

Young Brit Dean Brings Cinema to its Senses

A profoundly deaf teenager from London has recently been voted winner of the *Enterprising Young Brits: People's Choice Award*, at a ceremony honouring the outstanding contributions of young people.

With support from his family, Dean Rhodes-Brandon has changed attitudes within the UK film industry, persuading them to make the cinema accessible for people with sensory impairments. There are now about 500 subtitled shows every week and thousands more with an audio-description feature in over 300 cinemas nationwide. Dean's dedication and persistence has helped five million people, with hearing or visual impairments, get the most from their visit to the cinema. Since its creation eight years ago, his non-profit website *Your Local Cinema*, which promotes and provides listings of all the accessible shows available, has become a phenomenal success.

Back in 2000, when his campaign first began, Dean instigated an online petition and researched a solution to realise his dream. He launched his website and began investigating a new digital subtitle system. Such an approach would allow

a deaf person the pleasure of watching the latest blockbuster and cost around £5,500 to implement – far less than a popular film's average weekend takings.

Impressed with his work, the UK Film Council recruited *Your Local Cinema* to become a marketing arm for accessible cinema access, responsible for getting more people through the doors of their subtitled shows.



Ever tried to lip-read Spiderman?

300 subtitled cinemas
Latest movies
2,000 subtitled shows
every month nationwide
www.yourlocalcinema.com

www.yourlocalcinema.com



With so much already achieved, what is next for *Your Local Cinema*? “Our biggest challenge and goal is to invent subtitle spectacles,” says Dean. “They would be like 3-D specs but rather than provide a 3-D effect, they would provide subtitles, which only the wearer could see. This would then enable a person with hearing problems to attend a much bigger choice of subtitled shows.”

Contact: www.yourlocalcinema.com

Photo: © Dean Rhodes-Brandon