

Crowe gets heavy after Bafta speech cut short

- Tuesday 26 February 2002 11.43 GMT
- The Guardian – guardian.co.uk

Film star Russell Crowe pinned a TV executive against a wall after his Bafta award acceptance speech was cut short on Sunday night's broadcast.

The actor was furious when his speech following his award for best actor was edited by the BBC, with his reading of the poem Sanctity by Patrick Kavanagh removed from the BBC1 broadcast an hour later.

Crowe, who had been honoured for his role in Beautiful Mind, allegedly tracked down the show's director, Malcolm Gerrie, at the post-awards dinner and launched his attack.

The Sun reported that the Australian celebrity slammed Mr Gerrie against the wall in a storage room in London's Grosvenor Hotel and let rip with a foul-mouthed tirade, calling him a "c****" and a "motherf*****".

Mr Gerrie was apparently warned by rock legend Sting, a friend of Crowe's, that the actor was looking for revenge, according to today's Sun.

Crowe's minders then escorted the bemused director into a sideroom, where the star was waiting for him.

The doors were shut and the actor delivered his extraordinary rant while his security men stood guard.

"I don't give a f*** who you are. Who on earth had the f***ing audacity to take out the Best Actor's poem? You f***ing piece of shit. I'll make sure you never work in Hollywood," he said.

Crowe was alleged to have stood inches away from Mr Gerrie and jabbed his finger's repeatedly in the director's chest, before kicking three chairs across the room and storming out.

The BBC had warned award winners not to let their speeches over-run, but Crowe insisted on reading out an Irish poem and editors decided to drop it from the programme.

The Bafta committee later apologised to Mr Gerrie.