

TELLING GRIMM TALES

BRITAIN'S



Andy Edwards – founder of Paranoid Android Films and the twisted mind behind the dark fairy-tale nightmare *Rumpelstiltskin* - chats with John Hamilton about everything from *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* to Monty Python, BBFC battles to how Letterboxd keeps getting it wrong, and what it really takes to make indie horror in Britain in the year of our dread, 2025...

If you like your horror laced with humour, gore, and just the right amount of WTF?!?, then Birmingham-born Andy Edwards is probably already on your watch list - or should be.

Whether it's the sun-soaked splatter of *Ibiza Undead* (2016) or the seaside-slasher *Punch* (2023), Edwards has been quietly (and not-so-quietly) carving out a space for himself in the indie horror scene, and demonstrating a knack for turning limited resources into maximum mayhem.

After flaunting a Sam Raimi-esque love of comedy, chaos, and creative carnage in short films like *House Party of the Dead V*, *London Horror Story*, and *Grindsplotiation* (the gloriously gonzo *Alice in the Ultrabeyond* segment), Edwards broadened his exploitation horizons.

Mid-pandemic, while most of us were still trying to make sourdough and teach ourselves Italian, he crafted *Graphic Desires*, an erotic thriller that made a nonsense of social distancing. Just when he seemed pigeon-holed as horror's newest hyphenate, writer-director, he took a left turn into producing and under his own banner, Paranoid Android Films, made *Custom*, a tense fusion of erotic and nightmare, and a breakout favourite at FrightFest Glasgow 2024.

Now, Edwards is back with his latest, a twisted reimagining of *Rumpelstiltskin*. Yes, *that* Rumpelstiltskin - the creepy little man who spins straw into gold, barter in babies, and has a name that sounds like an allergic reaction. But in Andy's hands, this isn't a bedtime story. It's darker, bloodier, and features old gods with a taste for first-borns and no patience for fairy tale nonsense.

We sat down with Andy to talk about his early films, his enduring love of all things blood-soaked and bizarre, and why the horror genre is still the best playground for filmmakers with a taste for the twisted.

Spoiler: Nobody's living happily ever after!

Before we get onto *Rumpelstiltskin*, I wanted to ask about your background. Were you a media student?

I did Media Studies for 'A' Level and a B-Tech in Media Production, looking across the whole thing from TV, radio and video, and then I did Film Studies at Sheffield, Hallam. Did all that, knew I wanted to be a filmmaker and then the real world kicked in. I have no family connections, no family money. I moved back to my hometown of Birmingham and worked in a shop and a call centre...

Oh, I think we have all done that!

Oh, yeah. So, with no way into the film industry after I finished at Hallam and I needed money to live, I did some regular person jobs. Then moved to London and ended up working in radio for, maybe, six or seven years.



'Today I'll bake, tomorrow I'll brew, The next I'll fetch the queen's new child; Still no one knows it just the same, That Rumpelstiltskin is my name.'

Rumpelstiltskin, The Brothers Grimm

That scratched the creative itch for a while and then I got made redundant. I got into being a freelance video director-producer working on corporates, and doing that freelance allowed me the time to get back into films. I started with a bunch of shorts and then did *Ibiza Undead*.

Your debut film - which I saw at Frightfest in London.

That's right. *Ibiza Undead* played there, that was the first one... but if I don't have a film on, I'll go anyway because I love horror movies.

Your intention was always to be a movie director then, from your schooldays?

It's one of those kind of jobs that I decided I wanted to do it when I was about four! I saw *Star Wars* on the big screen and thought, 'that's incredible!' I was into not only the world of *Star Wars* on screen, but I would get the 'Making of...' books. This was pre-DVD extras and I would learn about how they did it, the models and stuff. I knew that was something I wanted to do, but growing up in suburban Birmingham, that felt a billion miles away. Now, I live in North London, very close to Elstree Studios, where it

was actually filmed. When I was growing up, I thought there was nothing I could do to get there.

My next film epiphany was, maybe, 13 or 14, old enough to rent '18' rated films from the video shop. Me and my mates would hire *The Evil Dead* and the early Peter Jackson films. Watching those type of films gave me the idea for the first time that this could be something I could do. These were movies that didn't require huge Hollywood studios or millions of pounds, there were no space ships involved. This was a group of friends messing around in the wood and essentially creating incredible movies. I think as a kid you really don't watch many low budget films. I watched *Star Wars* and *Indiana Jones*, *The Goonies*, *Ghostbusters* and stuff like that - huge Hollywood productions or animated stuff. *The Evil Dead*, *Brain Dead* and *Bad Taste* was the first time I'd seen stuff outside of the Hollywood studio system. I was like, 'ooh, there is hope.'

Did you look to Tobe Hooper or is that a generation removed from you?

I saw *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* when it was re-released. I think when I was too young and it was still banned over here. They re-released it and I remember seeing it in my local cinema, maybe I was 18 or 19. It was a midnight screening and I remember the cinema was full of couples and I was with my mate. We were going in thinking, 'let's see what all the fuss is about.' By the end of the film, we were pretty much the only people left in the cinema. I absolutely loved it.

The only way to see it is on the big screen, it's so intense and profoundly disturbing.

Intense is the best word for it. The atmosphere of dread and horror throughout the whole thing, and the sounds of it — they are deeply



This spread: Images from behind the scenes of *Rumpelstiltskin*, with sound recordist Joao Correia and make-up artists Georgia Brown and Lucy Loannou

unpleasant. It doesn't let up. Once the horror starts, the moment he comes out that door, that's just terror.

So, you were bitten then, it was always going to be horror for you?

I think so. I love all kinds of other movies, but I justify my love of horror by the fact that I will happily watch a bad horror movie, I will not necessarily watch a bad Rom-Com or a bad thriller. If someone tells me not to watch something because its rubbish about any other genre, I won't watch it. I just want to watch the good ones of other genres. I watch arthouse, musicals, I watch as many films as I can, but only the good ones. Even if it's terrible, I still watch the horrors. There will be something that I will get out of it. Maybe the film is bad but the monster is good or the kills are good. There will always be something.

You have been making films for a while now as Paranoid Android Films.

One of the things I am trying to do with Paranoid Android Films is to not just use it to make my films, it's not just a vanity project. I want to help film-makers, especially first-time film-makers get their film made and that was why we made *Custom* which played at Frightfest Glasgow last year...

Which, again, I saw it there and liked it a lot

I produced that via my company. That was the first thing I produced that I hadn't directed. Tiago [Teixeira] came to me for some advice on the script. I read it and I liked it, it was really small budget, a couple of people in a house, and I thought, I can help you put this together. This was the third film we made and I am looking to more of that, if people have interesting projects and are willing to work for very little money. **It was a case of trying to a film**



that I liked, and wanted to see but it wasn't my style. Instead of trying to be arthouse, I brought in a director to do it.

Do you see yourself as a sort of 21st Century Roger Corman?

It wasn't the sort of thing I wanted to do. Producing is the hardest of the tasks between writing, directing and producing. It's the most thankless; the one where you have the most spreadsheets, speak to accountants and HMRC, and talk about permits and release forms. All of that side is not fun. The fun side, I guess, is that Roger Corman side, finding new talent with interesting scripts and saying, 'I can't pay you very much, you won't get much money for it, but I can help you make your film.' That is the interesting thing.

Is there community of independent film-makers in the UK, all talking to each other and going for a pint?

We do. I try and help facilitate that as much as possible, and places like Frightfest are obviously good for that. There are a lot of people in this country

working in low budget independent horror movies, a lot of them are spread across the country. It's very easy to be in a small silo. The more that we can communicate, the better it will be for everyone.

I'm on a few WhatsApp groups and every now and then meet up with people, discuss cast and crew, and help each other out. Sharing information about distributors, for example, is really useful. That's the side of film-making that many people know nothing about - it doesn't get taught at film school. Filmmakers can make their first film and then get eaten alive. And it's a small world, you end seeing many of the same actors, lots of the same crew. I'm helping out a couple of first time filmmakers at the moment, not as producer, just giving them bits of advice, the stuff wish I'd have known when I first started.

It's like the 'Movie Brats,' that generation of American filmmakers in the 1970s.

Yes, it's a bit like that. And the important thing is realising that we are not in competition with each other. It can often



seem like that when you have the likes of the BFI where there is one little pot of money and essentially it is run like a competition. Only one of you gets the money, and it's probably not the horror film maker. The way it is set up in this country breeds that kind of competitive mentality, whereas we actually aren't in competition with each other at all. Everybody sources funding from disparate places. It's not one pot and it's not a limited number of eyeballs. Our mission is really to take on the US producers and start to build an industry here around horror and genre films.

That seems to be working, there is a lot more independent horror films coming through now.

That's true, and the next stage is working out how to make that sustainable from a financial point of view, where one film funds the next, that one funds the next, and you can keep doing it that way. You don't have to rely on Crowdfunding or what have you. I have been going to Frightfest for years, Horror-On-Sea, Romford and now I see people there with their first feature and they started going in as a punter. They maybe had a short film there and now they have features. It's a really nice thing to see, and I can go and support other people's films. You realise that there are other people I can talk to about this world, the good things and the bad things.

That brings us to *Rumpelstiltskin*, which was the closing film at Glasgow, that must have

been a thrill?

That was great. I've not been the closing film before. *Punch*, which was two years ago, was pretty much the opening film, it played the first night- which is great because you can then relax and enjoy the rest of the festival. The closing film is a great spot to have, but the whole time you are at the festival, watching other films, meeting other people, it's in my head that my film hasn't played yet.

Did you get much reaction at Glasgow online or from the people there?

Obviously, the downside being the closing film, is it finishes and everyone goes home! If you have the first film on, you bump into people who have seen it and you can talk to them. Most of the online reviews have been positive, a few on Letterboxd who aren't, but that's Letterboxd.

Its more about saying something funny with Letterboxd, usually snarky.

Absolutely! The worst thing that Letterboxd ever did was allow 'likes' on a review. Now it's full of one-liners like 'this film is like sticking needles in my eyes'- 4000 likes! The content that gets the 'likes' is those little snarky put-downs. Nobody actually says what they think about the movie which is what it should be for. Get rid of the 'likes', that's my controversial statement!

So, FrightFest always has a place in your plans?

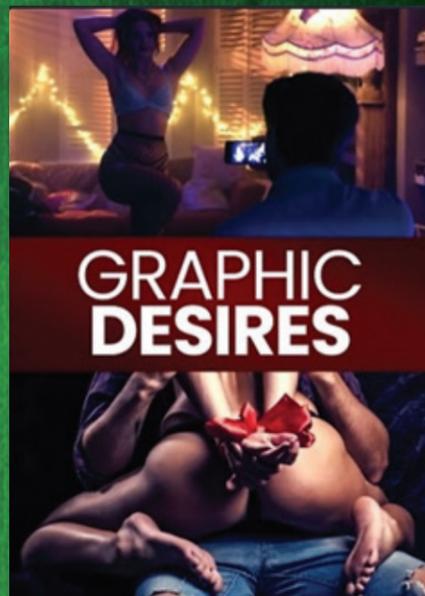
Obviously, I've got a relationship with them

the original Grimm Brothers' story for *Rumpelstiltskin*. I had expected a *Winnie the Pooh: Blood and Honey* angle, a reimagining.

That was obviously a very deliberate decision. I know guys who did the *Winnie the Pooh* film, they are friends of mine, and I saw what they were doing. My producer's hat was on and I was thinking from a financial point of view, making a movie that would sell; 'Are there any IPs, any fairy-tale characters that haven't been done? I was also aware of my director's head, what can be creative, what can I do that is different to what they are doing? What they did essentially was take a cute character, whether that is Cinderella or *Winnie the Pooh*, and making them evil, turning them into some kind of slasher killer. I wanted to take a character who is already evil and build a film around that. I went back to reading the original story and I thought, well, it's kind of creepy.

It is a bit grim, no pun intended.

Yeah, it's a folk horror story, he comes to eat her child. This doesn't need much changing in the structure of the story, the challenge was the length. The actual story is only a couple of pages long. I needed to flesh it out and make the characters believable. In the *Brothers Grimm* story, a lot of it is 'this person does this, this person does that' with no explanation as to why they might do it. It's about trying to think about the motivation of all the characters in the story. I realised when it read, though, that it didn't need much. ➡



Natasha Henstridge and Lauren Staerck in *Cinderella's Revenge* (2024)

Opposite: Andy directs Hannah Baxter-Eve as Evalina in *Rumpelstiltskin*

I genuinely thought you would go down the contemporary setting, have this creature loose in a maternity ward or something.

Maybe, that could be for the sequel! I did look at previous adaptations of *Rumpelstiltskin*; he's in *Shrek*, he's in *Once Upon a Time*, but the last version of him was essentially what you describe. He's in modern day LA in the 1990s. It was done by the *Leprechaun* guys and he comes to the modern world to steal a woman's baby. That's quite a long way in the past now, but I wanted to go away from that. There is a Cannon film adaptation in the 80s, which was a musical. I thought we should keep it period and ramp up the horror, leaving the story people know, or vaguely have in the back of their heads, and deliver what feels like a new way of showing it.

The period setting is well-maintained, it has a very *Monty Python* 'the peasants have a shit life'- *Game of Thrones* feel to it.

It's all deliberate. *Games of Thrones* was an influence in the look of it, and humour is very *Monty Python* and *Blackadder*, as well as the Robert Eggers' films, where he does historical period looking very grim. From *Monty Python* to Robert Eggers sounds quite a jump, but those were all in the mix. I think the thing we took from *Game of Thrones*, especially, was the idea of an historical fantasy period, but not set in a real place. That's what I wanted to go with, partly for budget reasons.

If you are saying this story takes place in 1487 in this particular place, then all your costumes need to be sourced and all of your locations need to be appropriate to that period. Whereas, we could source costumes from all over the place, we would shoot here and there, and blend them together, with the intention of building a cohesive fantasy world that takes elements from different periods of history. It's not set in a real time that people can judge us for historical accuracy. Part of that was the dark, grimy look. We wanted it to feel tactile, that you can almost smell it.

I also liked the swearing which I thought was very *Game of Thrones*, throwing out the F-word or the C-word all over the place.

It is partly influenced by that *Game of Thrones* world, but these were hard, rough times and the people had no time for niceties. Really. I wanted to get that across. Some reviewers said, 'oh, he's just trying to be edgy,' but, no, it's there because these people are living in poverty, they swear. That's the way people living on the bread line will talk.

Your leading lady, Hannah Baxter Eve, was very good, how did you get her?

She was brilliant, wasn't she? Hannah came through the audition process. I'd met her very briefly at a screening of a film she was in, she kept my details and when she saw I was casting she emailed me directly. To be perfectly honest, she missed the initial cut because of her height, believe it or not. I was looking for someone taller to make our little goblin guy seem smaller. I don't know how tall Hannah is but she's not that tall. I said, 'okay let's see your tape,' not really expecting anything; and she was really good. She came in and read alongside Joss, who plays Rumpelstiltskin, and we got them to do various activities together. And that was it, she's the one!

Glad you mentioned Joss, were you tempted to go down the *Leprechaun* route when casting *Rumpelstiltskin*.

He is shortish, but not short-short. He came about through a conversation I had with a SFX artist called Dan Martin, he does all the work for Ben Wheatley, Brandon Cronenberg; he's brilliant. I asked him originally if he could do the prosthetics for *Rumpelstiltskin* and he recommended Joss because they had just worked together on a film called *Tarot*, which features a whole bunch of monsters. Dan said, 'I know a guy who can play a great little goblin.' I met up with Joss, talked about the character, did some little rehearsals and

activities with him, and he is a great creature performer. He loves that stuff, he loves the goblin lifestyle. You know, he wears a necklace made of human teeth... In real life, not as part of the character. This is just how Joss is. He has a room full of taxidermy in his house; he really lives the lifestyle. He was perfect for it, and he is on-screen a lot. We cast him and he did the auditions against the various people who played the other characters, so we could see who worked well together.

How long was that make-up process?

Just the face was three hours. There is one day where we did the full body and that was six hours.

Oh, for the dancing round the fire scene. That looked like a very cold night.

It was, a very cold night in a field somewhere in southern England in March. Joss had his manic energy to keep him going. To do prosthetics on a low budget independent film is a luxury, really, but I think it was a luxury we needed to have. *Rumpelstiltskin* isn't a monster who pops up at the end for five minutes, or hides in the shadows for the whole film. He's a speaking character with the most words to say after our lead, I knew he couldn't be a guy in a mask and we didn't have the budget for CGI. It had to be prosthetics and they had to be good enough to be expressive and let him talk. That was quite a process, but it needed to be done.

So, it wasn't dubbed in post?

It was all Joss' performance. There were some lines that were redone in ADR, but the majority of it was on set and it's all his voice, so he had to have the teeth he could speak through, and the prosthetics needed to let him emote.

One feature of the horror genre is the abundance of strong, female characters, though you wouldn't know it from the mainstream press.

Think about all the stick that horror gets from

non-horror fans; 'oh, it's just sexist, women in bikinis being chased by monsters.' Actually, the films have had strong female leads, for want of a better description, for years. Every slasher movie has one. In many ways, horror is a much more progressive genre than many others. Look at thrillers and action movies, there are hardly any female characters, let alone leads. Whereas for a while, horror has been leading the way quietly in having these strong female actors. In *Rumpelstiltskin*, it has to be that way. Your monster is a goblin who wants to eat a baby, so your hero is the woman who wants to stop him. In the end, it's fun to write these kind of characters. You don't want to write any character that is just a victim.

There is a bit of nudity in the film, is that something that was needed to sell it?

No, not really. The nudity on the lead character's side comes through the story. That was sort of an embellishment on the original story, where she wanted him to spin straw into gold and the first two things she gives him are a gold ring and a gold necklace. She's already got gold! I wanted to make her living in abject poverty, that means she has nothing, literally, to give him, except her youth and her beauty. And those are the two things that an older goblin would want from her. That's where that comes from. There is another little bit of nudity from two other characters, one male, one female- I always want to keep it equal opportunities! It's in there because we are making a grown-up film for grown-ups. People have sex, people get naked. In terms of 'did we have to put it in there?'— actually it can count against the film from a distributors' point of view.

Given it's a horror film, that seems counter-intuitive?

Yeah, it does, but some of platforms are very prudish about what they show. And you have that American sensibility where any amount of violence is fine, but the slightest hint of sexuality

or nudity is not. It also creates problems in some other countries. If you have male nudity, you can't sell to the Middle East. The distributors would probably be happier if everyone kept their clothes on, but I'm trying to make a grown-up fairy tale. There is nothing explicitly violent or sexy in there, but there is violence and sex.

There is no Japanese or continental version then?

No, there is no *Caligula* version. The very first film we did with Paranoid Android wasn't a horror, it was an erotic thriller called *Graphic Desires* which was shot during lockdown. We were thinking about what could we do during lockdown since we couldn't leave the house- 'I know, let's do an erotic thriller since you just need some hot people in house.' There are various different versions of that, with the sex chopped out or added in. With *Rumpelstiltskin* it should be played 'as is' in most places.

Out of interest do you have any dealings with the BBFC?

This is something that the distributors deal with, not me. They submit it, not me, so the only time I came up against them was with *Ibiza Undead*, and the distributors and producers very much wanted it to be a '15' because they wanted to attract that *Inbetweeners*- *Shaun of the Dead* crowd.

Obviously, being a horror filmmaker, I was like 'Noooooo! Sex, swearing and violence!' That was the only time there was any kind of conflict and I think it did get a '15' in the end. There was some swear words we had to cut to get it. You are allowed a certain amount of F-words and C-words before it goes over in an '18'. I guess they have somebody sitting there with a little counter tracking these things.

Going back to the cast I was surprised to see an American in there, Jennifer Lim.

She is not American, she is British-Chinese and she lives in this country.

I only know her from *Hostel*, I assumed she was American.

She did talk to me about *Hostel*, but she lives here, she's married here. I think she is originally from China because our DoP was learning Chinese and they were speaking it together. She had worked with my co-producer, Becca [Hirani- producer of *Punch* and *Cinderella's Revenge*] and she recommended her. I knew her from *Hostel*, so I thought, great, let's get her in.

Was the intention then to attract a much wider audience?

It was more of a bonus really. I wanted someone to play this mysterious nun character, we needed an older female, someone with a bit of gravitas and she got Jennifer to do a tape and sent it over. I didn't know she lived in London.

You had Natasha Henstridge on one of your films.

Yes, she was in *Cinderella's Revenge*. I was a director-for-hire, I didn't produce that one. I wasn't responsible for bringing Nastasha on, but that was a nice bonus for me. She hadn't been cast but they were talking to her when they approached me. I remembered Natasha well from *Species* when I was a teenage boy. They asked me if I wanted to direct this film- 'Yes, I want to work with Natasha!'

I think all men of a certain age remember Natasha from *Species*!

She is still beautiful and absolutely lovely, a dream to work with.

I need to ask about your locations for *Rumpelstiltskin* which are amazing; am I right in thinking one was from the National Trust?

No, we didn't use any from the National Trust. We looked at a lot of places, and most of these period places are either National Trust or Heritage England and they do allow filming, but they are very expensive and very restrictive on what you can and can't do. 🗺️

The places we got were privately-owned places. One was a museum, one was Anne of Cleves house in Lewes; that's not National Trust but it is a privately owned museum. Genuinely 500 years old. In the set for the bedroom, everything in that room, including the bed was 500 years old. We had to be very careful.

We didn't have the money to build sets, except for the dungeon, which is a set, everything else is real, and genuinely very, very old. That gives you the production value and you can pretty much point the camera in every direction and it's going to look good.

That really helps when you are on a low budget film. The main castle location is an old church in Winchester, and it is still a working, consecrated church, but they had all these extra buildings. They had almshouses there where these old guys called The Brethren live. We had to make friends with The Brethren and assure them we weren't doing anything Satanic, because, obviously, it's still a consecrated church. We had to keep Joss the goblin hidden from sight. If they saw him they would think that Satan has come back! That's the advantage of shooting in England when you are using period, there is so much stuff that is authentic.

Is that the trick for low budget filmmakers, get as much on location as possible.

Yes, and we also shot the village scene at the beginning in one of those educational farms where they have rebuilt houses and stables. Some of the extras that came in were from the local theatre group, and some were LARPer, because our production designer [James Dance] was a LARPer.

What is a LARPer?

Live Action Role Play, the guys who dress up as knights or Medieval peasants just as part of their normal weekend. That's the real trick for low budget period movies, find the local LARPer groups. They have the costumes already and they will come on your film set for not a lot of money. That can give you the production value. There is a film I saw a couple of weeks ago called *Time Travel is Dangerous* [directed by Chris Reading], a British low budget comedy film and the producers told me they used LARPer as well. They literally just turned up, 100s of people in Civil War costumes, WW2 or Viking outfits, they filmed them for ten minutes. That really helps with your production values.

Did you finance *Rumpelstiltskin* yourself or was it pre-sold?

This was a deal with the distributors; we were part financed by them and part by Paranoid Android Films. This is the fourth film we have



Andy Edwards, and Joss Carter as Rumpelstiltskin

done. I was originally a writer-director and that was all I ever wanted to do, but then during the Pandemic all my projects fell apart, as they did for most people, but I didn't want to do nothing. I decided to learn the ropes of forming my own production company, from setting up the company, to raising finance, developing films, setting up sales and distribution. Basically, teach myself low-budget film-making. *Rumpelstiltskin* is our fourth film and we are trying to get more relationships with distributors, sales agents and streamers, and find out what they want. *Rumpelstiltskin* was the first one where we went to the distributor and said 'we have this idea, do you like it?' They said, 'yes' and put some of the money and we found the rest.

What sort of proportion would a distributor put in on a film like this?

About 50%.

Would you use Crowdfunding for your projects?

I haven't used Crowdfunding before, but I do have a Crowdfunding project coming up soon. This is a film called *Fairy Dust*, I am not directing, I'm producing this one. The director is a guy called Chad Michael Ward, he's a photographer, a film-maker and also a mask maker. He has made these beautiful masks and made a short film with fantasy characters and these masks and posted it online somewhere. I saw it said, 'This is amazing, what film is it from?' He replied, 'It's not from a film, yet. I'd love it to be, but it's just a proof of concept.' I wished him luck with that, and then I thought, 'I could help him make that.' But, because it's not based on an IP, it's much more a personal, weird fantasy-type movie, it is unlikely to get a pre-sales deal. The distributors want to know, is it based on an IP, is it a safe genre- vampires, zombies, for example, that's what you need for a pre-sales deal. This is weirder, so I am looking at doing our first Crowdfunding for that.

This is live action or animation?

Live action and the work he has done so far is beautiful, really reminiscent of Prog Rock album

covers from the 1970s; all these weird creatures in this multi-coloured fantasy world. It's evocative of things like *Dark Crystal*, *Labyrinth*, *Krull*... those kind of 1980s fantasy movies. A dark fairy tale, but an original story. Obviously, if it was based on something, then we could potentially get the pre-sales for it, but because it's an original story we are looking at Crowdfunding. We are doing auditions now to finalise the cast and we will hopefully be launching that quite soon. That is something I would love to get off the ground.

In the meantime, is *Rumpelstiltskin* streaming as we speak?

In the UK, it is on Amazon, Google, Sky and Apple... 'on-demand' sites. It's on a few more in the States, those ones you have never heard of. The distributors are like, 'it's on Moobie and Boobie, Toobie and Zoobie.' I'm like... oh? It's going out via 101 Films who have a huge back catalogue, and they're on all the main platforms. It's still a small indie film, but we have been doing interviews, trying to get reviews for it. Trying to give it a bit of love really.

What does success look like for a film like *Rumpelstiltskin*? Is it downloads or do DVD sales still matter?

It's on downloads really. Obviously, you make a lot less money on downloads and streaming than you do on selling a physical DVD, but the good thing is the film has multiple lives. The first life is on TVOD- it's on Amazon you purchase it for £3.99 or something. The second is window SVOD, subscription video on demand, Netflix for example, or Shudder for a horror title, and the third window is AVOD, which is advertising on demand, so Amazon Prime or YouTube or TUBI.

A movie like *Rumpelstiltskin* has all these different platforms it can go to. The bad news there isn't the 'what did it do on opening weekend?' rush. The good news is that in two years it can hit a new platform and still be bringing in revenue. Success for me, from a producer's point of view, is we make our money back so we get to make another one. That's what I am trying to do, make enough from one film to roll it over to the next one.

Last question, what's next?

Well, what is literally next is a call in about five minutes with distributors about Custom. That should be available on streaming some point in 2025.

Once it's out, there is obviously a bit of follow-up and interviews and stuff, but that's the easy bit. We are just working on everything else at the moment, trying to work out what's next. Busy times! **DS**