

It's unusual for films in any category to be so closely linked as Dallas Campbell's 'No Deposit, No Return', starring Sian Reeves, and Hattie Dalton's BAFTA-winning 'The Banker', featuring Michael Sheen. Both are set around a sperm bank, and fertility, to make their points. Both are about dissatisfaction, and a yearning for something else, as is Peter Chipping's 'Another Green World', starring Patsy Palmer.

"Patsy plays a woman scarred by her sister's death," says Chipping, "She's caught in this grim London life, and holding onto memories of life in the country, and thinks life must be better than this. She decides she wants to recreate the countryside. She gets an allotment, overlooking South London. Instead of growing vegetables, she makes this little green world, symbolising fresh life, and a way of surviving" Campbell's film came out of his work as a director with Rockcliffe, the London creative circle. "It's a heist movie, set in a sperm bank. We jumped at it, and the producers went to Cannes with a rather novel idea for fundraising; they decided to get sperm donations." This approach paid off, winning Best Pitch at Cannes. Campbell, an actor by training, spent six months working on the script. "I had to get it just right, know the story perfectly. I didn't have some of the skills so had to ensure I had a fantastic team and a great DP." Hattie Dalton, in contrast, always wanted to direct. "I worked as an assistant to a director making documentaries, worked in post and trained as an editor. Whenever I was working on someone else's film I got frustrated, because I wanted to tell the story myself." 'The Banker' began as many films do from personal experience. "I had a friend who was trying to get pregnant, going through fertility treatments and even using a turkey baster! Anyway, it got me thinking about sperm banks, and I came up with my central character, who runs a sperm bank and is obsessed with the nurse over at the fertility clinic. He goes to great lengths to prove his love, let's put it like that."

Dalton's script attracted the interest of Michael Sheen when she was cutting a film he featured in. "He called me, said he wanted to be in it. I had a fantastic crew attached and so the main problem was money. Michael put in some money, Trudie Styler



The Banker

Dir Hattie Dalton Prod Kelly Broad Prod Co Memory Box Films
A lonely scientist goes about his work in a sperm-bank dreaming of his love at the fertility clinic. A tale of unrequited love in epic proportions.



Taken Out

Dir David Whitney Prod David Whitney Prod Co Millhouse
A gritty drama about two lifelong friends, whose relationship is tested when one of them commits a crime.



No Deposit, No Return

Dir Dallas Campbell Prod Farah Abushwaha Prod Co Roccliffe Ltd
A desperate woman holds up a sperm bank but is disarmed by a sympathetic security guard also looking for love.



Scribble

Dir Faisal A. Qureshi Prod Richard Dawson Prod Co Richard Dawson Productions
A stenographer tries to cope with the failure of technology.



Another Green World

Dir Peter Chipping Prod Peter Chipping Prod Co Ignition Pictures
Patsy Palmer plays a woman trying to contend with gritty urban life after the loss of her sister during idyllic childhood.



Idiotheque

Dir Laurent King Prod Laurent King Prod Co (self produced)
A young man's first day on the job in a big anonymous corporation turns into a living nightmare



Home Video

Dir Edward Boase Prod Edward Boase Prod Co Magma Pictures Ltd
When your every move is being filmed, where do you hide?



Snaps

Dir Simon Lewis Prod Janey de Nordwall Prod Co The Gate Films
What is that weird smell in old people's houses?



Little Things
Dir James J. Twyford Prod Alex Feakes Prod Co Wave Form
Everything is a game when you are four. Even a brush with the law.



Who Do You Love?
Dir Jim McRoberts Prod Elaine Campbel Prod Co Digi-Cult
Heather loves her mum, but does her mum really know what love is?



An Interview With Toby Roberts
Dir Martin Banks Prod James Greene Prod Co Signals Media Arts



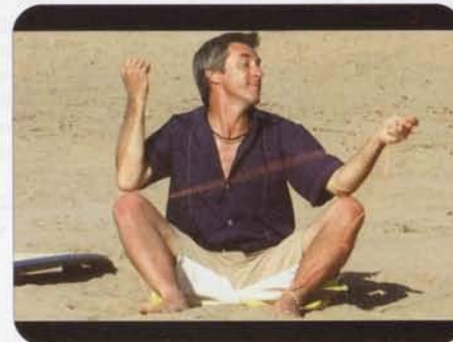
Have I Passed?
Dir Jason Fairley Prod Wright/Fairley/Robinson Prod Co Fairley Wright & Cheeky Monkey
A short comedy about a driving test.



Gravity
Dir Colin Hutton Prod Kate Norrish Prod Co Maverick Films
Gravity is a short film that deals with the detached nature of gun violence, and how actions and responsibility are often very disconnected.



Commas
Dir Dario Webster Prod Dario Webster Prod Co Nicius Productions
Man wakes up in agony and rushes to the bathroom, where circumstances force him to leave "a punctuation mark indicating a slight pause"....



Leave Me Alone
Dir Andrew Robb & Martin Briggs-Watson Prod Andrew Robb Prod Co Algernon Productions Ltd
Escaping from our world of intrusive global personal communications, Sam searches for solitude, sunshine and the soothing hush of the ocean, by way of a tranquil Australian beach. It's not long, however, before his estranged girlfriend Rachel, left far behind in England, tries to track him down.



The Lift
Dir Ivan Naisbitt Prod Alex Heathcote Prod Co Naisbitt & Co
After Howard Pippin becomes separated from his travelling companions, he cadges a lift back to London from mild mannered Will Dovecote, with unusual consequences.

got involved and other people started putting in funds..." Chipping's film, even after getting Patsy Palmer involved, was hit by a truly epic run of bad luck. "We had beautiful weather, then a deluge. We said, oh we'll pick it up in spring, then Patsy got into a theatre production and cut her hair off. Then, an old lady we used sadly got ill and lost her hair, Patsy got tonsillitis and had those removed; the film lab went bust, as well. But everyone was great, and put in a huge amount of work for eight and a half minutes of 35mm, but I'm proud of it, it looks glorious on a proper screen."

"A single strong idea is the key to short film," Chipping says, "I wanted to avoid a sketch form, create a human story which isn't depressing." Campbell believes that many shorts are done for the wrong reasons. "A lot are exercises, pitches for people who want to do something else. I made this film because I wanted to, because the story was excellent, that's crucial, a story that's strong and well-told." For Campbell, a director needs "preparation, and trust. You have to know exactly what you want, and you have to absolutely trust the people around you." Dalton agrees: "Directing means being able to get the best out of so many people, out of the enormous talent working around you, allowing you to spend time with the actors to develop real character. I'm very keen on characters that you don't necessarily want to like, but can't help yourself."

Chipping believes that awards are becoming more and more bespoke. It's about people championing what they like, and in a world where more and more shorts are being made, that's inevitable. There are different kinds of excellence, after all." Awards, says Campbell, champion the good. "I'd love to win of course, because this sort of festival makes the most of creativity, of writing." Having won a BAFTA, says Dalton, has made a difference. "Awards bring you attention, which might help you get other things made, I hope. After the BAFTA I've had so many meetings, seen so many scripts, but I want to work in comedy and few have been like that. I love black comedy, taking a potentially heavy idea and undercutting it with laughter, it plays on different levels, which I love."