

Frome Road, Adelaide. July 2015.

## Adelaide Screenwriter : Screenwriting, Movies, Tuckshop & Charm School.

TUESDAY, 29 APRIL 2014

### Interview with Berty Cadilhac

**Berty Cadilhac** is a Franco-Australian filmmaker based in London. His background is in visual arts, as a freelance photographer. He has worked as an installation artist in Singapore, Australia and Thailand, and also worked as a stand up comedian, performing at the Melbourne International Comedy Festival, and in comedy clubs USA, Australia and UK. These days he combines his comedy writing and visual approach to produce feature-length comedies.



- *Where were you born, and where did you grow up?*

I was born and grew up in Paris. Except, when I was fourteen, I spent six months in a boarding school in Ireland. The food was bad, the dorms were cold, the Irish kids were laughing at my French accent. I would write letters to my family (there was no email at the time), and would describe my little daily struggles with a funny tone, because I wanted everyone to think I was enjoying myself. I realized that writing funny stories would make me laugh, and helped me "look on the bright side of life."

- *What kind of a family did you grow up with?*

I come from a very traditional Catholic family, who had a great consideration for religious arts, classical music or traditional painting. On the other hand, contemporary creation was often looked down upon. Arts was something that should be part of one's culture, but should never be considered as a career. So I studied engineering. And failed.

- *When did you first take an interest in writing and performing?*

After the boarding school in Ireland, I had no reason to continue writing letters. But one of my teachers suggested his students to write one page every day, to improve our writing skills. And so every day I wrote stories, thoughts, even terrible poems.

Some kids perform from a very early age, they display great confidence and skills, while their proud parents film the graceful performance and capture it for eternity. I

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was not one of these kids. I only went on stage because we had to, during mandatory school workshop. I was incredibly shy, and the drama teacher was incredibly sadistic. He would yell at me to smile on stage, the more he yelled the more I cried, the more I cried the more he yelled me to smile.

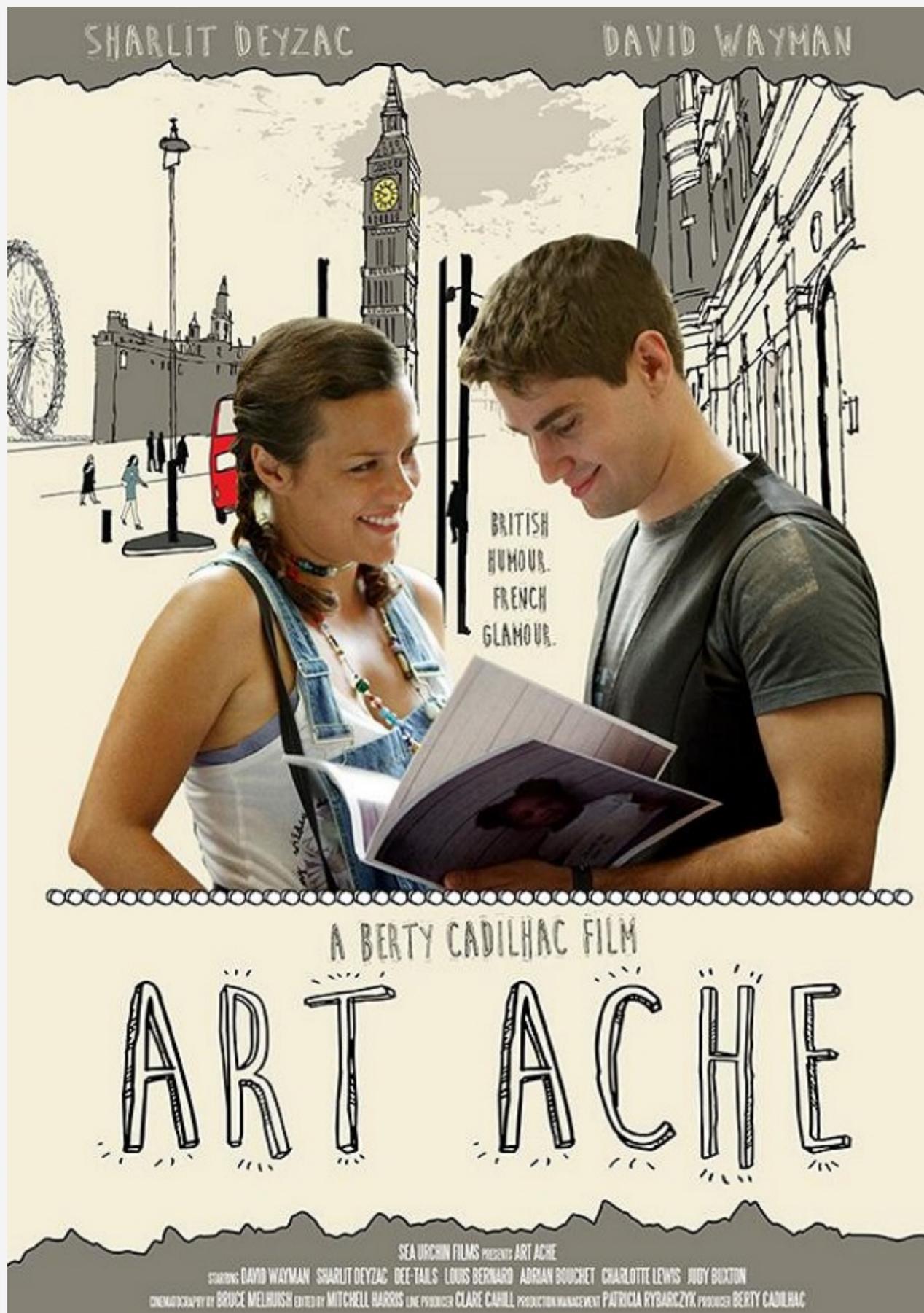
A couple of years later we heard that he had died. Only then did I smile.

- *What was your first paying job (in any field)?*

When I was eighteen, I worked for one month in a bank. They gave me repetitive tasks to do, mostly data entry. I had to process very large transactions to personal bank accounts. Somehow I messed up two transactions in one day, sending about a million euros to the wrong persons. The management freaked out when they discovered the mistake the next day. But they were so busy trying to understand how a secured system could have failed, that they forgot to blame me. Without even trying, I had managed to hack their system. I didn't mean it, I swear.

- *What was your first paying job as a public performer?*

After what seemed to be an eternity of free gigs, I was excited to get my first paying gig. But the venue that handled the show had messed up the evening advertising, and nobody turned up. Still, they had great ethics and we got paid, around 70 dollars. This was my first paying job as a public performer. I didn't perform that night, but got paid as a public performer.



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▶ [2015](#) (29)

▼ [2014](#) (373)

▶ [December](#) (17)

▶ [November](#) (33)

▶ [October](#) (32)

▶ [September](#) (32)

▶ [August](#) (38)

▶ [July](#) (33)

▶ [June](#) (31)

▶ [May](#) (33)

▼ [April](#) (30)

[Akira Kurosawa - On editing](#)

[Interview with Berty Cadilhac](#)

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[Hollywood's Golden Age](#)

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- You are currently working on a feature film called "Art Ache". Did you design the poster for the film?

*Art Ache* is now complete, and we are sending it to festivals everywhere. The poster was designed by a professional designer, I gave him instructions and a few ideas and he did a great job.

- Can you tell us a little of what the film is about?

*Art Ache* is a romantic comedy about a boring British accountant who lives in a massive comfort zone. He meets a lovely French artist, and understands that the only way to get her attention is to pretend that he is an artist himself. And now he needs to win a Contemporary Arts contest to win her heart.

It is uplifting and fresh, the cast was really awesome and the music from The Magic Theatre is lovely.

- You have performed in big cities around the world. Which was the most interesting and why?

I did a lot of short gigs in many different locations, but enjoyed much more performing a full solo show, and that was at the [Melbourne International Comedy Festival](#). This festival is awesome, and with a full solo show you have one hour to develop stories, characters, do call backs, etc.

- What are three things you wish someone had told you about filmmaking when you were starting out?

I wish someone had told me that directing was not only for gods and titans. You get so much help from the Director of Photography and other people, it's quite difficult but not as much as it seems. The key thing is to tell a story, and work closely to the actors. The technical side of it does not rely on the director.

I always thought of myself as a kind and respectful person. I wish somebody had told me that there was a heartless dictator in me. Bringing out that horrible person in me helps me run the show. It might be the ghost of my dead drama teacher.

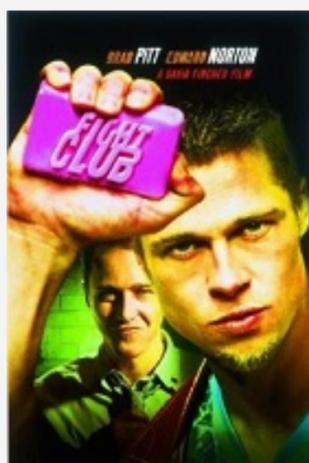
Also I wish that someone had told me that I was fantastic and would win an Oscar one day. Not because it's true, but because it would have made me feel fantastic.

- If you had to suggest just one screenwriting book to a newbie writer in Adelaide, which one would it be?

The very first book I bought was *The Screenwriter's Bible*, by [David Trottier](#). It covers everything, it even tells you how to format properly. Great overview about story, purpose, even the business side of things.

Again, that's a first book for a newbie. There are more advanced books, but this one is good to start with.

- What are your ten favourite (favourite, not 'best') movies of all time?



- The Big Lebowski* (1998)
  - Swimming With Sharks* (1994)
  - Garden State* (2004)
  - Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* (1998)
  - Fight Club* (1999)
  - Revolutionary Road* (2008)
  - Punch Drunk Love* (2002)
  - Little Miss Sunshine* (2006)
  - Down By Law* (1986)
  - And, of course, *Art Ache* (2014)
- ... you did say, "favourite, not best."

- What's next for Berty Cadilhac?

I am finishing a feature script, and will soon look for investors and producers.

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- ▶ February (29)
- ▶ January (34)

- ▶ 2013 (287)
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- ▶ 2011 (117)

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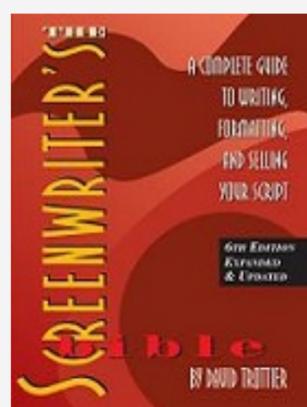
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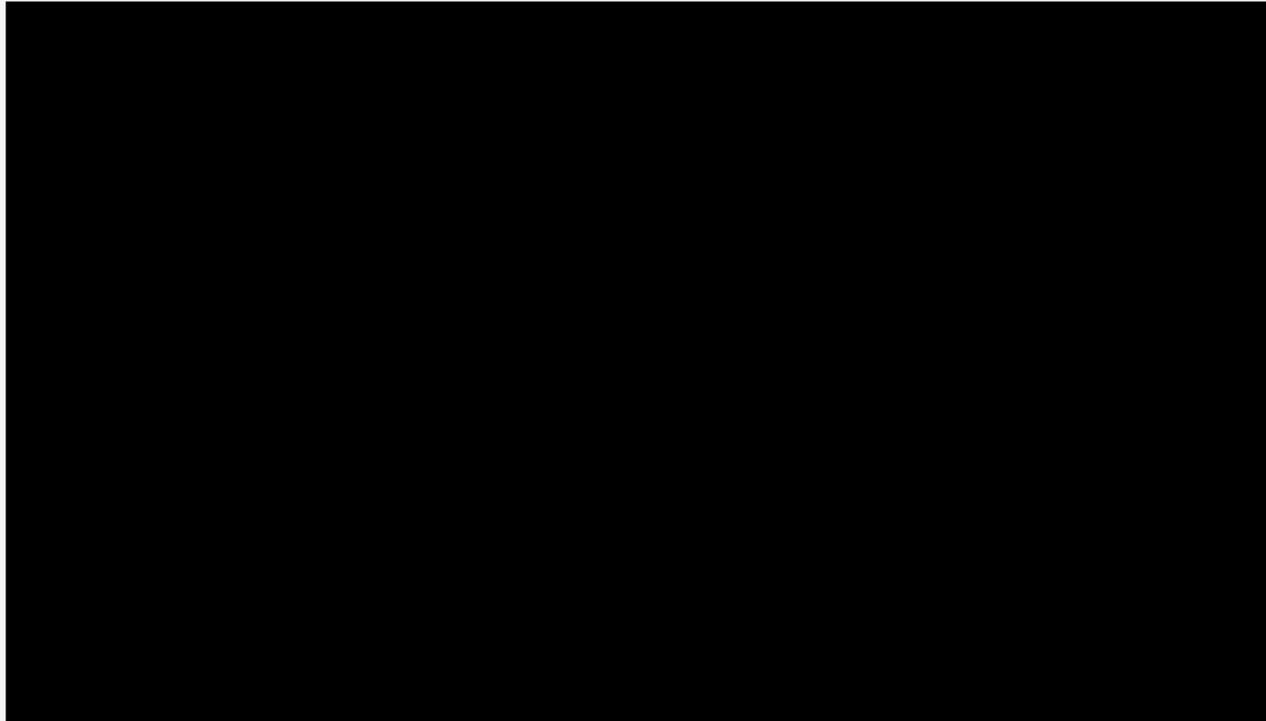
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But also I just finished a play, and decided to produce it as soon as I can because I want to work with actors again. Producing a play is so much more straightforward than a film, and if it works you can eventually turn it into a film.



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Posted by Henry Sheppard at 06:00 

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1 comment:

 **Kathy Smart said...**

It is hard enough to be a stand up comic in the US, but to do it with a broad French accent!

I hope Berty Cadilhac does well in his movie making. The idea of getting a story performed first as a play is wonderful, I think, it must strengthen the screenplay in so many ways.

April 29, 2014 1:53 p.m.

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