

# Watch out Hollywood ...

If you have ever pondered the art of film-making, you would be forgiven for thinking of America but you may be wrong. There are plenty of films being made on our very doorsteps, as *Melanie Gomm* discovered ...

**A**N EXCITING, new, low-budget, action-adventure film conceived, directed, produced and distributed by two Greenwich-based brothers premiered in the borough last week. Richard and Robert Allison, of Trick-shot Film Productions, celebrated the release of their 80-minute film, *Eightball*, on September 17 with a boozy bash at the Trafalgar Tavern.

The movie — which was paid for by the boys themselves for a meagre £1,000 — was two years in the making in collaboration with pal Jack Vine and around 30 volunteer cast and crew.

Richard Allison, the elder of the brothers at 27, was still buzzing from the party when I spoke to him about the making of the film.

"People at the premiere said they couldn't tell the difference between our effects and those in big-budget movies. The reaction has been mind-blowing, people were just not prepared to see such an exciting, independent film."

The film follows Jon, an underworld drug dealer who is determined to escape his seedy world before his girlfriend, Claire, finds out. But after the murder of his best friend by an old enemy, Jon sets out to take his revenge.

The brothers are now based in Eltham and filmed *Eightball* at locations around south east London, including Canary Wharf, the Chestnut Café, in Chislehurst, Lewisham Hospital and The Walnuts Car Park, in Orpington.

"It was really important for us to film in the area and local people have been very



**A BIG FUTURE:** Robert (left) and Richard Allison shoot a scene in the Winter Garden, Avery Hill Park

supportive. Many places allowed us to film there for free," said Richard.

"I love Canary Wharf, Docklands and the south east of London. I have friends in America who wanted to see London and where I live."

The Allison brothers grew up in Chislehurst. Robert, 18, has just completed his A Levels at Coopers School, Chislehurst (which many of the other cast and crew also attended) and Richard went to Coffe's School, Lee. The pair have both taken courses in film-making techniques and plan to eventually devote all their time to developing a film career.

"Robert wrote the story, then I took each bit and polished the dialogue. The script kept evolving as we went along.

"We are going to publish the movie ourselves on DVD and screen it at festivals and to distributors worldwide.

"By the time filming finished we had used more than 400 cherry bomb explosives, 10 replica automatic pistols and sub-machine guns, a Peugeot 306 GTI, a Kia Sedona people mover, a 1967 Toyota MR2 T-Bar convertible and five litres of fake blood."

Richard says if he was to manage the project again he would communicate better with cast members about the duration of the project. But he is very happy with the results of their efforts.

"We just wanted to make a film which would be entertaining, which people would pay to see, which was British and which was a believable action film. I think we have succeeded."

*Eightball* is dedicated to Benjamin Hopkins, a close school friend of Robert's who tragically died recently in a road accident.

For more information about the film and to view a trailer, visit [www.trickshot-films.co.uk](http://www.trickshot-films.co.uk)