

Film option signed for James Leasor's book on the R101 disaster

Submitted by: James Leasor Publishing

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London, 3 October 2018. An option has been signed to make a film out of one of Britain's greatest air disasters, 88 years ago this week, that killed a cabinet minister and finished off the airship as a viable means of transport. The film rights for the James Leasor book, *The Millionth Chance: The Story of the R101*, have been purchased by Talking Trees Film, an innovative visual company with a creative team based in London and New York City - drama, reality, documentary... entertainment for both television and the big screen.

The R101 airship was the largest aircraft ever built and was thought to be the model for the future, an amazing design that was 'as safe as houses...' except for the fact that this huge vessel crashed leaving forty-seven dead, including a cabinet minister – and only six survivors, on its first commercial flight. It is a story of undue political pressure, mismanagement and compromise. It is also a story of great bravery and mystery.

When *The Millionth Chance* was first published in 1957 it shocked the world. It was the first account of the incident that had revealed the full facts that led up to the disaster, after a whitewashed official enquiry. Written with the benefit of first-hand accounts of many of the people who had been involved, it was a bestseller on both sides of the Atlantic.

Stuart Leasor, publisher of James Leasor's works, said, "We're delighted that Talking Trees Film want to make a film of this story. It is one with a terrible place in the history of the aviation industry. It has all the makings of a fascinating film and Talking Trees are just the people to make it. This film option agreement is the second one we have signed for one of James Leasor's books in as many months. We have several more under discussion."

Tori Rudling and Loe Fahie, co-founders of Talking Trees Film, added, "We are thrilled to bring this epic moment in history back to life on screen, so that it's not forgotten."

More information:

www.jamesleasor.com

Stuart Leasor: +44 7703 537721

sl@jamesleasor.com

www.talkingtrees.film

Tori Rudling: +44 7930254004

Loe Fahie: +44 7930254004

info@talkingtrees.film

Below is a link to a short film, title "Little Lantern", set on the evening of Saturday 4th October 1930 at Cardington Airship Works, England. The ill-fated departure of the largest airship in the world – The R101 to India. Written, photographed, edited and directed by Steve Hilliker, a key member of Talking Tree Films <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N9m2VZS6LHw>

About James Leasor

James Leasor was one of the best selling and most prolific British authors of the second half of the 20th Century. He wrote over 50 books ranging from thrillers and historical novels to histories and biographies. A number were made into films including *The One That Got Away*, starring Hardy Kruger, *The Sea Wolves*, starring Roger Moore, David Niven and Gregory Peck and *Where the Spies Are*, starring David Niven and Francoise Dorleac. <https://www.jamesleasor.com/>

