



THE JOB: Millie Baxter from Waveney Rush which has made a hand-woven rush mat for a new movie called *I, Frankenstein*, starring Bill Nighy and Aaron Eckhart, left.

Main pictures: JAMES BASS

Rush job for Hollywood? That's what we do here!

By **BEN WOODS**

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IN 21st century cinema, filmmakers are treated to thrilling big screen action thanks to 3D and digital technology and state-of-the-art computer graphics.

But an Oulton Broad company has proved that there is still a place in the modern world of Hollywood for age-old skills and craftsmanship.

In its latest commission from a major film studio, Waveney Rush has been commissioned to hand-weave a traditional rush mat – for the gothic-thriller *I Frankenstein*, starring Bill Nighy.

Its weavers were commissioned by the American production company Lakeshore Entertainment to create the mat for the Queen of the Gargoyles'



I, FRANKENSTEIN

Chamber to help give the film's set an historic feel.

The unusual order came after the company was chosen to weave baskets for the 2010 film *Robin Hood*, starring Russell Crowe, and provide matting for the TV film re-make of the epic *Jason and the Argonauts* in 2000.

Millie Baxter, 55, from Beccles, who works as a weaver at the company, said: "We have done films before so the companies have got to know about us. "They went onto our website and just

asked us if we could do them a carpet, and we managed to do that which they were really pleased about.

"It proves these companies do go around various places making sure they get the right pieces for their films, and we are the right product for them because our work lends itself to modern and old.

"We did lots of baskets for *Robin Hood* and the producers used our matting around the edge of their boats."

I Frankenstein is a modern-day epic based on a graphic novel and original screenplay by Kevin Greivoux which imagines Mary Shelley's eponymous creature has survived into the 21st century.

The film, currently being shot in Australia, has been written and directed by Stuart Beattie and will star Aaron Eckhart in the lead role of Adam, and Miranda Otto, who previously appeared in the *Lord of the Rings*.

Mrs Baxter said: "The work is very hard on the hands because you are braiding for hours each day. We are looking for two new weavers to train. It takes a few weeks to get used to it. We can usually tell if someone is fine – some people take to it really quickly."

Waveney Rush was established in Suffolk in 1947, but it was not until 2000 that the business was sold and moved to its current premises at The Old Maltings in Caldecott Road, Oulton Broad.

The rush-weaving technique can be traced back to the Anglo-Saxon period and the same skills are still used to produce the products today.

Visitors can take a tour of Waveney Rush by appointment. For more

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