

# Winners Conference: Outstanding Debut By A British Writer, Director Or Producer

16 February 2014

## *Kelly + Victor*

**Q.** Please welcome the winner of the Outstanding Debut by a British Writer, Director or Producer for *Kelly + Victor*, Kieran Evans.

**KIERAN EVANS:** Thank you. Hi.

**Q.** Nice to meet you.

**A.** Thank you very much. Thanks a lot.

**Q.** Congratulations.

**A.** Thank you very much.

**Q.** How does it feel to be a BAFTA winner?

**A.** Pretty bloody amazing right now. I am trying to think of some rude Welsh words to try and sum it all up. Fantastic.

**Q.** You are a Liverpool fan, so I imagine this makes up for today's result?

**A.** It has been a dark day so far, so this has definitely brightened my life.

**Q.** What will this do for your career? I imagine, well, are you going to go into meetings now with the BAFTA and put it on the table as collateral, just –

**A.** Yeah, yeah. Well, you know, I hope people will take notice a little bit more. I will be able to knock on a few doors and the doors will open instead of remaining shut. There's a couple of projects already I am working on, developing, so hopefully this will kind of kick it on and we will get into development very quickly.

**Q.** Fantastic.  
How hard was it to get *Kelly + Victor* off the ground?

**A.** I am sorry to tell you that it took nine years from start to finish.

**Q.** Oh god.

**A.** And you know, we started way back in 2004, really. And then, you know, the ups and downs of British film financing and all that type of thing is kind of interesting. So ... but, you know, I stuck with it and so did my amazing producer, Janine. We just believed in it really, so we wanted to do something different, tell a different story. So we stuck with it.

**Q.** So nine years. How long from the start of development until you were actually before the cameras on set?

**A.** That was seven years. Seven years.

**Q.** Wow. Oh my good God.

**A.** Yeah, there was many ups and downs, you know. Different funding bodies fall apart, you are on the outer edges usually. But now ... maybe I won't be so much on the outer edges, so ...

**NEW SPEAKER:** What kept you going? Seven years!

**A.** I don't know. The story, I think the story -- I fell in love with the book so much and I fell in love with the characters. The book was so vital and, you know, I fell in love with Kelly and Victor and -- at the lowest points, you know, when there were offers to do other things like, you know, romcoms, a couple of zombie movies, that type of thing. That was the easy way out. I am a bit of a stubborn bastard really -- excuse my language -- but on that sort of thing. I just felt I owed it to Kelly + Victor and to Niall Griffiths to try and make it happen, whatever way. So that's what I do.

**Q.** Was part of the process as well trying to find two actors who could play Kelly and Victor, because I imagine getting two actors who were committed wholeheartedly in all the facets must have been tricky.

**A.** You needed two brilliant leads, and it just took a little bit of time. People were left in no doubt about what they had to do when they read the script, so, you know, that cut out a couple of bits of the chafe straight away. But, you know, Julian and Antonia just came at it in a completely different way to other people, to other actors, and they just really understood what I was after and gave their all, really.

**NEW SPEAKER:** Hi, Kieran. Because it took you so long, imagine there were some budding film makers out there, what advice would you give them?

**A.** I think that the important thing is just to believe in what you are trying to make and believe in the story that you are trying to tell, because, you know, it is too easy sometimes to just step off and you are -- you know -- film making is all about, I think, you know, getting -- telling your story, believing in your story. And I think the thing for me is when I started with *Kelly + Victor*, I just believed in everything that they were about. And I think that's the most crucial thing. You have just got to stick with it, even at your lowest point. If you believe in this story, just go with it and find a way.

**NEW SPEAKER:** Thank you. Am I right in thinking that your next project is the Dexys film?

**A.** That is just another little -- another little facet of my career. You know, I do make documentaries, yes. So I have just been working with Dexys on a concept film kind of idea with my friend Paul Kelly, who I made *Finisterre* with. So that is not a narrative film. It is just a documentary.

**NEW SPEAKER:** So what is the next narrative, really?

**A.** It is a flip of a coin, really. I am working on an adaptation of a fantastic John Burnside book called *A Summer of Drowning*, and also a biopic about Johnny Owen, the Matchstick Man of Merthyr and fantastic Welsh boxer. And then maybe, maybe something about the Manic Street Preachers.

**Q.** A film? A feature film?

**A.** Maybe, yes.

**Q.** Interesting. Can you say more?

**A.** Can't say more than that. Only left the studio on Friday.

**NEW SPEAKER:** Do you imagine that you will be able to make films in nine years?

**A.** I bloody hope so. Bloody hell. My bank manager will be really fingers crossed, yes.

**NEW SPEAKER:** How old are you?

**A.** I am 44.

**Q.** Any more questions for Kieran? If not, I am going to ask: where are you going to put that? Where are you going to put the award?

**A.** Mantelpiece. It is not going to be a doorstop, no. Definitely not a doorstep.

**Q.** Well, congratulations.

**A.** Thank you very much.

**Q.** Kieran Evans. Thanks a lot.

**A.** Cheers, mate. Thanks a lot. Thank you.