

"Harnessing the power of professional film to promote positivity and wellbeing in young adults."

Underdog CREW

STUDIOS | COLCHESTER



'Underdog Crew' prize giving gala event
29th October 2022 - Princes Theatre, Clacton-on-Sea

"A safe creative space for marginalised young adults to find inclusivity, positivity and emotional wellbeing."

“The Underdog Crew has proven to be an inspired destination for a significant number of our current and former film and television students. DB Morgan’s dedication to providing opportunities for vulnerable and disadvantaged students within the catchment of Colchester Institute on real world projects has added significant value to what we can offer. The importance of the Underdog Crew cannot be over-estimated. As major global companies continue to invest in studio space in the UK and with the planned building of at least 30 more sound stages over the next few years, the need for well trained technical crew is greater than ever.

Not only does the ‘Underdog Crew’ demonstrate faith in young students with limited experience, they are mentored and given meaningful roles in feature length projects. In the last year alone ‘The Underdog Crew’ have enabled Colchester Institute students to prove their worth on several feature length film projects, such as the eagerly awaited ‘Morris Men’ and on exciting and complex music video projects such as ‘Fools Gold by Forest of Fools’. I hope very much that we can continue to work together and that future students can further contribute to the growth and success of the Underdog Crew.” Reg Thompson - Course Leader. Level 3 Year 2 Film and Television.



Introducing Underdog Crew Studios

Our permanent regional hub! An innovative filmmaking and creative arts studio, opening in Colchester, Summer 2023. Incorporating a large multi-functional production studio, editing suite, vlogging & audio recording studio and training hub. Providing weekly creative film workshops and annual real world ventures into the professional world of independent film.

Specifically for the underdogs of this world, the outsiders and those in need of inspiration to unlock the creative champion within. [#allequal](#)

Mission Statement

Our mission is to foster inclusivity, self-worth and ambition in a safe space for young adults. We do this by empowering them with creative skills and practical workshops.

The Problems Underdog Crew is working on:

- The lack of skilled labor to support the UK film and high-end TV production boom.
- The exponential growth of mental health issues among children and adolescents and the lack of long-term meaningful support in the UK today.

Although the studio is open to all, our key focus is on supporting disenfranchised young adults aged thirteen to twenty-one from under-represented groups. Through our established links with the film industry, we aim to signpost our graduates into paid work placements and training opportunities after their time with us.



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EMPOWERMENT THROUGH:

- Building confidence through teamwork
- A nurturing space to develop new creative ideas
- Encouragement, guidance and signposting into further learning
- Self sufficiency/responsibility through daily rota'd lunch cooking
- Taking ownership of choices based around positive actions

High intensity creative workshops including:

- Industry standard practical special effects
- Screen combat training and implementation
- Prop making workshops
- Set building workshops
- Acting and improvisational workshops
- I.T workshops for graphical design and VFX

Certification modules:

- Storyworld building workshops
- Script development workshops
- Short film making workshops
- Post production workshops
- Post production audio workshops

To read full Underdog Crew write-ups please...

[LISTEN TO UNDERDOG CREW RADIO](#)



DIRECTOR, DB MORGAN talks 'Underdog'.

"It would be wrong of me to ask my crew to open up on their own personal experiences without offering my own into the mix. Two years of hell at a notorious Essex boarding school led to my younger life being consumed with drug abuse, leading to being an ex drug user and mental health survivor. I have been left with bouts of crippling anxiety that restrict my life in many ways. After losing our 12-year old daughter, Jodi, to aplastic anaemia in 2010 I've also been left with PTSD. I choose to rise above my limitations and slowly face my demons one by one.

My life experiences have provided me with so much ammunition to channel into the emotions of my work. As a creative I have learned that everyone has a story to tell and the richer a life's tapestry, the deeper the story. I love working with 'outsiders' as a true underdog myself and thrive on proving people wrong when it comes to underestimating, prejudging or prejudicing against marginalised people and groups. I am passionate about growing my 'underdog crew' ethos into a recognised UK movement and allowing all comers to shine under the brilliance of their own light."

#allequal #underdogcrew



Educational links with





OVER £75,000 RAISED TO DATE FOR THE STUDIO
With personal investment and ongoing grants from Essex County Council Arts and Cultural fund and Community 360 in 2022/2023.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS...

so you're up to speed.

WHAT'S THE AGE RANGE OF THE PEOPLE YOU HAVE HELPED?

We generally work with, and aim to support, young adults between the ages of thirteen and twenty-one.

WHAT MENTAL HEALTH OR PHYSICAL CONDITIONS DID/DO THEY HAVE?

We work with anyone who has been identified as needing an injection of positivity in their lives. From mental health survivors, to people on the autistic spectrum or non neurotypical, anxiety, depression or youths dealing with family tragedy, isolation, or at risk of taking a wrong turn in life.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN PROBLEMS THEY FACE IN LIFE?

Our project participants generally face difficulties in socialising, being part of group activities, or having the confidence to put themselves 'out there'. Whether stemming from being on the autistic spectrum, suffering anxiety or low confidence, or just generally being less gifted in the art of confidently mixing with their peers.

HOW DID THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH THE UNDERDOG CREW CHANGE THEIR LIVES?

We've seen huge developmental changes in all our project participants. Growth in confidence, increased ability to socialise, boosted positivity and changes in aspiration. Every Underdog Crew member has a positive story to tell relating to their participation in our projects.

WHAT KIND OF SKILLS DO THEY LEARN?

Alongside teaching empowerment and interpersonal skills we offer full professional training in all aspects of the filmmaking process. From special effects, to set building and prop design, to working alongside industry professionals in the camera, lighting and production departments. **Real world skills in real world environments.**

HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE ACTED AS MENTORS FOR THEM?

To date, underdog crew members have received training and one-on-one mentorship from around thirty industry professionals. From award winning directors and producers, to global actors and actresses and award winning special effects makeup artists.

WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THESE KIDS IN 5 YEARS TIME?

Several interns over the past few years of establishing the Underdog Crew have gone on to pursue work in the media industry. From an original project intern who is now official club photographer for a well known football team, to several media students who excelled, and are excelling, at media college. Our aim for every participant is to embrace the possibility of achieving one's dreams. A lot can be achieved in five years with a positive mind-set and a strong desire.

Visit the Website



**CURRENT
SUPPORTERS,
SPONSORS &
PATRONS**



UNDERDOG CREW STUDIOS

Launching Summer 2023 in Colchester

A 1500 square feet studio space. Fully integrated modular 'chat show studio set' for our weekly 'Underdog Crew online TV show'.

EXCLUSIVE miniature 'SCI-FI film set.'

Time travelling back to the golden age of cinematic special effects...

plus..

- * Fully equipped open plan film studio
- * TV Presentation studio area
- * Training 'boardroom' environment
- * Designated I.T area with fully integrated education suite
- * Gaming and cinema suite
- * Practical special visual effects workshop
- * Audio production suite with dedicated 'vlogging' studio

Fully DBS registered Underdog Crew team members, chaperoning daily groups of up to twenty attendees, together with our **dedicated educational co-ordinator**.

* VIEW 'Slice of Life' for reference.



**BLADE
RUNNER**

**STAR
WARS**

**BATTLESTAR
GALACTICA**

"Sometimes I find it hard because I think people just see the disabilities sides of me and not take me seriously, but I feel on the Underdog Crew we were all equals no one is judged. Everyone just has the one goal and we all come together with all our love of films to make films together. I feel like I am actually taken seriously and that everyone is... so it's a really good, friendly environment."

JAMIE MURPHY (19) - FOUNDING UNDERDOG CREW MEMBER



"When I was younger, I never really believed in myself, I never really had confidence in many things. From issues from my childhood. My parents suffer from mental illness and it was really tough. I always felt like I couldn't achieve anything, and I have nothing to show to the world. I had a dark stage in my life dealing with a lot of suicidal thoughts. But I overcame it. This team and film have given me a sense of purpose, and the title alone just shows how I feel now in life. After dealing with a lot of stuff and gradually picking myself up. This experience has given me faith."

JAMIE WRIGHT (19) FOUNDING UNDERDOG CREW MEMBER and GRADUATED MENTOR

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**BLADE
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**STAR
WARS**

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GALACTICA**

Underdog
CREW

'SCI-FI film set'

Time travelling back to the golden age of cinematic special effects...

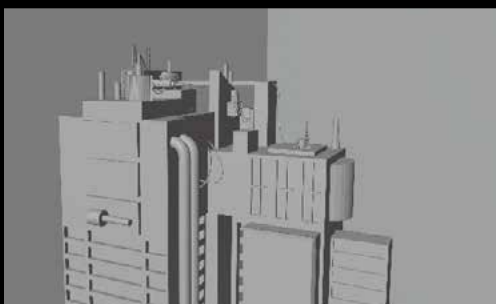
A 40 square foot miniature film set created predominantly from cardboard and paper mache components, along with simple electronics, LED lighting and green screen elements. A year-long creative exercise, where we document the process through an online archive. Our aim, from year two, is a fully functioning space age film set where local film young creatives can visit, and utilise, the set as part of our income stream.

Miniatures and models have always been used in filmmaking. Even in the modern CGI era, miniatures and models are still a heavily used special effects technique. Miniatures, which are often not that small, are scale models used to create special effects. From cities to spaceships, miniatures and models are physical set pieces often used for explosive visual effects. Georges Méliès used miniatures in his early films, including the legendary 1902 film 'A Trip to the Moon'. The 1953 version of 'War of the Worlds' used miniatures and models to achieve many of the films special effects.



The space craze of the 1950s and 60s saw countless sci-fi films and television shows using miniatures, like Star Trek. Using blue screen technology, the Starship Enterprise model was used in the famous intro and throughout special effects sequences. Stanley Kubrick also used several miniature space ships in 2001: A Space Odyssey. Many of the miniatures were detailed using parts from various Airfix model kits.

Miniatures and models were a huge part of Independence Day. Though the space ships were mostly computer generated, the film relied on practical effects for explosions. The destruction of the White House is the most iconic image from the film. The White House building was a 1/12 scale miniature.



UNDERDOG CREW TV



Alongside our ongoing studio projects we look forward to filming the first episode of Underdog Crew TV, a weekly magazine style youth TV chat show produced by, and starring, teenagers from Underdog Crew studio. Mentored by TV presenter and UC tutor, **Nicola Kelleher**, students work together to produce and present the weekly show, for Youtube and website hosting.

*“Blending the best elements of many established shows **UC:tv** is a fast paced 30-minute show, showcasing Colchester, current teen issues and poking sticks into the ant hill of the modern world.”*

WEEKLY SHOW ELEMENTS INCLUDE:

“COLCHESTER, THIS IS COLCHESTER.”

“THIS WEEK IN THE STUDIO.”

“Who are you and what do you do? Special Guests.”

“GIRL POWER. Highlighting inspirational women.”

“THE WORD ON THE STREET. Out and about in Colchester.”

“SHOW AND TELL.”

“THE DEBATE.”



NICOLA KELLEHER

Actress. Presenter. Author.

Nicola Kelleher is a highly experienced and well travelled freelance presenter. Starting out as a professional actress Nicola gravitated towards live television and acts between presenting gigs. Nicola's presenting has taken her all over the world from presenting for Samsung at IFA in Berlin to grappling with Lions in the African Bush for TV series, "The Code Breaker". Nicola has interviewed some of TV's most well known celebrities and has over 15 years presenting experience from everything from cameras, jewellery and beauty products on some of the best known shopping channels and major corporate companies.

THE SLIP

Our 2023 CORE 'Underdog Crew TV' project

A bold and forward thinking multi-episodic TV series reflecting the highs and lows of 12-15-year-olds and their fractured lives in the UK today. Told through the lens of fourteen-year-old Macey Caine, sole carer to an alcoholic Mother acutely gripped in a downward mental health spiral.



STARRING Paul Danan

TV personalaity and iconic Hollyoaks actor, Paul, Danan, takes the starring role as Danny Frost -youth mentor at 'the Slip' exclusion centre.

As an addiction and mental health survivor, Paul now runs his own 'Morning After Drama' therapy workshops. Paul is excited to not only be an Underdog Crew ambassador, but also taking on the lead role in this exciting youth television series.

#belonging

#mentalhealth

#exclusion

#relationships

#empowerment

#addiction

#invisible

#validation

TEEN BAND IDOL UK

BATTLE of the BANDS

THE SLIP
AN ORIGINAL TEEN DRAMA SERIES BY DB MORGAN

Five teenagers, thrown together by circumstance, fight the system in order to find their place in the world, preserve the sanctuary of their spiritual home and come together to win 'Teen Band Idol UK'... and earn the validation that comes with it.

A bold and forward thinking series reflecting the highs and lows of 12-15-year-olds and their fractured lives in the UK today. Told through the lens of fourteen-year-old Macey Caine, sole carer to an alcoholic Mother acutely gripped in a downward mental health spiral.

**** Actors and visuals for reference purposes only.**

THE SLIP Look | Feel | Tone megalodonstudios.co.uk/theslip **#THESLIP** underdogcrew.org

THE SLIP

Alongside a star studded cast of British television actors, 'the Slip' will feature numerous young acting talents from our region, all working alongside a highly professional film production team to nurture, educate and inspire our next generation of creative talent.



Alison Carroll is an actress known for her role of the Official Lara Croft for the prestigious 'Tomb Raider: Underworld' video game. She had to undertake a series of courses which included SAS survival, combat and semi-automatic weapons training in Eastern Europe. Alison is a highly versatile actress and has featured in feature films alongside Noel Clarke, Danny Dyer and Michael Madsen.



Jamie Chambers is known for his strong character acting as well as his action and fight skills, Chambers has been acting since 2010, working in TV and Film. He trained at the Actors Temple, studying Meisner technique. In the following years, he has worked steadily on Festival and Feature films, including Beyond Redemption, **Fury** and **Star Wars**. A trained martial artist, with an international black belt in PKA Kickboxing and experience in Judo and Krav Maga.



Dean Kilby has featured in numerous feature films, TV roles & short films. Highlights include Lead Role in Horror comedy '**Manfish**' for which he won Best Lead Actor at GenreBlast film festival in Virginia. Dean won The Best Actor Award at The Birmingham film festival 2019 for Gritty Drama film The Edge And was Nominated for Best Actor at The Romford Horror international film festival 2022 for 'Manfish' which went on to win Best feature film award.



Sean Earl McPherson is best known for roles in Gatwick Gangsters (2017), Rupture (2022) and Future Soldier and DB Morgan's '**Morris Men**'. Sean is an actor of incredible depth and a regular face on gold standard television adverts, including Coka Cola.

Visit the Website



“You don’t need a spaceship or time machine to access my worlds. Neither do you need to find the golden ticket, be the star quarterback or head cheerleader. You just need to grasp the opportunity of adventure and believe in yourself.”



DB Morgan is a screenwriter, author and multi award-winning film producer and director, born and bred in Colchester, Essex. A mental health survivor, PTSD & anxiety sufferer who refuses to be labelled, or obstructed, by these so-called limitations. DB is proud to welcome under-represented and minority groups into all his filmmaking exploits. Having trialled his ‘youth involvement project’ during the shoot of 2010, MTV competition winning, short film, ‘Subject 3’, he quickly learned that everybody has something to offer in a creative environment and crew members on the autism/asperger’s spectrum especially came away empowered and motivated from their experiences on set. We have spent the past fifteen years developing and nurturing the Underdog Crew initiative, whilst producing several short films, mini docs, music videos and our first three feature films - scooping multiple international awards along the way.

“DB Morgan is a rare breed of creative, totally self-driven and yet creatively inclusive. His way of working encourages others to flex their creative muscles in a controlled and learning environment. During the filming of his projects, Dominic created and put to work, “The Under Dog Crew”. This programme assists those with mental health challenges to work in a true creative environment whilst at the same time being guided and chaperoned through the work by long standing creative professionals. Dominic’s drive to help others with their mental health challenges by giving structured and guided access to the creative process is second to none.

DB uses an innovative approach whereby candidates are given real tasks and positions of responsibility within the project, but are shadowed by professional creative enablers, who not only have many years of media / creative experience but also have an understanding of some of the challenges the “UnderDog Crew” face with their mental health. This inclusive way of film making has proved successful and we would advise any other investor or funder to get on board, not only to help this very talented British filmmaker, but to help secure and develop the creative industries of Essex and South East England.”

David Brady CEO / Executive Producer DIA Media Group

“I think that I was very lucky to plunge into the atmosphere of professional filming, to be, albeit for a while, part of the film crew where I learned how to work with professional equipment, met the director, made many useful contacts, saw filmmaking from the inside. Thanks to everyone who participated in the filming for this wonderful opportunity. Daniil Furzenko (Ukrainian refugee)

Eve Painter (The Tuskar Trust) *I am very grateful to have been able to have had this opportunity and would like to say a massive thank you to everyone involved in making this all possible. I had a spectacular time and came away from it with a much better understanding of what goes into the production of a shoot, and hopefully I’ll be able to experience something like this again. Thanks again, Dom!*

Esme Appleyard (Thomas Lord Audley student) *Thank you so much for this experience. I will really treasure it for the rest of my life and will remember all the new things I have learned throughout my time on set in the future.”*

UNDERDOG CREW CIC

“Harnessing the power of professional film to promote positivity and wellbeing in young adults.”

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to provide a safe creative space for young adults to find inclusivity, positivity and emotional wellbeing within the realm of creative filmmaking.

Under the banner of #allequal and #empowerment we aim to inspire young adults between the ages of 13 and 18 years through creative practical workshops within our exciting studio environment.

To build a creative community where all members are encouraged to develop their fullest potential in spirit, mind and body.

We promote:

- Building confidence through teamwork.
- A nurturing space to develop new creative ideas.
- Inclusivity, self worth and ambition.
- Teamwork and collaborative thinking.
- Ownership of choices.
- Problem solving and ‘thinking outside the box’.
- Encouragement, guidance and signposting into further learning.
- Taking ownership of choices based around positive actions.
- ‘PEF’: ‘positivity, energy and focus’.

Some people are suited to the classroom environment, others are not. This is a fact! Underdog interns are dropped into real-world filmmaking situations and experience first hand all aspects of the filmmaking process. Participants work together with professional film crew and actors to produce TV show concepts, short films, documentaries and music videos. Participants learn all aspects of the filmmaking process guided by industry professionals to create their own creative works, either behind, or in front of camera.

At the end of each year, all participants receive certificates, maybe a prize or two and have the opportunity to celebrate with family and friends at our ‘glitzy’ annual prize-giving event, fusing a ‘red carpet’ film premiere with our Underdog Crew celebrations... to provide our youths an empowering glimpse into the Hollywood universe as an extra boost.



ALL CONTACTS:

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SCREEN INNOVATION

THE HOME OF DIVERSE FILMMAKING AND DIGITAL CONTENT

UNDERDOGCREW.ORG

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Visit the Website

