



# mono

**Written and directed by**  
Richard Smith

**Produced by**  
Abigail Howkins

**Starring:**  
Samantha Young (as Emily)  
Ainslie Henderson (as Jay)

**With:**  
Shakti Edwards (as Linda)  
Gerry Lynch (as Gary)

**Running Time:** 10 minutes

[www.monothemovie.co.uk](http://www.monothemovie.co.uk)  
[mail@monothemovie.co.uk](mailto:mail@monothemovie.co.uk)

A GMAC/Digicult production in association with Scottish Screen  
Made with support of the UK Film Council New Cinema Fund and the National Lottery through Scottish Screen

## PRESS KIT

Updated May 2007

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## Synopses

When Emily's quiet life is disrupted by a noisy musician moving in next door, the outcome is far from muted... (20)

Two lonely people – Emily and Jay – find themselves living on opposite sides of the same wall. As they become moved by the sounds of each other, they begin communicating through the wall. They engage and connect. After a terrible aural misunderstanding, the silence is deafening, and it's up to Emily to break the divide... (54 words)

## Production notes

Mono is the short directorial debut of Richard Smith, award-winning writer of psychological chiller *Trauma*, (directed by Marc Evans, starring Colin Firth and Mena Suvari and produced by Warner Bros/Little Bird/BBC Films) and television drama *Leonard* (starring Dennis Lawson and Stuart Wilkinson, directed by Brian Kelly and produced by Stella Maris Films/Scottish Media Group/Scottish Screen)

Mono is an urban love story about two young city dwellers – lonely in their separate ways – who find themselves living next door to each other in a flimsily renovated apartment block and slowly fall in love through the wall dividing their flats, and them.

Mono features a great cast of new faces to the screen, Samantha Young as Emily, Ainslie Henderson as Jay and Shakti Edwards as Linda.

Mono is a Glasgow Media Access Centre production, produced by Abigail Howkins and associate produced by Douglas Dougan. Developed and commissioned through the Digicult short film project, the film has been financed by the UK Film Council New Cinema Fund and the National Lottery through Scottish Screen and is executive produced on behalf of UKFC and GMAC by Paul Welsh (Edge City Films) and Caroline Cooper Charles (Lifesize Pictures).

Shot on Digital Betacam, Mono was filmed on location at the Fraser Suites (main apartment location) and The Bridge (bathroom location) in Glasgow, Scotland (UK) in February 2006.

The film was completed in April 2006.

Produced on a small budget, the production benefited from additional production support from Glasgow facilities house Hammerhead TV, independent production company Autonomi Ltd and the University of Strathclyde, as well as a very dedicated cast, crew and number of other individuals who donated time, effort and goods to the production.

## The Cast

### **Samantha Young**

Samantha Young studied at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama and graduated in 2004. Since graduating she worked as part of Dundee Repertory Theatre ensemble in *Macbeth*, *A lie of the mind*, *The Visit* and *The Graduate*. She worked for Tag theatre in *A Taste of honey* and is currently playing Abigail in *The Crucible* with The National Theatre.

She has worked frequently for BBC Radio Scotland and recently finished playing Alison in *Don't Look Back in Anger* for BBC Radio 4.

### **Ainslie Henderson**

Ainslie Henderson has been, among many other things, a musician and recording artist since leaving school. Having played in several different bands and by himself, he has performed gigs across the UK and America. He has been signed and recorded with a variety of record labels and has released a single that went to number five in the music charts. In 2003 he took part in BBC's Fame Academy, in which he came fourth. Ainslie has studied acting with the Impulse Company in London and the Edinburgh Acting School. He is currently finishing his third debut album and living in Edinburgh, *Mono* is Ainslie's first film.

### **Shakti Edwards**

A trained dancer and choreographer, Shakti Edwards graduated from the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in July 2006. In her time at the Academy, Shakti has performed in various productions including *Three Sisters*, *The Last Supper*, *The Comedy of Errors* and the title role in *Medea* and *Beowulf* with the Arches Theatre Company. She has also worked for BBC Scotland, as a voiceover artist and is currently playing Ruth in *Heritage*.

## Directors Notes

By Richard Smith

### **THE FILM: THEME AND STORY**

*MONO is about communication and anonymity in the big city; the walls between us are thin but imposing. It's about the barriers between people; the barriers which we create. It plays with isolation and loneliness. It's about our need to overcome our own constraints in order to find happiness.*

*The story itself is simple. It's about two people – lonely in their separate ways – who find themselves communicating through the wall dividing their flats. It's sweet, quirky and uplifting.*

### **ORIGINATION OF THE IDEA**

*The film is a butchered version of events in my own life! I've since discovered that my experiences are far from unique; people seem to sympathise easily with a situation in which neighbours are over-audible (clearly the world needs better insulation). In my case, as in MONO, the sounds ultimately brought me together with the girl next door...*

### **DEVELOPMENT AND EXECUTION OF THE FILM**

*I was clear about the sort of film I wanted to make for my first time directing; there was a particular scale, tone and narrative style that interested me. I wanted to find something simple, but rounded. The script was developed over a period of weeks, rarely flinching from its original purpose.*

*The visual movement of the film was quickly concrete in my mind. I was interested in extending the metaphor of the dividing wall to drive the shooting style (being that everything should derive from the central narrative). Simply, where the wall represents a barrier to our characters, the film is static and reserved, but as the wall becomes an opportunity and vehicle, the camera assumes greater fluidity and intimacy. The aural style (a crucial element) operates similarly, bringing the audience gradually closer to the sounds, and unifying them. It was important that the characters' change was supported subtly by the film in all ways.*

*MONO was somewhat an exercise in rhythm: two people out of synch with each other, trying to find a sense of harmony (which they ultimately achieve - metaphorically and literally). I wanted to accentuate this shift in movement, and push the tone of the film so we would get the greatest emotional reward at the end. Every element – performance, photography, sound, costume, make-up – had to work towards this.*

*I preached often that it was a film of 'moments'; we had to conquer the sweetness and connection felt by two people through a wall. It was a challenge, considering that the actors filmed separately and often without any sounds to react to. Rehearsals – and enormous natural talent – gave us a real chance. Samantha Young and Ainslie Henderson were real finds, and I'm sure will go on to do some special work.*

*In terms of photography and production design, there were numerous pitfalls to be avoided (not least of all that the two flats are actually the very same re-dressed room). The flats had to feel close together, but far apart – which is some brief! Production Designer Stephen Mason made the film credible, and Director of Photography Oliver Cheesman was simply a master craftsman throughout.*

*My job overall was made easy by a wealth of experience and commitment around me. The ability, creativity and hard work of the production department, cast and crew was humbling. I genuinely can't pass on enough credit.*

*We have high hopes now for MONO. It's life-affirming and universal. I hope it travels the world and breaks down communication barriers wherever it goes!*

*Enjoy!*

## Writer /Director Biography

### Richard Smith

*Richard Smith is a BAFTA award-winning screenwriter, and was recently named runner-up in the BBC New Filmmaker Award for his directing debut.*

Richard's first feature script, psychological chiller TRAUMA, was directed by Marc Evans, starring Colin Firth and Mena Suvari. Produced by Warner Bros/Little Bird/BBC Films, it premiered at the Sundance Film Festival, and opened across UK cinemas in August 2004; "a haunting meditation on grief and self-delusion...a UK film whose visual and aural virtuosity sets it apart" (Screen International). "Gripping thriller" (News of the World).

Richard's half-hour film, LEONARD, won Best Television Screenplay in the 2002 BAFTA Scotland Awards. Starring Dennis Lawson and Stuart Wilkinson, directed by Brian Kelly, it was produced by Stella Maris Films/Scottish Media Group/Scottish Screen. Other awards for LEONARD include the Audience Award at the Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival, the Organization Prize at the Algarve Film Festival, Best Single Drama at the Mental Health Media Awards and Best Fiction at the Tehran Festival for "the highly professional skills in driving the narrative and for its sense of humour in dealing with a human relationship."

Richard is currently working on his fifth and sixth feature script commissions: BIG DEAL (based on the book by Anthony Holden) with Celador Films (THE DESCENT) and NIGHTWORK (based on the book by Irwin Shaw) with Fragile Films/Ealing Studios (THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST). He recently completed the feature adaptation of LEONARD with New York-based Kinetic Arts, supported by Crab Apple Films and Scottish Screen. LEONARD is currently casting. He's developing an original feature film, DO NOT DISCONNECT, with Abigail Howkins/Paul Welsh.

Richard directed his first short film, MONO, in February 2006, written by himself, funded by Digicult/The Film Council/Scottish Screen, produced by GMAC/Abigail Howkins. It stars Samantha Young and Ainslie Henderson. It was runner-up in the BBC New Filmmaker's Award, won the Audience Award at Merchant City Festival and Best Short Drama at the End of the Pier International Film Festival. It was nominated for a Scottish BAFTA, and for a TORC award by the Celtic Film and TV Festival. It was selected across the world, including Los Angeles, Mill Valley (San Francisco), Atlantic Film Festival (Nova Scotia), Uppsala (Sweden), Foyle (Ireland), Leeds, Encounters (Bristol), Sao Paulo, Inverness, Vendome (France), Santa Barbara, Milan and Black Maria (New Jersey). It was shown domestically by BBC3.

Richard directed the three-minute film, SCORE, for filmaka.com, and was designated a 'winner' by its jury.

As a script editor, his credits include HIKIKOMORI (wr/dir Paul Wright), which was nominated for three Scottish BAFTAS (and won one), and for Best Short at the 2007 British BAFTAs. He developed ICE PLANT with Kate Burton for Digicult 2007. He's an advisor on the Moonstone script labs, and resident script editor at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. He has a postgraduate degree (with distinction) in screenwriting from the University of Salford, and is a graduate of Arista.

In another life, Richard wrote the ten-part television series, RE:PLAY, and the twenty-part TV series, DONNAWORLD, for Donna Air and BBC Play UK. "An astonishing piece of television" (The Guardian). He did stand-up comedy for three years, and threatens one day to do it again...

## Producer Biography

### Abigail Howkins

A graduate of Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art with seven years theatre experience in production and performance at Dundee Repertory Theatre, Abigail has been working freelance in independent and broadcast film and television production for 6 years, across a variety of projects and roles from short films, corporate videos and promos to TV series and feature films (including *Sweet Sixteen*, *The Book Group*, *Jeopardy*, *Milk*, *The Choir*). In addition to industry work, Abigail has also worked in community media and film education, directing and producing a variety of video projects and working as a production trainer and mentor at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama and Glasgow Media Access Centre.

As a producer, Abigail's short drama credits include; *Wish* (written and directed by Rene Mohandas and funded by Cineworks and the London Production Fund) which premiered at Edinburgh Film Festival and won a number of festival awards as well as the Scottish BAFTA award for Best Short Film in 2002; *Manji*, a BBC Tartan Short (written and directed by Rene Mohandas); *Swansong*; a Digicult project for Film Council / Scottish Screen written by Joern Utkilen and directed by Nicholas Bone; and most recently, *Mono* (written and directed by Richard Smith) which has been selected at international festivals worldwide, including Los Angeles, Mill Valley (San Francisco), Atlantic Film Festival (Nova Scotia), Uppsala (Sweden), Foyle (Ireland), Leeds, Encounters (Bristol), Sao Paulo, Inverness, Vendome (France), Santa Barbara, Milan and Black Maria (New Jersey). It was shown domestically by BBC3 and was runner-up in the BBC New Filmmaker's Award, won the Audience Award at Merchant City Festival and Best Short Drama at the End of the Pier International Film Festival. It was nominated for a Scottish BAFTA, and for a TORC award for Best Short Film by the Celtic Film and TV Festival.

Abigail is currently developing and financing further film and film-related projects, including a new filmmakers development programme with the newly formed company, Diversity Films, and a feature version of *Mono* with Richard Smith and Paul Welsh/Edge City Films.

## Screening News

- **Pittenweem Arts Festival**, Pittenweem, Scotland. Screened at the **Fishmarket Filmhouse** from Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2007 to Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> August 2007.
- **Arriviano I Corto (Here Come the Shorts)**, Montelanico Short Film Festival, Italy. Screening on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2007.
- Selected to screen at **Brisbane International Film Festival**. Screened on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2007.
- Selected for International Competition at **Los Angeles Film Festival**. Screened on Sun 24<sup>th</sup> June and Thurs 28<sup>th</sup> June 2007.
- **Leith Short Film Festival**, Edinburgh, Scotland. Screened on Sunday June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2007.
- **WINNER** of **BEST DRAMA SHORT**. Screened in Competition at the **End of The Pier International Film Festival**, Bognor Regis. Screened on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2007.
- Screened in International Competition at **Milan International Film Festival**. Screened on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2007.
- **NOMINATED** for **Bronze Torc Award** for Best Short Film at **Celtic Film and TV Festival**. Screened on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2007.
- Screened at **Black Maria Film and Video Festival**. Received **Director's Citation (Honorable Mention)**
- Screened at **Santa Barbara Film Festival**, USA on Thursday February 1, 2007
- Screened in European Competition at **Vendôme Film Festival**, Vendôme, France on Tuesday December 4<sup>th</sup> 2006.
- **NOMINATED** for **BAFTA Scotland** Best New Performance Award (Samantha Young), Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2007.
- Screened at **Encounters International Short Film Festival**, Bristol, Watershed, Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> November (as part of BBC New Filmmakers) and Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November (as part of UK Film Council Digital Generation)
- **UK Premiere** at **20<sup>th</sup> Leeds International Film Festival**, Carriageworks Theatre, Saturday November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2006.
- Screened at **Inverness Film Festival**, Eden Court Theatre, Friday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2006.
- **WINNER (2<sup>nd</sup> Prize)** of the **BBC NEW FILMMAKERS AWARD**.

- **South American Premiere at Sao Paulo International Film Festival**, Brazil. Three screenings between 24<sup>th</sup> October and 1<sup>st</sup> November 2006.
- **European Premiere at Uppsala International Short Film Festival** in Uppsala, Sweden, three screenings between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> October 2006.
- Screened at the **2006 Mill Valley Film Festival**, San Francisco, October 6, 2006 at the Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center and October 11, 2006 at CinéArts@Sequoia.
- **WINNER, Audience Award, Merchant City Festival**, Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2006, 7.30pm.
- Screened at **26th Atlantic Film Festival**, Halifax, Nova Scotia, International Perspectives program, Park Lane Cinema, September 16, 2006.
- **World Premiere at 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Los Angeles International Short Film Festival (LA Shorts Fest)** Arc Light, Hollywood, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2006, 3.30pm
- Industry Premiere at the **Edinburgh International Film Festival** as part of GMAC's Digicult programme. Screen 2, Cameo Cinema, Tuesday 22nd August 2006.
- Accepted by the **British Council** Film Department for submission to selected international film festivals.

<b>MONO NEWS ON THE WEB</b>
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- **MONO IS SELECTED FOR BBC NEW FILMMAKERS AWARD**  
[www.bbc.co.uk/newtalent/film/showcase\\_film2006](http://www.bbc.co.uk/newtalent/film/showcase_film2006)
- **MONO IS FEATURED ON BRITFILMS.COM**  
[www.britfilms.com/britishfilms/catalogue/browse](http://www.britfilms.com/britishfilms/catalogue/browse)
- **MONO IS FEATURED ON BBC FILM NETWORK**  
[www.bbc.co.uk/dna/filmnetwork/A15983328](http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/filmnetwork/A15983328)
- **AINSLIE FANS GO MAD FOR MONO ON MYSPACE SITE**  
[www.myspace.co.uk/ainsliehenderson](http://www.myspace.co.uk/ainsliehenderson)

Press Cuttings



**MONO HITS THE FRONT PAGE OF FILMWAVES**  
**Issue 31 – August 2006**

*Inside:* An interview with *Mono's* executive producer, Paul Welsh about the Digicult short film development and production project.



**MONO IS THE FEATURED SHORT FILM IN SHOWREEL, PRACTICAL VIDEO MAGAZINE**  
**ISSUE 18 – February 2007**

<b>Full Crew List</b>
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Writer/ Director                      Richard Smith

Producer                                      Abigail Howkins

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Associate Producer                      Douglas Dougan

Production Manager                      Fiona Clark

Production Co-Ordinator                Shirley Tulloch

Production Assistant                      Anna Purkis

Locations Manager                        Katrina Dee Inkster

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Casting                                        Victoria Beattie Casting

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1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Director                      Amanda Black

3<sup>rd</sup> Assistant Directors                      Victoria Campbell  
James Bolenbaugh

Script Supervisor                        Claire Mckay

Floor Runner                                Jacqueline Thornton

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Dop    Oliver Cheesman

Focus Puller                                James Harrison

Camera Assistant/Grip                      Adam Campbell

Sound Recordist                        Peter Brill

Boom Operator                              Thayna Mclaughlin

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Gaffer                                        Scott Napier

Lighting Technician                        Damian Leitch

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Production Designer                        Stephen Mason

Art Director                                Kara Ramsay

Stand-By Art Director                      Amanda Currie

Props Master                                Mark Davitt

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Costume Designer	Sophie Toulouze
Make-Up Designer	Wendy Kemp Forbes

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Editor	Gordon Lockhart
Online Editor	Jim Allison
Sound Design	Douglas Mcdougall
Dubbing Mixer	Kahl Henderson

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Stills Photographer	Jamie Simpson
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Executive Producers	Caroline Cooper Charles Paul Welsh
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Producer For GMAC	Karen O'Hare
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Short Film Executive For Scottish Screen	Julia Caithness
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Project Coordinator For UK Film Council	Paul Hewlett
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### **Full Cast List**

Emily	Samantha Young
Jay	Ainslie Henderson
Linda	Shakti Edwards
Gary	Gerry Lynch
Neighbour	James Bolenbaugh
Noisy Boys	Greg Chapman William Dodds James Rhattigan
Party Couple	Rosemary James Mattieu Sagnet

## Key Facilities

Camera & Grip Equipment: Hammerhead TV

Lighting Equipment: Lee Lighting

Online Editing: Jim Allison Editing

Audio Dub: Savalas Audio Post Production

## Distribution & Exhibition

Mono is available on Digi-Beta, Beta SP and DVD

## 'MONO' CONTACTS

### Production Company:

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