

'I never dreamt I'd be starring with Luke Perry after just one audition'



ALEX LENTATI

Film fan: Nicholas Galitzine is in *The Beat Beneath My Feet* with Luke Perry, inset

Louise Jury
Chief Arts Correspondent

WHEN he went to his first film audition, young Londoner Nicholas Galitzine had no idea he'd walk away with a part opposite US star Luke Perry.

But tomorrow, the 20-year-old from Hammersmith will take to the red carpet alongside acting greats at the Berlin International Film Festival.

Galitzine stars in *The Beat Beneath My Feet*, about an aspiring musician who discovers that a rock star – played by Perry – is living incognito next door.

"I've been a film fanatic all my life," he said. "But I wouldn't have imagined I would get this far. I feel really honoured to get to the Berlin Film Festival."

Galitzine, whose father is an entrepreneur, got into acting at Dulwich College and joined a youth theatre company at the Pleasance in Islington.

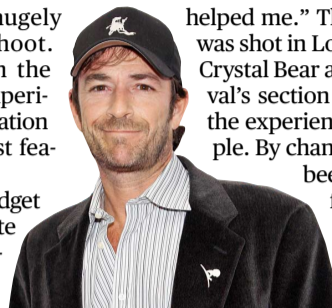
After the group took a production of *Spring Awakening* to the Edinburgh Festival two years ago, he was snapped up by agents Curtis Brown.

He auditioned for the role of Tom, a teenage loner who discovers his rock god neighbour has faked his death over tax fraud and blackmails him into becoming his guitar teacher.

Galitzine was astonished to win the part but said Perry, 48 – star of Beverly

Hills, 90210 – had been hugely encouraging during the shoot. "Luke's great. He's been in the industry for so long and experience is quite priceless in a situation where you're doing your first feature film," he said.

"When you're on a small budget you have to make every minute count. It's an extremely daunting thing to do and he really



helped me." The drama, which was shot in London, is up for a Crystal Bear award in the festival's section for works about the experience of young people. By chance, Galitzine had

been playing guitar for a year before the part.

But, he said: "You might be

an extremely confident performer and have amazing stage presence but to perform as a teenager who is really shy and for most of the film is petrified of performing is very different."

He has already shot his next feature, *High Strung*, in which he again plays a musician – this time with a violin.

■ *The Beat Beneath My Feet* will be in Picturehouse cinemas in May.
@LouiseJury

Severe but slippery Walter glides through a marriage

FIRST NIGHT

BOA

Trafalgar Studios, SW1

★★★★☆

HENRY HITCHINGS

A LARGE snake features prominently in the publicity photos for Clara Brennan's new play, so it's a little disappointing that no snake makes an appearance onstage.

Instead, Boa is the nickname of Harriet Walter's wiry dancer (otherwise known as Belinda). The name has several explanations – her resemblance to the nocturnal, irascible snake is one of them and so is her occasional offer of an embrace as light as a feather boa.

So far, so unexciting, but Brennan's tender two-hander is a neat vehicle for Walter and her real-life husband Guy Paul.

He plays Louis, a war correspondent who wins a Pulitzer Prize aged just 26. Boa and Louis are married, and we see their relationship at various points over its turbulent, yet affectionate 30-year history.

Boa is a heavy drinker, passionate and volatile, and Walter convinc-

ingly suggests her mix of hypnotic elegance and erratic intensity. She manages to seem both severe and slippery, contorting her body into improbable shapes as Boa reflects on her anxieties – whether about dancing, injury, the possibility of motherhood, or her belated and unsuccessful attempt to take up pottery.

Meanwhile, Louis appears more solid. That's ironic, as eventually becomes clear. But Paul, angular and pensive, captures his ability to be reassuring, reasonable and patient. At the same time, he evokes the pain to which Louis's job has exposed him – and the need for privacy that has resulted.

Hannah Price's intimate, sparsely staged production focuses on the couple's thoughtful performances and chemistry. Brennan's writing

has a natural authority and emotional intelligence.

But as the action hops between past and present, we're too often told about the characters' special connection rather than being shown its vital moments of agony and ecstasy.

■ Until March 7 (0844 871 7632, atgtickets.com/shows/boa/trafalgar-studios)

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Affectionate: Harriet Walter and Guy Paul

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