

STATEMENT

Mar Sin Leat (Bye Just Now) has been a cathartic script to write. It draws from the team's personal experiences; with loss, inflexible gender expectations and mental health. By making this short we hope to spark a discussion about these themes and the need to be vulnerable so more honest relationships flourish.

As young adults, we often blame ourselves for circumstances beyond our control. Skye blames her gender identity as the reason her father, Fergus, wouldn't let her attend her mother's funeral. What's original about our short is that when they finally confront each other, it was Fergus's inability to deal with his own emotions that made him keep Skye at arm's length.

In showcasing a moment of reconciliation between Skye and Fergus, we hope to show how openly discussing our feelings can help resolve hidden tensions, something that families can find near impossible.

For August, the uncommunicated tensions between father and daughter hit close to home, having been raised in a particularly dour, working class Scottish family. Centering this story on a trans woman who is not defined by her transition is an opportunity to portray Scotland as a country supportive of LGBTQI+ issues. Following the Secretary of State's veto of the Scottish Gender Recognition Reform Bill and the weaponisation of trans people in a culture war, it's vital - now more than ever- for Scottish film to support trans people.

To Mariana, language is in many ways the most genuine expression of culture. As someone whose first language isn't English, the nuances between words and meaning is something Mariana is fascinated by. We gave Skye a Central Belt Scottish dialect, which we juxtapose against Fergus's Gaelic, to communicate this generational barrier between father and daughter. This highlights their hardy, resolute nature which they must overcome in order to express themselves openly.

This short, although shot against a picturesque background, is not a picture perfect type of film. Instead, we aim to show the audience a glimpse of authentic Scottish life, which will stand out at an international festival circuit.

To ensure our portrait of unresolved grief would be sensitive, we partnered with At A Loss and Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland to interview people who had been kept from a parent's funeral. This research was eye-opening as to how difficult it can be simply to find the words to convey this pain.

Due to COVID-19, the world experienced loss on an unprecedented scale with many of us unable to attend the funerals of loved ones and say our final goodbyes. So long as it remains a taboo in society to openly discuss the complicated feelings of grief, moving on from and processing that loss will continue to be a monumental task.

For Mariana and August, making a short that realistically portrays complex emotions will showcase them as new talents, ready to take the jump into feature films. It's a life changing opportunity, getting them one step closer to their dream careers as director/writers.