



Will Croston won Best Student Drama for his film *Husk* at the RTS regional awards

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Film inspired by personal loss wins Best Student Drama at industry awards

Northumbria University graduate Will Croston has been awarded a prestigious Royal Television Society (RTS) regional award for Best Student Drama for his film *Husk*, having turned his personal experience of grief into a powerful cinematic experience.

Having graduated from Northumbria's Film and TV Production degree program last summer, the 24-year-old's journey into filmmaking wasn't straightforward.

Initially enrolling in an Electronic and Electrical Engineering course in 2019, he quickly realised his passion lay elsewhere and made the switch to Film Production in 2020.

His academic path was further challenged in early 2023 when he lost his mother, Maria, after a seven-year battle with metastatic breast cancer.

This tragic event led him to defer his dissertation, returning to his studies in 2023 with a renewed vision for his final year project. The resulting film, *Husk*, is a deeply personal yet universally resonant exploration of grief.

Drawing inspiration from classic horror films such as Robert Eggers' *The Lighthouse* and *The Witch*, as well as James Whale's *Frankenstein*, Will also found unexpected influence in Hungarian Slow Cinema, particularly the works of Béla Tarr.

Husk follows 'The Farmer,' whose descent into grief transforms his identity, reflecting the emotional turmoil that Will himself experienced.



A scene from Will Croston's award winning film *Husk*

Speaking about his recent recognition at the RTS North East and the Borders Awards, Will said: "It means so much to be recognised for such an award,

specifically for a film that was made as a way for me to process the most difficult point in my life and as a dedication to my Mum.”

Robert Jefferson is programme lead for the Film and TV Production degree course at Northumbria University. Speaking about Will's success he said: “I supervised Will's film project which showed how a high concept horror can be elevated with imagination and emotional connection. Will's vision grounded the weird transformation in the physical world of the farm. Along with his talented, team, he turned something that could have been ridiculous into something poetic and intense. He saw great competition in other shortlisted graduation films like Julia Sokolowska's *The Oath*, a historical drama about pioneering surgery.”

The production of *Husk* was a collaborative effort between Will and fellow Northumbria graduates, co-producer Kornelija Gilaityte, cinematographer Greta Maksevičiūtė, and co-editor Jack Sowden, as well as sound operator Gareth Hellens, co-sound designer Josh Pacey, and independent composer Oliver Stack.

The film's lead actor, Simon G. Craig, endured challenging conditions during filming, including wearing a hessian sack mask and crawling through mud – an effort that has now paid off with industry-wide recognition.



The crew of *Husk* pictured during filming

Although full-time positions within film production remain competitive, Will hopes to continue to gain experience following his graduation and eventually move to Manchester or London with his girlfriend, Francesca, and their pet turtle, Duncan.

His time at Northumbria University has equipped him with a strong foundation in film history, industry practices, and hands-on production experience. While studying he had the opportunity to work on several productions, including ITV dramas *The Hunt for Raoul Moat* and *Vera*, as well as Amazon Prime film *How to Date Billy Walsh*, and crime drama *The Red King*, which won best TV Drama at the RTS Awards. His biggest project was working on the third film in the *Venom* series, *Venom: The Last Dance*, for Sony.

He said: “I always wanted to be a director of films and visualise all the ideas I have scrambling around in my head. During my time at Northumbria, I had the opportunity to work in different positions of a crew and discovered a newfound respect for each job and the complexity it involves. During the production of *Husk*, I was involved in each role alongside my amazing crew. Whilst in post-production I found myself really enjoying the editing process which is now an area of film I'd love to pursue further.”

Last weekend saw a number of outstanding successes for Northumbria Film and TV Production graduates. In addition to Will and his fellow graduates' achievement at the RTS Society North East and The Borders Awards, two Northumbria alumni were recognised at the British Academy Film Awards, known as the BAFTAs.

Lol Crawley won the Best Cinematography BAFTA award for his work on *The Brutalist*, and *Kneecap*, a film produced by Jack Tarling, won the BAFTA for Outstanding Debut by a British Writer, Director or Producer. Lol Crawley is also shortlisted in the Best Cinematography category at the Academy Awards, known as the Oscars, which will be held on Sunday 2 March.

Husk will be released to the public later this year after appearing at a number of film festivals.

[Find out more about studying BA \(Hons\) Film at Northumbria University.](#)

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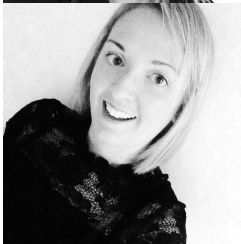


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