

# *After Auschwitz*

## **Synopsis:**

Hiding from the shadows of the past, Rebeka reflects on the paths not taken, of love lost and the moral obligations of being a survivor.

Running Time: 12 minutes 23 seconds

## **Credits:**

Writer-Director/Producer:	Paul Blinkhorn
Director of Photography/Producer:	Paul Anderton
Editor/Producer:	Steven Hutchinson
Original Music:	Dominic Mason
Production Designer:	Philip J Lunt

Cast: Cathleen Blower, Hazel Earle

## **Contact:**

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## **Screening history:**

Tryon International Film Festival (Tryon, North Carolina - USA), AHRC Film Award (London - UK) \* nominated for the Inspiration Award, Awareness Film Festival (Los Angeles, USA) Universal Film Festival (Kansas City, Missouri - USA), Eureka Springs Human Rights Film Festival (Eureka Springs, Arkansas - USA) \*award-winning, Immigrants of Spitalfields Festival (London - UK), Phoenix Film Festival (Melbourne - Australia), Shorts Off Film Festival (a BAFTA Cymru qualifying festival).

## **Director Biography:**

### **Short:**

Paul Blinkhorn is a director of short film, audio drama and theatre and a member of the Lincoln Center Theater Directors Lab (New York) and the Young Vic Directors Program (London). His previous short film 'Duty Calls' featured at festivals in Canada, France, Germany, Ireland and Romania.

**Long:**

Paul Blinkhorn (Writer-Director) was shortlisted for the Genesis Future Directors Award 2016 at the Young Vic. He is the Artistic Director of Northern Outlet Theatre Company and a member of the Lincoln Center Theater Directors Lab, New York.

**Training:** MA in Theatre Directing from East 15 (supported through an AHRC bursary).

**Short film includes:** As a writer-director his award-winning short film 'Duty Calls' screened at festivals in Canada, France, Germany, Ireland and Romania.

**Radio includes:** 'The Mighty Carlins' (selected to be part of the UK Radio Drama Festival 2015 and the HEAR Now: The Audio Fiction and Arts Festival in Kansas City, USA) and 'Country Life' (Wireless Theatre Company)

**Theatre includes:** JB Shorts 14 - 'Sugared Armour' (a new play by BAFTA-winning writer Anita Pandolfo), JB Shorts 12 - 'A Hairline Crack' (selected to be a part of the Re:play Festival at HOME), 'Naked Old Man' (UK premiere by Academy Award nominated writer Murray Schisgal) and 'John and Mark' (Northern Outlet Theatre Company, tour), 'Country Life' (RADA GBS Theatre/ Camden Festival Fringe before transferring to the Old Red Lion, London)

**As assistant director:** 'Two' and 'Two 2' (World Premiere) (Octagon Theatre Bolton, Dir: David Thacker), 'Frozen' (Library Theatre Manchester, Dir: Roger Haines)

**Other capacities include:**

- \* 2nd AD - 'Fairytale of London Town' (TV), Dir: Louis Neethling, Mutt & Jeff Pictures
- \* 2nd AD - 'Screen Acting: Close-Up' (documentary), Dir: Nic Phillips, Clever Boy Media
- \* 2nd AD - 'Do it like a Dude' - Jessie J (music video), Dir: Ben Peters, Luti Media
- \* 2nd AD - 'Sing, Sing, Sing' - Yolanda Be Cool (music video), Dir: Ben Peters, Luti Media
- \* 2nd AD - 'I Am Ruthie Segal, Hear Me Roar!' (short), Dir: Minkie Spiro, Third Man Film & Company Films (Official Selection: UK Jewish Film Festival, Toronto International Jewish Film Festival).
- \* 1st AD - 'No Regrets' (short), Dir: Nicolas Challenor, NC Films (Deep Fried Film Festival, Speak Up International Film Festival)

**Cast Biographies:**

Cathleen Blower (Rebeka)

Cathleen trained at Esme Church's Northern Theatre School, Bradford, United Kingdom (later renamed the Bradford Civic Theatre School) where she was tutored by, among others, the world-renowned movement theorist Rudolf Laban. Fellow graduates include Billie Whitelaw, Tom Bell, Dorothy Heathcote, William Gaunt, Bernard Helton, Donald Haworth, Bryan Mosley, Edward Petherbridge and Robert Stephens.

Cathleen spent more than twenty years of her life as an educator. She had a long association with Bolton Little Theatre.

Hazel Earle (Young Rebeka)

Hazel trained at Arden School of Theatre in Manchester and ICAT. She has appeared in many theatres around the North West including Sheffield Crucible, Bolton Octagon and the Royal Exchange Theatre. Hazel also runs Manchester based theatre company Hazel Tree Productions.

Film credits include: Tomorrow at Noon (Short), Going Out (Short), Au Gnome De L'Amour (Short), Seeing Smoke, Mancattan

### **Director's Statement:**

'After Auschwitz' is a short film about survival, truth and reflection. At a time when we are becoming increasingly concerned about what the future has in store for us economically and politically I wanted to write something that was about hope and inward reflection. About moving forward. As a filmmaker I wanted to be a part of the discussion around faith and tolerance.

We so often see what sets us apart, rather than what can ultimately bring us together. Rebeka; this elderly Jewish woman preparing a Sabbath table found her way onto the page and I had to tell her story.

### **Notes:**

#### **Writing-Directing:**

As both the writer and director of 'After Auschwitz' I was heavily influenced by documentary film and the works of Ken Loach and Mike Leigh in particular. The film very deliberately blurs the line between fiction and documentary and places great emphasis on the instrumental role of the actor. Subtlety and the search for a cinematic truth which would served the story I wanted to tell was of paramount importance throughout.

#### **Cinematography:**

When approaching the look for 'After Auschwitz' the DP Paul Anderton and I knew how important the cinematography would be, especially given that the dialogue being delivered comes from one character's perspective. Not only did it need to be visually interesting, it also needed to emphasise her feeling of separation, and the inner struggle she has with her faith. Paul Anderton has always been a great admirer of Christopher Doyle's work with Wong Kar-Wai, and his characteristic splitting of the screen into two proved to be one technique which we felt suited the style we where after for 'After Auschwitz'.

#### **Editing:**

I greatly benefited from having my Editor Steven Hutchinson on set throughout. We always wanted the editing to have a hand in telling the story. It was our aim to elevate the piece above a filmed theatrical monologue, so applying cinematic storytelling techniques through the edit was essential. We chose to overlap images with disembodied dialogue as a means to suggest a stream of consciousness; signifying that Rebeka's musings were perhaps internal and not necessarily linear. The flashback sequences provided an extra texture to the piece and allowed us to break up the subtle imagery and stillness in the main dialogue driven sections of the film which featured the older Rebeka.