



Presents

IT'S NOT YET DARK

A Documentary Film By **Frankie Fenton**

Narrated by **Colin Farrell**

Featuring Simon Fitzmaurice

Ireland | 77 min. | In English | 2016

In Select Theaters and On Demand August 4th, 2017

itsnotyetdark.com

Sundance Film Festival 2017
Galway Film Fleadh 2016 – Best Feature Film Award and
Best Cinematography in an Irish Feature (World Premiere)
Greenwich International Film Festival 2017
Hot Docs/Doc Soup 2017

For downloadable press materials please go to:

filmrise.com/its-not-yet-dark-press

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IT'S NOT YET DARK

The Film

Synopsis

Narrated by Colin Farrell, IT'S NOT YET DARK tells the groundbreaking story of Simon Fitzmaurice, a talented young Irish film maker with ALS (MND), as he embarks on directing his first feature film (MY NAME IS EMILY) through the use of his eyes and eye gaze technology.

Long Synopsis

IT'S NOT YET DARK is a feature length documentary telling the story of Simon Fitzmaurice, a talented Irish Filmmaker who is living with Motor Neuron Disease (ALS). He was diagnosed at the age of 34, after his short film premiered at the Sundance Film Festival. His wife was expecting their third child and they were left shocked and reeling.

Simon refused to give up and started to work on the script for a feature film – MY NAME IS EMILY. Now, five years later, the father of five children, he is completely physically incapacitated.

Narrated by Colin Farrell, and using extracts from Simon's bestselling memoir, we follow Simon as he embarks on the direction of his first feature film through the use of the last physical attribute he has control over – his eyes.

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Director's Statement

Motor Neuron Disease is something which has defined the latter part Simon Fitzmaurice's life. At the suggestion of his wife Ruth, he set out to write a personal letter to each of his five children in case the worst happened. But Simon ended up writing an incredible memoir of his life which describes in vivid detail the experience of his diagnosis and eventual paralysis. With it, Simon's drive to face the awful truths which were stitched permanently throughout every aspect of his lived experience, allowed him to come back fighting, stronger of mind than ever before.

Initially the idea for a feature length documentary about Simon came about to record the massive feat Simon was in the process of undertaking, to write and direct a feature film. An incredible feat for any human let alone one encumbered with the weight of a neurodegenerative disease. And so as the project progressed it became very obvious that a documentary needed to be made. When Simon's book "It's Not Yet Dark" finally hit the shelves in 2014 it was abundantly clear that this would form the narrative spine on which the documentary would be achieved.

My ideas for reprise, uses of interview, style, color, music and pace would complement the newly added mountain of home video archive that Simon also happened to have. As a filmmaker himself it was evident that he would have been filming his family and experiences during his life and that he did right up until he couldn't physically hold the camera anymore. And then gently the camera, turning 180, finally started to fall on Simon himself, and we could see for ourselves the vicious and silent battle taking place right before us on homemade footage.

We hope that through making this film we can give Simon's life, his personality and heart, which is so evident through each page of "It's Not Yet Dark," a color and a sound that can reach a much wider audience than originally imagined. Simon's story is a journey of love that encompasses a universal human battle we all touch on in our lives to a degree. A simple fight, to live or to die. And if not die, how to live?

— *Frankie Fenton*

IT'S NOT YET DARK

Frankie Fenton, Director – Biography

Frankie Fenton is an award-winning Irish Film and TV Director/Producer specializing in documentary film to do with pressing social matters. He is a former graduate of Dublin City University accomplishing a Masters in Film and Television Studies.

As founder of Sector 7G Frankie has engaged in international pitching, financing and shooting in many forums worldwide. He is an expert in online crowdfunding appeals and regularly consults in funding documentary projects both sides of the Atlantic. He is highly skilled at pinpointing and targeting potential audiences and building strategic support and educates on the benefits of online marketing.

Directing credits include *The Good Reactor* (working title, release date TBA) an environmental feature documentary about controversial ways to solve the coming global energy crisis; and *It's Not Yet Dark*, another documentary in conjunction with Newgrange Pictures and Kennedy Films in Dublin, Ireland. Narrated by Colin Farrell, this feature documentary explores the work of award-winning Irish film director and bestselling author Simon Fitzmaurice who directed his own feature *My Name Is Emily* (TIFF Official Selection) but under the burden of Motor Neuron Disease (ALS). Simon uses his eyes to communicate through Eye Gaze technology. *It's Not Yet Dark* was awarded the Best Documentary Feature and Best Cinematography of an Irish Feature at the 2016 Galway Film Fleadh, and screened at the 2017 Sundance Film Festival.

Frankie has spent many years working in the post production sector of UK television before moving to independent directing professionally. Although documentary film has been his primary focus Frankie has also trained and qualified as a professional artisan baker during his time in London.

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Colin Farrell, Narrator – Biography

Colin Farrell first appeared on the BBC's TV drama *Ballykissangel* in 1998, made his film debut in the Tim Roth-directed drama *The War Zone* a year later, and was discovered by Hollywood when Joel Schumacher cast him in the lead in his war drama *Tigerland* (2000). He then starred in Schumacher's psychological thriller *Phone Booth* (2002) and the American thrillers *S.W.A.T.* and *The Recruit* (both 2003), establishing his international box-office appeal. During that time, he also appeared in Steven Spielberg's science fiction thriller *Minority Report* (2002) and as the villain Bullseye in the superhero film *Daredevil* (2003). After starring in the independent films *Intermission* (2003) and *A Home at the End of the World* (2004), he headed Oliver Stone's biopic *Alexander* (2004) and Terrence Malick's *The New World* (2005).

Work in Michael Mann's *Miami Vice*, the adaptation of John Fante's *Ask the Dust* (both 2006) and Woody Allen's *Cassandra's Dream* (2007) followed, underscoring Farrell's popularity among Hollywood writers and directors; however, it was for his role in Martin McDonagh's *In Bruges* (2008) that he received a Golden Globe Award. In recent years, he co-starred in the comedy-horror film *Fright Night* (2011) and the sci-fi action film *Total Recall* (2012), both remakes, and McDonagh's second feature, the black comedy crime film *Seven Psychopaths* (2012). Farrell also starred with Noomi Rapace in the Niels Arden Oplev-directed action film *Dead Man Down*, and as Travers Goff in the period drama *Saving Mr. Banks* (both in 2013) about the author of *Mary Poppins*. In 2014, Farrell starred as Peter Lake in the supernatural fable *Winter's Tale*, an adaptation of the novel of the same name by Mark Helprin. In 2015, he starred as Detective Ray Velcoro in the second season of HBO's *True Detective*, alongside Vince Vaughn and Rachel McAdams.

IT'S NOT YET DARK

Filmmaking Team Biographies

DERMOT DISKIN – Editor

Dermot Diskin is one of Ireland's most experienced film editors. He has been working in the industry for over 20 years. Credits include *Moscow Never Sleeps*, *Stella Days*, *Wake Wood*, *Kings*, *Sweetie Barret* and Golden Globe-nominated *The Boxer*. His television credits include *Love/Hate*, *Raw* and *Single Handed*. Dermot has been won two Irish Film and Television Awards and has been nominated a further five times.

KATE MCCOLLOUGH – Cinematographer

Kate has been developing a very particular eye since 2003 when she finished at The National Film School, Ireland. At just 23 years old, she shot the multi-award-winning U.K short *Hibernation*—picking up her first cinematography award in Aspen. She made her entry onto the world stage at Sundance 2010 with her first feature documentary, the acclaimed film *His and Hers*, garnering the 'World Cinematography Award in Documentary' and the Michael Dwyer Discovery Award at JDIFF 2010. She also picked up the Donal Gilligan Award/Best Cinematography at the Galway Film Festival in 2011 for her work on the short *Mummy's Little Helper*. Her first feature drama, *Snap*, premiered at Tribeca in 2010. In 2014 Kate was nominated for 'Best Cinematography' at the Irish Film and Television Awards for her work on *Here was Cuba*. Her most recent documentary is the upcoming *Mom and Me*.

STEPHEN RENNICKS – Composer

Stephen Rennicks has been writing music for TV and film for the past 16 years. He is best known for his collaboration with director Lenny Abrahamson, scoring *Adam and Paul*, *Garage*, *What Richard Did*, *Frank* and the Academy Award®-winning *Room*. Among other features he has written music for the multi-award-winning feature documentary *The Pipe*, and comedy feature films *Man About Dog*, *Boy Eats Girl* and *The Bachelor Weekend*. His television work includes *Prosperity*, *Pure Mule*, *Bittersweet*, and *No Laughing Matter*. He has recently completed the music for the Channel 4 drama series *Not Safe For Work* and the Irish-Cuban feature film *Viva* which was long listed for Best Foreign Language Feature Film at the 2016 Academy Awards®.

IT'S NOT YET DARK Producers

NEWGRANGE PICTURES

Newgrange Pictures was founded in 2005 and is one of the leading production companies in Ireland. The company is run by producers Lesley McKimm and Jackie Larkin, and together they produce distinctive, innovative and high quality feature films, documentaries and television drama for the international marketplace. They work in all genres with the emphasis always on strong, character-driven stories.

Feature films produced at Newgrange include the upcoming *My Name is Emily* (starring Evanna Lynch and Michael Smiley), *Stella Days* (starring Martin Sheen, Stephen Rea, Marcella Plunkett, directed by Thaddeus O'Sullivan) which was nominated for 9 IFTAS, *Happy Ever Afters*, starring Golden Globe winner Sally Hawkins & Tom Riley which was released theatrically by Disney in Ireland, Verve in the UK, Haut et Court in France, Lucky Red in Italy & Senator in Germany, and *Kings* starring Colm Meaney, dir Tom Collins which was Ireland's first ever submission to the foreign language Academy Awards®. Newgrange also acts as co-producers on a number of European films – including the upcoming *The King's Choice* (director Erik Poppe), *Birchlegs* (director Nils Gaup) with Paradox, Norway. Previous co-productions include *Absolution* (director Petri Kotwica) with Vertigo, Finland, *A Thousand Times Goodnight* (director Erik Poppe starring Juliette Binoche and Nikolai Koster Waldau) with Paradox, Norway, *Call Girl* (director Mikael Marcimain) with GarageFilm, Sweden, and the German-Austrian film *Kill Daddy, Goodnight* (directed by the late Michael Glawogger).

KENNEDY FILMS

Winner of the Bingham Ray New Talent award 2015, Kathryn Kennedy is an upcoming Irish producer with her company, Kennedy Films. Kennedy's first feature film *My Name is Emily* premiered as the opening film at the Galway Film Festival 2015. Kathryn Kennedy has a BA (with honors) in Film Production and an MA in Screenwriting—she launched Kennedy Films in December 2012 with a short film *Just Saying* by director Dave Tynan, which was an instant viral sensation, achieving over 440,000 hits to date. Kennedy Films' first feature film is with director Simon Fitzmaurice, *My Name is Emily*, producing together with Newgrange Pictures Ltd; and co-producing with Garage Films in Sweden and Paradox in Norway. *My Name is Emily* is financed by the Irish Film Board, the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, Section 481, TV3, Film iVast and SVT, and was released theatrically in the U.S. in early 2017. Kennedy Films produced two documentary features, *It's Not Yet Dark* and *The Good Reactor*, with director Frankie Fenton. Kennedy is also developing a sci-fi feature film titled *Prescience* with writer/director Kevin Lehane (*Grabbers*, 2012) in conjunction with the Irish Film Board.

IT'S NOT YET DARK

Selected Credits

CONTRIBUTORS

Simon Fitzmaurice
Ruth Fitzmaurice
Damien Fitzmaurice
Florence Fitzmaurice
Kate Fitzmaurice
Phil McDarby
Hector Minto

Narrated by Colin Farrell

CREW

Directed by	Frankie Fenton
Produced by	Lesley McKimm and Kathryn Kennedy
Executive Producer	Jackie Larkin

Director of Photography	Kate McCullough
Edited by	Dermot Diskin
Original Music by	Stephen Rennicks

FINANCIERS

Irish Film Board, TV3, Wellcome Trust, Tobii Dynavox