



BORDERLINES FILM FESTIVAL

MOTHERBOARD (15)

Director: Victoria Mapplebeck

Starring: Victoria Mapplebeck, Jim Mapplebeck

UK, 2024, 1 hour 30 minutes, English

Motherboard is a smartphone feature documentary. Shot over nearly 20 years, it captures a whole lifetime with extraordinary intimacy. In it, director Victoria Mapplebeck compresses the joy, pain and the fun of raising her son Jim on her own, combatting numerous setbacks along the way.

Mapplebeck, a Professor of Digital Arts at Royal Holloway, University of London, has always been fascinated by new technologies and has experimented with new platforms such as VR in order to reach new audiences. She's been shooting exclusively on smartphones for the last decade and her short *Missed Call*, documenting her and Jim's attempts to reconnect with his father, won a BAFTA in 2019; it was the first commissioned film to be shot on an iPhone X.

Director's Statement (from *Motherboard* Production notes)

Motherboard begins with a personal story but it also tells a universal story. There are 3 million lone parent families in the UK, around 90% of those single parents are women. *Motherboard* shines a light on the power and agency of the many women who are raising children alone, by choice or by circumstance.

Motherhood as a story, is so infrequently told, because the world tells us that what mothers do is unremarkable and unimportant. A mother's heroic journey is not about how she leaves... but about how she stays.

In recent TV drama, there has been a growing appetite amongst audiences for unfiltered, unromanticised portraits of parenting– especially the joy and pain of being a middle-aged single mum, *Better Things*, *Rain Dogs* and *The Chair* to name but a few.

We were once turned down by a Documentary Producer who told us that *Motherboard* felt too "small" for him. He wanted "Big stories about true crime and space... *Epic* journeys". I replied, "Raising my son alone... him meeting his dad for the first time and how we both survived the fall out of my breast cancer diagnosis ... that's been a pretty epic journey...".

Why are stories which explore how women navigate the world, at all stages of life, often described as 'small'? *Motherboard* is shot on small cameras in small spaces, but it explores big, relatable stories with a huge reach. I hope that *Motherboard* is proof that epic journeys can begin and end at home.

Notes compiled by Jo Comino

If you like this, you may enjoy

TWO STRANGERS TRYING NOT TO KILL EACH OTHER

Filmed over a year, this documentary has a lot to say about personal and intimate interaction, how it's affected by creativity, recognition, fame and ageing.

SEX

Two chimney sweeps in monogamous, heterosexual marriages both end up in situations that challenge their views on sexuality and gender roles.