

Samson Films and Port Pictures Present
In association with Bord Scannán na hÉireann/The Irish Film Board & RTÉ
With the participation of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland and WestEnd Films



FLOAT LIKE A BUTTERFLY

A film by **Carmel Winters**

Starring Hazel Doupe, Dara Devaney, Johnny Collins, Hilda Fay, Lalor Roddy

Ireland – 101 mins – 2018

World Premiere: Toronto International Film Festival 2018 (Discovery section)

North-American and International Publicity:

Stephen Lan – Lan.Stephen@sympatico.ca
+1 416 923 6327

World Sales: WestEnd Films

Lucie Braverman – lucieb@westendfilms.com
+44 207 494 8300

Principal Cast

Frances	Hazel Doupe
Michael	Dara Devaney
Patrick	Johnny Collins
Granny Flynn	Hilda Fay
Grandad Joyce	Lalor Roddy
Aunt Nelly	Noelle O'Regan
Uncle Joe	Packy Lee
Uncle Tommy	Michael Collins
Sergeant	Aidan O'Hare
Uncle Bobby	Aaron Monaghan
Eamann	Jamie Kierans
Pa Quinn	Pascal Scott

Principal Crew

Writer & Director	Carmel Winters
Producers	Martina Niland David Collins
Co-Producer	Cathleen Dore
Executive Producer	Lesley McKimm
Director of Photography	Michael Lavelle
Production Designer	Toma McCullim
Editor	Julian Ulrichs
Costume Designer	Triona Lillis
Composer	Stephen Warbeck
Sound Recordist	Fiachra O'Hanlon
Production Executive	Claire McCabe
Production Coordinator	Sinead Barry

LOGLINE

“She is the Greatest. She said it before she knew she was.”

BLURB

From the producers of *Once* and *Sing Street*, *FLOAT LIKE A BUTTERFLY* is a powerful and timely story of a girl’s fight for freedom and belonging. In a gender-reversal of classic film *Billy Elliot*, 15-year-old Frances has to fight for the right to fight back. Raised in roadside camps in rural Ireland, Frances wants to champion her people inside the boxing ring and out, like her idol Muhammad Ali. But society is determined to break her spirit and destroy her way of life. And her father, once her greatest ally, is too defeated himself to imagine any better for his daughter. But Frances was not born to be broken. In the mother of all fights, she must dig deep to find in herself the Champion her father once knew her to be.

SYNOPSIS

15-year-old Frances lost her mother in a fight. The same fight which led to her father being locked up in jail for the last ten years. Frances has never forgiven the police sergeant who she feels is responsible for this. She’s got fighting in her blood, just like her idol Muhammad Ali. And like Ali, she wants to be the Greatest too.

When her father gets out of jail, Frances is starry-eyed. Together they can take on the world. But her father doesn’t turn out to be the hero she remembers. Required to keep the peace due to the conditions of his parole, he’s forced to endure humiliation from the police sergeant, much to Frances’ dismay. And to make up for lost time, he is determined to make a man of his son and an obedient wife of his daughter.

Frances never wanted to clash with her beloved father, but when he gives her boxing gloves to a prospective husband to “keep her in line” she has to make a stand. Cast out by the world and her family alike, Frances must fight even for the right to fight. Some people say it doesn’t matter whether you win or lose. But for Frances losing is not an option. This is a fight she has been training for all her life. At stake is her own freedom, her mother’s honour and her father’s faith. She knows the only way she can end this war is to win it.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

WHY "FLOAT LIKE A BUTTERFLY"? WHY NOW?

I am committed to making film that offers society a way of seeing, understanding and ultimately transforming itself. I think *Float Like A Butterfly* has a unique contribution to make to our current global reckoning of the abuse of power, and what it costs us.

As I see it, patriarchy not only bitterly fails its daughters, it fails its fathers too. In prehistoric matriarchal society there is no evidence of weaponry. Due respect and regard for the Mother makes the world safer for children, for women - and for men too. In looking to forge a better future for all humanity, I believe we may find a road map in our ancient nomadic past.

Float Like A Butterfly communicates these ideas in a radical re-visioning of the classic coming of age drama. Frances our teenage heroine fights not just to achieve her own coming of age, but to summon her father Michael to come of age as a fit parent. On a symbolic level corrupt patriarchy (as represented by the self-perpetuating violence of the local Sergeant and in turn his son) has robbed this family of its mother. Without Her, both father and daughter are bereft. And with her father Michael exiled (he's jailed), Frances nobly steps up to the role of mother *and* father to her young brother. When her father returns she is ready to stand shoulder to shoulder with him in love, solidarity and equality. The mistake Michael makes is to imagine he can recover his own power by suppressing hers. The film shows how this notion of toxic masculinity (a product of Patriarchy) takes a win/win situation of loving alliance between daughter and father, and makes it a lose/lose scenario disguised as a win for father, lose for daughter. Who benefits from this really?

Frances's noble quest is to return her family and tribal relations to their natural order. Her Grandmother, known as "Big Mammy" to her extended nomadic family, represents this lost ancient way. And the love between her and Frances' grandfather shows that men too can thrive when a girl like Frances becomes the powerful woman she was born to be.

Float Like A Butterfly shows how class (Frances belongs to an outcast nomadic 'Traveller' people) and gender unite to create bitter divisions. Divisions that Frances fights both to overcome, and to heal.

BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT

CASTING AND CREW

Casting involved everything from straight-forward auditions to planned and somewhat clandestine encounters at horse fairs and country markets (a particularly memorable day was when I set about selling a copper water tank at a fair for the price of a song. It was like the unofficial National Song Contest!). What I was looking for (and found) was a dynamic family of people – professional actors, horse trainers, singers, blacksmiths and magicians - who represent a diverse, vibrant and authentic rainbow of humanity on screen. Similarly

with crew, I co-opted both experienced stalwarts of the industry and luminous artists from other walks of life who enlivened and energised each other's way of seeing. For me a film is the sum of all the people involved in making it. If the right people come together at the right time, we make the impossible possible. We make magic. With *Float Like A Butterfly*, the goal was to springboard from an intensely personal and culturally specific creative vision to a truly transformative universal experience for an audience.

By the time we got through prep there was an absolute unity of vision between myself and the key collaborators across Michael Lavelle on camera, Toma McCullim on production design, Triona Lillis on costume and producer Martina Niland. This made for an extremely rich, organic collaboration - and also an authenticity that the actors (and I hope in turn the audience) could entirely believe in.

THE SHOOT

We were outside for 24 of the 26-day shoot. I wanted to harness the wild, elemental energy of Irish coastal weather to charge the film - to work with, rather than against Mother Nature. There were also lots of animals, babies and young children integrally involved in many of the scenes. This wasn't without its challenges for continuity, but the local community where I live and made the film contributed with great gusto. The village fair day, for example, was so vividly and authentically realised that many of those present forgot it was a film set and attempted to trade horses, buy buns and porter etc. As scenes unfolded people spontaneously erupted in songs and dances. The creation of our onscreen world was so potent, the bonds of our fictional and real community so interlaced, that sometimes I wondered if the art of the director is the art of making a film make itself!

BIOGRAPHIES

Carmel Winters: Writer & Director

Carmel is an award-winning writer and director for screen and stage. Her debut feature film SNAP won her 'Best Irish Feature' and 'Best Director' at the Dublin Critics' Circle Awards and the audience vote for Best Film at Montevideo International Film Festival. In 2011, she was also awarded the 'Irish Times Irish Theatre Best New Play' award for the Abbey, Ireland's National Theatre's production of her play B FOR BABY. Carmel has since participated in the Guiding Lights scheme for filmmakers, mentored by John Madden, and premiered four new plays, BEST MAN, WITNESS, SALT MOUNTAIN and THE REMAINS OF MAISIE DUGGAN. She is currently working on her third feature film, an original TV drama series and a stage musical.

Martina Niland: Producer

Founder and CEO of Port Pictures Ltd, Martina Niland is a well-established Irish Film and Television Producer with close to twenty years' experience in the industry, at both a domestic and international level.

Before setting up her own Company in 2014, Martina worked as a lead Producer with Samson Films Ltd.

This year Martina produced FLOAT LIKE A BUTTERFLY (WestEnd Films selling), her second feature with Writer/Director, Carmel Winters (SNAP) and the BBC/RTE six-part Comedy Series, THE YOUNG OFFENDERS (Dir Peter Foott/Vico Films Ltd), based on the hugely successful feature film of the same name.

Martina's most critically acclaimed production ONCE (Summit Entertainment, Fox Searchlight) a modern day musical directed by John Carney, won the World Cinema Audience Award at Sundance Film Festival 2007. ONCE then went on to receive the Academy Award for Best Original Song and was named Best Foreign Film at the 2008 Independent Spirit Awards. The film went on to become a Tony award winning stage musical.

In 2016, Martina produced SING STREET (Film Nation), also by Carney, receiving widespread critical acclaim at the Sundance Film Festival where it premiered. It went on to receive a Golden Globe nomination in the Best Film (Comedy or Musical) category in 2017.

In 2013, Martina produced the films RUN & JUMP (IFC) and STAY (Visit Films). RUN & JUMP (an Irish/Germany Co-Production) was Co-Written and Directed by Oscar nominated Steph Green and won Best Irish Feature and Best Irish First Feature at the Galway Film Fleadh in 2013 and the Silver Spike Award at the Valladolid International Film Festival. STAY premiered at the Toronto Film Festival 2013 and stars Aidan Quinn and Golden Globe nominee Taylor Schilling in the lead roles.

In 2009 Martina produced Carmel Winters' first feature, entitled SNAP, which had its world premiere at the 2010 Tribeca Film Festival and won 'Best Irish Film' and 'Best Irish Director' at the Dublin International Film Festival.

David Collins: Producer

David Collins runs Samson Films which is one of Ireland's leading feature film production companies. In addition to developing its own film and TV drama material, Samson also acts

as a co-producer and executive producer on a wide range of Irish, European and International feature film projects. The company has been awarded slate funding by the Irish Film Board and the EU MEDIA programme, amongst others. MD David Collins is on the executive board of the Screen Producers Ireland and is a member of the European Film Academy. Samson also has a sister company, Accomplice Television, which specialises in original drama for television.

Recent feature productions include FLOAT LIKE A BUTTERFLY, END OF SENTENCE, CELLAR DOOR, A DARK SONG, TIGER RAID, THE TRUTH COMMISSIONER, the OSCAR winning ONCE (Best Song), 'RUN AND JUMP' (Best Film Galway Film Fleadh 2013 and was released through IFC), while TV Drama projects include PURE MULE, winner of five Irish Film & Television Awards.

Michael Lavelle: Director of Photography

Michael Lavelle I.S.C. was born in Dublin. Following a degree in Law & French he decided to pursue his long term dream and studied cinematography at the National Film School of Ireland followed by an MA in Screenwriting.

As a cinematographer, his short graduation film UNDESSING MY MOTHER went to Critics Week in Cannes and received a special mention at Sundance. It went on to win a European Academy Award for Best Short Film in 2005.

His debut documentary feature film HIS & HERS premiered at Sundance in 2010 where Michael won the World Cinema Cinematography Award for Documentary.

PATRICK'S DAY, Michael's debut dramatic feature film, received its world premiere at SXSW 2014 and in 2015 he was nominated for an IFTA for his work on the film. At Woodstock Film Festival, Michael was awarded the Haskell Wexler Award for Best Cinematography. Wexler said that he gave the award "based on what I consider true cinematography, not just on the traditional dexterity. Michael Lavelle's work on PATRICK'S DAY shows a profound understanding of the story and his ability to employ DP skills...is subtle in unselfconscious ways to subliminally involve the viewer."

He has just completed principal photography on his eleventh feature film. He was recently named by Variety as Irish Cinematography's "rising star".

Julian Ulrichs: Editor

Julian Ulrichs completed an undergraduate degree in Law in 2006 (LLB, NUI Galway) before getting an MA in Production and Direction in 2008 (NUI, Huston School of Film & Digital Media). He started out as an Assistant Editor (BEGIN AGAIN, FOYLE'S WAR) before progressing to Assembly Editor on the multi award-winning Irish crime drama LOVE/HATE (Series 3, 4 and 5) and the Justus Von Dohnanyi film DESASTER (2015). Since then he has edited a number of projects that include JACK TAYLOR: SHOT DOWN (2014), John Carney's critically acclaimed musical-dramedy SING STREET (2016), SANCTUARY (Dir. Len Collin, 2016), METAL HEART (Dir. Hugh O'Conor, 2018)

and BLACK 47 (2018), Lance Daly's new film set during the Great Irish Famine.

Stephen Warbeck: Composer

After eight years of working as a composer and performer for the theatre, Stephen began writing music for film and television and has since built up a considerable filmography. Film scores include *The Children Act*, *Hampstead*, *The Time of Their Lives*, *Making Noise Quietly*, *India in a Day*, *Le Secret de Banquises*, *Mon Roi* (for which he was nominated for a César Award), *Seve*, *Polisse*, *Proof*, *Mrs Brown*, *Two Brothers*, *Mystery Men*, *Quills*, *Billy Elliott*, *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*, *Charlotte Gray*, *Birthday Girl* and *Shakespeare in Love*, for which he won an Academy Award.

Stephen has written music for more than 40 television projects, received five BAFTA nominations and in 2013 a BAFTA Award for his work on Richard Eyre's *Henry IV*, parts 1 & 2. Other recent television projects include Richard Eyre's *King Lear*, two series of *Indian Summers*, *Fungus the Bogeyman* and the first two series of *A Young Doctor's Notebook*. Stephen's stage productions include: *Junkyard* for the Headlong Theatre Company, the RSC's *Wolf Hall* and *Bring Up The Bodies*; the Royal Court's *The River* and *Jerusalem* (both West End and Broadway transfers) and *The Seagull*; The National Theatre's *Translations*, *The Red Lion*, *The Silver Tassie*, *This House*, *The Plough* and *the Stars*, *The Veil*, *An Inspector Calls*; John Madden's *Proof*, Sam Mendes' *To The Green Fields Beyond*; Ian Rickson's *The Birthday Party*, *Old Times* and *Betrayal* at the Harold Pinter Theatre and many productions for Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, The Almeida and West End theatres.

In addition to composing for film and television, Stephen is a founder member of the anarchic pub band *The Kippers* for whom he composes and performs. He has his own ensemble who perform selections of his film music. Stephen has written several concert pieces and the ballet *Peter Pan*.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES:

Hazel Doupe (Frances)

Hazel is 16 years old, lives in Dublin and has been acting professionally since the age of 9. She is an accomplished gymnast and has won gold medals at national competitions up to level 9. Hazel has appeared in several stage productions at the Gaiety and Gate Theatres. In 2015 she played the lead role in the ITV film *Peter and Wendy* set in Gt Ormond St Children's Hospital. Recent film productions include *Michael Inside* and *The Green Sea* (currently in post-production). She played the lead role in Carmel Winters' *Float Like A Butterfly* and recently completed filming on the feature *Calm With Horses*.

Dara Devaney (Michael)

Dara plays 'Maolra Seaoughe' in director Colm Bairéad's new docu-drama "THE MAAMTRASNA MURDERS" which premiered on TG4 in early April. You can watch it on the TG4player at www.tg4.ie/mmt.

Dara won the Best Actor Award at the 2016 Irish Film & Television Awards (IFTAs) for his performance in the role of 'Seamus Connolly' in season 1 of Daithí Keane's & Abu Media's

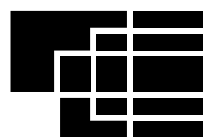
multi-award winning television drama "AN KLONDIKE", and was nominated for the same Award at this year's IFTAs for his work on Season 2. "AN KLONDIKE" tells the story of the Connolly Brothers; three Irish emigrants who travel from Montana to the Yukon during the Klondike gold rush of the 1890's in the hope of striking it rich.

He stars in "FLOAT LIKE A BUTTERFLY" a feature film written and directed by Carmel Winters, in which Dara ('Michael') co-leads with Hazel Doupe (Francis) who plays his daughter.

World Premiere supported by:



Culture Ireland
Cultúr Éireann



Fís Éireann
Screen Ireland