



Ben Pywell and Trixie Parkin-Christie

Feb 26, 2026 11:05 GMT

Northumbria Film graduates receive Royal Television Society honours

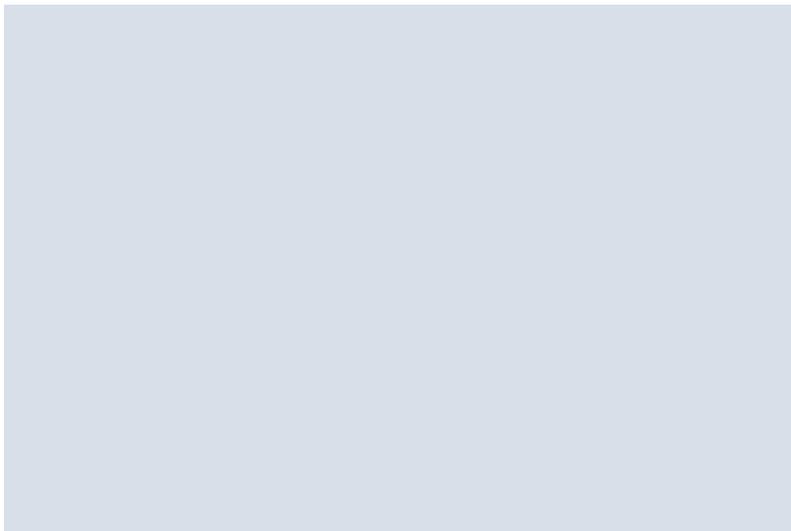
Trixie Parkin-Christie and Ben Pywell, who graduated from the [BA \(Hons\) Film](#) programme last summer, won recognition for their work in two separate categories. Their achievements mark the third consecutive year talent from Northumbria University has triumphed in the Best Student Drama category.

The regional Royal Television Society awards are dedicated to celebrating and showcasing the growing screen industry across the North East and Borders each year.

Trixie and Ben's achievements will be celebrated as part of the wider RTS regional awards ceremony on Saturday at The Hilton Hotel in Gateshead, with winners going forward to the national student awards.

Heather Robson, Dean of Academic Transformation Projects, said, "Congratulations to our two outstanding film graduates on this well-deserved award. Their creativity, dedication and craft showcases the strength and ambition of contemporary filmmaking.

Film plays a vital role shaping cultural identity, creating opportunity and contributing to a growing creative economy. We are incredibly proud of Trixie and Ben's achievements and excited to see their continued impact within the industry."



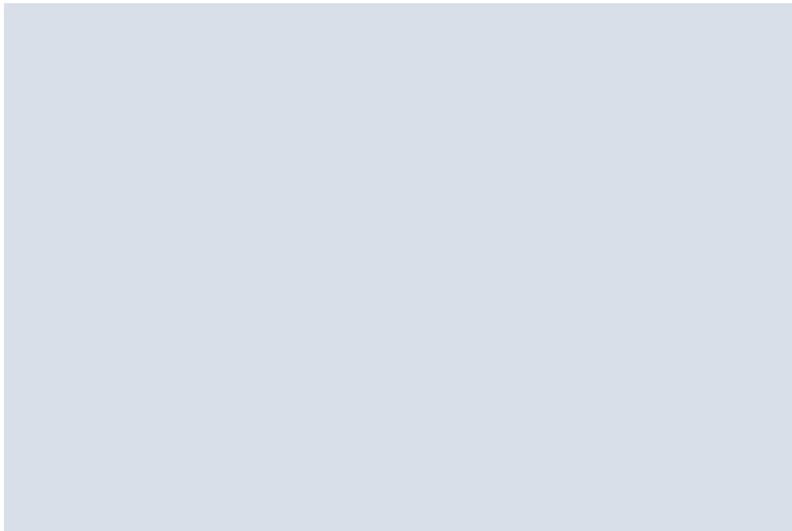
Drawing on influences such as Monty Python and Key and Peele, Ben's film *What Now?* had an unlikely beginning as a thriller conceived in a corner shop, before evolving into the winner of this year's Student Entertainment and Comedy Drama category.

Described as an "absurdist" comedy, Ben wrote, directed, and edited the film alongside collaborators Ethan Barnard and Matthew Rawstron.

The production was not without its challenges and finding a suitable filming location proved difficult. After approaching multiple corner shops in the North East and facing rejection, the team finally secured Today's Local on Warwick Street in Newcastle, who offered the space between 6am and 8am across three days to shoot the entire film.

"The idea that the film might become accredited by such a prestigious organisation as the Royal Television Society is something that has truly humbled me," Ben said. "I am very excited to see what the future holds. I think it was a great reward for our incredible cast and crew who came together to realise the idea, and I'm glad their hard work was recognised in this way."

Ben credits the BA (Hons) Film programme at Northumbria for giving him the opportunity to experience every stage of the production process, and paid tribute to the academic teaching team in particular Robert Jefferson, James Macdonald and Cecilia Stenbom for their support and guidance throughout.



Trixie Parkin-Christie was awarded 'Best Student Drama' for directing, writing and animating the short film Resurge:itate. The film has deeply personal origins, inspired by Trixie's own experience of psychological and physical healing following major leg surgery.

Drawing on research into traditional hermits, who once served as spiritual advisors and entertainers to the wealthy, she crafted a visually driven narrative that explores the question: 'who heals the healer?'

Taking inspiration from experimental filmmakers such as Jan Švankmajer, Resurge:itate condenses a complex emotional journey into seven minutes, inviting audiences to reflect on trauma, recovery, and self-confrontation.

"Resurge:itate I think distinguishes itself through its deeply personal origins and its intentional ambiguity in time and setting, allowing the story to feel timeless and aiming to be continually relevant", Trixie said.

“The final script became more visually driven than dialogue-heavy, and I had a very clear cinematic vision from early on, especially when it came to the cinematography and lighting.”

Having grown up near Newcastle, Trixie feels a strong connection to the landscape and culture of the North East, which she credits with bringing authenticity and confidence to her filmmaking.

“There is a distinctive regional character; a sense of tenacity, determination, and good humour, that influences the way productions operate. Working within a place and culture I understood, I feel benefitted me in bringing a sense of authenticity and confidence to the filmmaking process”, Trixie added.

As a developing writer and director, the recognition has given Trixie both the confidence and motivation to submit Resurge:itate to festivals and pursue writing, directing and cinematography more consistently.

Discover more about studying Film at Northumbria University online at: www.northumbria.ac.uk/film

UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR 2022 (Times Higher Education Awards)

Northumbria is a research-intensive university that unlocks potential for all, changing lives regionally, nationally and internationally.

Two thirds of Northumbria's undergraduate students come from the North East region and go into employment in the region when they graduate, demonstrating Northumbria's significant contribution to social mobility and levelling up in the North East of England.

Find out more about us at www.northumbria.ac.uk

--- Please contact media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk with any media enquiries or interview requests ---

Contacts



Andrea Slowey

Press Contact
Head of Corporate Communications (interim)
andrea.slowey@northumbria.ac.uk
07708 509436



Rachael Barwick

Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
rachael.barwick@northumbria.ac.uk
07377422415



James Fox

Press Contact
Student Communications Manager
james2.fox@northumbria.ac.uk



Kelly Elliott

Press Contact
PR and Media Officer
kelly2.elliott@northumbria.ac.uk



Ruth Lognonne

Press Contact
PR and Media Officer
ruth.lognonne@northumbria.ac.uk
07923 382339



Gemma Brown

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

gemma6.brown@northumbria.ac.uk