurant?*

*Feature Film Proposal  
By Restless Native Productions*

*Several townsfolk are  
mysteriously trapped in a  
Scottish fish and chip shop  
with the only way out  
seemingly is through the  
toilet door into a mysterious  
luminous void.*

*But can they take a leap  
into the unknown when  
they've barely left their  
small town?*

**A micro-budget -  
absurdist - magical  
realist - indie - comedy**







The Heaven In Dunfermline. An award winning family run fish and chip restaurant in rural Scotland. Run by Bill Cranston and his young adult son Jamie. The warmth and spirit within them and their restaurant has fairly extinguished after the recent passing of Bill's wife and Jamie's mother. They're both putting on a brave face for each other. They don't want to talk about what they're feeling. It's not the done thing here.

For Jamie, it's especially hard. For a long time he's been wanting to escape and see the world. Nothing particularly exciting happens in this town. And the people in the town never seem to leave. But he can't leave now.

Once open, some of the townsfolk start to enter. All familiar faces. Old flames (Ally) and her girlfriend (Lisa). The local thug (Skud). A struggling pastor (Keith) and a philosophical old beggar (Eric) (and his secret polecat). Each causing an air of unease and tension.

When one patron heads to the toilet, he opens the door and is engulfed in light. That's weird. He heads in. As nature calls for Eric, he bangs on the door for the man to hurry up. But there's no answer. At the same time the radio cuts out as does everyone's mobile signal. They break open the toilet door and everyone falls silent as the mysterious light engulfs them. They call out again for the missing patron. Nothing. Bill pokes a pole into the room, instead of hitting a wall, it dangles into a lit void. Fuck. They need to get out of here and phone the police. But the front door won't open. And the glass is unbreakable. The world outside is still. They're stuck. Like they've been frozen in time.



There doesn't seem to be anything they can do. There going to have to wait and see if anything changes. And in the meantime, they're going to have to get along. And learn about each other.

They learn some surprising truths about each other. Except for Bill and Jamie. They're not too sharing. But as nothing seems to change. Tensions amongst the group rises as there differences and fears come to a head. Arguments break out. Relationships are tested. And blood is shred. The patrons begin to take the leap of faith and walk through the toilet.

Eventually leaving Jamie and Bill alone. Can Bill leave his beloved restaurant. Can Jamie leave him behind?





Jamie breaks down and confesses how miserable he is that his life has felt stuck. Running a fish and chip shop is not the life he wants. Bill doesn't want his son to suffer. So agrees to step into the unknown.

Just as they make their decision; two Japanese men come out of the toilet door. They're stoned time travelling foodies who want to try award winning fish and chips. (There's no cod left in the future). But something has gone terribly wrong. Everyone was supposed to be frozen in time. They're in big trouble. Not just with Bill and Jamie. They explain that their friends are fine. But they can't return as time travel is intended to be covert. Bill and Jamie no longer have to leave. But Bill can sense how torn Jamie is, it's an adventure beyond his wildest dreams. Bill wants to stay. His wife lies in the walls of the shop and he can't leave that behind. He tells Jamie to go with them. The only thing he wants for his son is for him to be happy. Knowing that, they can both move on.





*Clerks*



*Restless Natives*



Comps

*Coherence*



*Orphans*





# *Writer's Statement*

Billy Connolly wrote in his autobiography how he always wanted to get out of Scotland. Yet when he is away he yearns to return. I somewhat share the same sentiment. Heaven in Dunfermline is one of my earliest ideas for a feature. I grew up in very rural Scottish settings and always dreamed of escaping to exotic realms. Where time moves slowly. The people I grew up around seemed either content with the smallness of their lives or not knowing how to leave. Or brave enough.

Thus I created a scenario where people from a largely small community who somewhat want to escape in some capacity are faced with having to take a leap into the unknown and having to ask big questions. A particular flaw in the Scottish male psyche is talking about one's emotions, particularly to other men and especially to your family. Where the thing that is more terrifying than an unknown phenomenon that shakes the foundations of one's reality, is having to talk about your feelings.

But for our main characters', it's the challenge of leaving someone when they are vulnerable. And never being able to talk about it because it's just not the done thing in Scotland; especially amongst men. Playing on the irony that the thing that is more scary than not knowing if you are trapped in a supernatural phenomenon is having to talk about your feelings. So whilst there is an absurdist concept, I want a very real and human story about relationships.

The Scottish film landscape has been largely dominated by fairly downbeat socio-dramas over the years. I like many in Scotland, want to show another side to Scottish cinema. One that is willing to show something different, a bit daring and not scared to entertain an audience. Whilst striving for originality.

I always write with two governing questions. Will people enjoy watching it? And can it be done? So I've aimed to make Heaven In Dunfermline an enjoyable experience with emotion but can be done practically as possible. I have a great admiration for films that punch above their weight and for filmmakers with a dogged determination to get their first film made. As referenced. Clerks and Coherence are two titles that I took influence from, but I'm looking to create something that reflects my own voice and sensibilities. That celebrates the absurdity of life.

# *Directorial Vision*

Black and white will give the film a sense of timelessness and cinematic surface. Which plays on the theme of time. And I really want to create a filmic aesthetic as for me, cinema is best when it helps you escape the world.

Shooting for 4:3 will condense the screen and enhance the feeling of being enclosed and entrapped but also the sense of narrowness that most of the characters live their lives or how their lives feel, especially in the case of Jamie. The main thing I try to get in my films is key expressionism from the cast. And this ratio will also lend itself to being close up with the actors and seeing their expressions.

Some of my favourite films are often the most simple ones. And not going overboard with the vision should give it a good juxtaposition with the absurdist and supernatural plot.

Yes it will come with subtitles.



# *Who The Fuck Are Restless Native Productions?*

Okay calm down. We are a fairly new young production hailing from, well you probably already know, Scotland. Started by hapless tit and ND riddled Chris Aitken, (yeah writing this in the third person, ick) as a response to the lack of production companies in Scotland that are focussed on Scotland. Despite deemed one of the funniest nations on earth, we don't make a lot of comedy.

RNP was a recipient of the BBC Small Indie Fund in 2023. And we made several silly sketches and shorts for BBC Scotland, citing reactions from audiences such as bestiality and demonic possession are not fun. Two of the films are currently on BBC iPlayer and the short Da's had a successful run on the international film festival circuit, playing at the iconic Chinese Theatre in Hollywood at the Academy qualifying Hollyshorts and as the only British film at Salute Your Shorts, voted USA Today's best new film festival. It even got a tiny mention in Variety.

Look local, think global is our motto. We want to find and champion emerging Scottish talent, particularly those who might have faced barriers to enter the TV and film industry. We look to make stories and moments that entertain and stay with audiences and as much as possible with a filmic edge.

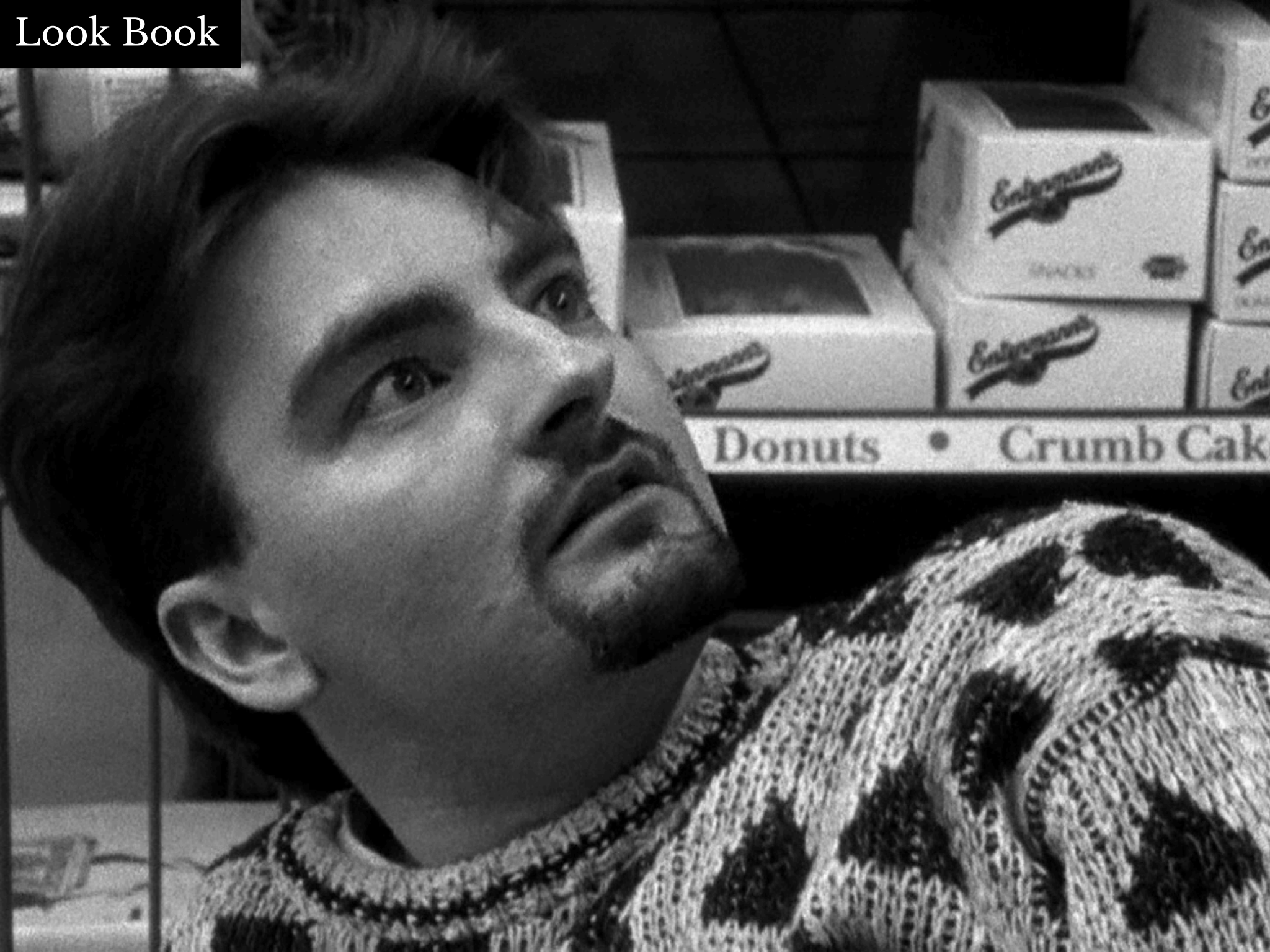
Under the RNP banner, Chris is the founder and director of the BAFTA and BIFA qualifying short comedy film festival Short Com. Regarded as one if not best comedy specific comedy short film festival in the world. Alongside the fast rising Scottish genre festival SI-FAN.

Chris has also been a script reader performing coverage on Hollywood scripts and even Oscar winners. He was a finalist in the Film London Microwave First Feature Scheme where one of the judges said to him 'I don't do comedy'.

So thank fuck RNP do. Otherwise we're going to look pretty stupid.















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RESTLESSNATIVEPRODUCTIONS.ORG

chris.aitken@restlessnativeproductions.org