

Oliver William Smith

Curriculum Vitae

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**17 Wakenshaw Road
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TRAINING & EDUCATION

- Royal Shakespeare Company Mentoring Program
- Northern Film and Media Assistant Directors Masterclass
- Northern Lights Film Academy
- A-Level Theatre (A) English Literature (A) Philosophy (C)
- GCSE Theatre (A*) English Literature (A*) English Language (A)

EXPERIENCE

Director at Ambitious Motion Pictures

June 2008 - Present

Ambitious Motion Pictures is a video and entertainment company I founded in 2008. We produce short form commercial and online content for corporate industry and create narrative fiction on the side. My short films have featured on MTV2 and ITV2, Topshop TV, and made the official selection of London Short Film Festival twice, as well as final selection for several major online contests including Virgin Media Shorts and the Reed.co.uk film competition. My entries were screened at the BFI Southbank, and at select cinemas nation wide. I write, direct, produce and shoot almost all Ambitious Motion Pictures content myself including spots for Benfield Motor Group and Sofa Italia, while I have also freelanced for the BBC and Vice Media in recent years as a camera operator. In 2016 I self financed a guerrilla feature film called VERVE in order to gain hands on experience with long form storytelling which I have thoroughly enjoyed and hope to pursue further.

Camera Operator at MBT Productions

September 2012 - Present

MBT specialises in corporate video and internal business communications and training films. I take responsibility for all the lighting and camera setups as well as equipment management, care, transport and rental.

Camera Operator at M&J Wedding Films

UK and International wedding filmmakers based in Newcastle Upon Tyne, making beautiful, storytelling wedding videos with a cinematic edge

Actor at Janet Plater Management

January 2016 - Present

JPM supplies supporting artists to the film and television industry, it's a great opportunity to gain experience on the stage floor of large productions. I have featured in CBBC shows Wolfblood and The Dumping Ground, ITV's Victoria and Vera, and The Weinstein Company's The Current War. I have also taken a dozen assignments role-playing for the NHS North East Leadership Academy, and The Royal College of Physicians.

Director of Photography and Editor at Teeny Tiny Films

January 2007 - November 2012 (5 years 11 months)

Teeny Tiny Films was a social enterprise documentary company created to inspire activism and promote civic responsibility. For me the great joy of working in documentary was learning about different subjects, characters and walks of life; spending time in places you wouldn't normally and lifting the lid on emotionally and ethically complex issues. I met soldiers and criminals, doctors, farmers and families from around the world. The work gave me a real sense of perspective and of editorial responsibility – after all it is so easy to misrepresent reality when you're leaving swathes of material on the cutting room floor every day.

This job also taught me the crucial importance of structure, as often we were dealing in events or information that had no fixed chronological order and the narrative had to be built or even invented in the edit room, often without voiceover or a presenter doing pieces to camera. I found that my experience in fiction helped a great deal in this, by identifying critical story beats and character arcs and arranging them in ways that were most engaging for the audience; my aptitude for this process was probably one of my biggest contributions to the company and two of my projects received recognition from the Royal Television Society in the category of Best Non-Broadcast Factual Programme.

Runner at Smoke and Mirrors - Soho, London

Jan 2010 – Feb 2010 (2 months)

Smoke & Mirrors is a highly creative and dedicated visual effects and full service post production company, providing international excellence, innovation and expertise for the advertising, film and music industries. With offices in London, New York, and Shanghai, Smoke & Mirrors has a superb reputation, which is recognised worldwide

VOLUNTEER WORK

Group Leader/Artistic Director at The Turrets Youth Theatre

April 2013 – January 2015 (1 year 9 months)

The Turrets Youth Theatre has provided opportunities for young people in County Durham for over 15 years, with a diverse and challenging creative program. Through weekly workshop sessions and regular performances the group is a platform for young people to develop theatre skills, boost confidence, and increase their exposure to the arts.

Over the years, hundreds of young people have taken part in The Turrets, many of whom consider it a formative experience. It teaches commitment and responsibility, and rewards hard work with infectious achievement. It improves literacy skills and allows young people to explore complex emotional and sociological themes. At the same time the strong bond and sense of community that develops within the group year after year produces life long friendships that are a great support mechanism for our participants. I was responsible for the artistic program, publicity, and safety of the young people as well as directing the annual public performance and delivering theatre workshops throughout the year. This creative melting pot is a place from which I draw constant inspiration.

Actor at The Castle Players Amateur Theatre Company

2009 - Present (7 years)

Performing in the theatre has been a passion of mine since I was very young. Specifically I have been performing outdoor Shakespeare to crowds of over 2000 people in the

grounds of The Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle for the last few years. Among its many transferrable skills Theatre teaches community and empathy, how to hold your nerve under pressure and to think on your feet. Above all, it demands that you maintain a keen awareness of your audience and ensures you can communicate clearly and confidently to large numbers of people.

Director at Amplify

March 2013 - November 2013 (9 months)

Amplify was a filmmaking opportunity I developed for young people in the Teesdale area to write, direct, shoot and star in their own films. Every Thursday evening I led the group in creating an entertaining film in two hours flat, editing in-camera. It was highly improvisational and designed to remove any technical barriers to entry; it was guerilla filmmaking at its best.

Drama Club Facilitator at Cotherstone Primary School

2009 - 2011 (2 years)

Being bundled in front of class of 6–11 year olds and charged with teaching them drama was a real eye opener; their level of enthusiasm was infectious, but chaotic. Over time I strove to bring structure, discipline, and character to their raw potential. The work they produced at the end of the two years was exceptional for their age; I was stunned at how readily they could embrace complicated theatrical conventions, and how much emotional insight they could bring to their characters with only the slightest of guiding hands. It was a role that required everything from great patience to high energy, authority and sensitivity – virtues I try and apply to my management of adult teams. I consider the nurturing of young talent to be one of the most insightful and rewarding aspects of my own young career and I continue to be heavily involved in youth arts.

Recommendations & Reviews

Sam Forsyth – Director, Teeny Tiny Films

“Oliver has the rare ability to see the wood for the trees – undaunted by hours and hours of source material he is able to weave magic in the edit. He is also brilliantly creative and resourceful in writing, producing and directing.”

Jill Cole – Arts Administrator, Former Relationship Manager at Arts Council England

“His eye for detail, his quirky and original sense of humour, his often idiosyncratic perfectionism and his deft camerawork all combine to ensure that each of his films is finely crafted, consistently well-edited and intelligently executed.”

Matt Price – Sound Recordist, Founder of Soundrolling.com

“Oliver is a pleasure to work with in any environment and his extensive knowledge of camera and directing bring up the value of any production as a whole. Highly recommended.”

Sofia Wilmot Josife – Singer/Songwriter

“Oliver is a very talented creative director who I have worked with many times. His eye for detail is impeccable and he is 100 percent reliable and captured exactly what I hoped he would. A pleasure to work with such a great talent.”

Chris Olsen – Reviewer at UKFilmReview.co.uk

“There are numerous sequences in the movie that are genuinely excellent. A one-take tracking shot through a cinema and out into the night streets with all the various characters in tow was a particular highlight for me. It felt as if the fluid camera movement was representing

the transformative stage these characters were in and as they chaotically moved around each other and entered the frames at different times, a sense of collaborative experience was being expressed that is so specific to this age group.”

Honors and Awards

Best Non-Broadcast Factual Programme

Royal Television Society

2012

Best Non-Broadcast Factual Programme

Royal Television Society

2011

Official Selection

London Short Film Festival

2013

Official Selection

London Short Film Festival

2012

Commendation

Chief Constable of Durham Constabulary Police Force

2011

Finalist

Reed.co.uk Film Competition

2013

Winner

Cobravisision Short Film Competition

2009

Finalist

Virgin Media Shorts

2011

Additional Skills & Expertise

Photoshop

Adobe Creative Suite

RED

Canon EOS

Full UK Drivers License

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