

Christian Horsnell - Testimonial from The Delius Society

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Early in 2024, in their quest to produce a film based on a recent novelisation about the life of composer Frederick Delius, the Committee of The Delius Society were recommended to the work of Christian Horsnell, having seen his film 'St. Edmund – From King to Legend'.

At the outset of the project, a script was provided by the book's author, but this was found to be excessive for what was required and was subsequently re-written with Christian's assistance to meet the Committee's specified time-frame. This meant that Christian had to absorb a large amount of material and condense into a more manageable whole. It soon became apparent that it was easier to leave Christian to work with the author to devise the framework for the entire film.

Christian's task required a familiarisation with the composer's colourful life story; coming up with ideas to create filmed sequences – some requiring specially procured props; devising interviews and readings and directing the filming on location. Post-production, and in addition to editing, Christian was also tasked with identifying and sourcing archive imagery and with fitting music around the filmed content.

As none of the Committee members involved was familiar with film-making they were thankful to be able to leave Christian to collaborate with the author regarding revisions to the script and for him to produce visuals that would create an entertaining film running to an allotted timescale. In the initial stages of planning, this was of crucial assistance and without Christian's vision and creativity, there would have been no film.

Music was going to play an important part in the film and Christian made an excellent job of using extracts for emotional and dramatic effect, adding an essential element which has lifted the film significantly.

The project took a number of months to complete and Christian was flexible in working around the availability of those involved in order to move the project forward.

In between times, Christian was able to step in to assist with another project at short notice and on location at the National Film and Television School, which was to film an interview featuring eminent Film Editor Roger Crittenden, on the subject of Director Ken Russell. The result was an illuminating and engaging talk thanks to Christian's careful editing in what had been an off-the-cuff exchange where pre-planning had not been possible. The film was turned around in a matter of days and has been well received by our membership as well as further afield; Ken Russell's widow included. We were grateful to Christian for delivering an excellent job in a relatively short time-frame.

The Delius Society Committee has no hesitation in recommending Christian's work and considers his many talents to include the following:

Quickly identifies what is required by the client.

Engages fully with the subject matter.

Offers ideas and feedback.

Responds to communications quickly and provides regular updates.

Plans logically, methodically and imaginatively.

Has the ability to direct a project and see it through to completion.

Works both with a team as well as individually without supervision.

Ability to identify key points of drama and opportunities for creative sound and visuals.

Christian is easy to get along with and in our view has gone the extra mile in order to complete projects that have exceeded our expectation. This has been born out by the delight from the author:

I am amazed at what you have produced from our rather brief and ragged initial session. My feeling at the time was rather sceptical because of the very tight framework in which we were operating. But you have proved your talents to be exceptional in working against such odds. I am struck with your own amazing creative and technical accomplishment in this work. I'm sure it will become a significant step in your career as a fine film-maker. Alan Young

Feedback from the Delius Society Committee:

"It's a triumph of film-making improvisation."

"It is inventive and imaginative and unlike anything we have seen before."

"What a great job you have made of this material, and how wonderfully well you have pulled all the elements together. One never loses interest as there is so much going on and the content conveys entertainment value on every level. Not everyone would have been able to visualise the concept, and we are grateful to you for being able to bring this about so successfully. It will be without a doubt enjoyed by the Delius Society membership for years to come."

Feedback from the Roger Crittenden filmed interview:

"A first-class film...one becomes totally absorbed. It is fascinating to hear about Ken's working methods."

"There is so much more of interest in this pleasantly informal interview."