

www.dogwoof.com

**DOGWOOF
PRESENTS**

MOUTH TO MOUTH



A FILM BY ALISON MURRAY

UK Release: 9 May 2008

UK, 2006, Colour, 101 minutes

Dogwoof Contact; Oli Harbottle – 020 7395 1217 – oli@dogwoof.com

Hi Resolution Images are downloadable at: www.dogwoof.com/pressroom

SYNOPSIS

Sherry loses her virginity, her illusions and her lip ring in one trippy road trip across Europe.

Sherry is searching for a place to belong where she can still be herself. She thinks she has found this in SPARK - Street People Armed with Radical Knowledge. She takes off in SPARK's camper van as they cross Europe recruiting a membership of the down and out. They arrive at a disused vineyard in Portugal that will be their paradise.

Harry, the group's leader, begins harvesting ripe grapes and ready minds through his own methods of hard work and punishment. The stakes are high within this volatile group. Two deaths ensure the submission of most of the recruits but not Sherry, or Mad Ax, apparently the craziest of all the street people. Mad Ax is the least taken in by SPARK's rhetoric. He is also in love with Sherry.

Into this Shangri-la comes Sherry's mother. Failing to persuade Sherry to leave, she decides that SPARK has more to offer than single parenthood in London. Disillusionment complete, Sherry stands up for what she knows is right, denounces SPARK, and escapes with Mad Ax into the unknown.

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Alison Murray grew up in Canada and the UK. She eventually studied dance and theatre before completing an MA in Film Direction at the Royal College of Art (1995). She has been making award-winning short films since *Kissy Suzuki Suck* (1992). Many of Alison's films incorporate her unique approach to dance and in 1996 she received a Paul Hamlyn Award for Choreography. She has choreographed and directed two films for the BBC's *Dance for the Camera* series.

Alison's work has been presented alongside that of Harmony Korine, Paul Thomas Anderson, Michel Gondry and Atom Egoyan in *RET. INEVITABLE* at Brooklyn Bridge Anchorage - an event billed as 'screening today's most important visualists'. The Institute of Contemporary Art in London has presented a retrospective of her short films, also shown at the Tate Gallery.

In 2000 she completed *Train on the Brain*, an hour long documentary for Channel 4 and TVOntario in which she rode the rails across North America, armed with a DV and Super 8 camera. In 2003 Alison collaborated with London based rapper Jonzi D to make *Aeroplane Man*, a film adaptation of Jonzi D's hit theatre show of the same name.

She has directed over twenty music videos, and is currently producing and directing a documentary about Carnys - travelling fairground workers. *Mouth to Mouth* is Alison's first feature film as a writer and director.

Director's Filmography

2003 *Aeroplane Man* - Channel 4
2000 *Train on the Brain* - Channel 4/TVOntario
2000 *Jewess Tattooes* - Arts Council of England
1998 *Bare Feet and Crazy Legs* - Arts Council of England
1997 *Cat Food Woman* - Lux Cinema
1997 *Teenage Rampage* - Channel 4
1997 *Bloody Mess* - BBC
1995 *Bad Mood Woman* - Channel 4
1995 *Horseplay* - BBC
1995 *Sleazeburger* - Royal College of Art
1994 *Pantyhead* - Royal College of Art/Channel 4
1993 *Wank Stallions* - Brighton University
1992 *Kissy Suzuki Suck* - Brighton University/Channel 4

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I left home when I was 15.

The energy and vitality of youth is paramount to the film. Like me at that age, the film's heroine Sherry is searching for a place to belong where she can still be herself. She thinks she has found this in SPARK - Street People Armed with Radical Knowledge. I tried to create an organisation I would want to join, SPARK was the result. Harry, SPARK's leader, says "Most organisations aimed at helping the homeless want you to fit back in, and contribute to society, like you should get off the street, into a house, into a 9 to 5 job...but maybe there's another way." To me, SPARK's appeal lies in offering those who have fallen through the cracks a chance to pull their lives together, without having to become cogs in the wheel.

The down and out characters SPARK recruit are clever, witty and sardonic. I tried to show the tenacity of these people on the margins in an irreverent, humorous way. It is Mad Ax, apparently the craziest street person, who is the least taken in by SPARK's rhetoric. He appreciates Sherry's innocence and feistiness, and falls in love with her. She rejects him, but inspires him to break out of his apathy. This strange relationship between Sherry and Mad Ax is my favourite thing in the film, a love story.

Sherry leaves the group after compromising what she believes in order to find acceptance. At the end of the film she stands up for what she knows is right, aware that she will go out into the world totally alone, but with her freedom and individuality intact. Others joined the group easily prepared to give their power away, in exchange for the security and sense of righteousness that being part of a group can bring. George Orwell's Animal Farm was a classic inspiration for exploring this meeting point of politics and human nature.

Although SPARK helps some of its members, my own disillusionment with 'alternative lifestyles' is reflected in the story. In my teens I lived for several years in squatted buildings in London, teetering on the edge of homelessness. I met and was inspired by political activists who wanted to change the world. The let down was hard when I discovered so many of these people to be armchair anarchists whose daily lives were little different to anyone else's. The utopia we were meant to be building never materialised. But at least there was a good party along the way.

I intend the film to look to the audience as the world looks to Sherry as she experiences it. As she travels from Northern to Southern Europe the dramatically changing landscape illustrates the mood. We experimented with how far we could push the limits of the HD blow up process from 16mm to 35, to create our unique look of saturated colours, sometimes blown out, sometimes shadowy. During the shoot, we often used very long master shots, which we grabbed just as the sun was about to set, rehearsing the shot again and again as we waited for the perfect light.

(director's statement cont.)

I used my background in dance and physical theatre to express the deeper emotions of the characters. Choreography is central to many films I admire, the fight choreography of Raging Bull, the soldiers in Claire Denis' Beau Travail. I love the heightened and intense physical drama dance conveys, but I am often puzzled as to why the dancers are going through the angst their contorted bodies express so powerfully. With MOUTH TO MOUTH I was able to create choreography where the audience knows exactly why the characters move as they do, because they have spent the previous thirty minutes getting to know the characters' stories. The choreography flows naturally from the characters' interactions and does not reflect conventional dance styles. I tried to work with the unique physicality of the individual actors to create something believable yet heightened. I hope the overall style to be truthful, yet poetic. The moments where Sherry physically touches and is touched by the other characters speak the most.

Alison Murray

CAST

Ellen Page - Sherry

Natasha Wightman – Rose

Eric Thal – Harry

August Diehl – Tiger

Diana Greenwood - Dog

Beatrice Brown – Nancy

Maxwell McCabe-Lokos Mad Ax

Elliot McCabe-Lokos – Manson

Jefferson Guzman – Blade

Willy Rachow - Scrawny Boy

Christian Näthe – Hackler

Jim Sturgess – Red

Patrícia Guerreiro - Squeegee Girl

Joaquim Horta - Cute Guy

Armin Dillenberger - Spark Member

CREW

Directed by

Alison Murray

Produced by

Anne Beresford

producer

Jürgen Biesinger

junior producer

Atom Egoyan

executive producer

Judy Tossell

Original Music by

Rowan oliver

Cinematography by

Barry Stone

Film Editing by

Christian Lonk

Production Design by

Ulrika Anderson

Art Direction by

Christian M. Goldbeck

Astrid Poeschke

Costume Design by

Jemima Cotter

Makeup Department

Heiko Schmidt

Production Management

Patricia Almeida

Unit manager: Portugal

Pedro Bento

Production manager: Portugal

Tom Sternitzke

Second Unit Director or Assistant Director

Hernani Borges

(crew cont.)

Second assistant director: Portugal

Andrew Cameron

Third assistant director: United Kingdom

Wolfgang Eissler

Third assistant director: Germany

Dylan Gray

First assistant director

Stojan Petrov

Second assistant director

Ana Patricia Quino

Sound Department

Alexej Ashkenazy

Assistant sound re-recording mixer

Daniel Iribarren

Dialogue editor

Robert Jäger

Sound re-recording mixer

Frank Kruse

Sound designer

Kirsten Kunhardt

Foley editor

Timothy Mehlenbacher

Adr recordist

Pedro Melo

Sound

Hanse Warns

Special Effects by

Adrian Lorber

Michael Stahl

Visual Effects by

Markus Degen

Digital effects artist

Florian Gellinger

(crew cont.)

Digital compositor

Caterina Schiffers

Stunts

João Gaspar

Stunt rigger

Sascha Heu

Stunt double

Alister Mazzotti

Stunt coordinator

Wolfgang Stegemann

Stunt double

Martin Warncke

Camera and Electrical Department

Dirk Domcke

Best boy

Dylan Gray

Camera operator: "b" camera

Oliver Kühne

Rigging gaffer

Helen Sabatzki

Second assistant camera

Claudia Schnoor

First assistant camera

Ole Ki Bun Wedemann

Costume and Wardrobe Department

Senay Ay

....

Transportation Department

Shane Davey

Script supervisor

Jaime Freitas

Set production assistant

Luis Lisboa

(crew cont.)

Production assistant

João Quintela

Location manager

Sarah Schill

Production coordinator: Germany

Laura Smith

Production coordinator

Nichole Wleklinski

MOUTH TO MOUTH - A DOGWOOF RELEASE