

# USE YOUR HEAD

**Anthony Stewart Head, known to some as Giles from Buffy, to others as the man from the Gold Blend ad, and still others from his numerous TV and theatre credits in shows like Doctor Who and Little Britain, tells Going Underground why he's proud to support the short film industry**

**Going Underground:** So Tony, how did you come to be involved with first-time director Daniel Cormack's short 'Amelia & Michael' (see review page 120)?

**Anthony Stewart-Head:** I was doing a theatre job, so I couldn't really do an awful lot else, then this small film came through. The script was really nice and basically it was one of those deals where you can do something helpful for somebody, so I did that and one other short; I did 'Macbeth' for a group of young actors who were putting it together themselves.

**GU:** What appealed to you about 'Amelia & Michael'?

**ASH:** The thing about it was that it was incredibly professionally put together, they were a really good crew, and they got me in and out as quickly as they could, which was perfect. 'Amelia & Michael' was a learning curve for the director and producers and by the time we finished they had made a really good use of the facilities they managed to blag. I love it when something feels that vibrant and that close to the root of things, when it hasn't got lots of money thrown at it, and it's edgy.

**GU:** What do you think about the idea of established actors helping out new directors by appearing in their short films?

**ASH:** The trouble is, even if you are established you never feel like you are. Every time you are out of work you never think you are going to work again, but if I can help somebody — and usually the problem is time — then why not? The fact is with 'Amelia & Michael' that I was in the West End. So you know if I can give them my time, I'm going to learn as much from them as they are from me.



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**GU:** What do you think the future might hold for director Daniel Cormack?

**ASH:** He'll probably end up a TV director. He was good, he knew what he wanted. There was a time initially when he panicked a little bit and you could feel it, it was tangible, but that was like kind of fun, and then once he got into the groove and realised how supportive his crew was, he got into it and he was great, really good.

**GU:** What work do you find you personally get recognised from most?

**ASH:** It's kind of cool; I've got a few iconic things under my belt, like bits in *Little Britain*, *Doctor Who* and *Manchild*. Sometimes I'm recognised but I then I have to ask people what they actually know me from, and they'll say 'oh, *Buffy*' or whatever, because thankfully my 'fan base' or whatever you want to call it, crosses all generations, which is good fun, really nice.

**GU:** For us it would have to be your work in *Buffy* — do you stay in touch with the cast?

**ASH:** Absolutely, absolutely — me and Alyson [Hannigan, Willow] and Alexis [Denishof, Wesley], and Sarah Michelle [Gellar, Buffy], when she comes over here and James [Marsters, Spike] when he comes over here. It was such a lovely family, they were so welcoming. I knew that my kids were always welcome on the set and the girls were like big sisters to them.

**GU:** Finally, *Going Underground* spoke to Bill Nighy a few months ago when he was curating the *Rushes Soho* Shorts film festival. Would you be interested in that kind of role?

**ASH:** Oh, we love Bill. Yeah, if time permits. I have to say I am hugely committed to my family and when I'm not working my time is spent with them as much as I can, but if I can sort of string the two things together, I'd love to do something like that.