



# *Treasure Trapped*

'...an amazing experience that entertains, educates, and yet remains respectful to everyone involved'  
**Starburst Magazine**

Available in Cinemas Worldwide Now

Directed by Alex Taylor  
Produced by Shona Brown  
A Cosmic Joke Production

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99 minutes

Rating: TBC (contains some strong language and simulated drug use)

[www.cosmicjoke.co.uk/treasure-trapped](http://www.cosmicjoke.co.uk/treasure-trapped)



# Pretending on a whole new level...

## Short Synopsis

Three unlikely heroes journey into the curious world of LARP (Live Action Role-Play) to explore what happens when you take pretending to a whole new level.

## Full Synopsis

In 1983 a group of table-top gamers took their hobby to a whole new level by taking over a castle and acting out their quest - for real! Live Action Role-Play (LARP) was born. Thirty years later and LARP is a worldwide pastime on an unimaginable scale.

Three unlikely heroes are on a whirlwind journey into the world of LARP to try and understand what it means to be a live action role-player and taking pretending to a whole new level. From hundreds of people fighting in the woods of England to the only school in the world that teaches through role-play, 'Treasure Trapped' sets out to discover what happens when you look beyond the pointy ears and foam swords of this often misunderstood hobby.

Not to be dismissed as a surface-deep look into geeks in funny costumes, 'Treasure Trapped' is an exploration beyond the facepaint and into the beating heart of a community; the scale, the passion and the people.





## Making 'Treasure Trapped'

Like the best things in life, the idea for 'Treasure Trapped' was conceived in a pub amongst three friends. Alex Taylor, Michael Surman and Nick Peel first heard of Live Action Role-Play (LARP) when a mutual friend took up the hobby. Several pints into the conversation and he wouldn't stop talking about a weekend spent dressed up in a field, fighting human-sized insects with a musket in an attempt to settle a new world colony. Alex, the director, remembers "I'd never heard of anything like this before, I had no idea it even existed! The more I heard, the more questions I asked and the more I needed to see this with my own eyes. I figured if I felt this, as did Mike and Nick, then surely others would want to see it too?" And so began a two year journey that would become 'Treasure Trapped'.

In true documentary style, the three friends, backed by Manchester production company, Cosmic Joke, mobilised a small crew and set out in search of all things LARP. After spending time forging relationships and building up trust with LARP groups, they finally got the chance to film their first event, a LARP called 'Maelstrom'. What followed was a hectic weekend culminating in the final battle for the event. Out of this chaos, came new leads to follow up. The group were able to tour the UK in a trusty campervan, absorbing as much LARP knowledge as they could; from weapons practice to building actual pieces of armour. Slowly but surely, the team were getting to the heart of the hobby and 'Treasure Trapped' the film was starting to take shape.

By now, the crew knew the story they wanted to tell: they wanted to show people the real side of LARP, the people beneath the masks and facepaint and the scale of the hobby itself. To tell this story, 'Treasure Trapped' would need to go international - across Europe to Scandinavia, where LARP was pushing the boundaries as a mainstream hobby. Cosmic Joke were able to run a successful Kickstarter campaign to fund the final leg of the film. With the help of over 100 very generous backers, the team were back out on the road to Denmark and Sweden. This time their travels would take in the huge conversion of a Swedish Cold War battleship into a spaceship, a 36 hour, drug-fuelled advertising agency and the heartwarming and unique school, Østerskov Efterskole, that teaches through role-play on a daily basis. For the crew, the image of LARP would never be the same again.

Upon returning to the UK, Alex, Mike and Nick now faced the impossible task of turning 100s of hours of amazing footage into a 90 minute film. Bringing on an excellent post production team, it still took the filmmakers a year to finally have a film that did their journey justice. The final film had a central theme: this was a film about a hobby but more importantly, the people whose lives were shaped by it. And the name? Well, it seemed fitting to name it 'Treasure Trapped' in honour of the first ever LARP itself ('Treasure Trap') and the 1000s of people worldwide that that game inspired.



## Sharing The Film

'Treasure Trapped' is a film about community and a film that was part funded through community with a successful Kickstarter campaign. It seemed fitting then to include the community that had grown around 'Treasure Trapped' in the screening process.

Inspired by this spirit, 'Treasure Trapped' had a small cast, crew and friends of the film premiere at A Small Cinema, Manchester in December 2014. A Small Cinema is a community-run arts centre in an old miners' workplace and we believed that this was the perfect setting for 'Treasure Trapped's first outing and was a great way to support the local arts scene and give something back at the same time.

Since the premiere, 'Treasure Trapped' has placed the power to screen into the hands of the fans and the community that built it. Screening requests can be made through the Cosmic Joke website and, with enough interest, 'Treasure Trapped' will come to your nearest nearest cinema. It is also available to be screened as a one-off for groups, societies, universities - the list is endless!

Using this system, 'Treasure Trapped' has successfully screened in Manchester, London, Stockholm, Lausanne and Lennestadt with screenings in Nottingham, Copenhagen and beyond lined up for the near future. 'Treasure Trapped' will begin a partnership with Tugg Inc. starting March 2015: a web-platform that enables individuals, groups and organisations to set up personalised screenings of 'Treasure Trapped' in cinemas and community venues across North America.

'Treasure Trapped' is available to screen near you NOW. All the information can be found at [www.cosmicjoke.co.uk/treasure-trapped](http://www.cosmicjoke.co.uk/treasure-trapped)  
'Treasure Trapped' will be touring film festivals both nationally and internationally in 2015 and is accepting distribution offers.





## The 'Treasure Trapped' Team



**Alex Taylor - Director**

Alex is an award-winning music video director and founder of Cosmic Joke. This is his feature debut. And just in case you didn't know, he's a massive Seahawks fan...



**Shona Brown - Producer**

Shona owns and operates Cosmic Joke with Alex after cutting her teeth with the BBC and with Warp Films alongside Shane Meadows on his documentary, 'The Stone Roses: Made of Stone'



**Nick Peel - Writer**

As well as his film work with Cosmic Joke, Nick is a published science writer with work featured in publications such as The Guardian.



**Michael Surman - Writer**

The brain child behind 'Treasure Trapped', Mike spends his days being a grown up in a suit...but still does a cracking impression of Coronation Street's Jim MacDonald...



**Matthew Sturdy - Post Production**

Matt runs the post production wing of Cosmic Joke. Over his first few years in the industry, he has worked with major UK brands and annually with Sheffield Doc/Fest.



**Kristian Nairn - Associate Producer**

Alongside playing fan favourite, Hodor, in HBO's 'Game of Thrones', Kristian Nairn is a global DJ and keen advocate of role-playing games such as 'World of Warcraft'.