

## Director's Note

Leash is a minutely observed small-scale tragedy, which becomes large and universal by being full of humanity not politics. It's an intense human drama played out by epic figures in a landscape. It's not small-framed gritty detailed reality. Humour and warmth is very close to the surface of these characters.

It's about there being some people who have no place. It's about humans creating systems, which de-humanise. It's about the effects of grief and extreme emotion. It works on the premise that tragic fates operate in a naturalistic world. There's a perfectly good life to be had here if it wasn't for the Aidan's interfering. People can do all right if you leave them alone even though there's death and poverty to deal with.

The dog fighting is not a gimmick and is not featured. It's the presence of moral violence. We are saying that dog fighting is a culture we are capable of wanting. It's a naturalistic world; the whole point is that in the same naturalistic world people fight dogs. The film is about the extraordinary capacity for both love and damage that people have. There's love in this film but there's also a great deal of rage. Rage at Lisa's fate. Rage that there's no role for Cal. Rage, which must have an outpouring at the end. Opposite this rage is humanity and humour. This is best embodied in the moving and often blissfully funny friendship that develops between Cal and Kenny Peen and the girls.

LEASH is about where you locate the margins of civilisation and savagery.

Tom Connolly - Co-writer/Director