



Random Encounters with Nate Barlow



Multi-talented renaissance man Nate Barlow does about just everything there is to do in the film industry. Nate is an actor, producer, creative consultant, director and writer in Los Angeles, CA, and he's here to tell us about his new film *Random Encounters* (2010) as well as his other recent exciting film developments past, present and future.

ME: Hey, Nate, thank you for taking time away from your busy schedule. Can you speak a little bit about the part you play in *Random Encounters*?

NATE: *Random Encounters* is an indie romantic-comedy about two Los Angeles twenty-some-things who meet randomly in a coffee shop and who then struggle to reconnect with each other. I actually wrote the screenplay a few years ago and came close to having something happen with it twice before. The first time a production company expressed interest they were purchased by another entity a week later and all acquisitions were put on hold. The second time I was supposed to direct it myself but then the executive I was working with had to leave the company and my project ended up out in the cold. So I shelved the script for awhile, knowing that sooner or later something would work out. As for my role, I play a small part, one of the bad dates that the female lead goes on as she tries to find the guy again.

ME: It seems that so many films are made from scripts that have had turnaround lives for years before production. I'm so glad this one finally got made. What your experience was working on set with cast? It must be awesome to see a script you wrote being produced.

NATE: My role was performed on a night shoot, 1:30 AM call, always an interesting experience, especially when you go home as the sun is coming up! The cast and crew were really tight and there was great camaraderie throughout. Everyone seemed to be having a good time, which makes for a good set even when the production runs a little behind, as was the case that night. I did visit the set several other times and came to know everybody well because of those trips. It is fascinating to see how someone else interprets one's words, story and concepts, since he or she never does so in the exact manner that you initially envisioned the final project. That is a good thing, of course; the director needs to place his or her unique stamp on the film for it to be a good movie, and his or her unique perspective invariably adds new layers and new meanings. One of the beauties of filmmaking is that it is a collaborative art, even when one person is a multi-hyphenate. Being on the other side of that direction as an actor adds to that understanding of the director's vision on top of your own as a writer.

ME: That is the beauty of scriptwriting. So many people do come into play in the collaboration of a film. It's a fascinating process. Did you ever take your daughter to the set?

NATE: I brought my then six-month-old daughter to set one day. She was very serious, absorbing everything as she tends to do, until she met Sean Young. Sean had an amazing way talking and playing with my baby, completely cracking her up!

ME: LOL! So cool! You have worked as actor, director, producer and writer and in many of your films. Is there one you prefer or will you continue all?

NATE: Always a great question, and one that the answer probably changes depending on the day of the week or my mood at the moment. Will I continue all? Yes. I love each one for different reasons. I am putting a lot of focus on writing at the time being since that is where I currently have the most momentum; however, I am actively auditioning and would leap on a role if I land one. I am also involved with multiple projects as producer, so if we find our financing... however I may direct my focus at a given moment in time, I am never so intractable not to take advantage of an opportunity in another direction if such arises.

ME: Here! Here! That's why I love film, because of people like you who are multi-talents. Our magazine (though online) is based in Europe. Can you tell people about what it is like to be working in indie film in US? How hard is it these days?

NATE: Indie filmmaking always stands at the crossroads between technology and financing. From a technical standpoint, it's easier than ever to make a movie and to make one that looks good, even on a low budget. But with the global economic meltdown, funding is more difficult to find than ever. It's the mid-level indies that are suffering. Big studio pictures will always be made, and I've seen a proliferation of Screen Actors Guild Ultra-Low Budget films being listed. It's great that technical advances let these films be made for the budgets they are, but with so much competition--and the inability to afford name talent--their long-term distribution options are limited outside of the self-distributed DVD and internet platforms... unless they are so well made that they become break out hits on the festival scene. But few exhibit that level of quality.

ME: I totally agree with you on that one. I work in distribution and I see so many films, from big budget to major indie and as you say, maybe only one out of ten that I see are decent but then maybe one in twenty is actually something that might sell. With the over-flooding of filmmaking market, there are so many films made that standards for quality are higher than

ever so the competition is also higher than ever. Anyway, Nate, thank you for speaking with us. You're doing awesome on the Hollywood scene and I hope to see more of your work soon. Keep doing it all. Everyone go see *Random Encounters*! Coming soon to festivals and theaters near you!

Interview by Vanessa McMahon on Sep, 20, 2010

actor Nate Barlow

