



# THE ARBORIST

PRESS PACK

LIKE AN EGG  
PRODUCTIONS

BBC | cymru  
wales

THE NATIONAL LOTTERY®  NETWORK | film

A FILM BY CLARE STURGES

## LOGLINE

Laura faces an impossible choice when she discovers her twin's memorial tree is dying.



## SHORT SYNOPSIS

When tree surgeon Laura discovers her twin sister's commemorative oak is dying, she returns to their childhood home seeking the threads of connection. Here she must repair broken bonds with her estranged brother Joe before she can say goodbye to Eloise.



“We are tiny, trembling clusters of atoms  
subsumed within grief’s awesome presence.”

– NICK CAVE, The Red Hand Letter



## LONG SYNOPSIS

*The Arborist* is a story about how profoundly painful, difficult and necessary it is to accept the death of a loved one – how grief remains deeply embedded within us forever and can reawaken. At these times, how do we learn to live with it again?

Raw emotion overwhelms Laura when she realises her sister's tree is dying and the story is driven by her struggle to accept its loss... The death of the only living thing that connects her to her twin.



For Laura, the tree is a powerful conduit to the trauma of the past: the moment of her sister's death. Its decline throws her into turmoil and she retreats into memory in search of solace – to the objects and shared moments that connect her to her twin.



Laura must repair the broken bonds with her older brother Joe – through forgiveness and the beginnings of reconciliation – before she can accept the loss of the tree and the death of her sister. The felling of the tree marks the end of the hold that unresolved grief, resentment and nostalgia have over Laura. She can begin again.



“Grief is the terrible reminder of the depths of our love.”

– NICK CAVE, The Red Hand Letter



## DIRECTOR STATEMENT

*The Arborist* is a semi-autobiographical film that draws from my own experience of losing my twin and places it within a fictional context. It has elements of real life – for example, the memorial tree in the film is genuine – and it's also an act of imagination. When I was 21 years old, I lost my twin sister Eli suddenly. Her death was devastating and I was completely powerless in the face of overwhelming grief. I longed for answers, which she could never give... to say goodbye. We planted an oak tree for Eli and sprinkled her ashes among its roots. I wrote and directed *The Arborist* to make sense of Eli's loss and to explore the healing role that objects, shared stories and memories play in connecting us to the dead and to each other, and in making the

terrible irreversibility of death bearable. I wanted to invite audiences into this most intimate, devastatingly human experience – creating a sensory cinematic world through composition, colour, atmosphere, music, sound design and visually expressive storytelling. And by allowing the actors' performances to reveal the depth of emotion: the power of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Despite the tragedy at its core, my hope is that audiences feel emotionally and visually rewarded by watching *The Arborist*. Through Laura and Joe's story, we learn that, sometimes, to forgive the ones we love, we must let go of the ones we've lost.

## CLARE STURGES, writer and director

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Clare is a BAFTA Award-winning director drawn to intimate stories that speak to our shared humanity. Her documentary work has explored themes including end of life care, sexwork, the arts in residential care, relationships and love for people with learning disabilities and the personal impacts of terrorism. It has screened at international festivals including Ireland's Oscar-qualifying Foyle Film Festival, London Short Film Festival, Los Angeles Women's Independent Film Festival, London's East End Film Festival and the Women's International Film Festival in Hollywood. It has found international distribution through ABC Australia, DVD release and iTunes.

*The Arborist* is Clare's first narrative short.

Clare is the recipient of a Diverse Cymru bursary in partnership with Screen Skills and the High-end TV Levy Fund and private training grants to support her development as a director of scripted work. In 2015 Clare won the BAFTA Cymru Breakthrough Award for her documentary *Sexwork Love & Mr Right*. In 2016 she won the BAFTA Cymru Short Film Award for *My Brief Eternity*, in collaboration with Like An Egg. *My Brief Eternity* was also longlisted for a British Independent Film Award in 2016 and the EE BAFTA for British Short Film 2017.





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## KEIRAN MCGAUGHEY, producer

Keiran is co-founder and director of Like an Egg Productions. Founded in 2010 Like an Egg are a small passionate team of filmmakers proudly based in the South Wales Valleys. They specialise in telling engaging cinematic stories through online branded content. This includes campaigns for Welsh Government, the Equalities and Human Rights Commission and Macmillan Cancer Research.

Over the years Like an Egg have achieved a reputation for making the impossible possible collaborating with other filmmakers. Keiran has produced projects in collaboration with award winning directors including Kieran Evans, Craig Roberts and Clare Sturges.

Keiran is graduate of the International Film School of Wales. Much of his most recent work has been factual based but 2019 marks a return to producing fiction films.

## CREDITS

Laura Crawford

Jo Crawford

Doctor

Eloise May Crawford

Written and directed by

Produced by

Executive Producers

Director of Photography

Production Designer

Costume Designer

Hair and Make Up Designer

Casting Director

1st Assistant Director

Editor

Original Score by

Sound Designer

Colourist

Flame Artist

Catrin Stewart

Rhodri Meilir

Nicholas McGaughey

Tori Lyons

Clare Sturges

Keiran McGaughey

Kimberley Warner for

Ffilm Cymru Wales

Christina Macaulay for

BBC Wales

Christopher Jacobi

Grace Mahony

Sarah Jane-Perez

Jodie Gibson

Hannah Marie Williams

Emyr Rees

Chris McGaughey

Samuel Barnes

Nicholas Davies

Rob Godwin

Glenn Collict

Script Supervisor

2nd Assistant Directors

Steadicam Operator

Clapper Loader

Gaffer

Sound Recordists

Sound Special Effects

DIT

Carpenter

Transport

Unit Stills Photographer

Arborist Special Advisor

Title Design

Sound Design at

Flame Facility

Camera Equipment

Lighting

BFI Network Wales Manager

Development Executive

for BFI Network Wales

Chiara Carbonara

Ani Hoskins

Jordan Sheehy

Tom McMahon

Tamsin Palmer

Russ Greening

Nicholas Davies

Bryn Duffy

Rhys Young

Atlanta Swannack

Dave Clement

Steven Jevons

Tom Sparey

Jo Hedger

Emily Merchant

Hoot Studios

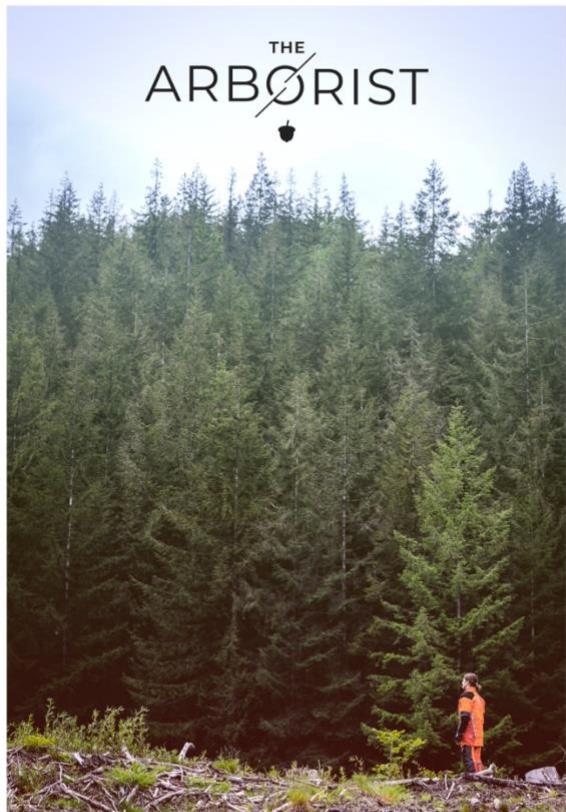
Wordley.

Camera Movement

Firebug Lighting

Alice Whittemore

Gwenfair Hawkins



LIKE AN EGG PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS CATRIN STEWART RHODRI MEILIR "THE ARBORIST"  
PRODUCED BY KEIRAN MCGAUGHEY CINEMATOGRAPHY BY CHRIS JACOBI EDITED BY CHRIS MCGAUGHEY  
ORIGINAL SCORE BY SAMUEL BARNES SOUND BY NICK DAVIES

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY CLARE STURGES



## PRESS PACK

All press queries

Keiran McGaughey  
Tel 01443 402596  
Email [keiran@likeanegg.com](mailto:keiran@likeanegg.com)

High res stills available on request  
Credit Tom Sparey  
Full res poster available on request

[WEBPAGE](#) | [TRAILER](#)

PRIVATE SCREENER  
available on request

## TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Title: The Arborist  
Year of production: October 2019  
Duration: 14 mins  
Country of production: Wales, UK  
Genre: Drama  
Aspect ratio: 2.40:1  
Finish formats: UHD and 2K DCP, ProRes  
Sound: 5.1 surround and stereo  
Language: English

Ffilm Cymru & BFI.NETWORK in association with BBC Wales

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