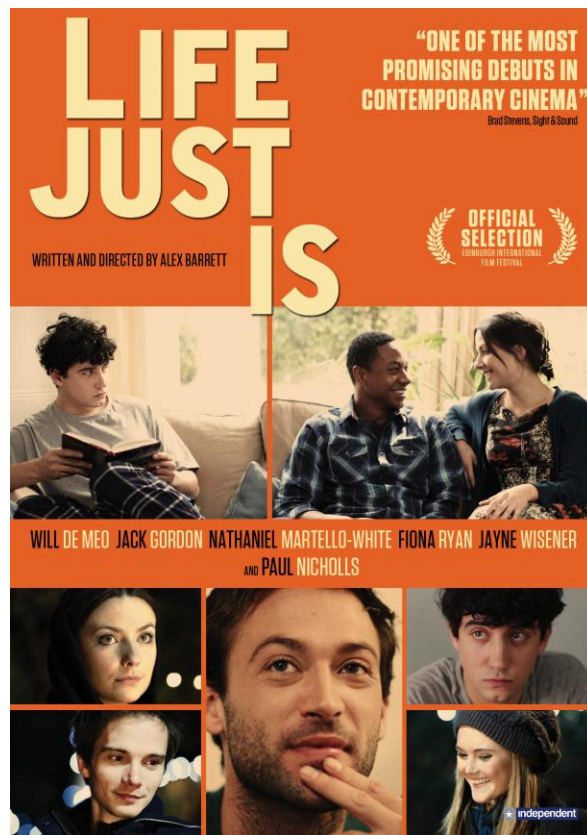




Presents



Theatrical Release Date: 7 December 2012 (cert 15)

DVD Release Date: 10 December 2012

Written and Directed by **ALEX BARRETT**

Produced by **TOM STUART**

This is a written movie in a seam that can be traced back to Hal Hartley's early films

—**ROBERT KOEHLER**, Film Comment

The young cast shines.

—**TIM ROBEY**, Film Critic for The Daily Telegraph

For press inquiries please contact:

Isabelle Knight, isabelle.knight@btinternet.com, 07717 152006

www.independentfilmcompany.com



SYNOPSIS

Pete, Tom, David, Claire and Jay are a tight-knit group of friends who share neighbouring flats in London after recently graduating from university. As they hang out, throw parties and navigate the new responsibilities of adult life, romantic tensions begin to stir beneath the surface. When Jay begins a relationship with the much older Bobby (played by *EASTENDERS* star Paul Nicholls) and Pete goes on a quest to discover the meaning of life, the true meaning of their friendship is put to the test.

FESTIVALS & AWARDS

Official Selection, The Michael Powell Award for Best British Feature Film, Edinburgh International Film Festival 2012



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

When conceiving the project that was to become [LIFE JUST IS](#), the initial idea that crystallized within me was to try and write something which would explore the lives of young adults in today's society. My aim was to explore the 'inner life' of the characters, and this was the motivating factor for the film's emphasis on the action of everyday life. The many moments of quiet contemplation contained within the film, along with the meditative pace and sparse production design, have all been included to help render these 'inner lives' on screen.

As the idea developed, I also became interested in incorporating a slightly more esoteric element, through which I could examine the attitudes towards religion within the new generation. As a curious agnostic, I have always been fascinated by religious ideas, and more specifically the way that they can be reconciled with an ever increasingly secularised modern society. In his work, the writer Nikos Kazantzakis has often spoken of the battle between the 'spirit' and the 'flesh' which rages inside his soul, and this dichotomy should be seen as one of the two main existential dilemmas which form the heart of [LIFE JUST IS](#).

The other, equally important, dichotomy which exists within the film is that of 'fear' and 'desire', and the ways in which the former often prevents us from being able to fulfil the latter. Of course, the battleground on which these dichotomies play out is the battleground of life, and as the characters struggle to come to terms with them, and to settle their inner restlessness, they discover that no matter what approach they take to life they can't control it. Quite simply, life is what it is, and thus the best they can do is accept it and embrace it.

When writing the script I knew that, as my debut feature, [LIFE JUST IS](#) would have to be realised on a micro-budget. As a result of this, I always kept in mind the practicalities of how it would ultimately be made. Although this created a number of limitations on what would be possible, it also helped me to focus on what was important to the story, and in this way I was able to turn these limitations into advantages. By freeing myself from the distractions which often come with larger-scale projects, I was able to concentrate first and foremost on creating an intimate character study, infused with the existential and spiritual dilemmas so central to, yet so ignored by, much of modern life.

—ALEX BARRETT

INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR ALEX BARRETT

What were the ideas you wanted to explore and your main aims for making [LIFE JUST IS](#)?

I was in a similar place to some of the characters when I started writing it. I was at that kind of age, just out of university, and I was seeing a lot of films about people of that age group that were just taking drugs and partying and all that kind of stuff. I thought it would be interesting to try to do a slightly different approach to that kind of age group and try to do something that was a bit more similar to what I felt like had been my university experience. I was also interested in exploring ideas of religion, of existential quests. People at that stage of their lives, as well as going out and partying, are also thinking about whether God exists and what their place in the world is – life and the universe and everything. So I was trying to explore that age but do it from a slightly more existential angle rather than a kind of [AMERICAN PIE](#) angle.

What were your influences in making the film?

There were quite a few influences. The DP and I looked a lot at European and Scandinavian arthouse films from the 50s and 60s. When I was writing the script I was also very influenced by Richard Linklater and Ingmar Bergman. Some of the mumblecore directors gave me the push that I needed to actually get out there and make it as well. One of the key people that we looked at was Carl Dreyer, who's my favourite filmmaker, so we took quite a bit of influence from his stuff, so a real mixed bag of influences.

What were the challenges you faced?

I started writing the film in 2005 and we shot in 2010 so the challenge for me was getting myself ready to make it. I came out of uni and I wanted to make a feature but I knew I wasn't ready, so I went off and made a bunch of shorts, which is why it took 5 years. And then when I was ready it was that classic thing of trying to get funding, and then if you don't get that you can just decide to make it anyway. So that was the biggest challenge I think, the practical, trying to pull it all together. Obviously there are creative challenges as well, but the practical ones are, in a way, the more tricky ones to overcome.

What made the difference between 2005 when you were writing but didn't feel ready to make the film and now, when you have actually made the film?

I'd made a bunch of films at uni, but a lot of them had just been very small things that were me, or me and my friends, or I was the editor or another role rather than being writer/director on them, so there were a few things I wanted more experience with. I wanted more experience of working with actors, especially for the piece that I've done as it's so much about the performances. I also wanted more experience of working with composers, and just in general, with film grammar and all that stuff. It's great what I learned at uni, but you only get one chance to make a first feature and I wanted to do my best. You're never ready for a feature and you always jump in, but at least I did enough prep that I felt I was ready to make that leap.

THE CAST

PAUL NICHOLLS – Bobby

After making his name in *EASTENDERS*, Paul Nicholls continued to work in television appearing in *CITY CENTRAL*, *THE PASSION*, *HUSTLE*, *MISS MARPLE*, and *CLAPHAM JUNCTION*. His film career started in 1999 when he appeared in William Boyd's *THE TRENCH*. Since then he has appeared in *THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE*, *GOODBYE CHARLIE BRIGHT*, *IF ONLY*, *BRIDGET JONES – THE EDGE OF REASON* and *FAINTHEART*. He is also starring in *A LONG WAY FROM HOME* which is set to be released in 2013.

JACK GORDON – Pete

After studying at RADA, where he graduated in 2007, Jack went on to numerous roles in theatre, film and television. Most recently in 2011, he starred in the low-budget suspense/horror film *PANIC BUTTON*, directed by Chris Crow, while in the same year, also obtaining a small role in the big budget epic *CAPTAIN AMERICA* for Marvel Studios. He has also had roles in Gurinder Chadha's *IT'S A WONDERFUL AFTERLIFE* and Andrea Arnold's multi award-winning *FISH TANK*. His performance in Philip Ridley's film *HEARTLESS* was described by a Variety Magazine critic as 'scene stealing'. Jack has also appeared on television in episodes of *LAW & ORDER: UK*, *LEWIS*, *THE BILL*, *PRIMEVAL* and *EASTENDERS*. He also starred in *TRUTH OR DARE* which was recently in cinemas, and is set to appear in *NORTHERN SOUL* alongside Steve Coogan later in the year.

NATHANIEL MARTELLO-WHITE – Tom

Nathaniel performed in many theatre productions both during and after his time studying at RADA. In 2007 he began acting in film, starring in the short film *THE PREACHER*, and has gone on to appear in *SISTERHOOD OF THE TRAVELLING PANTS 2*, *RED TAILS* and *HARD BOILED SWEETS*. He has also featured in numerous television shows including *TRIAL AND RETRIBUTION*, *PARTY ANIMALS*, *DOCTORS*, *ROMAN MYSTERIES*, *MISFITS* and *LAW & ORDER: UK*.

JAYNE WISENER – Claire

Jayne Wisener got her first film credit in 2007 on *SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET*. She has gone on to appear in *BOOGEYMAN 3*, *JANE EYRE* and *A KISS FOR JED*. She has also worked in television, appearing in *THE INBETWEENERS* in 2009, as well as in *VEXED*, *CASUALTY*, *THE RUNAWAY*, *INJUSTICE*, *MISFITS* and she plays Sandy in the BBC Northern Ireland drama *6DEGREES*.

FIONA RYAN – Claire

Fiona began her acting career by training at the Gaiety School of Acting in Dublin. Along with numerous roles in theatre, she has starred in the film *POSSESSION* directed by Eoin Macken. Her television credits include *THE TUDORS*, *DOCTORS*, *THE BILL* and *THE LAST FURLONG*.

WILL DE MEO – David

After starring in several short films, [LIFE JUST IS](#) is Will de Meo's debut feature film performance. He is currently working on [SHAME THE DEVIL](#) directed by Paul Tanter ([JACK FALLS](#)), which is currently in production.

THE FILMMAKERS**ALEX BARRETT – Writer/Director**

Alex Barrett is an independent filmmaker whose films collectively have been selected for over 50 international festivals, including such prestigious events as the Edinburgh International Film Festival, Hamburg International Short Film Festival and the Tribeca Film Festival. In addition, his work has enjoyed a number of non-festival screenings, including showings at the BFI Southbank, Brixham Theatre and the Victoria & Albert Museum. To date his films have garnered eight awards, including 'Best Lo-Budget Film' at the London Short Film Festival and 'Stoli Emerging Filmmaker Award' at the Babelgum Online Film Festival. His work has been described by the writer and broadcaster Sarfraz Manzoor as 'witty and profound'.

TOM STUART – Producer

Tom Stuart has been working in production and location management for 10 years and completed the script development diploma with The Script Factory and NFTS in 2008. His first short film as producer was [ROAD KILL](#), nominated by numerous festivals including best newcomer at Rushes Soho Shorts. Next came [THE PIT](#) starring Natalie Press and Struan Rodger, selected by Palm Springs and won best cinematography at the Fuji Shorts Awards. His first feature as a producer is Alex Barrett's debut [LIFE JUST IS](#) starring Paul Nicholls. Currently in post-production is Tom Petch's debut [AFG](#), a contemporary war film set in Afghanistan. At present Tom Stuart is studying with the Media Business School, whilst also developing a feature project with BBC Films.

CHRISTINE HARTLAND – Executive Producer

Christine produced her first feature film, the political thriller [WMD](#). by David Holroyd (nominated Best Debut UK Feature at the East End Film Festival in 2009) which had a day-and-date UK theatrical and VOD release in October 2009. She has produced many award-winning short films including [SICK](#) available at the BFI and on the Film 4 Forgotten Classics DVD Collection. She is the executive producer of debut feature [VERITY'S SUMMER](#) by Palme d'Or Nominee Ben Crowe. From 2009-10 she was part of the Guiding Light Mentoring scheme with producer mentor Damian Jones ([SEX & DRUGS & ROCK'N' ROLL](#), [ADULTHOOD](#), [HISTORY BOYS](#) etc). Her company Patchwork Productions has several feature projects in various stages of development.



GRAEME FRY – Executive Producer

After studying engineering at university Graeme spent several years working for electronics companies around the world. Eventually, discovering that he was not a natural techie, he drifted into sailing and spent a happy time island-hopping in the Caribbean. When his sense of responsibility finally re-established itself he returned to the UK and did a qualification in marketing. He then became a consultant to technology businesses in the field of marketing and communications. He started his own company in 1997 which has now grown to be one of the UK's most successful niche management consultancy firms. In recent years he also began to develop his interest in independent film and attended film school and studied script writing. With colleagues, he recently established production company Stanley Road Productions which develops and invests in projects from new talent.

MURAT KEBIR – Editor

Over the past fifteen years Murat has worked on a wide range of projects including documentaries, light entertainment and drama as an offline and online editor, motion graphic artist, writer, director, producer and post production supervisor. For the last 11 years he has been working as a senior editor at Sky Television, working extensively in sports, promos, art & movie projects, both as an offline and online editor and motion graphic artist. Throughout the last 6 years Murat has focused on exploring cinema, especially film editing and directing techniques. Murat also worked as the editor on Alex Barrett's previous short film [ANDREW](#).

YOSUKE KATO – Cinematographer

After working on numerous commercial films and music videos at Pyramid Film in Tokyo, Yosuke moved to the U.S. to refine his artistic craft as a filmmaker. Later he went on to study at the London Film School and worked on many short films as a cinematographer. One of his graduation works, [DRY RAIN](#) won the Best Short Film at the Hong Kong International Film Festival 2009. He is currently working on several different projects, including other feature films.



ASALVA and PATCHWORK PRODUCTIONS
Presents

LIFE JUST IS

Directed by
ALEX BARRETT

Produced by
TOM STUART

Executive Produced by
CHRISTINE HARTLAND
GRAEME FRY

Starring

WILL DE MEO
JACK GORDON
NATHANIEL MARTELLO-WHITE
PAUL NICHOLLS
FIONA RYAN
JAYNE WISENER
RACHEL BRIGHT
JASON CROOT
VANESSA GOVINDEN
ANDREW HAWLEY
LACHLAN MCCALL
JOSHUA OSEI
NIALL PHILLIPS
ALIX WILTON REGAN
GILLIAN WISENER
ANNA BROOK

Crew

Cinematographer: YOSUKE KATO
Editor: MURAT KEBIR
Production Designer: NIINA TOPP
First A.D.: ALICE CARONNA
Production Manager: EMILY LOMASNEY
Sound: JASON CREASEY

Songs

"STARLIGHT SERENADE"

Composed and performed by John Elleson-Hartley
Courtesy of North Star Publishing

"GEORDIE IN WONDERLAND"

Composed by David Leslie Walls
Performed by Will De Meo
Courtesy of Conexion Music LTD

"ON MY MIND"

Composed and performed by Will De Meo

"MOVING ALONG"

Composed by Jeff Streatfield
Performed by Will De Meo

"IMPATIENCE"

Composed and performed by Emma McGlynn

"AND REAR LIGHTS"

Composed by Andrew Myers
Performed by The Lustjunks

"GRAVY"

Composed by Todd Anthony Roache
Performed by The Heart Strings

"LEMONADE GIRL"

Composed by Christopher Paul Jagdhar
Performed by Will De Meo

"HOLY ROLLING"

Composed by Mcfarlene, Matthews, Gordon,
Dunn
Performed by Deckard

"SAY SOMETHING STUPID"

Composed by Mcfarlene, Matthews, Gordon,
Dunn
Performed by Deckard

"GLITA"

Composed and performed by nate_seacourt

"GOOD TIMES ARE COMING FOR TO GET YOU"

Composed by Todd Anthony Roache
Performed by The Heart Strings

"A FUTURE ENDING"

Composed by Tim Crompton and Stuart Peck
Performed by The High Wire

"DRUNK LOVE"

Composed and performed by Emma McGlynn

"MEPHISTOPHELES"

Composed by Yardley, Crombie, Lea and
Sauberlich
Performed by Animal Kingdom
Courtesy of Kobalt Music Publishing LTD

"DREAMING IN A"

Composed by David Leslie Walls
Performed by Will De Meo, Jack Gordon,
Nathaniel Martello-White, Fiona Ryan and
Jayne Wisener
Courtesy of Phoenix Music International LTD

"DREAMING IN A"

Composed by David Leslie Walls
Performed by The Wildhearts
Courtesy of Warner Music UK LTD