

PRESS RELEASE

National Trust Censors Forthcoming Feature Film “Lawrence: After Arabia”

With only a few days before background filming began on the forthcoming British independent full-length feature film “Lawrence: After Arabia” the National Trust at Cloud’s Hill withdrew its provisional consent to film in the gardens of the former cottage of “T.E. Lawrence” near Moreton in Dorset.



Director/Producer Mark J.T. Griffin said, “We received an email to say that the custodian and volunteers at the property said they could not support the project because they believe the film perpetuates the theory of Lawrence’s death being a conspiracy. This is censorship pure and simple. They have had no sight of our screenplay and their view seems to have been taken on hearsay. No one from the property or the NT discussed the content of the screenplay. They seem not support any alternative view of events than their own.”

“It’s a bizarre stance from the NT and many are scratching their heads in disbelief. We hope NT members will contact the Head Office to express their astonishment. Previously the NT has given permission for filming at a number of their properties with much more doubtful subject matters for example NT properties were used for “Pride and Prejudice and Zombies (2016)”, Conan Doyle’s “The Hound of the Baskervilles (2000)” and of course the “Harry Potter” series films. The NT Head Office were originally very supportive as they felt the British drama would increase visitor numbers at the property, rekindle interest in TE Lawrence – one of the Top 50 Greatest Britons - and Cloud’s Hill would be an authentic location for the film.”

Griffin said, “The film also focuses on Lawrence’s abusive childhood and his PTSD following WW1; both issues not previously dealt with in movies. Indeed a percentage of the films profit will be donated to two charities that deal with these issues. One would have thought the property would want to support this.”

“We have contacted senior management in the National Trust to move the issue forward including Director General Hilary McGrady and the Board of Trustees including its Chair Tim Parker but surprisingly have received no response to our emails and calls for discussion.”

“Most of our cast and crew are Dorset based. Many are NT members. Cloud’s Hill is after all owned by the nation and not the fiefdom or domain for an elite few. The NT’s motto is “Forever. For Everyone” - it seems this is only true as long as they do not question the belief of a property custodian and volunteers and believe in zombies, giant spectral hounds, wizards and witches! I am confident for the sake of common sense this ridiculous decision by the NT is reversed.”

The film which is part funded by sponsorship is due to complete filming in summer 2019 with release in May 2020. For more information visit www.lawrenceafterarabia.co.uk.