

Dinard Festival - France **2 - 5 October 2008**

The scene opens in the grey morning mists of Dinard, camera panning across this magically evocative French seaside town with its share of local legends...

Some say Alfred Hitchcock based the infamous *Psycho* house on an antique-looking structure currently perched perilously over the town's pebbled seafront. Others say that Hitchcock was heavily influenced by Dinard when filming *The Birds*; considering the great black flocks flying overhead this time of year, this revelation does not seem at all unlikely.

Dinard also happens to host the annual **Dinard Festival of British Film**, where industry professionals, international film distributors and the local public all come together for four days of low-key glamour and high-level film appreciation.

Background

The Dinard Festival began 19 years ago, partly as a response to the growing popularity of the American Film Festival in the nearby town of Deville. Not wanting the British film industry to be overshadowed on Britain's doorstep, organisers launched a film festival of British work in Dinard; a festival which has since become a much anticipated British films preview screening ground aimed at helping distributors discover films for European market distribution.

The number of films produced in the United Kingdom has doubled since 1990, and the Dinard Festival has seen its attendance grow in tandem. It currently runs screenings at five main venues around town, including both British features and shorts. Previous feature-film award winners include: *Shallow Grave* (1994), *The Full Monty* (1997), *Billy Elliot* (2000), *Girl with a Pearl Earring* (2003).

Partnership and Involvement

The British Council has been a major festival supporter and core funder of the Dinard Festival since it began, along with **The UK Film Council**, which joined us in 2000.

For five consecutive years, the British Council has also been handing out the **Entente Cordiale** film award. This €1500 prize is awarded by public jury to a promising new short-filmmaker from either [NFTS](#) or [La Femis](#) film schools.

Film-school students also get the chance to participate in **the Lab** - a screenwriting workshop sponsored by the British Council in conjunction with several other related organisations. This workshop lasts for nine months and

teams industry professionals with young French and British screenwriters for project mentoring. Culminating at the Festival, students must pitch the final version of their scripts to a panel of respected British and French producers.

Every summer before the Dinard Festival, the British Council also sets up **preview screenings** for the Festival Directors in London in order to aid them in sifting through all of the 25,000-plus initial Festival entries. The British Council Film Team selects and suggests potential films for screening to Festival Directors as part of our 'UK showcase work'.

Additionally, the British Council invites a small number of European industry professionals to Dinard every year for **professional updating**. This year we have invited two professionals from Spain: film festival co-ordinator Victoria Smith and distributor Jordi Picas, who will come and take part in the full Dinard Festival experience.

"The British Council is delighted to be partnering again with the Dinard Festival. Congratulations to the Dinard team - it's a packed programme, so now let's dim the lights and run the film..."

- Satwant Gill, Head of Film Team, British Council