

Portadown College pupil has role in short film nominated for Best Comedy Award at the 2010 First Light Film Awards

A premiere screening of Flukey Finn, a short film produced by a group of talented young deaf people from Northern Ireland, took place at the Storm Cinemas in Belfast on Saturday 3rd October 2009.

Flukey Finn was made during Film Project, now in its fifth year, organised last summer by the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS), and funded by First Light Movies. 13 deaf teenagers between the ages of 13-19 worked together with BBC Blast(NI) and learnt filmmaking skills, including directing, script writing, acting for the camera, and costume and make-up design. Storyboards were sent to applicants who were then chosen on the strength of their explanations about why they were passionate about film and what particular interests they have in the industry. One of the young people involved in an acting role in Flukey Finn was Nicola Agnew, a Year 14 student at Portadown College.

Stacey Kilpatrick, (a former Portadown College student), Arts Officer at the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) explains: "The deaf teenagers working with BBC Blast(NI) were involved at every stage including acting, directing, making camera shots and editing material from the week. The exciting project allowed them to come together and gain hands-on experience in a specialised industry, giving participants a taster in film production and maybe a foot in the door to their desired career."

"Access to the arts is extremely important for deaf children. Deaf children are at risk of developing low expectations of what they can achieve in life and many think their deafness excludes them from participating in activities at school and at local clubs. The deaf teenagers had a chance to meet their deaf peers, share their interests in film and, most importantly, grow in confidence."

The annual **FIRST LIGHT AWARDS** showcases the creative talents of young people across the UK. It is an inspirational event that celebrates the next generation of British filmmakers. This year's event will take place at **ODEON, Leicester Square, London on the afternoon of Tuesday 2nd March.**

Young people from across the country, many from disadvantaged and minority ethnic backgrounds, have received nominations for a prestigious **FIRST LIGHT AWARD** for their short digital films and media projects.

Each category is being judged by names such as director/producer **Sam Mendes (Revolutionary Road, American Beauty)**, **Joseph Fiennes (Shakespeare In Love)**, **Jason Isaacs (Harry Potter, Good)**, **Kwame Kwei-Armah (Hotel Babylon/Casualty)**, **Maxine Peake (Shameless, Dinner Ladies)** and producer **Hilary Bevan-Jones (The Boat That Rocked)**, and the winning films will be announced at the glittering awards ceremony on **2nd March at the ODEON Leicester Square, London.**

Hosted by **Dick and Dom**, the ceremony will be attended by a mix of film industry luminaries and celebrities who will present the awards across a range of categories including Best Animation, Best Drama, Best Screenplay, Best Comedy and Best Original Music.

Dick and Dom said: *"We're really looking forward to presenting the First Light Awards in March – it will be a lot of fun; all of the nominated films are fantastic and the awards will be a great celebration for everyone involved."*

Flukey Finn has been nominated for the category of Best Comedy. Nicola Agnew has been selected as one of two of the young people involved in the film who will attend the Awards Ceremony on behalf of NDCS, and this will be fully funded by First Light Films. Congratulations to Nicola and all involved in the film. Best wishes for the Awards Ceremony, and hopefully we will hear good news. More information on the First Light Awards can be found at <http://www.firstlightonline.co.uk/fl-awards/the-first-light-awards-2010>.



Nicola Agnew being presented with her certificate for her part in Flukey Finn by Emma Dunseith of BBC Blast(NI) at the premiere of Flukey Finn at the Storm Cinemas in Belfast on Saturday 3rd October 2009.