

More than a barbershop

How a passion for music turned a local old-school barbershop into an icon of the Irish music scene



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A short-documentary by Fernando Otero and Xandru Fernández







A Documentary by
FERNANDO OTERO & XANDRU FERNANDEZ

MORE THAN A BARBERSHOP

Starring

Dave Judge

Blair Packham

Johnny Stewart

Peter Meade

18 minutes

Camera: Shot on Full HD 16:9 at 25 frames per second

1844 Times Projects

Dublin – Ireland

Xandru Fernández

Fernando Otero

www.visualizo.com/1844TimesProjects

E-mail: 1844TimesProjects@visualizo.com

Twitter: @1844Times

Facebook: www.facebook.com/1844TimesProjects

MORE THAN A BARBERSHOP

Logline

How a passion for music turned a local old-school barbershop into an icon of the Irish music scene.

Synopsis

Abner Browns seems to be just one old-style barbershop which is embedded into the Southern Dublin neighborhood of Rathmines amongst pubs and local shops; but in there, his owner decided to mix his way of living with another of his passions in life, music. That is something that you can quickly spot, as the place has an exceptional decoration on its walls between scissors, lotions and cut-throat razors.

The idea of featuring concerts in a barbershop would be crazy, but in here it becomes real, open to everyone, friendly and with no alteration in the local community's balance of coexistence, but even improving it with the inimitable and spontaneous atmosphere that is generated only for a few hours in this improvised venue.

This has become one of the main and most interesting venues in Ireland, and it is the place where every band in town wants to perform. Since the first time the Canadian singer-song writer Blair Packham played here, hundreds of acts have already performed, such as Gavin Glass, Ash, Duke Special, David Geraghty (of Bell X1 fame), Molly Sterling, Mundy, The Hot Sprockets and many more. Even Michael Stipe, REM singer, was a visitor to this alternative spot last time he was in Dublin.

"More Than a Barbershop" is a short documentary which captures what is happening in this small corner of Dublin, tells how this mad idea started and developed, and explains how this place has become an icon in the Irish Music scene.

MORE THAN A BARBERSHOP

Q&A with Directors and writers FERNANDO OTERO & XANDRU FERNANDEZ

What was your inspiration for the film?

I attended a few of the very first concerts at the barbershop. Since the very beginning I have realised and felt that what was happening there was something very particular. It was all so spontaneous, natural and left you with a great feel-good sensation. I contacted my friend Fernando and told him we had to tell everyone about that place. Everyone should be able to experience and be a participant of what was happening in that barbershop and its atmosphere, and that is the main reason we did this documentary.

How did the film get off the ground? What was the process of getting the film made?

It all started with a bad haircut in another barbershop in Dublin. Since that day I decided to look for a new barbershop. I used to live around the corner of Abner Browns barbershop, and I had seen many times the shop with its posters in the windows, all the music instruments and vinyl on the walls.

While I was getting my hair cut, the owner Dave Judge, told me about the concerts they had in the evenings after the shop was closed. The first time I attended a concert here I felt in love with the place. After attending another couple of concerts at the shop, I wrote a script and sent it to Fernando, who is living in Spain. He loved the idea of doing a documentary about it, even though he did not know the place and had never been there.

We proposed the idea to Dave Judge and he liked it. Fernando flew from Spain to Ireland. We worked on the planning, the interviews and the shooting. We also worked on organizing the editing process since we were living in different countries.

Once all the shooting was done, we worked together on the editing process by using different internet tools. Being in different countries delayed the project. It took us about one year to finish it since we found a bit challenging working in this way.

How long was the shoot? Where did you shoot?

1 Week. We shot in Dublin—Rathmines neighborhood—.

What is your favorite scene in the film?

A few. I cannot pick just one. However, I will talk about how my favorite moments in the film are the ones they show and talk about the unique atmosphere generated at the barbershop when the concerts

are happening. The owner of the shop, one of his colleagues and a couple of musicians talk about the particular vibe of the place

What was the most difficult scene to shoot?

I would highlight a couple of them. Shooting the interview with Blair Packham, first musician to play at the barbershop, as it was not originally planned. It all happened so quick, we did not have many time to prepare the interview and we had to quickly improvise the shooting in the recording studio he was working at that time.

Another challenging shooting happened when recording the concerts at the barbershop. We had planned in advance the shooting as we wanted to capture the essence of the shop while the concerts were happening. Even though it was planned, it was very difficult to capture the open and spontaneous atmosphere. On top of that, we had been shooting earlier that day, and we were having some trouble with the batteries of our cameras.

Is this your first project?

Yes, this is our first project together. Fernando has a few years' experience in the industry working on "*No nos cuentes películas, házlas*" and "*Bajar la música*" documentaries. He also worked on TV. This is the first experience in this field for Xandru. It is the first time we gathered together and work an end-to-end project.

What format did you shoot the film on?

We shot the film on Full HD 16:9 at 25 frames per second. We shot on two cameras affixed to tripods. One of them was a Canon XF 300 and the other one a Nikon D3200.

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About the Cast

BLAIR PACKHAM / MUSICIAN

Blair Packham is a Canadian singer, songwriter, guitarist, composer, producer, engineer, writer, broadcaster and educator.

At the beginning of his career, Blair engineered recordings for the likes of Bryan Adams, Stevie Ray Vaughan and REM amongst others artist.

He was a guitar and lead vocalist for The Jitters in the 1980s. During The Jitters' ten years together, Blair wrote several Canadian hits, including *"Last of the Red Hot Fools"* and *"'Til the Fever Breaks"*.

After his Jitters stage he has written for numerous films and television programs, including *"The Adventures of Chuck and Friends"*. He worked for Global Television, Discovery Channel, MuchMusic, YTV, The Sports Network/ESPN, Oxygen, CBC and CTV.

Blair released his solo debut *"Everything That's Good"* in 2001. His friend Ron Sexsmith helped him. Songs from the album appeared on TV soundtracks for shows such as *"Dawson's Creek"*.

In 2003 Blair released his next album *"Could've Been King"*.

In 2005, Blair co-produced, with Ron Sexsmith, *"What Ever Happened to Christmas"* for Andy Kim (*"Sugar, Sugar"*), and the song hit Number Five on the national AC charts.

He has served as Vice-President of the Songwriters Association of Canada from 2000 to present.

Blair has founded with Rik Emmett (Triumph), the *"Humber College Songwriting Summer Workshop"*. As Program Co-Ordinator and co-Artistic Director, Blair sets the agenda, books the guests (guests have included Ron Sexsmith, Murray McLauchlan, Ed Robertson -Barenaked Ladies-, Steven Page -ex-Barenaked Ladies-) and runs his own daily workshop.

He is also co-hosting his weekly music-oriented radio show on Newstalk 1010 CFRB in Canada.

JOHNNY STEWART / MUSICIAN

Johnny Stewart is an Irish singer songwriter guitarist who plays a fresh and energetic blues rock music. Over the last years he has played support to some of the most well-known Irish artists, such as Hot Sprockets, Ryan Sheridan, Damien Dempsey, Ham Sandwich and Fight Like Apes.

In 2013 his single *"Little Miss Sunshine"* reached number 1 on the iTunes blues singles chart. The song also reached Irish nationwide radio stations. His album *"Daydreamer"*, where the previous song was included, also reached number 1 on iTunes on the blues album charts.

He was a top 20 finalist in MTV's Brand New Unsigned for 2014 (out of 580 artists). The competition recognises outstanding new unsigned talent from around the world.

His next two singles *"She's Trouble"* and *"Ain't Love A Beautiful Thing"* reached also number 1 on the blues charts of iTunes.

Currently his artistic name is Wolff and he is going to release in 2016 a new album called *"Flesh, Blood, Skin & Bone"*.

CARLY COONAGH / MUSICIAN

Carly started her career at Dublin Gospel Choir, singing with the choir for about 8 years. She has toured with them throughout Ireland and sharing stage with Ennio Morricone, The Dubliners and Mundy amongst others.

After that experience, she decided to start a career on her own as an independent musician.

She is a backing vocalist for the band The Riptide Movement. She recorded on their first album *"Getting Through"*, and toured with them throughout European music festivals such as Benicassim or Electric Picnic. She appeared on TV with them on the shows *"The Voice"* and *"The Late Late Show"*.

She started also her own path as singer songwriter. She played at the Electric Picnic and the Ruby Sessions in Dublin.

She is releasing in 2016 her first album, *"Dream Away"*, working with producer SIGALA in London's Tileyard Studio's.

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About the Filmmakers

FERNANDO OTERO / CO-WRITER / CO-PRODUCER / CO-DIRECTOR

Fernando Otero, is the co-founder of ***“1844 Times Projects”***.

Fernando started working on the local newspaper as a photographer after finishing his studies as Audio Visual Technician. He then worked in a production role for Spanish nationwide television channel *“Cuatro”*.

After, he worked for *“Geográfica Films”*, where he was running the show *“Silvestria”* from end-to-end, broadcasted on *“Canal 7”* from *“Televisión de Castilla y León”*.

Fernando created and currently manages the website [“www.CarnavaldeLaBaneza.com”](http://www.CarnavaldeLaBaneza.com) about the carnival festivities in his Spanish hometown of La Bañeza.

In 2015 he created his own audiovisual communication company *“Visualizo”* working on all kind of audiovisual projects.

During his career he worked on short documentary *“No nos cuentes películas, házlas”*. He directed and produced short documentary *“Bajar la música”* in 2005 featuring at the International Film Festival of Gijón, Spain.

He currently lives in Leon, Spain.

XANDRU FERNANDEZ / CO-WRITER / CO-PRODUCER / CO-DIRECTOR

Xandru Fernandez is the co-founder, together with Fernando Otero, of ***“1844 Times Projects”***.

Up to *“More than a Barbershop”* short documentary he has no experience in the industry. He has been working for the last 11 years in Dublin in various multinational companies, mainly as an Operations Analyst.

His wide experience in Project Management (PMI) and Lean Six Sigma methodology has significantly helped him to co-create his first work.

He lives with his wife and son in Dublin, Ireland.

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Review Coverage

Dave Judge (Barber / Owner of Abner Browns Barbershop): *"It just exploded on the Irish music scene, I can't believe what's happening. I have gone from being a barber into... well, they keep telling me I am one of the main promoters around town now"*.

Jude Blackburn (Director of Chicago Irish Film Festival): *"It is such a wonderful story of a special place and its contribution to music"*.

Aaron Bayham (Co-Chairman 2016 Baton Rouge Irish Film Festival): *"An intimate look at a really unique place"*.

Sherry Gamlin (Festival Director of Sunnyside Shorts Film Festival – New York): *"It is a wonderful documentary. Original. Humorous"*.

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Screenings

- **Abner Browns Barbershop**, Dublin – Ireland. March 5, 2016. Worldwide Private Premiere.
- **7th Underground Cinema Film Festival**, Dublin – Ireland. September 10, 2016.
- **Fingal Film Festival Fingal Dublin Ireland**, Dublin – Ireland. October 2, 2016.
- **Dublin International Short Film and Music Festival 2016**, Dublin- Ireland. October 7, 2016.
- **Sunnyside Shorts Film Festival 2016**, New York City - United States. October 8, 2016.
- **Chicago Irish Film Festival 2017**, Chicago – United States. March 4, 2017.
- **Jecheon International Music and Film Festival**, Jecheon - Korea. August, 11 & 15, 2017.
- **Jukebox International Film Festival**, Carson City - USA. August 15, 2017.
- **Kansas City Irish Fest**, Kansas - USA. September 1, 2017.
- **Nederland International Film Festival**, Nederland - USA. September 16, 2017.
- **Short Film Festival Ireland**, Wexford - Ireland. September 21, 2017.
- **Disappear Here Film Festival**, Donegal - Ireland. September 22, 2017.
- **First Friday Film Festival**, Kansas City - USA. October 6, 2017.
- **Sonic Scene Music Film Festival**, Trani - Italy. December 16, 2017.
- **Euroregion Film Festival 2018**, Heerlen, Netherlands. March, from 22 to 26, 2018.
- **Film and TV Festival Reino de León 2018**, León, Spain. May 28, 2018.
- **Music in Cinema Film Festival 2018**, Atlanta - USA. June 30, 2018.
- **OpenEyes Film Festival**, Marburg - Germany. July 19, 2018.
- **Screening in theatre**, La Bañeza, Spain. August 1, 2018.
- **Short Film Festival from Órbigo Luna de Cortos**, Veguellina de Órbigo, Spain. August 4, 2018.
- **DORF Film Festival**, 2018, Vinkovci - Croatia. August 25, 2018.
- **Ponferrada International Film Festival 2018**, Ponferrada, Spain. October 6, 2018.
- **Screening at Cineteca del Matadero Madrid**, 2018, Madrid, Spain. October 8, 2018.
- **Screening at La Cueva del Jazz**, Zamora, Spain. November 8, 2018.
- **Screening at Cultural Center Teodoro Cuesta**, Mieres, Spain. March 14, 2019.
- **MusiCanZone Film Fest 2019**, La Spezia - Italy. June 28, 2019.
- **Cultural Week**, Pobladura de Pelayo García, Spain. August 8, 2019.
- **Cáceres Irish Fleadh**, Cáceres, Spain. October 24, 2019.
- **Cultural Week**, Santibáñez de la Isla, Spain. December 30, 2019.

Awards

- **Best Short Documentary** at Sunnyside Shorts Film Festival 2016, New York City - United States. October 8, 2016.
- **Festival Award Winner** at Chicago Irish Film Festival 2017, Chicago – United States. March 4, 2017.
- **Best Short Documentary & Best Picture** at Jukebox International Film festival 2017, Carson City - United States. August 15, 2017.
- **Festival Award Winner** at MUVI Música no Cinema International Festival 2019, Almada - Portugal, February 28, 2019.

MORE THAN A BARBERSHOP

PRODUCTION STILLS







MORE THAN A BARBERSHOP

Credits

Visualizo Productions

1844 Times Projects

Presents

MORE THAN A BARBERSHOP

A film By

FERNANDO OTERO

&

XANDRU FERNANDEZ

Music

- "Do your thing" – Written and performed by Johnny Stewart
- "Need to know (if you were mine)" – Written and performed by Blair Packham © 2013 No. 1 Imperfects {SOCAN}
- "Bitch Please" – Written and performed by Carly Coonagh
- "Little Miss Sunshine" – Written and performed by Johnny Stewart
- "One-hit Wonder" – Written and performed by Blair Packham © 2014 No. 1 Imperfects {SOCAN}

Graphic Design: Raquel Fernández & David Blanco

English Subtitles & other tasks: Ronan O'Neill

Spanish Subtitles: Lorena Pezzino

Tripods: Paul Power & Alberto Badiola

Memory Man: Darragh O'Toole

Locations:

Temple Lane Studios

Abner Browns Barbershop

Rathmines, Dublin

EXTRA SPECIAL THANKS

Federico Badiola

Darren Behan

Lucas Fernandez

Rocio Gonzalez

Maika Fernandez

Aoife Gowen

Tito Fernandez

Aisling Hamilton

Dennis Hermann

Ray Kennerney

Daniel Millan

Eric Murray

Owen O'Shaughnessy

Temple Lane Studios

Ana Ortiz

Alba Otero

Jacobo G. Polledo

Fernando Ramos

Angie Ribas

Abel Ubach

Filmed in Dublin, 2016. A 1844 Times Projects & Visualizo Production. Property of Fernando Otero Perandones and Xandru Fernández Ramírez (1844 Times Projects).