

BBFC Board of Classification Meeting

Thursday 15 October 2020

(Meeting held remotely)

Present:

Patrick Swaffer	President
Kamlesh Patel	Vice President
Murphy Cobbing	Vice President
David Austin	Chief Executive
Dave Barrett	Deputy Chief Executive
Matt Tindall	Senior Policy Officer (minutes)
Matt Blakemore	Head of Product (for item 3)
Chris Davies	Compliance Manager (for item 4)

Minutes of the previous meeting

1. The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.
2. It was noted that the planned update from the team working on the development of an enhanced ratings info product will instead take place at November's Board meeting.

Matters arising

3. There were no matters arising.

AI and classification

4. Matt B updated the Board on plans for developing artificial intelligence tools to enhance the BBFC's classification processes.

Recent classification decisions

5. Chris briefed the Board on HURACAN, a US sports drama about a mixed martial arts fighter who must reckon with his past trauma. It was submitted for a theatrical classification with a 12A request from the distributor. Upon viewing the film, the Compliance team noted that it contained a scene of sexual violence in which a man rapes a woman while a child watches from a cupboard. Though the sequence is relatively undetailed, the team decided that due its duration, the domestic setting and the aggravating aspect of the child observer the film was most appropriately classified at 18. They acknowledged however that this was a 'borderline' decision. Following the film's classification, the distributor requested a reconsideration and submitted a letter from the

director arguing that the film should not be restricted to adults only. The film was viewed again by the Chief Executive, Compliance Manager, Senior Compliance Officer and Senior Policy Officer. The team noted the scene's visual restraint and its contextual importance to the film's narrative, and decided that the scene could be classified at 15 given these mitigating factors. The Board agreed with the 15 classification.

6. Chris presented two clips from a recent theatrical submission, EXHIBITION ON SCREEN: FRIDA KAHLO, profiling the life and work of the Mexican artist. In one clip, a painting showing a naked Kahlo lying on a blood-stained bed with a stylised foetus floating above her is discussed in relation to her miscarriage. In another, a painting is shown of a man in blood stained clothes standing over a dead naked woman, believed to be a prostitute, who has multiple stab wounds over her body. The scene, although stylised, contains some relatively realistic injury detail and is said to be based on an actual event. The work was submitted with a U request, and although there was sympathy from the Compliance team to defend the miscarriage scene at PG, the stabbing painting was felt better placed at 12A due to the detail, nudity, real-life basis, and the factor of violence against women. The Board agreed with the decision.
7. Chris shared a clip from BREWS BROTHERS, a Netflix comedy series about a microbrewery. In the scene a children's football team are enlisted to help fill hollow glass dildos with beer, with the scene comically playing on sexualised imagery of them handling the bottles, including a slow motion shot of white foam splattering on one boy's face. It was viewed in May as part of the BBFC's monthly Netflix audit and classified 15 in line with Netflix's assigned category. The Board agreed with the classification.

AOB

8. Patrick suggested that the Board watch the Netflix film CUTIES, which has been the subject of some controversy. David noted that the film was viewed as part of the Netflix audit and was classified, very straightforwardly, at 15.
9. The Board discussed the recruitment process to appoint a new BBFC President once Patrick's tenure comes to an end in October 2022.

Date of next meeting: 27 November 2020