

A DOGNOMADS PRODUCTION PRESENTS

I DID NOT WAKE UP DEAD TODAY

A FILM BY ERIN MACPHERSON

PRESS KIT



ABOUT THE FILM



LOGLINE

Do we have the right to die if we no longer have the will to live?

SYNOPSIS

Approximately 280 million people suffer from depression.

Among them – one depressed teddy bear.

This autobiographical experimental documentary follows Erinbear as they contemplate the choice between surviving the weight of a monotonous, mundane world and their desire to escape it; all while exploring the central question: Is living even worth it?

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR



BIOGRAPHY

Erin Macpherson is an award-winning docu-fiction filmmaker from South Africa. With an MA in Documentary Directing from the prestigious Doc Nomads, their work has featured on national television, won awards such as the Golden Horn SAFTA for “The Water Dancers” and the Golden Eagle Best Director Award for “I Did Not Wake Up Dead Today”, and have featured in Oscar and EFA Qualifying festivals, such as TFF, GoShorts, DIFF, DocLisboa, and SFFILM. They have worked with renowned directors on films that have received festival nominations and awards at IDFA, Encounters, Big Sky, AFI Docs, and the Emmys. Believing that cinema is the universal language of empathy, they use humour in their work to explore themes of grief and trauma as a reminder to viewers that healing cannot exist without laughter.



SPECIFICATIONS

PROJECT TYPE DOCUMENTARY, EXPERIMENTAL, SHORT

GENRES DRAMA, COMEDY, BIOGRAPHY

RUNTIME 17.30 MINUTES

COMPLETION YEAR 2023

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN BELGIUM

COUNTRY OF FILMING BELGIUM, HUNGARY, PORTUGAL

LANGUAGE ENGLISH

SHOOTING FORMAT DIGITAL

ASPECT RATIO 2.33.1

FILM COLOUR COLOUR



WHAT WAS THE MOTIVATION BEHIND THE FILM?



For most of my life, I have grappled with chronic depression. But I was often met with judgement or criticism when sharing my struggle with others. This experience encouraged me to use cinema as a tool to represent this mental illness in a way that helps tackle the social stigma. This is the thought-process that birthed, “I Did Not Wake Up Dead Today”. I wanted to create a living dialogue through film that would not only combat this general lack of understanding, but would also encourage empathy for those struggling with this mental illness. And a teddy bear? Well, that’s disarming. I knew that a teddy bear would subvert viewers’ expectations of what depression is supposed to look and feel like, because a teddy bear represents warmth and nostalgia, not suicide and depression. And when you see this symbol of childhood memories engulfed in a depressive episode, suddenly something stirs inside of you. You have empathy. And so, aptly named Erinbear, I used my own childhood teddy to tell my story. Not only does a teddy bear help integrate humour into the narrative, but it also acts as a great metaphor for how difficult everyday life can be to survive: If a teddy bear cannot move its limbs, how can we expect a depressed person to? So this film was created for me, and for all sufferers of the everyday, so that we can share our story and retreat from the shadows of our shame.



REVIEWS AND AWARDS

INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM WEEK REGENSBURG 2024: **BEST SHORT FILM AWARD**

AGUILAR FILM FESTIVAL 2023: **BEST DIRECTOR | GOLDEN EAGLE AWARD**

CATALYST FILM FESTIVAL: **BEST SHORT FILM RUNNER UP AWARD**

GOSHORT FILM FESTIVAL 2023: **TOP 10 AUDIENCE FAVOURITES**

“A sweet and kind spirited story about a dark topic.”

LETTERBOXD

“With the film “I did not wake up dead today”, filmmaker Erin Macpherson processes their own experiences autobiographically and wins the award. They approach the topics of depression and suicide sensitively and empathetically. ... The focus lies on the voice behind the camera. The voice that laughs, that cries, that breaks. All scenes are characterized by a cool, tense atmosphere, which is repeatedly dispersed by comical and absurd moments. At the same time, the film does not forget to comfort. ... It always reminds us of the constant presence of loneliness. The story is immediately moving.”

JURY REVIEW | REGENSBURG SHORT FILM WEEK

“For the delicacy totally free from rhetoric, not without irony and able to stimulate questions, with which the director addresses the taboo theme of depression and suicide. And for the expertise with which they build the documentary using a fictional film language, except to break into reality through the unexpected embrace that replaces the person's avatar.”

VIAEMILIA DOKFEST



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