



## 'MOTHERBOARD'

### Logline

BAFTA award-winning director [Victoria Mapplebeck](#) turned the camera on herself when she found herself single, pregnant, and broke at 38. Shot over two decades, '[Motherboard](#)' is a celebration of messy lives, solo motherhood, and proof that epic journeys can begin and end at home.

### Short Synopsis

'[Motherboard](#)' is a feature documentary exploring motherhood, filmed over 20 years by BAFTA award-winning British director Victoria Mapplebeck. At the age of 38, Victoria found herself single, pregnant and broke. Unable to combine motherhood with freelance directing, she was forced to abandon her career in TV, instead turning the camera on herself and her son, Jim. Victoria first began documenting their lives with her old DVCAM before shooting almost daily on five generations of smartphones, from the iPhone 6 to the iPhone 15. She recorded hundreds of hours of footage, capturing each twist and turn in Jim's life, from the thumbs-up he gave her during her first scan, to his first day at college.

As Jim grows up, Victoria charts the trials, traumas and occasional triumphs of their single parent family. We see the good times, the holidays, the birthdays, the bedtime routine, Jim's love of singing and dancing. But we also see the bad times, Victoria's breast cancer diagnosis and treatment, the disappointments Jim felt when he met with his dad for the first time and in his late teens, his struggles with depression and binge drinking.

Victoria captures a life where breast cancer, absent fathers and depression are part of the package, but where life still wins every time. 'Motherboard' is the antidote to the judgmental and unrealistic expectations we have about motherhood, creating an honest, funny and relatable film for any mother who has wept tears of both joy and frustration.

### Director Bio

[Victoria Mapplebeck](#) is a BAFTA award winning artist and director, who has worked in film, VR and immersive audio. Victoria's works explore autobiographical stories which ask universal questions about our relationship with technology, parenting, health and wellbeing.

She recently completed [‘Motherboard’](#) a smartphone feature documentary which charts the joy, pain and comedy of raising her son Jim alone. ‘Motherboard’ received funding from [OKRE](#), [Women in Film and TV](#) and was bought by [Autlook Film Sales](#).

For the last decade, Victoria has been shooting continuously with smartphones. She is passionate about the innovation, intimacy and diversity of smartphone filmmaking. In 2015, she wrote, filmed and directed [‘160 Characters’](#) a smartphone short for Film London. Shot entirely on an iPhone 6, ‘160 Characters’ brings to life the secrets buried in a vintage Nokia. When the film launched online it received a Vimeo Staff pick. In 2017, Victoria wrote, filmed and directed [‘Missed Call’](#) which was the first commissioned short film to be shot on the iPhone X. ‘Missed Call’ explores Victoria and Jim’s decision to reconnect with Jim’s father, who’d been absent for a decade. ‘Missed Call’ begins with the last message he sent in 2006 and ends with the first call to him over a decade later.

‘Missed Call’ won [Best Short Form Programme at the 2019 BAFTAs](#) and Best Documentary Short at The 2019 Broadcast Digital Awards. In 2021 Victoria co founded and co curated [‘SMart, The London International Smartphone Film Festival’](#), with director and former Channel 4 commissioner Adam Gee.

Over the last three decades Victoria has experimented with new technologies and new platforms to build new audiences. In 2019, she was awarded an [EPSRC Immersive Documentary Encounters Commission](#), to create a VR project which told the story of her breast cancer (as patient and filmmaker) [‘The Waiting Room VR’](#) piece is part of a wider project which also includes a 30 min smartphone short funded by Guardian Films. ‘The Waiting Room VR’ premiered at the 76th Venice International Film Festival, was selected for Tribeca’s, ‘We are One Film Festival’ and won The IDFA DocLab Award for Digital Storytelling . It was also featured on BBC Click.

In 2021 Victoria wrote and directed, [‘Testing Times’](#) an immersive audio experience which features over 50 hours of phone calls and voicemails, with friends, family and doctors, capturing the challenges of multiple lockdowns. ‘Testing Times’ premiered at IDFA in 2021. In Spring 2022 it was showcased at The True/False Arts Festival in Ohio and in 2023, it was part of a [BFI Expanded](#) showcase celebrating recent innovations in XR.

Victoria is a [Professor of Digital Arts](#) at Royal Holloway, University of London and is also a member of BAFTA. She writes regularly for The Guardian and [The Conversation](#) about gender parity in the creative industries and developments in smartphone production and immersive storytelling

## **Director’s Filmography**

### **2019 – 2024**

#### **‘Motherboard’ –Director, Producer and Co Editor**

‘Motherboard’ is a smartphone feature which charts the trials, traumas and occasional triumphs of lone parenting. Director, Victoria Mapplebeck, has spent the last two decades filming the joy, pain and comedy of raising her son Jim alone. ‘Motherboard’ follows Victoria and Jim’s journey as they navigate their way through two generations of absent dads, Victoria’s breast cancer and Jim’s teenage struggles with depression and binge drinking.

#### **2021 - Testing Times – Writer, Director and Producer**

In 2021 Victoria co directed 'Testing Times', with her then 17 year old son Jim. Testing Times is an interactive audio experience which captures the highs and lows of family life during multiple lockdowns. 'Testing Times' received an IDFA DocLab award and premiered at IDFA in 2021. In Spring 2022 it was also showcased at *The True/False Arts Festival* in Ohio. In 2023 it was part of a BFI Expanded showcase celebrating recent innovations in XR.

### **2019 - [The Waiting Room Film and VR project](#) – Writer, Director and Producer**

'The Waiting Room' is a Film and VR experience exploring Victoria Mapplebeck's breast cancer journey from diagnosis to recovery. This VR piece takes viewers on a surreal journey through Victoria's cancer treatment and challenges the rhetoric of illness and the cultural myths surrounding chronic illness. The Guardian film was nominated for a Critics Choice Award and 'The Waiting Room VR' project was selected for [Forbe's Top 50 XR experiences](#) and won The IDFA DocLab Award for Digital Storytelling in 2019

### **2018 – [Missed Call](#) – Writer, Director and Producer**

Shot on an iPhone X, Missed Call explores Victoria Mapplebeck's relationship with her teenage son, as they discuss how they'll reconnect with his father, who's been absent for a decade. Missed Call begins with the last message he sent in 2006 and ends with the first call to him over a decade later. Missed Call was shot and directed by Victoria Mapplebeck and executive produced by Amanda Murphy and Debbie Manners

Missed Call was the first commissioned short film to be shot on the iPhone X and won a [BAFTA](#) Best Short Form Film award and Best Documentary Short at [The 2019 Broadcast Digital Awards](#).

### **2016 – [160 Characters](#) – Writer, Director and Producer**

'160 Characters' brings to life the secrets buried in a vintage Nokia. It premiered at The London Film Festival and won the Best Documentary Award at the 2017 Short of the Week Film Awards. When the film launched online it received a Vimeo Staff pick

Link below to personal website;

<http://victoriamapplebeck.com>

### [First Person Films](#)

**First Person Films are a BAFTA award winning production company co founded by Victoria Mapplebeck, Debbie Manners and Michelle Feuerlicht.**

### [Company Credits](#)

**2024 - ['Motherboard'](#) – 87 mins**

'Motherboard' is a smartphone feature which charts the trials, traumas and occasional triumphs of lone parenting. Director, Victoria Mapplebeck, has spent the last two decades filming the joy, pain and comedy of raising her son Jim alone.

'Motherboard' follows Victoria and Jim's journey as they navigate their way through two generations of absent dads, Victoria's breast cancer and Jim's teenage struggles with depression and binge drinking. *Motherboard* is shot, directed and edited by Victoria Mapplebeck and executive produced by Debbie Manners. Motherboard had its world premiere at CPH:Dox and its UK Premiere at The London Film Festival in 2024

#### **2019 - [The Waiting Room](#) – 28 mins – Guardian films**

Shot exclusively on the iPhone X, *The Waiting Room* is an unflinching portrait of the blood, sweat and tears of cancer treatment. *The Waiting Room* challenges the cultural myths that surround this disease, putting under the microscope the language of illness. *The Waiting Room* documents illness from a patient's POV, exploring what we can and what we can't control when our bodies fail us. The *The Waiting Room* 30 minute smartphone short was broadcast on The Guardian website as part of their documentaries strand. *The Waiting Room* was shot and directed by Victoria Mapplebeck and executive produced by Debbie Manners.

#### **2018 – [Missed Call](#) – 19 mins**

Shot on an iPhone X, *Missed Call* explores Victoria Mapplebeck's relationship with her teenage son, as they discuss how they'll reconnect with his father, who's been absent for a decade. *Missed Call* begins with the last message he sent in 2006 and ends with the first call to him over a decade later. The film explores the many ways in which our lives are lived and archived via the phones we hold so close. *Missed Call* was shot and directed by Victoria Mapplebeck and executive produced by Amanda Murphy and Debbie Manners

*Missed Call* was the first commissioned short film to be shot on the iPhone X and won a [BAFTA](#) Best Short Form Film award and Best Documentary Short at [The 2019 Broadcast Digital Awards](#).

#### **2016 – [160 Characters](#) – 11 mins**

'160 Characters' brings to life the secrets buried in a vintage Nokia. It premiered at The London Film Festival and won the Best Documentary Award at the 2017 Short of the Week Film Awards. When the film launched online it received a Vimeo Staff pick

#### **Company website**

<https://firstpersonfilms.co.uk>

## **Motherboard Director's statement**

'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.

### **Motherboard socials :**

Instagram: [@motherboardfilm](#)

Facebook: [@victoria.mapplebeck](#)

Motherboard Website: <https://motherboardfilm.com>

Director website : <https://victoriapplebeck.com>

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