

Horror from Bantry director shows off West Cork haunts

BY SALLY COLLINS AND
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RURAL folk-horror film 'Hokum', shot and produced in West Cork, has opened in London's West End to sold-out previews and a resoundingly positive reception.

On Tuesday writer and director Damian McCarthy, a Bantry native, introduced the film to a packed screening just 'around the corner' from where he screened his first short film in Leicester Square in 2008.

McCarthy said he wanted to bring some self-awareness and local humour to such a big horror production, and that despite the frights and suspense, the film 'doesn't take itself too seriously'.

There was a healthy mix of laughter and screams in London's West End for the film's debut in the sold-out 300-seat main screen at the Prince Charles Cinema, a beloved 1960s repertory cinema with a penchant for cult horror screenings.

The film stars Adam Scott as a troubled writer travelling to a rural hotel in search of closure, only to reckon with mysterious locals steeped in mythology and superstition. Keen viewers will spot more than a few recognisable faces among the supporting cast, familiar lush landscapes, and perhaps even a regional newspaper that rings a bell.

The film entered production in Skibbereen last spring. McCarthy bringing both locals and US actors home to his native county. There was scattered applause for the Fís Éireann logo upon the film's opening, with the film also co-produced by Irish outfit Tailored Films.

Earlier this week Scott about his love



US actor Adam Scott

for West Cork. The Hollywood actor stayed at Liss Ard Estate during his time in Ireland.

'West Cork, and Skibbereen specifically, is one of the most beautiful places in the world,' he said. 'Whenever we weren't working, I was staying on this really cool estate that's been turned into a hotel, the Liss Ard Estate.'

'When I had time, I would just get lost in the grounds. I walked those grounds

probably 30 times over the couple of months we were there. It is just beautiful. I could lose myself in West Cork and stay there for months and months.'

Scott added: 'The crew that Damian works with is unbelievable and everyone is so nice and smart. Ireland is a place to go and a place to stay as far as I'm concerned.'

Hokum is in cinemas this Friday, May 1st.