

DANISH FILMS BERLIN ISSUE 2015

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/|FILM|/



ANTBOY

Ask Hasselbalch is upping the ambition in the sequel to his hit children's film about Denmark's first big-screen superhero who developed powers of his own when he was bitten by a mutant ant.

FASSBINDER

German film's great auteur talks about art and life in Christian Braad Thomsen's film based on interviews from the 1970s.

MINI AND THE MOZZIES

Jannik Hastrup and Flemming Quist Møller's half-inch heroes are on the loose.

MISFITS

Coming out in the Bible Belt.

THE LOOK OF SILENCE

The role of the documentary filmmaker.

FLOTEL EUROPA

Memories from a refugee ship.



DANISH FILMS
BERLIN ISSUE 2015
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The Danish Film Institute is the national agency that supports and encourages Danish film and cinema culture.



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REVERSE SECTION

QUALITY AND DIVERSITY

At the end of 2014, the Danish parliament passed a new four-year agreement setting out a framework for Danish cinema in the period from 2015 to 2018. More films – particularly through a new low-cost initiative – a viable economy, improved opportunities for talent, double the support for video games and enhanced efforts for children and young people – these are some of the key points of the new Film Agreement.

Tying it all together is the desire for a new subsidy system that promotes quality in all areas and in all types of film. The Danish Film Institute welcomes this enhanced focus on quality across all subsidy types and looks forward to implementing a series of initiatives to ensure the development and enrichment of Danish cinema in partnership with the film industry.

Focusing on quality also means an increased focus on cultural diversity. To the Danish Film Institute, increased cultural diversity amongst both applicants and projects is a means to higher quality. Though the support schemes were never set up as tools for neither formal ethnic integration nor to achieve gender equality in any mathematical sense, we have a strong belief that the search for excellence requires the broadest possible talent base. In addition to the call for formalised quality criteria and diversity, the new film agreement also stresses a particular interest in the social recruitment of the industry, the education system and the supporting bodies. A survey is expected to map these areas of interest early next year.

At the moment, though, at the beginning of a new four-year agreement period, we are pleased about the artistic diversity in the Danish films that have passed through the eye of the needle into the Berlinale. Films for children and adults, by young talents and veteran filmmakers. Documentaries and features with something to say. Stories from all over the world. That variety, that diversity, is something to cherish and cultivate. In the world of film – and everywhere.

Henrik Bo Nielsen, CEO, Danish Film Institute

NEWS & NOTES



Cold Case Hammar skjöld Photo: Jonas Berlin

WAS IT AN ACCIDENT?

UPCOMING. In 1961, Secretary General of the United Nations, Dag Hammar skjöld, died in a plane crash in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia). Mads Brügger looks for answers in *Cold Case Hammar skjöld*.

When his plane went down, Hammar skjöld was en route to cease-fire negotiations between non-combatant UN forces and troops from the breakaway state of Katanga. Was the crash an accident, or was he assassinated?

Hammar skjöld was popular and controversial, taking a stance in the fight against colonialism in times of instability and the Cold War. What started as perhaps unlikely conspiracy theories involving conglomerates fighting for minerals and metal resources has evolved into a growing consensus that Hammar skjöld and fifteen other people were shot down.

Swedish aid worker Göran Björkdahl has been interviewing witnesses previously too scared to come forward, spending the past 14 years investigating the case on his own, inciting the UN to reopen it on the suspicion of assassination.

Mads Brügger (*The Ambassador*) has been following Björkdahl in his search for the truth for his documentary *Cold Case Hammar skjöld*. Produced by Electric Parc, release 2016. MHF



Long Story Short Photo: Per Amesen

LONG STORY SHORT

NEW FILM. Love with all its ups and downs takes centre stage in May el-Toukhy's debut feature, the ensemble story *Long Story Short*.

In her first feature, May el-Toukhy takes a closer look at our concepts of true love and how many of us enter into a relationship full of hope, but end the journey in disappointment and break-ups.

Long Story Short follows Ellen and her friends, all in their late thirties-early forties, and their complicated love life and longing for romantic redemption.

The film is a summary of three years of highs and lows told through eight chapters, each of them set at a party: a New Year's Eve, a housewarming, a Midsummer's Eve, a wedding, a surprise party, a naming ceremony, an anniversary and finally a birthday.

Ellen is played by Mille Hoffmeyer Leffeldt, while Jens Albinus, Trine Dyrholm, Danica Curcic and Marijana Jankovic feature as her friends. Produced by Miso Film. Release in May. AH

NEWS & NOTES / DANISH FILMS

U.N. SCANDAL ON FILM

UPCOMING. *Per Fly's Backstabbing for Beginners* is a political thriller based on Danish-American whistleblower Michael Soussan's acclaimed memoir about the Oil for Food scandal, widely known as the biggest financial scandal in UN history.

When young and idealistic Michael lands his dream job at the United Nations, he quickly finds himself at the centre of the UN's Oil for Food programme. He learns the ropes from Pasha, a seasoned diplomat with a considerable ego. After a UN official is killed in Iraq, Pasha needs a fresh face to present a report on the success of Oil for Food to the UN Security Council. Michael is the perfect candidate.

When Michael discovers that the Oil for Food programme is deeply corrupt, he also realises that he has been instrumental in supporting the bribes paid to Saddam Hussein. The only way out is to expose it all, risking his own life, his mentor's career, and the life of the woman he loves.

Backstabbing for Beginners is to be directed by Per Fly (*Waltz for Monica*) as the first project from Creative Alliance, a Danish collaborative company formed by producers and directors with the aim to develop films for an international market. Produced by Creative Alliance. Expected release 2016. MHF



Director Per Fly Photo: Signe Vistrup

THE COMMUNE

UPCOMING. Following the success of his Oscar-nominated *The Hunt*, Thomas Vinterberg is back with *The Commune*, loosely based on his own experiences growing up in a commune. Set in the '70s, academic couple Erik (Ulrich Thomsen) and Anna (Trine Dyrholm) are living in a time when dreams of freedom and fellowship are peaking, inspiring them to establish a commune in which everyone can live, party and grow together. But an epoch nears its end, and things take a turn for the worse when Erik's new love moves in. Vinterberg is also releasing his first English-language film in years, *Far from the Madding Crowd* based on Thomas Hardy's novel, in April. *The Commune*, out in August, is produced by Zentropa. MHF



Director Thomas Vinterberg with actors Photo: Henrik Petit



Land of Mine Photo: Gordon Timpan

FATEFUL CROSS-ROADS

NEW FILM. Rúnar Rúnarsson is readying his second feature, *Sparrows*, shot in the remote Westfjords of Iceland.

Sparrows is a coming-of-age story about 16-year-old Ari who has been living with his mother in Reykjavik and is suddenly sent back to the beautiful, but desolate Westfjords to live with his father Gunnar. There, he has to navigate a difficult relationship with his dad, and he finds his childhood friends changed, especially Laura, whom he falls in love with.

The story strikes the singular note that has become a hallmark of Icelandic director Rúnar Rúnarsson, a graduate of the National Film School of Denmark: his urge to depict people at vulnerable cross-roads in life.

Other fateful junctures are found in his Oscar-nominated short *The Last Farm* (2004) and his two award-winning films, *2 Birds* (2008) and *Anna* (2009), both selected for Cannes Film Festival, as well as his critically acclaimed debut feature *Volcano* (2011), selected for Director's Fortnight at Cannes.

Sparrows is produced by Nimbus Film and the newly created Nimbus Film Iceland. Expected release in 2015. MHF

UNDER THE SAND

NEW FILM. Martin Zandvliet delves into a dark chapter of Danish postwar history in *Land of Mine*, his most ambitious film to date.

During WWII, German occupying forces scattered landmines all along the West Coast of Denmark. After the war, in May 1945, more than 2,000 German POWs were forced to remove over 1.5 million landmines. Many of them were just young boys. Almost half of them died or were seriously maimed.

Martin Zandvliet's *Land of Mine* looks into this dark chapter of

Danish postwar history. Bitterness and resentment towards the recent occupying forces were predominant emotions, not least for Carl Leopold Rasmussen, the Danish sergeant in charge of the enfeebled young Germans forced to perform the dangerous task of disarming the landmines with their bare hands.

Roland Møller takes his first lead as the Danish sergeant. Making his screen debut in Tobias Lindholm and Michael Noer's hard-hitting prison drama *R*, Møller went on to perform in Lindholm's *A Hijacking* and Noer's *Northwest*.

Martin Zandvliet, who is making his third feature after his critically acclaimed *A Funny Man* (2011) and *Applause* (2009), is also behind the script. *Land of Mine* is produced by Nordisk Film. Release is set for October. MHF



A War Photo: Per Arnesen

ROOTED IN REALITY

NEW FILM. Tobias Lindholm’s credits as scriptwriter include *Borgen* and Thomas Vinterberg’s *The Hunt*. Now it’s time for his third film as a director, *A War*.

Firmly rooted in reality, *A War* is about a Danish company commander and his men who are stationed in Afghanistan. During a routine mission, the soldiers are caught in heavy Taliban crossfire. To save his men, he makes a decision that ultimately sees him return to Denmark accused of a war crime – and returning to his wife Maria and their three children who have been struggling without him. A potentially realistic drama, the soldiers are played by actual soldiers that have been stationed in Afghanistan. Lindholm’s first feature as a director was *R* in 2010 (with Michael Noer), followed by *A Hijacking* in 2012. As was the case in these two, Pilou Asbæk will also star in *A War* together with Søren Malling. Lindholm has risen to prominence as scriptwriter as the man behind renowned titles such as the BAFTA-winning TV series *Borgen* and Thomas Vinterberg’s Oscar nominee *The Hunt*. *A War* is produced by Nordisk Film. The film is set for release in autumn. *MHF*



Summer of '92 Photo: Christian Geisnæs

VICTORY IN RED & WHITE

NEW FILM. In 1992, the Danish national football team had failed to qualify for the European Championship. The players were already on holiday when they were called up with a surprising message: Yugoslavia was disqualified because of the war, and the Danes were set to replace them. The rest is history: Denmark went

on to surprise the experts and upset the odds by winning the tournament. Director Kasper Barfoed has set out to capture the story of the underdogs who conquered the hearts of everyone with *Summer of '92*. Coach Richard Møller Barfoed is embodied by Ulrich Thomsen, and one of the key players – Brian Laudrup – by Cyron Melville. Silver Bear winner Mikkel Boe Følsgaard portrays hard-tested midfielder Kim Vilfort. Produced by Meta Film. Expected release in September. *MHF*

OBSESSION IN THE FASHION WORLD

NEW FILM. Danish fashion model and newcomer Maria Palm is starring in *The Model*, Mads Matthiesen’s second feature following his Sundance winner *Teddy Bear* from 2012.

Emma is an emerging fashion model struggling to enter the Parisian fashion scene. In a world of glamour and temptations, she is fighting for her place and cannot stop herself from developing a deadly obsession for fashion photographer Shane White. For the role of Emma, Matthiesen has enlisted first-time actress Maria Palm who knows the fashion world

inside out from her own work as a model. The role of Shane White is played by British actor Ed Skrein (*Game of Thrones*). Skrein is also soon to be seen as the lead star of the upcoming EuropaCorp action film *Transporter Legacy*. *The Model*, shot on location in Paris, Warsaw and Copenhagen, is Matthiesen’s second feature film following his big-screen debut *Teddy Bear*, about a bodybuilder seeking love in Thailand, for which he received a number of international awards, including a Best Director award at Sundance Film Festival in 2012. *The Model* is written by Mads Matthiesen, Martin Zandvliet and Anders Frithiof August and is produced by Zentropa. Release is to be announced. *MHF*



The Model Photo: Carole Bethuel

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

NEW FILM. Writer and director Bo Mikkelsen has already made a string of award-winning short films. His long-awaited debut feature *What We Become* is a horror film shot in Mikkelsen’s hometown of Sorgenfri, a peaceful suburb of Copenhagen. Also used as the film’s Danish title, Sorgenfri literally means “carefree.” The feature, Mikkelsen’s first, tells the story of a family of four in a small town where a mysterious virus outbreak changes everything. Their strong bond is challenged when it all comes down to survival. “The film revolves around what’s closest to you, family, neighbours and friends on a small street. What happens when everything we take for granted is taken away from us? What do we turn into when pushed to our limits?” Bo Mikkelsen asks.



What We Become Photo: Christian Geisnæs

The film marks Mikkelsen’s feature debut after a number of shorts including the acclaimed *Tabu*, produced by Nicolas Winding Refn and Lene Børglum. The cast features Mille Dinesen and Mikael Birkkjær, who both appeared in hit Danish TV series *Borgen*, as well as Troels Lyby, Marie Boda, an newcomer Benjamin Engell. Produced by Meta Film. Expected release October. *MHF*

APRIL 9TH

NEW FILM. Roni Ezra’s war drama is set during the early morning hours of April 9, 1940, as German troupes are crossing the border to Denmark. Pilou Asbæk stars as second lieutenant Sand leading his unit to be the first Danish soldiers to meet the enemy in battle. Against a vastly superior army, the Danish vanguard of bicycle and motorcycle units must stall the Germans until reinforcements can be mobilised. Also on the cast is Shooting Star Joachim Fjelstrup (see page 24) and Lars Mikkelsen. *April 9th* is written by Tobias Lindholm and produced by Nordisk Film. National release is set for March. *MHF*



April 9th Photo: Kenneth Nguyen



The Shamer's Daughter Photo: Jiri Hanzl

MEDIEVAL FANTASY

film, *The Shamer's Daughter*, an adaptation of a popular fantasy novel scripted by Anders Thomas Jensen and featuring an all-Scandinavian cast.

NEW FILM. Kenneth Kainz is bringing out his fourth feature

Dina is no ordinary girl. Having inherited the supernatural ability from her mother, she can look directly

into other people’s souls and make them ashamed of anything bad they might have done. When Dina’s mother refuses to use her gift to make the sole heir to the throne of Dunark wrongfully confess to the murder of his family, she is taken captive. It is now up to Dina to prove her innocence and find out the truth behind the brutal murders. *The Shamer’s Daughter*, helmed by Kenneth Kainz (*Pure Hearts*), is set in a medieval fantasy world of dragons and magic, starring Peter Plaugborg (*The Keeper of Lost Causes*), Jakob Oftebro (*Kon-Tiki*), Søren Malling (*The Killing*), Maria Bonnevie (*A Second Chance*) and Stina Ekblad (*Love Is All You Need*). Oscar-winning screenwriter Anders Thomas Jensen (*In a Better World*) is behind the adaption of the first book in a bestselling fantasy series by Lene Kaaberbøl. Produced by Nepenthe Film. Release in 2015. *MHF*



Men & Chicken Photo: Rolf Kanow

OF MEN AND CHICKEN

NEW FILM. After nearly a decade out of the director’s chair, Anders Thomas Jensen, a prolific writer for Susanne Bier, is ready with his fourth directing credit, the pitch-black comedy *Men & Chicken*. Gabriel and Elias might be brothers, but they’re not exactly the same: Gabriel is a worn-down professor while Elias’ only concerns are women and trivial knowledge. When their father dies, they receive disturbing news: he wasn’t their real father after all. Their quest for answers takes them to the island of Ork. With Mads Mikkelsen, Nikolaj Lie Kaas and David Dencik. Produced by M&M Productions. Release February. *MHF*

FILMS & PEOPLE

■ **Susanne Bier** will be directing a new AMC show based on John le Carré’s 1993 spy novel *The Night Manager*. The show is co-produced by BBC and stars Tom Hiddleston and Hugh Laurie. To air in 2016.

■ **Lars von Trier** is working on an English-language TV series entitled *The House That Jack Built* – more than 20 years after his groundbreaking mini series *The Kingdom*. *The House* will reportedly have a huge international cast. Shooting is set to commence in 2016. Produced by Zentropa.

■ Following a string of documentaries, **Max Kestner** is making his first feature film, the sci-fi thriller *Fang Rung*. The film is set in a near future when a “quida,” a human copy, is sent back from the year 2095 to obtain a plant that can turn salt water into fresh water and help save the world from a disastrous flooding. Produced by SF Film Production. Release in 2016.

■ **Christina Rosendahl**’s second feature film *The Idealist* is a political thriller based on true events. After her feature debut *Triple Dare* and several acclaimed documentaries and shorts, her new film delves into one of the most hushed-up chapters of Danish Cold War history involving a plane crash with toxic consequences. Produced by Toolbox Film. Premiere in April.

■ Making *Drive*, **Nicolas Winding Refn** fell madly in love with the electricity of Los Angeles and knew he simply had to go back. This time he is to direct a horror tale about young women in the fashion industry. *The Neon Demon* follows a group of women obsessed with beauty, willing to do whatever it takes to remain young and pretty. Principal photography is set to begin in the first quarter of 2015 in Los Angeles. Produced by Space Rocket Nation.

■ **Lone Scherfig** is making her US TV directing debut with *Astronaut Wives Club*, about the women who stood beside the biggest heroes in US space history. The 10-episode drama series is expected to air on ABC this spring. Scherfig is also behind the Hjalmar Söderberg adaptation *The Serious Game*, directed by Pernilla August. Release in 2016.

■ Mikkel Boe Følsgaard, winner of a Silver Bear for his big screen debut in *A Royal Affair*, takes the lead in **Frederikke Aspöck’s** *Rosita*, a story about a father and son who fall in love with the same woman. Scripted by Kim Fupz Aakeson (*In Order of Disappearance*). Produced by Nordisk Film. Release in spring.

ANTBOY HITS AGAIN

Antboy – Revenge of the Red Fury Photo: Andreas Schlieter

Generation Kplus / Berlinale 2015

Ask Hasselbalch is upping the ambition in the sequel to his hit children's film *Antboy* from 2013 while sticking to his credo of meeting his audience at eye level. In *Antboy – Revenge of the Red Fury*, our young superhero has grown into a teenager who falls in love for the first time.

By Sophie Engberg Sonne

"What characterises Spielberg is that he hasn't forgotten what it's like to be a kid. Nor do I think I have completely forgotten, either."



Antboy – Revenge of the Red Fury Photo: Andreas Schlieker

The cool, wintery colour scale of *Revenge of the Red Fury* is inspired in part by Alfonso Cuarón's *Harry Potter* films.

Danish cinema got its first superhero in 2013, when *Antboy*'s apple-cheeked, 12-year-old Pelle was bitten by a mutant ant, giving him ant power out of all proportion to size.

Same with the film. *Antboy*, a first-time feature made on a modest budget, was sold to 35 countries, got favourable reviews in *The Hollywood Reporter* and the *Los Angeles Times*, won the Danish film industry's prestigious Robert award for best Danish children and youth film, and sold an impressive 175,000 tickets at Danish cinemas.

Expectations are obviously high for the sequel, *Antboy – Revenge of the Red Fury*. The film follows Pelle, now 13, as he not only struggles to balance life as an ordinary school kid with his not so ordinary secret life as a superhero but also feels love for the first time, with all that it entails. But that's nothing compared to what happens next, when the girl Maria turns the full force of her wrath on him, as her image of Antboy the superhero is gravely shattered.

Loss of Innocence

Antboy director Ask Hasselbalch is well aware of the challenges he was facing.

“One of the charming things about the first film was that the children were so young. And because we didn't have the budget to do any wild effects, we

worked a lot on the humour and the timing. We charmed our way out of it,” the filmmaker says.

“But for all sorts of reasons we couldn't just repeat ourselves and do the same fun, charming film over again. We had to make a film that corresponded to where the children are, now that they have lost some of their innocence and are becoming teenagers. New things are in play. So we took the film in a darker direction style-wise,” Hasselbalch says. Spielberg films from the 1980s and movies like *Gremlins* were role models for the first film, which was shot in the fall, while *The Red Fury* is a winter film with a colder colour scale inspired in part by Alfonso Cuarón's *Harry Potter* films.

Still, there is no denying the influence of American '80s movies on *Revenge of the Red Fury*, which takes the world of children seriously in an unpretentious way.

“What characterises Spielberg is that he hasn't forgotten what it's like to be a kid. Nor do I think I have completely forgotten, either,” Hasselbalch says. “I always try to meet the children where they're at in their lives, talk to them like they're my friends. Cinematically, this is expressed in how the camera always stays at the kids' eye level. We never look down on them.” The same principle applies to the casting. “I pick the children I can speak to in a normal way. Then they don't feel talked down to, either.”



Antboy – Revenge of the Red Fury Photo: Christian Geesens

“We had to make a film that corresponded to where the children are, now that they have lost some of their innocence and are becoming teenagers.”

No Use for Irony

The director never rehearses scenes in advance with the children. Instead, he talks each scene through with them and lets them work based on their own intuition.

“We rehearsed a couple of scenes in the first film and those are the worst scenes in the film. It's good if things are spontaneous. Rehearsing makes it seem fake.” That's not saying he doesn't fill the role of adult authority figure. “I'm the one who sets the direction, of course,” he says. “But the most important thing is that they can tell I respect them.”

Hasselbalch clearly enjoyed returning to the Antboy universe, even if his once so little leads are now teenagers with raging hormones and emotions.

“That's what makes it so much fun. For a teenager, everything is very black and white. There's no in between.” That is also how Hasselbalch does *Antboy*. “We're trying to be very clean with these films. Even if I can see the humorous slant in a situation, I don't use irony. I want to go all in – the funny scenes should be funny and the scary scenes should be scary, too. No leavening the horror by having the villain slip on a banana peel.

“Again, it's about not talking down to children. I remember as a kid how the scary part of a film was really cool. It may have scared me, but at the same time I felt I was being taken seriously. It's like fairytales that way. We know that most fairytales have a happy ending and *Antboy*'s audience knows that the characters in the film will make it. They just have to go through a few things before they come out on the other side” ■

Antboy – Revenge of the Red Fury opened in Danish cinemas on 25 December. The film is produced by Eva Jakobsen for Nimbus Film and is enjoying its international premiere in *Generation Kplus* at the Berlinale. For more information, see reverse section.

ANTBOY – REVENGE OF THE RED FURY

Pelle gained his superpowers when he was bitten by a genetically engineered ant. As Antboy, he can lift many times his own weight, climb on walls and pee acid – if he's fed enough candy bars, that is.

In Ask Hasselbalch's sequel our young hero is more popular than ever following the defeat of his archenemy The Flea. His greatest desire is to be more than just friends with Ida. Meanwhile, Antboy faces an even greater foe than before. Christian, the new boy at school, will stop at nothing to steal Ida away from him. As if that wasn't enough, Antboy finds himself haunted. A new supervillain has taken the stage. The two *Antboy* films are based on a popular book series by Kenneth Bøgh Andersen, adapted for the screen by Anders Ølholm.



Director Ask Hasselbalch Photo: Anton Willemann

Ask Hasselbalch

Director, born 1979. Trained at the European Film College, Denmark, 2001-02. Has directed short fiction, commercials, music videos and TV satire. Graduated from the alternative film school Super16 in 2010.

Hasselbalch's feature debut *Antboy* (2013) world premiered at Toronto Film Festival. The sequel, *Antboy – Revenge of the Red Fury* (2014), enjoys its international premiere in *Generation Kplus* at the Berlin Film Festival 2015.

Eva Jakobsen

Producer at Nimbus Film. Films include her first feature as producer, *Antboy* (Ask Hasselbalch, 2013), and *Antboy – Revenge of the Red Fury* (Ask Hasselbalch, 2014).



ADVENTURES OF BEETLES AND BUGS

Mini and the Mozzies is a tie-dye bright story of bullying and friendship, brought to life in a simple cutout technique and peppered with jazzy tunes and anarchic humour. Co-directors Jannik Hastrup and Flemming Quist Møller have put their thumbprints all over Danish animation for close to a lifetime now.

By Ulrich Breuning

Say hello to Miranda the Girl Flea, Dagmar the Dancing Mosquito and Egon the Cycling Mosquito. Meet the gloomy Caterpillar, Basse the Dung Beetle, Dumrik the Assassin Bug and Snothas the Cockroach.

And above all, tip your hat to Mini the Beetle, the star of Jannik Hastrup and Flemming Quist Møller's *Mini and the Mozzies*. Their new film is that rare thing – art for a young audience with songs and music, humour and depth, wit and grit. Bullied out of the flea circus after an awkward fail, title character Mini the Beetle goes astray. But no road is so thorny in Hastrup and Quist Møller's generous universe that it fails to lead back to the flea circus and Mini's friends, to happy reunion and reconciliation.

"We want to entertain children with a story and a cast of characters that deal with subjects like bullying and friendship but in the shape of an adventure," the two directors say. Like its 2007 predecessor, *A Tale of Two Mozzies*, the new film's universe and characters are based on Flemming Quist Møller's timeless 1967 children's book about the two mosquitoes Egon and Dagmar. Once again, the two directors are working in a classic cutout technique.

While computers were used to animate the characters, the drawings are handmade and you don't sense the presence of digital technology. In other words, Hastrup and Quist Møller's tactile poetry is a far cry from the slick, turbocharged computer animations that the Americans, in particular, master to perfection.

For Children and Adults Alike

Mini the Beetle first charmed audiences as a side character in *A Tale of Two Mozzies* and eventually Hastrup and Quist Møller thought he deserved to be



the star of their second film set in the buggy world of Egon and his friends.

But the ambitious veterans are not content to just reach a new children's audience with their latest collaboration. Characteristically, the satirical subtext ensures that an adult audience, too, will be amply entertained by *Mini and the Mozzies*.

"What we really want to achieve is telling a story that even the youngest audiences can enjoy and identify with, while at the same time appealing to their parents. We don't care to make a film which we ourselves wouldn't want to go and watch at the cinema," Hastrup and Quist Møller say.

Vibrant Partnership

For close to a lifetime now, Quist Møller and Hastrup have put their thumbprints all over Danish animation.



They first met in an advertising studio in the early 1960s and made a few, quirky animated shorts together. Their creative partnership peaked with 1971's *Benny's Bathtub*, an animated feature about a boy who explores a magical world at the bottom of his bathtub. Revered for its highly imaginative style, the film is included in the official Danish film canon.

The partners then went their separate ways. Hastrup created his famous children's TV series about *Circleen* and her mice friends (1968-70) and series of films with a political content that would be a defining characteristic of the director. Hastrup's heart is on the left and beats for the world's small and vulnerable beings. He next brought out a number of now classic theatrical animated films, including *Samson & Sally* (1984), *War of the Birds* (1990), *The Monkeys and the Secret Weapon* (1995), and three features, including *Little Big Mouse* (2004), starring his hugely famous *Circleen* with spiky black hair and a polka-dot dress who sleeps in a matchbox on the artist's desk.

Quist Møller, continuing along a parallel but more rounded and gently satirical path, made three popular animated films and a TV series about

the fantasy creature *Hugo*. *Jungle Jack* (1993), *The Movie Star* (1996) and *Jungo Goes Bananas* (2007) are contemporary classics in Denmark, where children and their adults love the rare, lovable, self-involved, sly and temperamental, food-loving and drop-dead charming *Hugo*, who, it is said, embodies a big chunk of the Danish national character.

When the two filmmakers finally reunited professionally and co-directed their first feature in 36 years, *A Tale of Two Mozzies*, their chemistry was clearly intact. The success of the film naturally led to a second opus, *Mini and the Mozzies*, featuring *Miranda*, *Egon*, *Mini* and all the other half-inch heroes ■

Mini and the Mozzies is selected for Berlinale's children's programme Generation Kplus. The film is produced by Marie Bro for Dansk Tegnefilm. For more information, see reverse section.



Jannik Hastrup

Director, born 1941. Creator of numerous Danish animated classics, including *Benny's Bathtub* (with Flemming Quist Møller, 1971), *Circleen* (shorts 1967-71 and features 1998-2004), *Samson & Sally* (1984), *The Boy Who Wanted To Be a Bear*, and (with Quist Møller) the Egon the Cycling Mosquito films: *A Tale of Two Mozzies* (2007) and *Mini and the Mozzies* (2014), both selected for the Berlinale's Generation Kplus.

Flemming Quist Møller

Director, musician and writer and illustrator of children's books, born 1942. Director, with Jannik Hastrup, of the animated classic *Benny's Bathtub* (1971). Co-director and writer of the three animated features starring the popular jungle beast *Hugo* (1993, 1996 and 2007). Director, with Hastrup, of two films based on his own popular 1967 children's book: *A Tale of Two Mozzies* (2007) and *Mini and the Mozzies* (2014), both selected for the Berlinale's Generation Kplus.

Marie Bro

Producer at Dansk Tegnefilm. Has worked in animation as producer and production manager since 1985. Films include Jannik Hastrup and Flemming Quist Møller's *Mini and the Mozzies* and *A Tale of Two Mozzies* (2014, 2007) and most of Hastrup's features including *Little Big Mouse* (2004), *The Boy Who Wanted to Be a Bear* (2002), *Hans Christian Andersen and the Long Shadow* (1998).

Jannik Hastrup and Flemming Quist Møller's creative partnership reached a high in 1971 with *Benny's Bathtub*.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

The Critic

Jannik Hastrup and Fleming Quist Møller are swordfish in the fish tank of animation (...) Their handmade drawings make a last stand against computer animation. The pace is mellow, the tone by turns wacky and profane. The subtext excels in satirical messages, which will likely go over the heads of the target audience but register with their grownup companions. *Mini and the Mozzies* is sweet and sharp, just like the old days, when the zeitgeist sided with the losers.

Bo Green Jensen, the Danish weekly Weekendavisen

The Specialist

Jannik Hastrup and Flemming Quist Møller in 1971 created *Benny's Bathtub*, one of the most successful Danish animated films ever. Forty-four years have passed since then and the film is still alive and kicking. Kids today watch it with glee. The film looks as fresh and energetic as it did when it came out. That's quite a feat. Funny, fast-paced, well told, lushly animated and bubbling with abundance. The same can be said about the two gentlemen. They are still delivering high quality and high spirits.

Gunnar Wille, Head of Animation and Game Design at the National Film School of Denmark

The Young Filmmaker

I grew up with their films and always thought that, while they were fun and immediate, they were also mysterious and alluring. They have a jazzy unpredictability with clashes between children's and adult worlds. Their anarchic characters always have a great time. There is something hand-made and playful about the films. They simply look like they were fun to make. They inspired me to believe in the legitimacy of a loopy imagination, that by all means you should make films that look like themselves and not like other films that are already out there.

Esben Toft Jacobsen, Beyond Beyond, The Great Bear

The Producer

Flemming Quist Møller has an amazing ability to create and play with his characters. He knows how to write a good story and his dialogue is bursting with humour and energy. In the same spirit and with the same audacity, Jannik Hastrup has the ability to bring life to the events, to balance the touching and the magical, drama and fantasy, and always on the eye level of, and in solidarity with, the little ones.

Marie Bro, Dansk Tegnefilm

Fassbinder – To Love without Demands is a portrait of one of the world’s most prominent filmmakers, and probably the most productive. Based on interviews Danish director Christian Braad Thomsen recorded in the 1970s, the film shows one of German film’s greatest auteurs Rainer Werner Fassbinder at his most open.

Panorama Dokumente / Berlinale 2015

LOVE IS COLDER THAN DEATH

Christian Braad Thomsen was a close friend of Rainer Werner Fassbinder (1945-82) throughout his career. The two met when Fassbinder screened his first film *Love Is Colder Than Death* at the Berlinale in 1969, and they were together for the last time only three weeks before Fassbinder died. In less than fifteen years Fassbinder completed 40 feature-length films and two television series, not to mention heaps of stage plays and acting roles.

Fassbinder – To Love without Demands is built around the footage that Braad Thomsen made with Fassbinder in the 1970s – lengthy interviews that have never previously been shown.

“It took me 32 years to realize how I could use the footage,” says Braad Thomsen. “In front of my camera Fassbinder is more open and vulnerable than ever. His production madness seems to be a puzzle even to himself, but he believes it has to do with his postwar childhood. Under conditions which would have turned most people into social outcasts, Fassbinder developed the confidence and integrity that later would enable him to make up to five films a year.”

Fassbinder – To Love without Demands also contains new recollections by actress Irm Hermann. She and Fassbinder became friends while he was still unknown to the public yet dreamt of making Hollywood films in Munich. Actor and producer Harry Bär equally appears in new recordings. He was the last person to talk to Fassbinder only a few hours before he died. Finally the film brings a new interview with Andrea Schober, the child star of Fassbinder’s early films. All sequences are bound together by Braad Thomsen’s personal memories from his friendship with Fassbinder.

In the film, Fassbinder talks with candour about his love for the Hollywood of his childhood, the 1970’s revolt, psychoanalysis, the emancipation of women, terrorism in West Germany, love, marriage, children – and about choosing madness as perhaps the only suitable alternative to the insanity of the ruling system.

“The title of his first film, *Love Is Colder Than Death*, could easily be a headline for his production as a whole, and yet he created a love stronger than death in those who came close to him,” says Braad Thomsen.

On the following pages the Danish director shares his thoughts and recollections from past times with Fassbinder, accompanied by images from his film.



Photo: Christian Braad Thomsen

1.



Photo: Dino Raymond Hansen

2.

Quotations and image selection by Christian Braad Thomsen

1. Fassbinder with his mother Lilo Pempeit who acted in several of his films.

2. Fassbinder, 1978.

3. Fassbinder and Christian Braad Thomsen in Fassbinder’s hotel room at Cannes Film Festival, 1978.

Fassbinder was just 24 when his first film, *Love Is Colder Than Death*, was mercilessly booed at the Berlin Film Festival. I, for my part, experienced the film as if it were the first film in the world. In a time when the language of cinema had degenerated into commercial clichés, it had now been invented anew. The static camera lingered so long on the actors that we got to linger in the frame, too, and when a cut was finally made, it felt like a cut. The actors didn’t say much, but when they did, you listened. Having filmed silence, Fassbinder now filmed the German language. That was a particular revelation for a Dane like me who was born in 1940 when German troops occupied Denmark. I grew up with a fundamental hatred of all things German, including the language itself, which I had always perceived as a soldier’s language, a language of command. Thanks to *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant* and *Effi Briest*, I now realised how beautiful and poetic the German language can be.



Photo: Dino Raymond

3.



4. Fassbinder and Irm Hermann in *Fear Eats the Soul*.

5. Fassbinder and Hanna Schygulla in *Love Is Colder Than Death*.

6. Fassbinder and Christian Braad Thomsen at Cannes Film Festival, 1974.



There is footage of Fassbinder just eight hours before he died, in which he articulates his motto: you have to have yourself twice to become a whole person. Indeed, you can't say one thing about him without having to say the opposite as well. At the last bar of the night he often looked like a bully you would give a wide berth on the sidewalk. Then, the next morning, when you watched him work on the set with actors, camera and lights, the frog turned into the handsomest prince. Having yourself twice may refer to Freud's theory that a person is torn between the superego, the seat of morality, and the id, where repressed desires are stowed away. But the words may also refer to Fassbinder's favourite prop, the mirror, in which his characters constantly have themselves over again. Take Emmi in *Fear Eats the Soul*, who after her first night with her Arab lover looks in the mirror and remarks that she's just an old cleaning lady who is assumed to have put such desires behind her.

Once during my friendship with Fassbinder I feared it was over. I told him that I was expecting a child with my girlfriend, and he got furious and said that then I had really understood nothing of his films, which are about how we have organised ourselves so horribly with each other that bringing children into the world is utterly indefensible. And then he disappeared into the night. I was distraught, but his actress Irm Hermann later told me that he was just jealous and that he had often begged her to give him a child. But that's where she drew the line. Fassbinder was, in a sense, himself the child he never had and no matter how insufferable he could be, perhaps these childlike qualities were precisely why we all regarded him with such love. When he made a film, he was like a child creating his own private fantasy world – or his own nightmares. His films in a certain sense are filmed from the point of view of the wondering child. Just look how grownups live! Look how they abuse each other and themselves.



Christian Braad Thomsen

Director, writer, producer and film distributor, born 1940. Has established himself as an incisive culture critic and writer on film as well as a passionate defender of arthouse cinema. His artistic orientation is reflected in his books on Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Alfred Hitchcock and the French New Wave directors. Braad Thomsen has also played an important role in Denmark as an importer and distributor of arthouse films.

Making his film debut in 1971, Braad Thomsen has signed feature films as well as documentaries. Awardwinning feature films include *Stab in the Heart* (1981, Special Jury Prize in San Remo), *Ladies on the Rocks* (1983, Best Direction award at Atlantic Film Festival), and *The Blue Monk* (1998, Carl Th. Dreyer Prize in Copenhagen). His latest films include the musical portraits *The Voice of Iran – Mohammad Reza Shajarian* (2006), *Marilyn Mazur – Queen of Percussion* (2006) and *Blues for Montmartre* (2011). *Fassbinder – To Love without Demands* (2015) world premieres in Panorama at the Berlinale. For more information about the film, see reverse section.

RAINER WERNER FASSBINDER

German film director and screenwriter, 1945-82. One the most important figures in the New German Cinema. In a professional career that lasted less than fifteen years, he completed forty feature-length films, two television series, three short films, four video productions, twenty-four stage plays, four radio plays, and thirty-six acting roles in his own and others' films.

Fassbinder is said to be, above all, the visual interpreter of German history in the 20th century, from the collapse of the Weimar Republic to the terrorism of the 1970's. Famous works include his feature debut *Love Is Colder Than Death* (1969), *The Merchant of Four Seasons* (1971), *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant* (1972), *Fear Eats the Soul* (1974), *The Marriage of Maria Braun* (1978), *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (TV, 1980), *Lola* (1981), *Veronika Voss* (1982).

COMING OUT IN THE BIBLE BELT

Panorama Dokumente / Berlinale 2015



Jannik Splidsboel’s documentary *Misfits* follows three LGBT teenagers struggling to be accepted in an extremely conservative community.

By Freja Dam

“Abortion is murder, homosexuality is perversion!” yells a man on the street of Tulsa, Oklahoma. And while he looks like the typical crazy preacher whom no one takes seriously, his views resonate with the popular opinion of the town. The percentage of Oklahomans affiliated with Evangelical Protestantism, which widely condemns homosexuality and whose ministers preach of America’s moral breakdown, is higher than any other state. With 2,000 churches, Tulsa goes under the nickname “the buckle of the Bible belt.”

Coming out as gay in this religious community takes a lot of courage. The protagonists of *Misfits*, 17-year-old Larissa, 19-year-old Benny and 16-year old “D,” can testify to that.

The three teenagers have struggled with both fear of being excluded and the evidence that those fears were well-founded, in the form of physical and mental abuse from family, friends and strangers. When Benny came out to his older brother, he punched him in the face. Larissa moved away from home, because her mother didn’t accept that she had a girlfriend, and “D” stacks a knife in his boot before he goes out.

“*Misfits* is a personal film. I’ve gone through what the characters are going through. You have a lot of thoughts and doubts, before you choose to be open,” says Jannik Splidsboel.

“Unfortunately, homophobia is a growing factor. In Russia, just speaking about ‘different’ sexualities can get you in prison, and in too many countries

being a homosexual is punished by death. In that respect, being gay in Tulsa, Oklahoma, seems pretty harmless. But the state of Oklahoma has one of the highest suicide rates among teenagers in the US, and parents can still disown their son or daughter because of a different sexuality,” Splidsboel says.

A Haven of Love and Support

The teenagers have one safe place. Squeezed in between two churches lies a tiny youth centre called Open Arms, which welcomes LGBT kids to come and discuss their feelings about sexuality, family, religion – and all other concerns that every teenager deals with.

“The only abnormal thing about our main characters is in fact that they are completely normal. They are, like most teenagers, full of identity problems, big dreams and small conflicts that seem irresolvable,” says Splidsboel. “But on top of that, the kids in the film have one extra obstacle: They must defend their sexuality in an age where the hormones are blooming, and they really just want to jump into life, no matter what others think about their choice of a boy- or girlfriend.”

“Misfits is a personal film. I’ve gone through what the characters are going through. You have a lot of thoughts and doubts, before you choose to be open.”

For Benny, the guilt over being gay used to be overwhelming. “I felt like I was a big pile of sin that did something horrible,” he says about the time he started hooking up with guys. Now, both he and his family have accepted him as he is, not least thanks to the support and the new group of friends he found at the youth centre.

Larissa also struggles with self-acceptance. She left home to avoid confrontations with her mother after coming out as a lesbian, but still struggles with the need of approval. “My mom’s opinion doesn’t matter to me,” she claims, to which her girlfriend retorts, “Yes it does, or you wouldn’t be talking about it.”

As a consequence of her turbulent home life, she’s fallen behind in school and is now working hard to get back on track in order to pass her final exams.

“Larissa, Benny, ‘D’ and all the other teens shouldn’t spend all that energy fighting for acceptance, when they could use it on so many other things,” says Splidsboel. “By getting love and support in the youth centre, the kids find the courage to be themselves. I would like to pass on that same feeling to the audience” ■

Misfits, invited to Berlin Film Festival’s Panorama Dokumente, is produced by Sara Stockmann for Sonntag Pictures. For more information, see reverse section.



Jannik Splidsboel

Director, born 1964. Studied art and film in Copenhagen and Rome. *Homies* (2005) screened at festivals including Nordic Panorama and IDFA, and *How Are You* (2011), about artist duo Elmgreen & Dragset, was invited to Berlinale’s Panorama. *Misfits* (2015) is selected for Panorama Dokumente at the Berlinale.

Sara Stockmann

Producer at her own company Sonntag Pictures. Films include *Misfits* (Jannik Splidsboel, 2015), *A Home in the World* (Andreas Koefoed, 2015), *Mercy Mercy – A Portrait of a True Adoption* (Katrine Kjær, 2012), *Armadillo* (Janus Metz, 2010).



The Look of Silence Photo: Lars Skree

Joshua Oppenheimer reflects on what the process of making *The Act of Killing* and *The Look of Silence* has taught him, and how he sees his role as documentary filmmaker today.

Berlinale Special / 2015

As told to Freja Dam

The fly on the wall is premised on a lie. Whenever you point a camera at anybody, they start staging themselves, consciously or unconsciously. They act out the fantasies they wished they lived up to and dramatise idealised images of themselves that they wished they could fulfil. In that sense, the non-fiction film camera is, in its most natural state, a prism with the power to reveal the fictions that constitute ourselves and our perception of reality. And from this self-staging, we can infer how people really see themselves.

Anwar in *The Act of Killing* isn't re-enacting what he did in 1965. He's dramatising, for my camera, his present-day fantasies and emotional states. For example, the gangster scenes are not re-enactments, but an acting out of a despairing identity borrowed from Hollywood's film noir that glamorises evil and allows him to live with himself. The audience doesn't see it as glamorous, but as an enactment of how a man copes with guilt.

What matters is what questions the film is answering. I think our responsibility as filmmakers is to answer the most urgent question inherent in

whatever situation we're filming. Insofar that as we're *creating* reality with anybody we film, it is our responsibility to create whatever reality will be most insightful to these questions. In *The Act of Killing*, I was trying to understand not only how human beings commit evil, but what lies we tell ourselves to justify our actions – and the effects of those lies. *The Look of Silence* is a poem about what 50 years of fear and silence does to a human being, to a mother, to the flesh of an old man, to a family and a community. I'm always searching for poetic forms that allow me to express the most important thing – which is always something not immediately visible.

I don't see my two films as uncovering a hidden and forgotten genocide, nor am I certain that would be of value in and of itself. The purpose of both films is to expose the *present-day* legacy of genocide – the thuggery and corruption and fear that results from decades of impunity – and to immerse viewers in a poetic, almost physical experience of what it is like to live in such a world.

Both films are about what it means to be human. They are not historical or journalistic films about Indonesia. They depict the effects of evil on our humanity, and how unacknowledged evil

affects the way we live together as human beings. To achieve this, both films only provide as much contextualising historical and political information the audience needs in order to feel the emotional, moral, and political significance of the journey.

The experience of making both films, and hopefully viewing them, is like being engulfed by a tsunami. The essence of my filmmaking is to allow myself to be sucked in by the undertow of a stormy sea. I feel that both films reach a place where nobody is in control, where nothing is safe, where you're somewhere very unfamiliar, strange, beautiful and terrifying. And yet you recognise it instantly as authentic, unprecedented, and essential.

I think all art should serve as a mirror, where we have an insightful and emotionally profound encounter with something in ourselves that we instantly recognise as real – something we've been afraid to speak about before, or perhaps something simply too mysterious for words.

In all filmmaking, you're intervening. I take responsibility for my intervention, and I always try to know why I'm intervening. I made both films in collaboration with a community of survivors of the genocide and the Indonesian human rights community, specifically as an intervention against the power of the perpetrators, the thugs and the military, against impunity and against fear. My Indonesian collaborators saw me as their agent, not a foreign filmmaker coming to expose the terrible situation to foreign audiences. And I saw myself as holding up a mirror to Indonesian society, and to all of us.

Both films' central dramas emerge as a direct consequence of the filmmaking process. If I were a fly on the wall, Adi would not be meeting the perpetrators that I filmed in the years leading up to the production of *The Act of Killing*. It is inevitable that I am in both films (albeit as a voice behind the camera, a presence, a moral point of view), because I am the catalyst for the process that generates the central dramas. But the film's narrative is not the story of how I made the film, for example how I met Adi, and how we worked together, because in that case I would be the protagonist. I take a journey with the characters, but I'm not the main character on that journey.

The process has changed me in every way. It has taught me that when we confront the most painful and frightening aspects of our reality, the world becomes less frightening – because at least you stop running away. A calmness sets in. A resolve. It has also taught me to forgive any human being who can truly acknowledge their mistakes, and thereby separate their humanity from their crimes. None of



The Act of Killing Photo: Anonymous

the perpetrators in my films are able to do this, but *our* humanity depends on always being willing to forgive. I have learned, therefore, that it is never the task of the artist to condemn other human beings. It is, on the contrary, always our duty to try to understand people. Of course I condemn what Anwar and the other perpetrators did, but I refuse myself the arrogance of condemning them as monsters because they've done something monstrous.

I've learned that filmmaking for me is a life journey. Having the commitment to take a journey with people whose dilemmas profoundly interest me and go to places that seem utterly frightening and magical is the core of what I do.

I've also learned that there are no rules except the ones that we make and discover ourselves, and no limits to how wild a film can be ■

The Look of Silence, screening in Berlinale Special, is produced by Signe Byrge Sørensen for Final Cut for Real. For more information, see reverse section.



Director Joshua Oppenheimer Photo: Daniel Bergeron

Joshua Oppenheimer

Born in 1974, USA. Based in Copenhagen. Artistic director of the International Centre for Documentary and Experimental Film, University of Westminster. Has worked for over a decade with militias, death squads and their victims to explore the relationship between political violence and the public imagination. *The Act of Killing* (2012) was Oscar-nominated for Best Documentary. *The Look of Silence* (2014) won the Grand Jury Prize at Venice Film Festival.

Signe Byrge Sørensen

Producer at Final Cut for Real. Films include Joshua Oppenheimer's diptych *The Look of Silence* (2014) and *The Act of Killing* (2012), *The Human Scale* (Andreas Møl Dalsgaard, 2012), *Cathedrals of Culture: Halden Prison* (Michael Madsen, 2014).

ACTING IS THE ULTIMATE FREEDOM

Straight out of acting school he landed a starring role in the major Danish feature *Itsi Bitsi* and a place of honour as Shooting Star in Berlin. Things are moving quickly for **Joachim Fjelstrup**. Indeed, the 27-year-old rising star is an actor who knows what he can do and what he wants with his craft.

Shooting Star / Berlinale 2015



*“Joachim couldn’t have made a better feature film debut than *Itsi Bitsi* – as real-life beatnik rocker Eik Skaløe he is simply captivating, bringing out all the elements of a man whose tragically short, tormented life was nevertheless brightened by love, laughter and head-on rock’n’roll excitement.”*

Shooting Stars Jury motivates its choice of Joachim Fjelstrup

By Per Juul Carlsen

“So far, just taking what I’ve been offered and doing my best with it has worked out pretty well for me,” Joachim Fjelstrup says. It’s hard to argue with that. The 27-year-old Copenhagen native has appeared in two features and two shorts and has been chosen as the Danish Shooting Star at this year’s Berlin Film Festival, arguably the film industry’s greatest recognition for a young actor.

What opened the Shooting Star jury’s eyes to the Danish actor was the dramatic feature *Itsi Bitsi*. In the film, which world premiered at last year’s Toronto Film Festival, Fjelstrup reincarnates the Danish rock singer Eik Skaløe of Steppeulvene. The band’s single album, *Hip*, was released in 1967 and since became a classic, largely thanks to Skaløe’s freewheeling lyrics and grating, Bob Dylan-inspired delivery. Shortly after *Hip* was released, Skaløe left for Nepal and in October 1968 he was found dead, 25 years old, on the border between India and Pakistan. A note found on his body read, “For the officials: As I guess you know – this suicide is decided & carried out by myself. No one is to blame, except the cruel person inside me. Forgive me, Eik Skaløe.” The dramatic circumstances surrounding his death made Skaløe the beatnik an instant icon of Danish rock.

“I feel very lucky,” Joachim Fjelstrup says. “The film was 10 years in the making but happened to be shooting two months after I graduated from acting school – and I look like Skaløe and the role fits me.”

“I hope I can keep that fear of messing up. That fear makes me diligent. If I went into a project feeling like I knew I could do it, I risk preparing insufficiently.”

Call it luck. But the young star of *Itsi Bitsi* is more than just lucky. From scene one, Fjelstrup has the presence and scope of the young poet who dreams of changing the world and setting himself free but also has a very hard time tearing himself away from his unhappy love affair with his soul mate, Iben Nagel Rasmussen, the *Itsi Bitsi* of the title. Skaløe was at once a searching young man and a mature thinker, and Fjelstrup nails this balance between vulnerability and strength with surprising authority in his first screen role.

Actually, saying Fjelstrup looks like Skaløe is a bit of a stretch. As *Itsi Bitsi* director Ole Christian Madsen points out, Skaløe was 163 centimetres short, while Fjelstrup towers at 193. Madsen only picked Fjelstrup after extended periods of working with three to four other potential Eiks.

“We always knew that Joachim was a qualified candidate, but it was only when Joachim underwent a physical transformation along the way that we knew he was the one. I have never worked with



an actor who prepared so thoroughly for a role,” says Madsen, who has directed great Danish stars like Mads Mikkelsen, Paprika Steen and Anders W. Berthelsen. Madsen mentions that the already slim Fjelstrup lost 7 kilos to play the emaciated Skaløe at the end of the film. Still, Fjelstrup wasn’t sure that he had lost enough weight.

“I hope I can keep that fear of messing up,” Fjelstrup says. “That fear makes me diligent. If I went into a project feeling like I knew I could do it, I risk preparing insufficiently. When my acting works out, it’s one of the coolest things there is.”

As for why acting is one of the coolest things, Fjelstrup says:

“It’s the ultimate freedom. There are no rules. You can be as aggressive as you want without being afraid that the other person is going to hit you back. It’s incredibly mean to tease someone who stutters, like I do in *Itsi Bitsi*. You just don’t do that. There’s a freedom in letting go of yourself and your inhibitions, and afterwards we actors are friends again.”

Roni Ezra’s *April 9th*, about the day in 1940 when Nazi Germany invaded Denmark, has Fjelstrup in a supporting role as a Danish soldier who fights back. A blessed smile spreads across Fjelstrup’s face.

“I’m the kind of person who easily turns ironic and indirect, but there’s something very neat about saying ‘This is the most important day of my life’ the way my character does in the film” ■

Joachim Fjelstrup is one of ten European actors and actresses to catch the spotlight at the Berlinale as Shooting Stars 2015, an initiative launched by European Film Promotion offering young acting talents a unique platform to meet the industry and a dedicated audience.

Joachim Fjelstrup

Actor, born 1987. After graduating from the Danish National School of Performing Arts in 2013, Joachim Fjelstrup went straight on to make his screen debut in Ole Christian Madsen’s *Itsi Bitsi* (2014), which premiered at Toronto Film Festival. Fjelstrup is soon to appear opposite former Shooting Star Pilou Asbæk in Roni Ezra’s WWII drama *April 9th*, set for domestic release in March, as well as in two graduation films from the National Film School of Denmark.

GROWING UP ON A REFUGEE SHIP

Fleeing Sarajevo with his family in 1992, Vladimir Tomic spent two years on a refugee ship in Denmark. In *Flotel Europa*, the director juxtaposes VHS footage shot by the Bosnians living on the ship with his personal story about a 12-year-old boy trying to live a normal life in a place far from normal.

Forum / Berlinale 2015

By Freja Dam

When 12-year-old Vladimir Tomic first learned that he was going to live on a ship, he was “the happiest boy in the world.” But life on Flotel Europa, a giant floating refugee camp in the harbour of Copenhagen, was different than he imagined. Confined to tiny cabins with a thousand other Bosnian refugees, he observed frustrated adults drinking, crying at night and throwing things at the TV set that didn’t provide the news they wanted. But, as he tells in the first-person narration of his autobiographical documentary *Flotel Europa*, he also found “a particular charm” in their new home and experienced friendship, rock’n’roll and an obsession with a pair of “big brown eyes with a shade of green in them” belonging to a girl named Melissa.

Tomic came to Denmark with his mother and older brother in 1992 with a wave of refugees from the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. With refugee camps completely full, the Red Cross pulled a giant ship into the harbour of Copenhagen. The ship, Flotel Europa, became a temporary home for

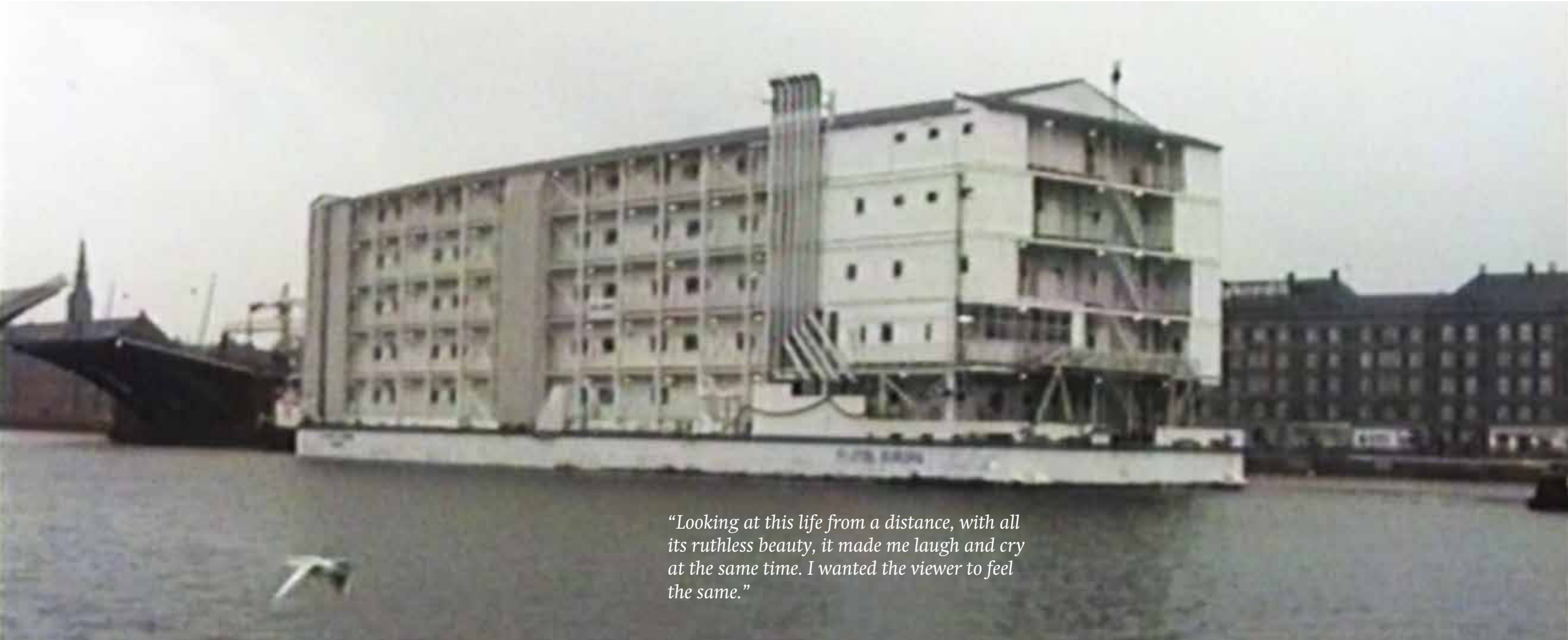
a thousand people waiting for decisions on their asylum applications. Tomic and his family lived there for two years.

Twenty years later, the now 34-year-old director takes us back to the ship, narrating his own story to personal VHS archive material shot by refugees who shared the “space-time vacuum” of the Flotel.

“As the phone line to Bosnia rarely worked, we, the refugees, started recording our lives and personal messages on VHS tapes and sending them to our relatives through Red Cross humanitarian convoys,” explains Tomic. Years after, his grandfather gave him an old VHS tape with the inscription “To my grandfather from Flotel Europa.”

“The VHS tape I once sent to my grandfather brought me back to that time, and I felt that there was a story that needed to be told. Together with my dear friend and producer Selma Jusufbegovic, I started gathering the VHS material from other Bosnian refugees living in Denmark, and soon I had hundreds of hours of people’s personal material in my hands. My memories of life on Flotel Europa were as vivid as the material, so I wrote them down.”

Vladimir Tomic was among the thousand refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina living on Flotel Europa in Copenhagen Harbour.



“Looking at this life from a distance, with all its ruthless beauty, it made me laugh and cry at the same time. I wanted the viewer to feel the same.”

Tomic narrates his experiences with extreme precision – the care package his mom sent back to their family contained “two kilos of flour, two liters of cooking oil, a kilo of cornmeal, five cans of beans, a kilo of sugar, a pair of sneakers, a jacket and two bars of chocolate.” He channels the naïve innocence of a 12-year-old boy who senses the grown ups’ fear for their families and frustrations about living in a limbo, but adapts to his new life with a sense of adventure and is soon preoccupied with sports, school, girls and a group of older friends introducing him to sex, drugs and rock’n’roll.

“I used my personal story of a 12-year-old kid trying to find my place and live a normal life on a refugee ship when not much of what was around me was normal. I fell into a space between time where refugees often find themselves when forced to leave their home in search of new stable ground.”

“Looking at this life from a distance, with all its ruthless beauty, it made me laugh and cry at the same time. I wanted the viewer to feel the same. Through this small personal story, I tried to tell a much bigger story of how Yugoslavia fell apart” ■

Flotel Europa, selected for Berlinale Forum, is made with support from the Danish Film Institute’s Film Workshop. For more information, see reverse section.



Director Vladimir Tomic Photo: Vladimir Tomic

Vladimir Tomic
Director, born 1980 in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina. Graduated from the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, 2009. Lives and works in Copenhagen. Tomic’s art films are played out in the field of contemporary art and experimental documentation, and universal and human tension caused by the changing structure of society is often the center of his work. Films include *My Lost Generation* (2009), *The Valley of Shadows* (2006), and *Flotel Europa* (2015), selected for Berlinale Forum.

Selma Jusufbegovic and Srdjan Keca
Producers of *Flotel Europa* (Vladimir Tomic, 2015) for Uzrok production company. Srdjan Keča’s films include, as director, *Museum of the Revolution* (2014), and as producer, director and cinematographer *Mirage* (2011), *A Letter to Dad* (2011), *After the War* (2006).

WHEN REALITY CRACKS

Short Film Competition / Berlinale 2015



Pebbles at Your Door: Framgrab

Vibeke Bryld’s *Pebbles at Your Door* tells of a woman’s rude awakening from the North Korean puppetry. Old propaganda publications, a blow dryer and incense sticks went into the making of this oddly beautiful short.

By Freja Dam

How do we construct reality? Do we trust our family, our teacher, our government, or our own perception?

Harmonia, the centre of Vibeke Bryld’s short film *Pebbles at Your Door*, grew up in the North Korean elite. She lived a protected life in Pyongyang with a good education, medical care, and plenty of food on the table. She had always believed her homeland to be a nice communist country where people looked after each other. Her only worry was the wellbeing of her mother and sister, who escaped to South Korea when Harmonia was little.

In the film we witness how her belief was so strong that when she’s suddenly confronted with the true face of North Korea, her world collapses. Now, she faces a choice between living in a broken paradise of lies and deception or treading the unknown, lonely path of the world outside the cave.

“North Korea is an extreme version of losing your childhood faith: the shock of being confronted with a reality that looks completely different than you imagined,” says director Vibeke Bryld. “It’s fascinating, and terrifying, that there’s still this one place in the world where people are stuck in a fictional world.”

“It’s fascinating, and terrifying, that there’s still this one place in the world where people are stuck in a fictional world.”

Like a Puppet Theatre

Harmonia was a minor character in Bryld’s last documentary, *Bedtime Stories from the Axis of Evil* (2011), where she reads to her grandchild. While the grandmother’s story didn’t fit into that film, Bryld knew she wanted to tell it. One complication: The woman couldn’t show her face, because she had to remain anonymous for security reasons.

That’s why Bryld and her team of set designer Elin Maria Johansson and cinematographer Lis Dyre developed a cinematic cardboard universe. “I planned to make an animation film, but we didn’t have the money,” says Bryld, who also had to scrap her shadow play idea, because the puppeteers were too expensive.

Instead, they got creative. Stacking cardboard pieces from old propaganda publications and other props on glass sheets, they shot the film like a puppet theatre. Any movement on the screen is caused by human interaction: elevating the snow with a blow dryer, turning the ferris wheel or spraying water on the sheets for rain. For lights, they used torches, and to create smoke they used incense sticks. “It was very much like a children’s playroom,” says Bryld.

In the end, she thinks the result, an oddly beautiful and textural postcard-like set design, suits the film’s theme better than her original conception. “Because the film is concerned with what reality is made of, I wanted to experiment with layers upon layers in an old-fashioned theatre setting. In concrete terms, construct a reality” ■

Pebbles at Your Door, selected for the Berlinale Shorts competition, is produced by Heidi Elise Christensen for Final Cut for Real with support from the Danish Film Institute’s Film Workshop. For more information, see reverse section.



Pebbles at Your Door: Framgrab



Director Vibeke Bryld Photo: Morten Grøthe

Vibeke Bryld

Director, writer, born 1976. Holds a Bachelor in literature and a Master in documentary filmmaking. Has directed short documentaries for Al Jazeera English, experimental documentaries and TV series. Has a focus on memory and the physical and social moulding of our reality. Her short film *Bedtime Stories from the Axis of Evil* (2011) was nominated for a Robert award by the Danish Film Academy and was in competition at Hot Docs. *Pebbles at Your Door* (2015) is selected for the Berlinale Shorts competition.

Heidi Elise Christensen

Producer at Final Cut for Real. Has worked with documentaries since 2001. Films as producer include *Pebbles at Your Door* (Vibeke Bryld, 2015), as associate producer *The Look of Silence* (Joshua Oppenheimer, 2014), as production manager *The Visit* (Michael Madsen, 2015, see page 34), *The Act of Killing* (Joshua Oppenheimer, 2012).



Good Things Await, Framgrab

FOODS FOR THE FUTURE – AND NOMA, TOO

Culinary Cinema – Opening Film / Berlinale 2015

What does a cow pie from a healthy cow look like? Do farmer Niels Stokholm's biodynamic steaks really taste better? Phie Ambo's *Good Things Await* about Stokholm's biodynamic farm Thorshøjgaard, supplier to the world's best restaurant Noma, is opening the Berlinale Culinary Cinema, a celebration of film, our environment and the joy of food.

By Nynne Østergaard

How do you tell from a cow pie that its owner is a healthy cow living according to its instincts and in harmony with nature and the people around it?

Niels Stokholm, the 80-year-old protagonist of Phie Ambo's *Good Things Await*, will tell you that the cow pie should have a healthy, dark colour. That's a sign that the cow has had access to a lot of grass. The cow pie should have a firm shape and resemble a cream puff. If you hold your hand close, you should be able to feel a slight heat arising from it – and you shouldn't have to hold your nose.

GOOD THINGS AWAIT



About the film

Phie Ambo goes to bat for sustainable agriculture in her new film. Niels Stokholm, 80, struggles to run his farm his way, biodynamically, following the principles of Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner that form the core of biodynamics. Instead of regarding weeds as an evil, Stokholm thinks of them as part of the farm's circulatory system. The animals are on pasture all year round, including when the ground is covered in snow. Stokholm's cattle, an old dairy breed known as Danish Red, are so frisky you could mistake them for deer. But Stokholm's ways of farming in harmony with the planets and the primal instincts of the animals are not popular with the authorities who subscribe to more conventional ideas of organic farming.

With her film, Ambo seeks to demonstrate that alternatives do exist to how farming is practiced today.

"For me, it's incredibly inspiring to see someone actually doing something instead of just talking about it. We live in an age where the industrial and capitalist worldview is collapsing left and right. I think the way that Niels and his wife live presents a positive alternative, even if it is extreme simple living."

Good Things Await had its international premiere in IDFA's Female Gaze section in 2014.

About the director

Phie Ambo has helped define the success of Danish documentaries over the last decade.

In 2001, with Sami Saif, she won the world's most important documentary film award at IDFA for *Family*, making her name around the documentary world even while she was still attending film school. An original and personal film, *Family* blazed a trail for a generation of documentarians with the courage and vision to create visually powerful narratives for the big screen.

In recent years Ambo has chiefly pursued work of a more thematic nature. In 2007 she launched

a trilogy on science and human existence with *Mechanical Love*, which charted the relationship between humans and robots and the nature of emotion. The next film in the trilogy, 2012's *Free the Mind*, explores how thoughts influence the mind and the body. The third and final film, *Ripples at the Shore*, expected to premiere in 2015, looks at human consciousness and its connection to the living body.



Phie Ambo Photo: Maggie Okuska

The cow pie should have a firm shape and resemble a cream puff.

Stokholm and his wife Rita run their biodynamic farm Thorshøjgaard, 50 km north of Copenhagen, based on 40 years of observing their animals and the nature around them.

To Stokholm, biodynamic farming is about engaging in dialogue with your surroundings and striving to understand how everything thrives. His daily routines are based on observing the animals' well-being – for instance by ascertaining the quality of a cow pie. You might even call it research of a kind.

"Everything can't be measured and weighed. I can't measure the impulses that go from humans to animals. But I know they're there, and I can tell that it matters to the animals that they have human contact. It makes them calm and secure," Niels Stokholm says.

Another significant observation Stokholm has made over his many years as a biodynamic farmer is that the more the animals live in accordance with their instincts, the better their meat tastes – and the better it is for us.

Not surprisingly, as Ambo shows in *Good Things Await*, this idealistic farmer with his far-reaching ideas is a thorn in the eye of the authorities. The food and agriculture department is threatening to deprive Stokholm of his right to farm livestock.

But Stokholm is not alone in contending that biodynamic farming is important to the quality and

taste of foods. Thorshøjgaard supplies produce to some of the best restaurants in Denmark, including Copenhagen's Noma. Chef and co-founder René Redzepi regularly buys beef from Thorshøjgaard because, as director Phie Ambo puts it, "it simply tastes exceptionally well" ■

Good Things Await is produced by Malene Flindt Pedersen for Danish Documentary Production. For more information, see reverse section.

CULINARY CINEMA / OPENING FILM

Food, pleasure and the environment are key themes of the Berlinale's Culinary Cinema section, celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2015 and opening with Phie Ambo's *Good Things Await*. Ambo's portrait of Niels Stokholm, his ideas about farming and raising livestock and his struggle against the bureaucracy are a perfect fit for the section's tenets. The film has also inspired a three-course dinner, to be served after the screening, featuring cheese from Stokholm's Thorshøjgaard.

THE NORTHWEST UNITES

Ties between Denmark and Iceland have long been strong. Now, Greenland and the Faroe Islands are joining in to widen and strengthen the Northwest Atlantic film partnership.

Recent years have seen a steady increase in film collaboration between Denmark and Iceland. More than a few joint projects are currently under way by such filmmakers as Guðmundur Arnar Guðmundsson, Hlynur Pálmason and Rúnar Rúnarsson. Moreover, Dagur Kári, whose *Virgin Mountain* is world premiering at the Berlinale, is a product of the close and long-standing film ties between Denmark and Iceland. Taking the initiative to expand this collaborative spirit across the North Atlantic, the Danish Film Institute and the Icelandic Film Centre have now invited Greenland and the Faroe Islands to join in the partnership. The first step was a seminar held in Reykjavik in October, bringing together filmmakers

from the four countries to share experiences and form networks. Noemi Ferrer Schwenk, head of the Danish Film Institute’s international department and co-initiator in establishing a more formalized framework, sees a bright future for collaboration between the four countries. “It is time to get the two other Northwest Atlantic countries to join in. Clearly we are very different. Combining this diversity with the many cultural features our four countries have in common makes for a partnership that could prove strong and fruitful.” Both the Faroe Islands and Greenland are experiencing a new dawn in filmmaking:

The Faroe Islands: Capital Injection Katrin Ottarsdóttir’s *Ludo* from 2014 was the first Faroese feature film in 15 years, while Sakaris Stórá’s short film *Vetrarmorgun* won the Special Prize of the Generation 14plus International Jury at the Berlinale the same year. For many years the Film Workshop Klippfisk in Tórshavn has fended for its film community. Efforts to sustain a viable film industry now seem to

be gaining momentum. The Faroese government recently injected relatively considerable sums into the country’s film production. **Greenland: A Local Film Institute** Several films have been made in Greenland over the past five years, including *Nuummioq* by Otto Rosing and Torben Bech, *Inuk* by Mike Magidson, *Aqqalu* by Kristian Nygaard, *Qaqqat Alanngui* by Malik Kleist and, more recently, Inuk Silis Høegh’s *Sume – The Sound of a Revolution*, selected for the 2015 Berlinale. Greenland in 2012 established its first film association to support the local film industry. The Northwest Atlantic initiative comes at an opportune time, as the recent political agreement in Greenland for the 2014-18 period specifies plans to establish a local film institute with the primary tasks of creating a robust film economy, ensuring international partnerships and strengthening the artistic development of Greenlandic films.

What Next? As a result of the seminar held in Reykjavik, the four countries plan to strengthen cooperation on talent and film education through a joint secretariat. Greenland, Iceland and the Faroe Islands will present a preliminary status on developing and professionalising national talents, and these surveys will form the basis for a joint action plan for the initiative, which will be driven by Prami Larsen, head of the Film Workshop at the Danish Film Institute.

Efforts to strengthen **Northwest Atlantic collaboration** are initiated by the Danish Film Institute and the Icelandic Film Centre in partnership with the Faroese Film Workshop Klippfisk, the Greenlandic Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Church, and FILM.GL, the Greenlandic association of film professionals.



Sume Photo: Susanne Mertz

DANISH CO-PRODUCTIONS

Of these four films made with Danish co-production support, two titles attest to the close ties between Denmark and its Northwest Atlantic partners.



Sume Photo: Susanne Mertz

Sume – The Sound of a Revolution In the 1970s, the young, political rock band Sume gave voice to Greenlanders’ longing for freedom and co-determination. After the release of their first album in Greenlandic in 1973, concepts like “revolution” and “oppression” found their way into the Greenlandic language, and soon the country was engaged in its first big showdown with colonial Denmark. Director Inuk Silis Høegh and creative producer Emile Hertling Péronard look back at one of Greenland’s most popular bands

whose songs instantly captivated the young and provoked the old. After decades of modernisation and Danification, Greenlanders had to stop and take a stand: Where are we? Where are we going? *Sume – The Sound of a Revolution* is the first Greenlandic film about the country’s modern history and the first feature-length documentary produced in Greenland. **Countries** Greenland-Denmark-Norway **Director** Inuk Silis Høegh **Production** Anorak Film (Greenland) **Danish co-production** Bullitt Film

The Mad Half Hour **Berlinale Shorts / 2015**

Referring to a condition experienced usually by indoor cats, *The Mad Half Hour* is an off-beat comedy about Juan, 30, who is going through a period in his life where he is overcome by energy bursts and flashes of madness. Memories of childhood traumas, Alice in Wonderland, aliens

and a song heard in a Copenhagen bar are all part of Leonardo Brzezicki’s inspiration for his film which is supported by CPH:LAB, an international talent development and training programme established by documentary festival CPH:DOX. **Countries** Argentina-Danish **Director** Leonardo Brzezicki **Production** Rewind My Future **Danish co-production** CPH:LAB



Virgin Mountain Photo: Nimbus Film

Virgin Mountain Fúsi is in his forties. He has yet to find the courage to enter into adulthood. He sleepwalks through the mundane routine of everyday life until an encounter with a vivacious woman and an 8-year-old girl forces him to make changes. Fúsi is at the centre of Dagur Kári’s fourth feature film, which marks the director’s return to his native Iceland. After his widely acclaimed debut *Nói Albinói* (2003), Kári ventured to make *Dark Horse* (2005) in Denmark and later the US production *The Good Heart* (2009). DOP is Rasmus Videbæk of Denmark, who shot Nikolaj Arcel’s lavish historical drama *A Royal Affair* as well as Kári’s feature debut *Nói Albinói*. **Countries** Iceland-France-Denmark **Director** Dagur Kári **Production** Blueeyes Productions (Iceland) **Danish co-production** Nimbus Film

The Yes Men Are Revolting For the last 20 years, notorious activists the Yes Men have staged outrageous and hilarious hoaxes to draw attention to corporate crimes against humanity and the environment. In their third film, they are now well into their 40s, and their mid-life crises are threatening to drive them out of activism forever – even as they prepare to take on their biggest challenge: climate change. Danish involvement includes editor Søren B. Ebbe, sound designers Mikkel Groos and Roar Skau Olsen, and Niels Pagh Andersen (film editor on *The Look of Silence*) and Frank Piasecki Poulsen (director of *Blood in the Mobile*), who were consultants on the film. **Countries** USA-Denmark **Directors** Laura Nix, Mike Bonanno, Andy Bichlbaum **Production** Human Race LLC **Danish co-production** Chili Film



The Yes Men Are Revolting Photo: Nate Igo Smith

THE HUMAN JOURNEY INTO OUTER AND INNER SPACE

World Cinema Documentary Competition / Sundance 2015

There are no little green men but lots of masterminds and mind-boggling questions in Michael Madsen’s *The Visit*, which documents an alien invasion that hasn’t taken place – yet.

The Visit. Photo: Haki Film

By Kim Skotte

It almost sounds like the antithesis of a documentary when *The Visit* declares, “This film documents an event that has never taken place.”

How can you even make a documentary about something that never happened?

You can, if you happen to be director Michael Madsen and make films that raise questions about humankind and aren’t held back by petty concerns – questions probing humanity’s future and digging deep into our species’ self-understanding and possibilities for survival.

“Making a film about an event that hasn’t happened is a conceptual device, a way of creating a scenario,” director Michael Madsen says. “*The Visit* is a future scenario, an experimental setup, the way it’s done in science. What can you investigate and how?”

“I have an issue with reality. I’m interested in what reality really is. And so, I’m interested in possible realities,” Madsen explains. “As Robert Musil

writes in ‘The Man without Qualities,’ the space of possibilities is as relevant as the real.”

To use terms from the scientific method, a normal documentary is an empirical collection of data organised into a more or less viable thesis about the nature of reality. Madsen’s documentary *The Visit*, for its part, is more reminiscent of the experimental setup itself.

“Looking at reality with other eyes is what I’m interested in, and it’s what interests me about documentaries. Documentaries have the great quality of being rooted in reality. But that’s also the problem with a lot of them,” he says.

“Their relationship to reality basically is that they know better. Documentaries don’t go far enough or deep enough,” Madsen says. He’s hardly impressed with documentary filmmakers who have a preconceived, ironclad idea about what the meaning of reality is or should be. The activist trend in documentaries is not Madsen’s cup of tea.

The Triffids or E.T.?

Michael Madsen dug very deep, literally, in his breakthrough film, the internationally acclaimed *Into Eternity*, which looked at the practical and philosophical consequences of storing nuclear waste. How do you even relate to the concept of depositing waste that will be toxic to future generations for the next 100,000 years, when you yourself only live 70-80 years? How can you take responsibility for an act like that, and what moral questions does it raise when you do?

“I have an issue with reality. I’m interested in what reality really is. And so, I’m interested in possible realities.”

In *The Visit* Madsen turns his eye to the sky, and to space, to explore another possible reality awaiting us out there. In practical terms, *The Visit* asks, what will happen if one day we are visited by aliens from outer space? What mechanisms will be triggered? What scenarios can we envision? What questions will we ask the aliens – and what will those questions say about us?

So, *The Visit* is a film that documents an event that has never taken place – even if it doesn’t feel that way considering the glut of films, books and rural legends about more or less spectacular and hostile aliens. Will it be the Triffids coming, or Spielberg’s cuddly E.T.? And will Sir David Attenborough be there to greet them in short pants, with his hand outstretched?

The Space between Your Ears

According to the experts, Michael Madsen says, there are three basic scenarios for how an alien visit would manifest itself: 1. An emergency landing. 2. An

expedition. 3. An invasion. But that’s actually not what interests the filmmaker most. The aliens that truly obsess him are us, and the space he explores is the space between our ears.

While the actual waste repository of *Into Eternity* irrefutably made it a documentary, *The Visit* is necessarily more speculative. Madsen’s interview subjects may include space theologian Jacques Arnould, military advisor Paul Beaver, director of Interstellar Message Composition Doug Vakoch and the staff at the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs in Vienna, but they are still making statements about a fictional situation.

Instead of dramatisations, Madsen uses the camera’s investigative eye to create the sensation of an alien gaze on our daily life.

“I want you to realise along the way that it’s not about aliens. It’s about us. The questions that are discussed are real, whether aliens are present or not,” Madsen says. Naturally, those questions orbit the film’s central what-if scenario. What if intelligent beings visited us one day? What would happen and what would it mean?

“If it did happen, I think it would be the single greatest event in human history. It would be the completion of the Copernican revolution. We would no longer be the centre of the universe. Everything would be called into question. Something concretely unknown would come into our understanding of the world, a dead angle from which anything could emerge. This state of uncertainty would force us to ask ourselves some very fundamental questions,” Madsen suggests.

The Expert as Stand-In

“For me, the audience are the key actors in my films. I very much want the audience to enter the scenario I set up,” the director says, with an ambition to make the viewer the object of investigation.

“The experts in a sense are just stand-ins for humanity. It’s not about them, but they appear in the film and gamely play along. They have had to pursue the concept to the absolute limit in terms of envisioning the truly alien. What’s the limit to what you can imagine?”

The director thinks many of the participating experts actually found the game very liberating. They could pretend that the encounter with another civilisation wasn’t a theoretical situation but a real challenge requiring all of their knowledge.

It wasn’t easy, he admits, to get these serious professionals on board. What kind of a weird UFO film is this? It wasn’t until one of the UN staff in Vienna realised that Madsen was the man behind *Into Eternity* that the Office agreed to participate, and the astrobiologist and the others loosened up and joined in Madsen’s thought-provoking game. “Some of them are people who will be contacted if a



Michael Madsen uses the camera’s searching eye to create the sensation of an alien gaze (above). *The Visit* also features a string of experts, including Mazlan Othman, the then director of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, and John Rummel of the Panel on Planetary Protection (below).



landing happens. Several of them volunteered for it, fully aware of the risks and uncertainties involved.

“I think several of them are convinced that there *must* be other civilisations in the universe, that anything else is all but impossible.”

A Third Film Even More ‘Out There’

Coming after *Into Eternity*, *The Visit* is the second film in what will be Michael Madsen’s trilogy about humanity on its journey to new horizons.

Madsen’s third film, *Odyssey*, now in pre-production, will be even more “out there.” The final instalment of his trilogy, *Odyssey* will look at the practical and philosophical concerns that arise the moment a decision is made to undertake a journey to another solar system, a journey of many light years.

“*Odyssey* is a personality test I developed with an American space psychologist and a German spaceship designer. It is an imaginary journey to the stars. A generation starship. To get to another world – without going into hypersleep as in *Interstellar*, which is indeed science fiction – you would have to reproduce and make a society function for maybe

10,000 years before you reach your goal,” he says.

“In the film, we’ll try to understand what such an expedition would actually involve. You wouldn’t get to die of old age, your bodily fluids would be recycled, etc. It would be a radical counterimage to the concept of personal liberty that’s such a dominant theme of our time. It would be a lot more like a hunter-gatherer society, where everything is used and recycled.”

“*Into Eternity* tried to make us comprehend, in human terms, that nuclear waste stays toxic for 100,000 years. It’s a crucial watershed in human history that we have the capacity to do that kind of thing now,” says Madsen.

With *The Visit* and *Odyssey*, the director’s eye is now fixed on the next possible watershed – aliens landing in our backyard or perhaps the first odyssey embarking to the stars ■

The Visit world premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in January. The film is produced by Lise Lense-Møller for Magic Hour Films. For more information, see reverse section.

Michael Madsen

Director and conceptual artist, born 1971. Madsen directed the multiple award-winning *Into Eternity* (2010), which sent him deep underground to satisfy his curiosity about the world’s first permanent nuclear waste repository in Finland. Recent films include *Halden Prison* (2014), in 3D, part of Wim Wenders’ architecture series *Cathedrals of Culture*, which was showcased at the Berlinale. *The Visit* (2015) is having its world premiere at the Sundance Film Festival in the World Cinema Documentary Competition.

Lise Lense-Møller

Producer of fiction and documentary films. Founder of Magic Hour Films. Documentary titles include Michael Madsen’s *The Visit* (2015) and *Into Eternity* (2010), *Burma VJ – Reporting from a Closed Country* (Anders Østergaard, 2008) and *The 3 Rooms of Melancholia* (as co-producer, Pirjo Honkasalo, 2005).

INTO ETERNITY / “A TROUBLING DREAM”

Michael Madsen made his name with 2010’s *Into Eternity*, a mesmerising meditation on the construction of the world’s first permanent nuclear-waste storage facility, designed to last 100,000 years. One reviewer called the film “more like a troubling dream, or outtakes from an abandoned David Lynch project, than a conventional documentary.” In *The Visit*, Madsen again uses bold imagery and an evocative score to present his vision of an alien encounter.

Göteborg & Rotterdam Film Festivals / 2015

NO AGE LIMIT ON DESIRE

Michael Noer would like to see more true depictions of old age. Both when it is raw and dark and when it’s bubbling over with desire and exuberance, like any other time of life. Noer captures that tension in *Key House Mirror*, the story of a woman who finds love in her autumn years.

By Katrine Hornstrup Yde

“I promise, you will never end up in a nursing home.”

Michael Noer wrote a note with these words and left it by his grandmother’s phone. When she would call and tell him how afraid she was of ending up like her husband and having her last shred of independence taken away from her, he would say, “Grandma, look down. What does the note say?”

Noer wrote another note and filed it away in a desk drawer. What it proposed seemed miles away from the director’s earlier, high-drama fictions: “Make a feature about a nursing home.” Which led to his third feature film, *Key House Mirror*.

Despite Noer’s promise, his grandmother did end up in a home. Meanwhile, his original idea of representing a nursing home as a horror story about the final, hopeless stop before death ended up as a romantic coming-of-old-age film starring Denmark’s greatest living actress, Ghita Nørby.

Stripping Away Prejudice

“Meeting Ghita I found a friend whose age wasn’t far from my grandmother’s but was someone I could talk with about very different things. She made me realise that we by and large struggle with a lot of the same things throughout our lives,” Noer says today.

Noer’s initial fear of nursing homes was transformed into an unprejudiced look at the dramatic phases of old age. *Key House Mirror*, written with Anders Frithiof August, follows Lily, a lonely 80-year-old woman, who agrees to move into a nursing home with her brain-damaged husband. Inside the inevitably prisonlike walls of the nursing home, her desire and life spark are reawakened as she gets to know her neighbour, a charming Swede, known as The Pilot, played by acclaimed Swedish actor Sven Wollter.

“Considering how anxious nursing homes make us in our society, we precisely should not depict them in an anxious way. We should take a deep breath and recognise that a nursing home is a place where people live and struggle to make things work,” Noer says.

Shot on Location

Key House Mirror was made according to the same principle of authenticity that Noer and his co-director Tobias Lindholm got from the real-life prison where they shot the raw, realistic *R* (2010) and that Noer later applied to his frenetic gang-life drama *Northwest* (2013).

Accordingly, *Key House Mirror* was shot in a real nursing home. The residents and staff are real residents and staff. The characters in the film are subject to the same rules and logics that apply at the actual nursing home. Noer’s guiding concept was to make no difference in his approach whether he was depicting an 18-year-old boy or an 80-year-old woman. He didn’t want to pigeonhole by age or genre.

“There’s just this weird cinematic agreement that when we do something about old age, it has to drag.”

“In *Key House Mirror*, we took the interest in a location from *R* and the pacing from *Northwest*,” he says.

“These are things you don’t associate with films about old age. My experience watching seniors chat over coffee at the nursing home was that they don’t actually talk slow. There’s just this weird cinematic agreement that when we do something about old age, it has to drag.”

Old Age Has It All

Key House Mirror is also about what happens when your surroundings start questioning your judgment. You lose something when you move into a nursing home.

This dark side of old age is something Noer finds missing from typical fictional representations of the elderly.

“True depictions of death and old age are rarely seen – even in the wildest arthouse film on the topic. So it was important for me that Lily and the Pilot don’t go out and open a hotel or rob a bank,” he says. “You have to be honest about the world you’re representing – when it’s raw and lonely and feels like a prison and we anxiously have to accept the



Key House Mirror Photo: Christian Geisnes

intimidating fact that a nursing home is the last, sad stop before death. But you should also be honest about showing that that world is full of just as much desire and inner drama as any other stage in life,” says Noer. Exuberance, hope and despair aren’t exclusive to an 18-year-old kid in *Northwest*.

A Scandinavian Microcosm

While *Key House Mirror* is a universal story, the nursing home is also a microcosm of our Scandinavian society, Noer says.

“A Danish woman once told that she sure as hell hoped she’d never end up in a nursing home – but she didn’t expect to, either, because she had four children, she said to me.” Her logic reflects an image of our family structure here in Denmark and in Scandinavia that’s a century out of date.

“In China today, you can legally complain if your children don’t take care of you. But that, too, is changing. They’re building Danish-inspired nursing homes now, because the Chinese family structure is changing and they have to be more efficient in the labour market. Perhaps, in a single generation, they’ll go through what we went through in the last fifty years or so,” Noer says.

“All of us, across cultures, have to ponder how we look at other generations – and what we promise each other” ■

Key House Mirror had its international premiere at the Göteborg and Rotterdam Film Festivals. The film is produced by Tomas Radoor and René Ezra for Nordisk Film. For more information, see reverse section.



Director Michael Noer Photo: Kenneth Nguyen

Michael Noer

Director, born 1978. Graduated from the National Film School of Denmark, 2003. Noer’s documentaries include *Vesterbro* (2007), and *The Wild Hearts* (2008).

Noer made his feature debut with the prison drama *R* (with Tobias Lindholm, 2010), winning top awards at the Göteborg and Mumbai Film Festivals. His second feature *Northwest* (2013) world premiered at Rotterdam and won the FIPRESCI award at Göteborg. *Key House Mirror* (2015) opened the Göteborg Film Festival and was also in competition at Rotterdam.

René Ezra & Tomas Radoor

Producers at Nordisk Film since 2003. Films include *Key House Mirror* (Michael Noer, 2015), *April 9th* (Roni Ezra, 2015), *A War* (Tobias Lindholm, 2015), *Northwest* (Michael Noer, 2013), *A Hijacking* (Tobias Lindholm, 2012) and *R* (Michael Noer, Tobias Lindholm, 2010).

UNITED IN DEATH



Rotterdam & Göteborg Film Festivals / 2015

Jeppe Rønne is bringing out his first fiction feature, *Bridgend*, a story based on a real-life wave of teen suicides in Bridgend County, South Wales. Over six years, the director made frequent visits to Wales to get close to the local youth and try to answer the question on everyone’s mind: Why did they do it?

By Nynne Østergaard

The big, unanswered question is: Why did so many young people – the official count is 79 between 2007 and 2012 – from tiny Bridgend County, South Wales, decide to end their lives?

This question is the starting point of Jeppe Rønne’s first feature fiction *Bridgend*. Sara moves with her father back to the former mining town they are from after her mother dies. Her father, Dave, is a policeman tasked with solving the spate of mysterious suicides among the town’s youth. Mixing life force with a death wish, the teenagers meet in the woods – away from their parents – to drink and swim in the lake and celebrate the dead. As the suicides mount, Sara’s fascination with the group grows and, against her father’s will, she falls in love with one of the boys, Jamie, a minister’s son.

“Like Sara and the other teens, most of us recognise the need for community – even if that

community has an unknown dark side. You can’t control your love and your longing, especially when you’re young. But most of us don’t take our own lives for that reason. That’s where the crucial difference kicks in. Why did it end in such a tragedy?” Rønne asks.

The Collective Unconscious

The director provides no final answer in *Bridgend*, just as there is no answer in real life. Some suspect the teens made a suicide pact online, where they got together in a virtual world divorced from reality. Others point to the lack of parental care. All the young suicide victims used the same method: girls and boys alike hanged themselves without leaving a suicide note.

“Like Sara and the other teens, most of us recognise the need for community – even if that community has an unknown dark side.”

“The modern, rational person wants to find the cause of a problem, so it can be fixed. So we can move on and put it behind us. Getting no answer when we ask ‘why’ makes us insecure. It can happen again. And it does. Young people are still committing suicide there, even if it seems to have peaked, fortunately,” Rønne says.

“The important thing for me wasn’t to provide an answer, because how do you do that? What’s the meaning of life and death? Instead, I tried to get close to the teens and understand what drives them and the group dynamics they are part of for good and ill – this incredibly powerful collective unconscious where you do certain things and follow each other without knowing exactly why.”

In the film, the divide between reason and irrationality is embodied in Sara and her father. As a cop, Dave follows the path of logic, which only leads to further bewilderment, while Sara, via her natural sensibility and immediate love, is much closer to an actual understanding.

Local Involvement Is Key

Jeppe Rønne first came across the story of the suicides in a newspaper article in January 2008. A few months later, at Easter, he made the first of countless trips to Bridgend. At first, Rønne had to take an almost anthropological approach to access the lives of these teens, but today he thinks of them as friends.

“Several people have tried to make a film about the incidents, but they were all shut down or didn’t get real access. It takes a certain amount of patience,” he says. “Because I wasn’t a journalist – the local youths beat up journalists – and because I didn’t take notes, I slowly got closer to them over the years. I have been with them through good times and bad, partied with them and felt on my own body how tough this area can be.”

Several young people the director was in contact with later committed suicide, even though they told him they would never dream of doing it. One hanged himself in a tree next to the one his best friend hanged himself in the year before. Others have tried to hang themselves more than once but survived. For a while, this happened several times a week.

Naturally, the many suicides among its young people have shaken the small community. Out of respect for the place and the youth, Rønne and his crew chose to film in the area and find local talent both in front of and behind the camera. The two leads, Sara and Jamie, are played by professional actors Hannah Murray and Josh O’Connor, while the rest of the actors were cast locally over a year and a half.

Images and sounds embrace us in an evocative, sensuous way in Jeppe Rønne’s *Bridgend*.





The teenagers in *Bridgend* celebrate the dead by shouting out their names at the sky at night.

“These young people want their story told and put out there. Most grownups I have met want that, too, though a few, typically those whose daughters or sons have committed suicide, were more sceptical about the film. For that reason, having the support of the local community was essential to us. We showed up at community centres and other places to describe the project and took the time to talk with the authorities and the families,” Rønde says. “I was certain we’d come up against all sorts of resistance when we shot the film, but we didn’t. On the contrary. That’s a huge relief and it pleases me no end. They could so easily have called me out for not being from around there and who was I to tell their story? But they didn’t.”

A Personal Project
Bridgend is Jeppe Rønde’s first fiction feature. Originally a maker of documentaries, he is the director of *Jerusalem, My Love* and *The Swenkas*, which were both screened at a ton of festivals and both orbit the father-son relationship and the search for meaning. Faith plays a significant role in *Bridgend*, as well. While the grownups profess a more conventional religion, in church, other forces are in play among the youth. They celebrate the dead by shouting out their names at the sky and find community with each other and in nature. Many of the characters are composites of stories that Rønde came across in Bridgend. Clearly, the film is as personal to him as his other films. “When I make a film, I’m always interested in examining a simple question: Why do we get up in

the morning? What’s the meaning of all of this, of life?” For the same reason, it isn’t crucial to him whether he’s working in documentaries or features. “There’s no clear boundary between fiction and reality. There’s no one truth. Or there are as many truths as there are people. It’s all about sensibility and how best to tell your story. That’s where my language as a director comes in. It’s my truth. Whether it’s called one thing or another is secondary.” “Why do the young people in *Bridgend* hang themselves? I try to find answers where there are none by using a cinematic language emphasizing that there’s more to life than a linear story and a perfect pan. By mixing images of death and life, nature and modernity, time and place into montages. By showing a dog in an overgrown railway leading into the woods, as if nature had taken over civilization. By letting the silence explode into a cacophony of words and music. In short, by allowing images and sounds embrace us in an evocative, sensuous way. That way we might be able to find some kind of answer after all.” “The Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard once wrote about directing a pair of binoculars at something you either hope to see, want to see or despair at not seeing. You have to understand that the outer lenses of the binoculars are in fact mirrors. The answer lies, first and foremost, within ourselves,” the director says ■

***Bridgend** opened at Rotterdam and Göteborg Film Festivals. The film is supported by the Danish Film Institute’s talent scheme New Danish Screen and produced by Michel Schønnemann and Malene Blenkov for Blenkov & Schønnemann Pictures. For more information, see reverse section.*



Jeppe Rønde
Director, born 1973. Rønde holds a BA in Film Studies and Art History from the University of Copenhagen.

His first feature documentary, *Jerusalem, My Love* (2004), about the city’s uncompromising religious character and the director’s own quest for religion, debuted in IDFA’s First Appearance Competition.

The Swenkas (2005), a portrait of a small group of men in post-apartheid South Africa who dress up in flashy suits to inspire others, was nominated for IDFA’s Joris Ivens Award and won a Special Jury Prize at Toronto Hot Docs.

Bridgend (2015), Rønde’s debut fiction feature, had its world debut in the Tiger Competition at Rotterdam and the Ingmar Bergman International Debut competition at Göteborg Film Festival.

Malene Blenkov & Michel Schønnemann

Producers at Blenkov & Schønnemann Pictures, their own company founded in 2003. Films include *Bridgend* (Jeppe Rønde, 2015), *Player* (Tomas Villum Jensen, 2013), *Almost Perfect* (Hella Joof, 2012).

“The important thing for me wasn’t to provide an answer, because how do you do that? What’s the meaning of life and death?”

THE BRIDGEND TRAGEDY

According to official sources, 79 young people committed suicide between 2007 and 2012 in Bridgend County, a South Wales community of 139,000 people. In most cases by far, they hanged themselves, leaving no suicide note.

No one has found a definitive answer why these young people killed themselves, but several theories try to explain the underlying causes. Some say the teens made a suicide pact on a social network site, where several of the deceased had profiles. Others point to the uncommonly dreary lives these young people lead and the lack of parental support in this disadvantaged, former coalmining area. Others again single out the bleak weather that enshrouds Bridgend throughout the long winter months.

MASS SUICIDE

Mass suicide is not a new phenomenon. History’s first mass suicide took place at the mountain fortification of Masada on the Dead Sea in the year 73 A.D., when nearly 1,000 Jews killed themselves after a two-year siege rather than fall into Roman hands. Most cases of mass suicide in the last 40 years have been religiously motivated. The most widely publicised example is that of the members of the People’s Temple, led by Jim Jones, who in 1978 had ensconced themselves in Jonestown in a jungle area in Guyana, South America, waiting to depart for another, better planet. The media has called the Bridgend incidents “Jonestown with broadband,” referring to the teens’ alleged online suicide pact.

Mass suicide is not unique to humans. While Rønde was in South Wales working on his film, 26 dolphins simultaneously swam up on a beach south of Bridgend and died. This phenomenon has been observed before and marine biologists have no other explanation for it than mass suicide.



In Your Arms. Framgrab

“I clearly have a fondness for tragic stories. Those things touch me. It’s beautiful and naive to fight things you can’t defeat.”

Nordic Competition / Göteborg Film Festival 2015

TRAVELLING WITH A DEAD MAN

It is necessary to get close to death to learn to truly live? Samanou Acheche Sahlstrøm asks that question in his lyrical first feature *In Your Arms*, about a woman accompanying a man on his final journey.

By Marianne Lentz

Maria, 35, is in a rut in her life. Apart from work – she is a nurse in a nursing home – she rarely goes out. For dinner she eats cornflakes out of the box, while watching her cat, simply named “Cat,” eat its pellets. The one person she seems to have any close contact with is Niels, a patient at the nursing home. Niels is a young man who is paralyzed from the waist down and his neural disorder is slowly eating away at the rest of his body. He has asked his family not to visit anymore, and he drives his caregivers crazy with his acerbic comments and his loud music. Maria and Niels have a special connection. She is the only one who can see behind his sarcastic comments and he even warms up a little bit in her presence. When he acts like an idiot, she just laughs and watches the corners of his mouth turn down. None of that changes the fact that Niels wants to die. His last wish is to go to Switzerland where he can legally commit assisted suicide. When his family declines to accompany him there – his mother can’t bring herself to do it – Maria is his only chance. Though she is against the purpose of his trip, she agrees to go with him. So begins a journey that brings the two of them closer to each other and to life – and death.

Road Movie and Chamber Play
When Samanou Acheche Sahlstrøm saw Jim Jarmusch’s *Dead Man* years ago, the film’s opening quote, by Henry Michaux, lodged in the French-born director’s mind: “It’s preferable not to travel with a dead man.”

“That was the starting point for the story I wanted to tell. What is it like to travel with a man who is actually looking forward to death? You can’t help but be affected by such a trip,” Acheche Sahlstrøm says. *In Your Arms*, his first feature as a director, is a cross between a road movie and a chamber play, a tragedy and a love story. While the film’s engine is Niels’s looming death, Maria is the film’s true protagonist. As they travel through Germany to Switzerland, their bond tightens. It used to be Maria who made Niels smile, at the care home. Now Niels, going to his final destination, forces Maria out of her shell. “I wanted to have a protagonist who is affected by Niels – who wants to save him, on the one hand, but who also has more selfish motives. She’s an enigmatic character that way. I like the idea that Niels basically has no clue why Maria goes with him. That makes their relationship more equal,” says the director.

A Fondness for Tragedies
Assisted suicide is a heavy subject. As the director admits, he has a weakness for the melancholy. “I clearly have a fondness for tragic stories. Those things touch me. Tragedy in a lot of ways creates its own logic. It’s beautiful and naive to fight things you can’t defeat. When you are thrust into a situation where you act in ways that make no sense intellectually but have an emotional truth.”

This kind of emotional logic runs through the story of Maria and Niels. The closer they get to the end of Niels’s life, the closer they get to each other. That may make no sense, but as Sahlstrøm says: “There is something emotionally right about it, because they are faced with experiencing the most intimate moment there is – witnessing someone’s death. We’ve all had sex with more people than we’ll ever watch die. So why, in this case, shouldn’t Niels and Maria give each other the gift of intimacy?” While tragedy is the engine driving the story, something happens to Maria and Niels. Maria, the loner, lets her hair down and we get a sense that there is more than self-sacrifice behind her decision to make the trip with Niels.

“Maria has another side, beyond self-sacrifice. Something is driving her out. She has to learn to live and accept her life and find her own happiness instead of thinking about others,” the director says.

A Love Story Emerged
Niels and Maria are played by Peter Plaugborg and Lisa Carlehed. They were cast because they were willing to try a lot of different things. “We were never going for the perfect take. I don’t believe in the perfect take. Instead we tried out a lot of different things in order to find out how far we could go with each scene. It’s not improvisation; it’s more a raw exploration of the material. That takes actors who can accept that they will be doing a lot of rubbish,

as we look for those moments that can only happen when a scene hasn’t been rehearsed to death.” Perhaps that’s why *In Your Arms* looks so real – because the moments we see arose spontaneously. As the director says, the love story between the two characters wasn’t in the script but emerged during the filming. “If you make a film with a man and a woman and they are in almost every scene, the audience automatically gets certain expectations about their relationship. I deliberately stayed away from writing the script as a love story. That would have been a completely unpalatable outcome, as I saw it then. Instead, we now had this virginal storyline in the editing process that actually emerged as a love story. That way, it was a lot less contrived and obvious. Then you can add a look or a gesture and use it within that framework,” he says. “I like to trust that things will emerge along the way” ■

In Your Arms premiered at Göteborg Film Festival. The film is supported by the Danish Film Institute’s talent programme New Danish Screen and produced by Sara Namer for Meta Film. For more information, see reverse section.



In Your Arms. Framgrab



Director Samanou Acheche Sahlstrøm

Samanou Acheche Sahlstrøm
Director, born 1982, France. Moved to Denmark in 2001 and started at Zentropa the following year.

Graduated from the National Film School of Denmark in 2011 with *Les Amours Perdus* starring Emmanuelle Béart and Denis Lavant.

In Your Arms (2015), supported by the Danish Film Institute’s talent programme New Danish Screen, is his first feature. The film world premiered at Göteborg Film Festival.

Sara Namer
Producer at Meta Film. Has a focus on new Danish talents. Feature films include *In Your Arms* (Samanou Acheche Sahlstrøm, 2015) and *What We Become* (Bo Mikkelsen, 2015, see page 6).

SIDSE BABETT KNUDSEN ACTRESS

By Morten Piil

In the late 1990s, Sidse Babett Knudsen established herself as the leading Danish female film star of her generation, emerging as a new type of ingénue – sharp and razor-tongued while ruled by powerful, often romantic, passions. Trained at the Théâtre de L’Ombre in Paris, she also made a splash on stage, mastering the gestural as superbly as the subtle delivery of lines.

Playing Denmark’s first female PM in the recent drama series *Borgen* has opened even more doors for the 46-year-old actress who is set to feature in two international productions in 2015.

Let’s Get Lost (1997) → Knudsen got her screen breakthrough in Jonas Elmer’s improvised comedy *Let’s Get Lost*. As Julie, a moody student, Knudsen is brassy around the three male sluggards in her commune but emotionally raw as a dumped girlfriend. A bit of a clown and very much a vulnerable young woman, she is by turns sarcastic, sad and despondently cheerful. The role won her both coveted Danish film awards, the Bodil and the Robert.



The One and Only (1999) ↑ Sexy, fun and touching, Knudsen nailed it in Susanne Bier’s breakthrough, monster-hit comedy. Playing another complex female character, Knudsen is by turns comically helpless and sassily aggressive, a slave to her emotions. Her blue eyes twinkle and cupids fill the air in the romantic scenes at the core of the film. As always, comedy and humour are never far away in her highly nuanced expressions and spontaneous delivery. Again, she won both the Bodil and the Robert for best actress in a leading role.

Mona’s World (2001) ↓ Knudsen resumed her partnership with Jonas Elmer in another improvised comedy. This time she plays a shallow, mousy office worker who unfolds her butterfly wings and has an adventure. Again, she is the all-powerful centre of the film, whether falling for a bumbling bank robber, fronting as her company’s boss or vamping it up as a seductive barfly. The role epitomizes her specialty in her years as the leading young female star of Danish film: an ordinary young woman with rich, untapped potential who unleashes her fantasies.



Old, New, Borrowed and Blue (2003) ↑ Knudsen’s shimmering, vibrant acting is the driving force in this breezy Dogme film by Natasha Arthy, part screwball comedy and part character study centring on Knudsen’s bride-to-be, Katrine. The character’s inconvenient love for her sister’s Swedish boyfriend is like a bolt of lightning, sumptuously rendered with Knudsen’s full arsenal of conflicting emotional nuances and comically spontaneous reactions.

After the Wedding (2006) → As Mads Mikkelsen’s rekindled old flame, Knudsen transitions from the impulsive young women she has so far been portraying to a more mature type of woman. Susanne Bier’s emotional and witty drama stars Knudsen in her first role as a mother. Her daughter’s wedding is an opportunity to reunite with the man she loved in her youth – Mads Mikkelsen’s idealist, Jacob, who went to India and founded an orphanage. For her part, she married a man of means (Rolf Lassgård) who, for obscure reasons, wants to donate a fortune to the orphanage. Though haunted by ghosts from the past, she stands firmer than before, on her own two feet.



Borgen (2010, 2011, 2013) ← For an actress best known for bubbly and animated performances in romantic comedies, it might seem like quite a leap to portray Denmark’s first female prime minister. But in 30 episodes over three seasons, Knudsen expands her range in her first starring role on TV. The idealist leader of the Moderate party, she speaks not only to the voters’ brains but also to their hearts. A family person forced to sacrifice her marriage for her job, she feels loneliness at the top, while always maintaining her humanity amidst the countless intrigues and compromises of a three-party government. Knudsen’s unique blend of sharp and sweet, authority and immediate vulnerability, helped make the series an international hit.

- Sidse Babett Knudsen / Selected Films
- L’hermine** (2015) Christian Vincent
 - A Hologram for the King** (2015) Tom Tykwer
 - 1864** (TV, 2014) Ole Bornedal
 - The Duke of Burgundy** (2014) Peter Strickland
 - Speed Walking** (2014) Niels Arden Oplev
 - Borgen** (TV, 2010, 2011, 2013) Adam Price
 - Almost Perfect** (2012) Hella Joof
 - Therapy** (2010) Kenneth Kainz
 - Above the Street below the Water** (2009) Charlotte Sieling
 - Take the Trash** (2008) Rasmus Heide
 - After the Wedding** (2006) Susanne Bier
 - Old, New, Borrowed and Blue** (2003) Natasha Arthy
 - Mona’s World** (2001) Jonas Elmer
 - The One and Only** (1999) Susanne Bier
 - Mifune** (1999) Søren Kragh-Jacobsen
 - Let’s Get Lost** (1997) Jonas Elmer

FESTIVALS IN 2014



Nymphomaniac Photo: Christian Gelineas

FEATURE FILMS
Danica Curcic, appearing in an impressive four major roles in 2014, shone at the Berlinale as one of ten emerging young talents getting the red-carpet treatment under the **Shooting Stars** umbrella. The festival also saw the presence of Danish cinema’s arguably biggest star, “maverick auteur” **Lars von Trier**, whose **Nymphomaniac Director’s Cut Volume 1** premiered in Berlin. Six months later, **Volume 2** had its premiere at the Venice Film Festival. With Volume 1 also on the bill at Venice, von Trier’s full five-and-a-half-hour sexual odyssey was finally out. Back in January, three Danish films made the final round of the Oscars: **Thomas Vinterberg’s The Hunt** for Best Foreign Language Film, **Joshua Oppenheimer’s The Act of Killing** for Best Documentary Feature and **Anders Walter’s Helium** for Best Live Action Short Film. Of the three, Walter’s life-affirming story of the human imagination emerged triumphant. The Danish line-up at Cannes included **Kristian Levring’s** revenge story **The Salvation**, starring Mads Mikkelsen as a settler who strikes back at his family’s killers, and **Jonas Alexander Arnby’s** critically acclaimed first feature **When Animals Dream**, featuring Sonia Suhl in her big-screen debut as a teenage girl undergoing bizarre changes. At the Toronto Film Festival in September, Oscar-winning director **Susanne Bier** premiered **A Second Chance**, with Game of Thrones star Nikolaj Coster-Waldau

as a cop thrown dangerously off balance. Also at Toronto was **Ole Christian Madsen’s Itsi Bitsi**. For his outstanding performance as the film’s real-life hippie poet, **Joachim Fjelstrup** has been selected as a **Shooting Star** at this year’s Berlinale. Speaking of stars, **Paprika Steen** was named Best Actress at the San Sebastian Film Festival for her performance in **Bille August’s Silent Heart**, a drama about a family grappling with the mother’s painful decision to end her own life. **The Absent One**, **Mikkel Nørgaard’s** second film about cold-case detective Carl Mørck, was invited to America’s highest-profile genre festival, Austin’s Fantastic Fest. Finally, two Danish co-productions made their mark in 2014: **Pawel Pawlikowski’s Ida** (Polish-Danish) garnered five top prizes at the European Film Awards and is nominated for two Oscars in 2015, while **Ruben Östlund’s Force Majeure** (Swedish-Danish-Norwegian-French), after winning the Jury Prize at Cannes, has amassed dozens of accolades, including (like Ida) a Golden Globe nomination.

DOCUMENTARY FILMS
The year in documentaries opened with an Oscar nomination and a BAFTA award for **The Act of Killing**, **Joshua Oppenheimer’s** acclaimed portrayal of the killers from Indonesia’s forgotten genocide. Its companion piece, **The Look of Silence**, showing the 1965-66 killings from the victims’ point of view, premiered at the Venice Film Festival, winning the Grand Jury Prize and four other awards, and in November, it took home the main prize at **CPH:DOX**. Scandinavia’s largest documentary film festival kicked off its 2014 edition with a pan-European screening of **Anders Østergaard’s 1989** at more than 20 venues across Europe, marking the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Iron Curtain. CPH:DOX’s Best Nordic Film award went to **Olmo & the Seagull**, by **Lea Glob** and **Petra Costa**, a highly

inventive narrative about an actress at the famous Théâtre du Soleil and her feelings of becoming a mother. CPH:DOX also honoured **Camilla Nielsson** with a Special Mention for **Democrats**. “At once important and impishly entertaining,” wrote Variety about Nielsson’s bittersweet reporting from Zimbabwe’s bumpy road to a new constitution. The film was also warmly received at **IDFA**, where it was one of four nominees for Best Feature-Length Documentary. So was **Something Better to Come** by **Hanna Polak**, who took home the Special Jury prize for her 14-year chronicle of life in Europe’s largest garbage dump. Also in competition at IDFA were **Søren Steen Jespersen** and **Nasib Farah’s Warriors from the North**, a by now shockingly familiar story of rootless young men leaving to fight a holy war, and **Elvira Lind’s Songs for Alexis**, a musical portrait of a transsexual teen and his girlfriend. As many as **15 Danish titles** were selected for the world’s most prominent documentary showcase at Amsterdam, including the international premieres of **The Arms Drop** by **Andreas Koefoed**, **The Circus Dynasty** by **Anders Riis-Hansen**, **Good Things Await** by **Phie Ambo** and **The Newsroom – Off the Record** by **Mikala Krogh**. Toward the end of the year, **Just the Right Amount of Violence** by the grand old man of Danish documentaries, **Jon Bang Carlsen**, was among the nominees for the European Film Award for Best Documentary.



The Look of Silence Photo: Lars Skree



The Absent One Photo: Christian Gelineas

WHAT DANES LIKE

With *The Absent One* claiming the top spot on the Danish charts in 2014, director Mikkel Nørgaard takes the cake for the second year running.

A total of 12.3 million tickets were sold at Danish theatres in 2014, a decline compared to general admissions in 2013 (13.5 million). But taking a broader view, last year is down only slightly from the average for the last 10 years. In other words, the big-screen experience remains a favourite Danish cultural pastime.
25 Danish films had their domestic premiere in 2014 and sold 3.3 million tickets, once again securing a high market share, this time of 27%. Danish film took five spots in the overall Top 10, with first and second place, respectively, claimed by Mikkel Nørgaard’s *The Absent One* and Mikkel Serup’s *The Reunion 2 – The Funeral*. Both films are sequels, reflecting a general trend in the market at the moment: established film series do better commercially. Six of the ten best-selling films at Danish cinemas in 2014 are based on well-known brands.

The Absent One is the sequel to *The Keeper of Lost Causes*, which rose to the top back in 2013 with 725,000 admissions. Nørgaard’s second film about cold-case detective Carl Mørck has now (January 2015) sold more than 768,000 tickets, making it the third most popular Danish film in theatres this century, surpassed only by Nørgaard’s 2010 debut film *Klown* (855,000 admissions) and Lone Scherfig’s 2000 Dogme film *Italian for Beginners* (829,000 admissions). Nørgaard now holds an impressive position as the director of three of the five most-watched films since 2000.
Nørgaard is readying yet another sequel, *Klown Forever*, expanding on the toe-curling escapades from his 2010 debut film and once again starring the two comedians Casper Christensen and Frank Hvam. The film is expected to premiere this fall.

TOP 10 / Danish Films 2014

Title	Director	Production	Admissions
The Absent One *	Mikkel Nørgaard	Zentropa	764,000
The Reunion 2 – The Funeral	Mikkel Serup	Nordisk Film	605,000
Father of Four	Giacomo Campeotto	ASA Film	287,000
Speed Walking	Niels Arden Oplev	Nordisk Film	251,000
Silent Heart *	Bille August	SF Film	237,000
Crumbs – All at Stake	Barbara Topsøe-Rothenborg	Regner Grasten Film	226,000
Someone You Love	Pernille Fischer Christensen	Zentropa	167,000
The Jul Family	Carsten Rudolf	Pixy Film	159,000
The Cartel	Charlotte Sachs Bostrup	Nordisk Film	127,000
All Inclusive *	Hella Joof	Happy Ending Film	105,000

TOP 10 / All Films 2014

Title	Admissions
The Absent One * (dk)	764,000
The Reunion 2 – The Funeral (dk)	605,000
The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies *	485,000
The Hunger Games: Mockingjay – Part 1 *	310,000
How to Train your Dragon 2	306,000
Frozen	302,000
Father of Four (dk)	287,000
Speed Walking (dk)	251,000
The Wolf of Wall Street	246,000
Silent Heart * (dk)	237,000

* Still playing (January 2015)

Source: Distributors Organisation (FAFID). The official figures will be released by Statistics Denmark in April. Admission numbers as per 31 December 2014.



GOLD COAST / DANIEL DENCIK

In 1836 the Danish botanist and visionary Wulff Frederik Wulff leaves on a royal mission to supervise a coffee plantation on Africa's Gold Coast (now Ghana). Soon, his best intentions and Christian belief are tested by the harsh realities of slave trading and violence.

Daniel Dencik's first feature is an epic drama of love and faith, shedding light on a neglected chapter of Danish colonial history.

The film stars Jacob Oftebro as Wulff and Danica Curcic as a young missionary. Made in collaboration with local Ghanaian filmmakers, *Gold Coast* is produced by Haslund/ Dencik Entertainment. Release in July 2015.

Gold Coast Photo: Michael Haslund



LUKAS & THE ASPIES
/ LUKAS & THE ASPIES

12-year old Lukas is in many ways a normal kid. He plays in a band, hangs out with friends and fights with his kid brother. But Lukas also has Asperger Syndrome - and hence his own set of unique problems.

As proven by *Soccer Boy* (2001, selected for IDFA), *Little Miss Grown-Up* (2008, Best Documentary at Copenhagen's Buster festival) and *Scratch* (2003, selected for Berlin), Anders Gustafsson has a special talent for working with children.

Danish release / 2015
Running time / 25 min.
Director / Anders Gustafsson
Appearances / Karl Oskar Meyer, Erik Schmidt, Jan Meyer, Regitze Estrup
Producer / Jacob Jarek
Production company & international sales / Profile Pictures
/ +45 2873 2680
/ ditte@profilepictures.dk
/ www.profilepictures.dk

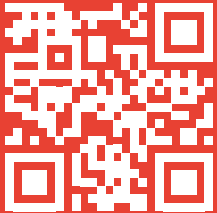


VITELLO DIGS A HOLE
/ VITELLO GRAVER ET HUL

Vitello is bored. The kids he usually plays with are not at home but his mother sends him off to play anyway with instructions to go out and make a new friend. Once out in the street Vitello has an idea. If he can find a coin he can buy a lot of sweets and attract new friends that way. He immediately starts searching the ground for coins. A curious boy, The Brat, comes by and begins looking for coins together with Vitello. Then the Brat proposes an even better idea: they can dig a hole, which Vitello can use to capture a new friend. The boys start digging a big hole in the bicycle path behind the mall. Afterwards they lie down in the shade and wait for a friend to fall into their trap. Suddenly there is loud crash. It paid off!

Dorte Bengtsson's graduation film, *The Syllphid*, premiered at Cannes' Cinéfondation in 2009.

Genre / Short fiction - Animation
Danish release / 2015
Running time / 7 min.
Director / Dorte Bengtsson
Producer / Charlotte Pedersen
Production company / Zentropa
/ +45 3686 8788
/ zentropa@filmbyen.com
/ www.zentropa.dk



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DANISH FILMS

BERLIN DIGITAL ISSUE 2015

./FILM./



SOMETHING BETTER TO COME

/ SOMETHING BETTER TO COME

Right outside of Moscow - home to the highest number of billionaires pr. capita - you'll find the largest junkyard in the world: The Svalika. It's a hard place run by the Russian mafia. And it's where Yula lives with her mother, her friends and many other people. Life is tough in the Svalika, but it's also a place where beauty and humanity can arise from the most unlikely conditions. It is from this place that Yula dreams of escaping and changing her life, even if it seems impossible.

Hanna Polak has directed, produced and shot several films that have won international awards, including the Oscar-nominated, IDA-winner and two times Emmy-nominated *The Children of Leníngrádsky* (2014).

Danish release / 2015
Running time / 110 min.
Director & Producer / Hanna Polak
Production company / Danish Documentary Production
International sales / Films Transit International Inc.
/ t 514 844 3358
/ janrofekekamp@filmstransit.com
/ www.filmstransit.com



THE VISIT

/ THE VISIT

This film documents an event that has never taken place - man's first encounter with intelligent life from space. Ever since the invention of radio, humans have been sending signals into space, announcing their existence to other civilizations. With unprecedented access to the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs, the military and experts from leading space agencies, the film explores a first contact scenario, beginning with the simplest of questions: Why are you here? How do you see in ourselves? A journey beyond a terrestrial perspective, revealing the fears, hopes, and rituals of a species forced not only to confront alien life forms, but also its own self image.

Produced by Oscar-nominated production company Magic Hour Films, as was Michael Madsen's first feature documentary *Into Eternity* (2009), about a depository for nuclear waste. His contribution to Wim Wender's *Cathedrals of Culture*, Halden Prison, premiered at the Berlinale 2014.

Danish release / 2015
Running time / 85 min.
Director / Michael Madsen
Producer / Lise Lense-Møller
Production company / Magic Hour Films
International sales / Autlook Filmsales
/ t 43 720 34 69 34
/ autlookfilms.com

Abukar, a Somali, lives a life at the very bottom of the Danish society. His son, Mohammed, has joined al-Shabaab in Somalia, perhaps to avoid a life like his father's. Abukar now fears that Mohammed will be the next suicide bomber to carry out his mission, a fear that seems very reasonable, as two out of the seven Danish-Somali men recruited together with Mohammed have already become "martyrs." One carried out a suicide attack at a graduation ceremony for doctors in Mogadishu, killing 24. The other attempted an attack at Mogadishu's airport, but failed to kill anyone but himself and two UN soldiers. A fourth young man from this terrorist cell, "The Shadow," got away just in time. "The Shadow" is the narrator of this film.

Søren Steen Jespersen graduated from the Danish School of Media and Journalism in 1993 and has since worked as a producer and for television. Nasib Farah made *My Cousin the Pirate* (2010) with Christian Sønderby Jepsen. *Warriors from the North* is Jespersen and Farah's debut as documentary film directors.

Danish release / 2014
Running time / 58 min.
Director / Søren Steen Jespersen, Nasib Farah
Producer / Helle Faber
Production company / Made in Copenhagen Aps
International sales / DR International
Sales / t +45 3520 3040
/ drsales@dr.dk
/ www.drsales.dk

WE ARE JOURNALISTS

/ WE ARE JOURNALISTS



A documentary film about the difficult conditions of Iranian journalists inside and outside the country and based on the personal story of the director. The film lays bare not only Ahmad's personal pain and suffering in his relentless fight for freedom of expression, but also the plight of many Iranian journalists who lost their livelihoods when the newspapers they worked for were banned.

Ahmad Jalali Farahani worked as a journalist and editor at Mehr News Agency in Iran. He has lived in Denmark since 2010 where his documentary *Sofar* screened at CPH:DOX.

Danish release / 2014
Running time / 85 min.
Director / Ahmad Jalali Farahani
Appearances / Ahmad Jalali Farahani
Producer / Anja Dalhoff
Production company / Danish Doc Production
International sales / Journeyman Pictures / t 44 208 398 4616
/ info@journeyman.tv
/ www.journeyman.uk



Panorama Dokumente / Berlinale 2015

/ MISFITS

In Tulsa, Oklahoma, between two of the city's two thousand churches, you find OpenArms Youth Project - the city's only youth center welcoming gay and transgender teenagers that have decided to come out in the middle of the Bible Belt. These kids are considered misfits as their wicked lifestyle does not fit into Tulsa's conservative and religious society. *Misfits* is a film about being yourself, even though that choice may cause great personal costs. The three characters in the film, Larissa, Benny and "D", all go to the center where they find love and support to confront the daily drama they are living because of their sexuality.

How Are You (2011), about the artist duo Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset, was selected for the Panorama programme at Berlin and was on show at HotDocs.

Danish release / 2015
Running time / 74 min.
Director / Jannik Sjældboel
Appearances /
Producer / Sara Stockmann
Production company / Sonntag Pictures
International sales / Wide House
/ +33 1 53 95 04 64
/ www.widehouse.org



Despite increasingly refined war technology, mass rape is used as a tool of war in modern combat. Some 25,000 to 40,000 women were victims of mass rape during the Balkan war 1992-1995. Twenty years after these crimes, only very few cases of war crimes of sexual violence have been investigated and prosecuted. For the women in the film the rapes remain a dark shadow in their lives enshrouded by taboo. For these women, legal justice is the only hope to regain integrity and life. However, justice fails and betrays them all the way to the International Criminal Court of justice in The Hague.

Katia Forbert Petersen and Annette Mari Olsen have kept in contact with a group of women who stranded in Denmark in 1992. The women had fled from Bosnia. They spoke about their experiences, their pain and the fear they had for the future — for themselves and for their children.

Danish release / 2014
Running time / 61 min.
Director / Annette Mari Olsen,
Katia Forbert Petersen
Producer / Annette Mari Olsen, Katia Forbert Petersen, Karen Hjort
Production company / Sfinx Film/TV
International sales / DR International
Sales / +45 3520 3040
/ drsales@dr.dk
/ www.drsales.dk



NAKED

/ DAGBOG FRA PORN VALLEY

Denice, who has starred in hundreds of porn films, has for some years been busy with the start-up of Scandinavia's biggest webcam site. Denice decides to make a comeback in Porn Valley in Los Angeles to make some quick cash over the summer. She moves into a mansion owned by Derek Hay, a porn film agent. Ten young porn models live together in the house - some of them as young as 18 and about to make their debut in the tough industry of porn. After three years away from the industry, Denice starts to see it in a new light. She finds that it makes her extremely sad. Her own situation is reflected in that of the young girls - as if she sees herself for the first time.

Nicole N. Horanyi has directed *Au Pair* (2011) and *The Devils* (2009). She is a graduate from the National Film School of Denmark.

Danish release / 2014
Running time / 51 min.
Director / Nicole N. Horanyi
Appearances / Denice Karskov
Producer / Helle Faber
Production company / Made in Copenhagen
International sales / DR International
Sales
/ +45 3520 3040
/ drsales@dr.dk
/ www.drsales.dk



THE NEWSROOM – OFF THE RECORD

/ EKSTRA BLADET UDEN FOR CITAT

The world of printed media is threatened by the financial crisis as circulation figures are falling and the media corporations' economies are faltering. The Danish media is marked by the crisis as well – and also Ekstra Bladet is going through the worst crisis in the newspaper's hundred years of publishing. The readers have gone online and are falling the printed newspaper. And no one has yet cracked the code on how to capitalize on news on the web. Every day Denmark's old watchdog, Ekstra Bladet, compete with other newspapers for the readers and the good stories. The battle is fierce, and in the end, only the strongest will survive. The film is a portrait of a tabloid newspaper entering a new era.

Danish release / 2014
Running time / 97 min.
Director / Mikala Krogh
Appearances / Poul Madsen, Karen Bro, Jimmy Maymann, Kristian Kornø
Producer / Signé Dykjær
Production company / Danish Documentary Production
International sales / Danish Documentary Production
/ +45 26162 535
/ danishdocumentary@gmail.com
/ www.danishdocumentary.com



OLMO AND THE SEAGULL

/ OLMO AND THE SEAGULL

Olivia is an actor in the famous theatre company Theatre du Soleil - both in the film and in real life. When she and her boyfriend and acting colleague Serge are expecting their first child Olivia has to give up an important part and a tour with the theatre in order to stay at home and take care of herself and their baby.

Petra Costa and Lea Glob won the Nordic Doc Award for *Olmo and the Seagull* at CPH:DOX in 2014, where Lea Glob also received the Reel Talent Award. Costa's *Elena* screened at IDFA and HotDocs and won awards at numerous Brazilian festivals. Glob received a Gold Panda Award for Students for Most Innovative Documentary for her graduation film *Meeting My Father* Kasper Top Hat at the Sichuan TV Festival in China.

Danish release / 2015
Running time / 90 min.
Director / Lea Glob, Petra Costa
Appearances / Olivia Corsini, Serge Nicolai
Producer / Charlotte Pedersen, Luis Urban, Tiago Favan
Production company / Zentropa
International sales / Zentropa
/ +3686 8788



PEBBLES AT YOUR DOOR

/ PEBBLES AT YOUR DOOR

"If we lived in Paradise, we would no longer need hope," Harmonia lived a happy life in North Korea, but her reality cracks as she learns the truths she never wanted to know. In the end, she faces a choice of living in a broken paradise of lies and deception or treading the unknown, lonely path of the real world outside. Nothing is free, and the struggle to become a whole human being is inhuman. *Pebbles at Your Door* is a film about a woman from the North Korean elite, who faces the reality of her once beloved childhood paradise and the impossible task of healing a life that has been torn from birth.

Danish release / 2015
Running time / 18 min.
Director / Vibeke Bryld
Producer / Heidi Elise Christensen
Production company / Final Cut for Real
International sales / Final Cut for Real ApS
/ +45 3543 6043
/ byrrge@final-cut.dk
/ www.final-cut.dk

Director of *Bedtime Stories from the Axis of Evil* (2011), in Chief of DOX, the European Documentary Magazine.



FASSBINDER – TO LOVE WITHOUT DEMANDS

/ FASSBINDER – AT ELSKE UDEN AT
KRAÆVE



FLOTEL EUROPA

/ FLOTEL EUROPA



GENETIC ME

/ GENETIC ME

Danish film director Christian Braad Thomsen was a close friend of Rainer Werner Fassbinder (1945-82). They met when Fassbinder showed his first film *Love Is Colder Than Death* at the Berlinale 1969 and saw each other for the last time just three weeks before he died. This documentary is based on lengthy film interviews that Braad Thomsen shot with Fassbinder in the 1970's, and which have never been published.

Director, writer, producer and film distributor Christian Braad Thomsen has established himself as an incisive culture critic and film writer as well as a passionate defender of art-house cinema. His artistic and ideological orientation is reflected in his books on Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Alfred Hitchcock and the French New Wave directors. Films include *Dear Irene* (1971), *Ladies on the Rocks* (1983), *Karen Blixen – Storyteller* (1995) and *Blues for Montmartre* (2011).

Danish release / 2015
Running time / 106 min.
Director / Christian Braad Thomsen
Appearances / Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Im Hermann, Harry Bar, Margit Carstensen
Production company / Kollektiv Film
International sales / Christian Braad Thomsen
/ www.braadthomsen.com
/ braadthomsen@gmail.com
/ t +45 3316 4224

In 1992 a wave of refugees from the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina reached Denmark. With refugee camps completely full, the Red Cross pulled a giant ship into the canals of Copenhagen. The ship, *Flotel Europa*, became a temporary home for a thousand people waiting for decisions on their asylum applications. Among them was a young 12 year old boy, Vladimir, who fled Sarajevo together with his mother and older brother. They spent two years in the limbo of Flotel Europa. Two decades later, Vladimir Tomic takes us on a journey of growing up on this ship filled with echoes of the war - and other things that make up an adolescence.

Tomic's films *The Pianist* (2005) won 1st Prize at Short Ends World Art/Film Festival in London. Selected for IDFA Student Competition, *My Lost Generation* (2009) received 1st Prize for Best Art Work at Copenhagen Fine Arts Academy Exhibition

Danish release / 2014
Running time / 52 min.
Director / Pernille Rose Grankjær
Appearances / Lone Frank, Robert Plomin, Daniel Nettle, Ahmad Hanri
Producer / Lone Frank, Bjørn Vide, Jesper Eugen-Olsen
Production company / The Four Letter Revolution
International sales / DR International
Sales / t +45 3520 3040
/ drsales@dr.dk
/ www.drsales.dk



GOOD THINGS AWAIT

/ SÅ MEGGET GODT I VENTE

Niels is one of the last idealistic farmers in the agricultural country of Denmark. He makes some of the world's finest products, praised by the consumers, prized by the world's best restaurant, NOMA in Copenhagen, and nursed in harmony with the universe. But Niels' ways of farming in accordance with the planets and the primal instincts of the animals are not too popular with the authorities. They are threatening to withdraw his license to keep cattle, the buildings are deteriorating, and with no successor to take over, Niels risks seeing his life fall apart.

Phie Ambo co-directed *Family* (2001) which won the Jørgen Ivens award for best feature documentary. Ambo is also renowned for *Gambler* (2006), about Danish feature film director Nicolas Winding Refn, and *Free the Mind* (2012).

Danish release / 03.09.2014
Running time / 96 min.
Director / Phie Ambo
Appearances / Niels Stokholm, Rita Stokholm, René Redzepi
Producer / Malene Flindt Pedersen
Production company / Danish Documentary
International sales / CAT&DOCS
/ cat@catndocs.com
/ www.catndocs.com
/ t +331 4461 7748



LIFE IS SACRED

/ LIFE IS SACRED

The fearless Colombian philosopher-politician-teacher Antanas Mockus and his followers struggle for peace in a country with the longest running internal conflict in the world. This is a story about four years and a lifetime that changed a country. And how learning to lose patiently might make you win.

Danish release / 2015
Running time / 104 min.
Director / Andreas Møl Dalsgaard
Producer / Signe Byrge Sørensen, Anne Køhnke
Production company / Final Cut for Real ApS
Sales / t +45 3543 6043
/ byrge@final-cut.dk
/ www.final-cut.dk

Afghan Muscles (2007), Dalsgaard's debut as a documentary director, was a festival hit, winning Best Documentary at AFI Los Angeles and Open Eyes Award at Rome MedFilm Festival. *Cities on Speed – Bogota Change* (2009), which also portrayed Antanas Mockus, was selected for IDFA's Reflecting Images: Panorama. *The Human Scale* (2012) screened at a number of festivals, including Hot Docs and Chicago.

Danish release / 13.11.2014
Running time / 99 min.
Director / Joshua Oppenheimer
Producer / Signe Byrge Sørensen
Production company / Final Cut for Real ApS
International sales / Cinephil - Philippa Kowarsky Production Ltd.
/ t +97235664129
/ info@cinephil.co.il

Through the filmmaker's work filming perpetrators of the 1965-66 Indonesian genocide, a family of survivors discovers how their son was murdered - and the identity of the men who killed him. The family's youngest son asks how he can raise his children in a society where survivors are terrorized into silence, and everybody is terrorized into treating the murderers as heroes. In search of answers, he decides to confront each of the surviving killers involved with his brother's murder. And thus begins, though cinema, an unprecedented dialogue.

Joshua Oppenheimer was nominated for an Oscar in 2014 for *The Act of Killing* which has won huge international acclaim since its world premiere at Toronto Film Festival in 2012.



THE LOOK OF SILENCE

/ THE LOOK OF SILENCE



/ KRIGEN
A WAR

Company commander Claus Michael Pedersen and his men are stationed in Helmand, Afghanistan. Meanwhile back in Denmark, with a husband at war and three children missing their father, everyday life is a struggle for Claus' wife Maria. During a routine mission, the soldiers are caught in heavy Taliban crossfire. In order to save his men, Claus makes a decision that ultimately sees him return to Denmark accused of a war crime.

In the director's third feature, Tobias Lindholm reunites with actors Pilou Asbæk and Søren Malling from *A Hijacking*, a critical hit at Venice and Toronto. Lindholm has written several episodes for the international hit series *Borgen* (2009-13). Co-writer with Thomas Vinterberg on the director's two latest films, *Submarine* (2010, Berlinale Competition) and Cannes winner *The Hunt*, and upcoming *The Commune* (2015). Made his directorial debut with *R*, co-directed with Michael Noer. Among Variety's 10 Directors to Watch in 2013.

Status / Post-production
Danish release / 20.08.2015
Running time / 90 min.
Director / Tobias Lindholm
Appearances / Pilou Asbæk, Tuva Novotny, Søren Malling, Charlotte Munk
Producer / René Ezra, Tomas Radoor
Production company / Nordisk Film
International sales / Studiocanal

Genre / Horror
Status / Post-production
Danish release / 08.10.2015
Running time / 90 min.
Director / Bo Mikkelsen
Appearances / Mille Dinesen, Troels Lyby, Benjamin Engell, Marie Hammer Boda
Producer / Sara Namer
Production company & international sales / Meta Film
info@metafilm.dk
www.metafilm.dk

/ SORGENFRI
WHAT WE BECOME



The setting is a residential street in the idyllic town of Sorgenfri. Our focus is on a family of four. Their daily life changes abruptly, when a deadly virus afflicts the town. Now, it is about survival of the fittest, and the question is whether the family is strong enough as a group to make it through the crisis.

First feature film by Bo Mikkelsen.



/ 1989
1989

In 1988, to save Hungary's appalling economy, the young technocrat Miklós Németh becomes the country's new prime minister. He decides to remove the expensive border control apparatus from the state budget. A young couple from East Germany is encouraged by the rumours that the Hungarian border to Austria will be opened and decide to try their luck. But Németh's decision has set him up against formidable adversaries and communist hardliners. The young couple is caught in the political power game, and the young man is shot dead at the border. This tragic event paradoxically accelerates Németh's final decision to open the borders, and soon after the Berlin wall falls.

Danish release / 05.11.2014
Running time / 90 min.
Director / Anders Østergaard, Erzsébet Rácz
Appearances / Miklós Németh, Gundula Schafitel, Uta Koch, Mathias Rösler
Producer / Lise Lense-Møller
Production company / Magic Hour Films
International sales / First Hand Films
World Sales / t +41 44 312 2060
info@firsthandfilms.com
www.firsthandfilms.com

British arms dealer Peter Bleach is on a mission to find the agent who lied in court as Bleach faced a possible death sentence in India. On his word, Bleach was convicted for dropping four tons of weapons over West Bengal to start a civil war. Bleach was indeed part of the weapons drop – but as an informer for MI5 trying to setup the mastermind behind it, the Dane Niels Holck, who was also on board. But Holck dramatically escaped, and Bleach paid the price. Now, years later, Holck stands before trial in Denmark. Bleach decides to forgive his former enemy and embarks on a quest to find the truth behind the mission.

Andreas Koefoed made his first feature-length documentary, *Ballroom Dancer*, in co-direction with Christian Bonke. They received the award for Best Nordic Documentary at Nordisk Panorama in 2012.

Danish release / 04.06.2014
Running time / 94 min.
Director / Andreas Koefoed
Appearances / Niels Holck, Peter Bleach, Paul McEwan, Andreas Führer
Producer / Miriam Nørgaard
Production company / Fridthjof Film
International sales / DR International
Sales / t +45 3520 3040
drsales@dr.dk
www.drsales.dk

/ VÆBENSMUGLINGEN
THE ARMS DROP



/ DEMOCRATS
DEMOCRATS



Over the course of more than three years director Camilla Nielsson has been up close in the inner circles of politics in Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe. With the process of creating Zimbabwe's new constitution as the film's narrative backbone, this is the unique story of the political elite in Zimbabwe fighting the battle over the founding principles defining the country's possible future.

Camilla Nielsson is co-director on *Cities on Speed* — *Mumbai Disconnected* (2010). She holds an MA in visual anthropology from New York University and worked as a media consultant for UNICEF and UNESCO.

Danish release / 2015
Running time / 100 min.
Director / Camilla Nielsson
Appearances / Paul Mangwana, Douglas Mwonzora, Robert Mugabe
Producer / Henrik Vejborg
Production company / Upright Films
International sales / DR International
Sales / t +45 3520 3040
drsales@dr.dk
www.drsales.dk



/ SHELLEY

In an isolated villa by a lake in the middle of the forest, a Danish couple, Louise and Kasper, live in harmony with nature and away from modern life: away from cell phones, high tech and even electricity. Louise's biggest dream in life is to become a mother, but she is not able to have any children. In desperation, Louise enters a pact with her Romanian maid, Elena, to bear her child as a surrogate mother in return for a large sum of money. Quickly it becomes clear that Elena's pregnancy is not a regular one. The life growing inside Elena is quickly taking shape, and it is forcing. The horrors of birth are in effect.

Feature debut by Ali Abbasi. Supported by the Danish Film Institute's talent scheme, New Danish Screen.



/ SILENT HEART

Three generations of a family gather over a weekend. The two sisters Sanne and Heidi have accepted their terminally-ill mother's desire to die before her disease worsens. However, as the weekend progresses, their mother's decision becomes harder and harder to deal with, and old conflicts resurface.

August made his first Danish-produced film in 25 years with *Marie Krøyer* (2012). With *Silent Heart*, the director is returning to the human drama of his Palme d'Or, Golden Globe and Oscar winner *Pelle the Conqueror* (1987) and his Bergman-scripted *The Best Intentions* (1991) which also won an Oscar.

Genre / Drama

Status / Post-production

Danish release / 2015

Running time / 90 min.

Director / Ali Abbasi

Appearances / Cosmina Stratan, Ellen Dorrit Petersen, Peter Christoffersen, Kenneth M. Christensen

Producer / Jacob Jarek

Production company & international sales / Profile Pictures / t +45 2873 2680

/ ditte@profilepictures.dk

/ www.profilepictures.dk

Genre / Drama

Status / Released

Danish release / 13.11.2014

Running time / 98 min.

Director / Billie August

Appearances / Ghita Nørby, Paprika Steen, Danica Curcic, Morten Grunwald

Producer / Jesper Mothorst

Production company / SF Film

International sales / Levelk

/ t +45 4844 3072

/ time.klinnt@levelk.dk / www.levelk.dk

/ SPARROWS



The story follows Ari, 16, who lives with his mother in Reykjavik. When she goes abroad to start a new job, Ari is forced to move back with his father in the desolate Westfjords far from the city. There he has to navigate a difficult relationship with his father, and he finds his childhood friends changed, especially Laura, whom he falls in love with.

Rúnar Rúnarsson has scored international honours for his three short films: *Last Farm*, Oscar-nominated in 2006, *2 Birds*, nominated for a Palme d'Or in 2008, and his graduation film *Aima*, chosen for Directors' Fortnight in 2009. *Volcano*, Rúnarsson's feature film debut, was selected for Cannes' Directors' Fortnight in 2011.

Genre / Drama

Status / Post-production

Danish release / 2015

Running time / 99 min.

Director / Rúnar Rúnarsson

Appearances / Aili Oskar Fjalarsson, Ingvar Eggert Sigurdsson, Kristbjörg Kjeld, Rakei Björk Björnsdóttir

Producer / Mikkel Jersin,

Production company & international sales / Nimbus Film



/ KAPGANG

In a quirky, small town, situated in the outskirts of everything, 14-year-old Martin is getting ready for one of the most formal transitions from boy to man: the communion. It's 1976, music's in the air, and hormones are blossoming. But in the midst of it all, Martin's mother suddenly passes away, and her tragic death triggers a series of events that not only changes Martin's life forever, but also affects everyone else in the local community.

By director Niels Arden Oplev. *His We Shall Overcome* (2006) took home the Crystal Bear as well as 26 other international awards. *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (2009), based on novelist Stieg Larsson's popular thriller trilogy, was a worldwide boxoffice success.

Genre / Drama

Status / Released

Danish release / 28.08.2014

Running time / 108 min.

Director / Niels Arden Oplev

Appearances / Villads Bøye, Frederik Wither Rasmussen, Kraka Donslund Nielsen, Anders W. Berthelsen

Producer / Thomas Heinesen

Production company / Nordisk Film

International sales / TrustNordisk

/ t +45 3686 8788

/ info@trustinordisk.com

/ www.trustinordisk.com



/ SOMMEREN '92

In 1992, the Danish national football team had failed to qualify for the European Championship in Sweden. The players were already on holiday when they were called up in their summer residences with a surprising message: Yugoslavia was set to replace them. The rest is history: Denmark went on to surprise the experts and upset the odds by winning the tournament, beating the reigning European and World Champions in the process.

Starting Ulrich Thomsen (*The Celebration*, *In a Better World*) and two previous Shooting Stars, Mikkel Boe Følsgaard (*A Royal Affair*) and Cyron Melville (*Nymphomaniac*).

Genre / Drama

Status / Post-production

Danish release / 24.09.2015

Running time / 110 min.

Director / Kasper Barfoed

Appearances / Ulrich Thomsen, Allan Hyde, Mikkel Boe Følsgaard, Cyron Melville

Producer / Nina Bisgaard,

Production company / PeaPie, Meta

International sales / HanWay Films

/ t +44 0 207 290 0750

/ www.hanwayfilms.com

/ TORDENSKIOLD



The Great Northern War is over, and Vice Admiral Tordenskiold, star of the victorious Danish-Norwegian fleet, has no clue what to do with his life. His valet, Kold, persuades him to go on a vacation arguing that now is the time to marry and settle down. The trip turns into a fun and freewheeling road movie through Denmark. Women swoon at the sight of the attractive young star. Gradually, clouds start to darken, and in Hannover, the increasingly alarmed Tordenskiold is forced into a suspicious duel by former Swedish arch-enemies seemingly bent on revenge.

Terribly Happy (2008) won the Grand Prix at Karlovy Vary and swept up a remarkable seven honours at the Danish Robert Awards, including award for Best Film. *Tordenskiold* is Genz' sixth feature film. Leading actor Jakob Oftebro was Norway's Shooting Star in 2014.

Genre / Historical drama

Status / In production

Danish release / 28.01.2016

Running time / 90 min.

Director / Henrik Ruben Genz

Appearances / Jakob Oftebro, Martin Buch, Natalie Madueno,

Producer / Lars Bredø Rahbek

Production company & international sales / Nimbus Film



MY CANADIAN ADVENTURE - THE QUEST FOR THE LOST GOLD / MIN SØSTERS BØRN OG GULDGRAVERNE

The children find an old photo of a man with a beard and gold prospector equipment. The man turns out to be their great-grandfather, who immigrated to Canada many years ago to become a gold prospector. This excites the children and they manage to get in touch with their great-aunt Anna, who invites them to Canada for a visit. It turns out that there is a story of an old gold mine and a treasure map. Soon, the kids catch the gold fever and search for the treasure, which may still be hidden in the mine which has remained untouched for over fifty years. On their way to find the mine, they are surprised by the Canadian wilderness, nature, animals and two suspicious gold prospectors, who also want their hands on the treasure.

Seventh feature in the My Sister's Kids children series.

Genre / Children's film
Status / Released
Danish release / 05.02.2015
Running time / 90 min.
Director / Niels Nørføv
Appearances / Signe Skov, Troels Malling, Rasmus Botoft, Lærke Winther
Producer / Michael Obel
Production company / Obel Film
International sales / Levelik
/ t +45 4844 3072
/ time.klint@levelik.dk / www.levelik.dk



NYPHOMANIAC DIRECTOR'S CUT

/ NYMPHOMANIAC DIRECTOR'S CUT

Nymphomaniac is the story of a woman's journey from birth to the age of fifty as told by the main character, the self-diagnosed nymphomaniac, Joe. On a cold winter's evening the old, charming bachelor, Seligman, finds Joe beaten up in an alleyway. He brings her home to his flat where he tends to her wounds while asking her about her life. He listens intently as Joe over the next eight chapters recounts the lushly branched-out and multifaceted story of her life, rich in associations and intersecting incidents.

Cannes laureate Lars von Trier has received top awards for six Cannes titles including the Palme d'Or for *Dancer in the Dark*.

Genre / Drama
Status / Released
Danish release / 10.09.2014
Running time / 325 min.
Director / Lars von Trier
Appearances / Charlotte Gainsbourg, Stellan Skarsgård, Stacy Martin, Shia LaBeouf
Producer / Louise Vesth
Production company / Zentropa
International sales / TrustNordisk
/ t +45 3686 8788
/ info@trustnordisk.com / www.trustnordisk.com

PEOPLE GET EATEN / MENNESKER BLIVER SPIST



Ingelise and Herluf have been happily married for many years. Their marriage has become more of a routine arrangement and Ingelise has secretly been having an affair with a colleague at work. She is also busily preparing their daughter Gitte's third wedding, while Herluf is doing all he can in order to fulfill his responsibilities as a dutiful husband, father and mechanic - even if he could do without the hassle and work of the impending wedding. Herluf starts forgetting things and one day, he hands a fixed car over to a customer, without the brakes working. The car crashes shortly afterwards. Herluf is in shock, and then one day, he doesn't come home. Nobody knows where he is and Ingelise and the whole family discover how much they miss him, how little they know about Herluf, and how much he means to them.

Eric Clausen's *Freedom on Parole* (2010) was selected at Montreal World Film Festival.

Genre / Drama
Status / Completed
Danish release / 26.02.2015
Running time / 90 min.
Director / Erik Clausen
Appearances / Bodil Jørgensen, Erik Clausen, Lærke Winther, Rasmus Botoft
Producer / Maja Dyekjær
Production company / Clausen Film
International sales / Clausen Film
/ t +45 3321 1968 /
/ clausenfilm@pc.dk
/ www.ericclausen.dk



ROSITA

/ ROSITA

Johannes lives together with his father, the middle-aged widower, Ulrik, in a small fishing town in the northern part of Denmark. They live a quiet routine life, each minding their separate jobs in the fishing industry. Ulrik lacks the love and tenderness of a woman and arranges for the young, beautiful, Filipino, Rosita, to come to Denmark - like many other men in the town have done before him. Johannes is reluctantly drawn in as Ulrik's translator. However, over the following weeks Johannes and Rosita get closer. Rosita faithfully does everything in her power to try to fulfill her role in Ulrik's life and suppress the growing attraction to Johannes. Nonetheless the tensions within the family intensify.

Frederikke Aspöck's first feature *Out of Bounds* (2011) premiered in Cannes and won the Golden Star Award at Marrakech Film Festival.

Genre / Drama
Status / Completed
Danish release / 07.05.2015
Running time / 95 min.
Director / Frederikke Aspöck
Appearances / Mikkel Boe Følsgaard, Jens Albinus, Mercedes Cabral, Julie Agnete Vang
Producer / Thomas Heinesen
Production company / Nordisk Film
International sales / TrustNordisk
/ t +45 3686 8788
/ info@trustnordisk.com / www.trustnordisk.com



A SECOND CHANCE / EN CHANCE TIL

Detectives and best friends, Andreas and Simon, lead vastly different lives. Andreas has settled down with his beautiful wife and son, while Simon, recently divorced, spends most of his waking hours getting drunk at the local strip club. But all that changes when the two of them are called out to a domestic dispute between a junkie couple, caught in a vicious cycle of violence and drugs. It looks very routine - until Andreas finds the couple's neglected infant son, crying and hungry. The usually collected policeman finds himself confronted with his own powerlessness and is shaken to his core. As Andreas slowly loses his grip on justice, it is suddenly up to the unruly Simon to restore the balance between right and wrong.

The director's *In a Better World* received an Oscar and a Golden Globe in 2011. Later the same year, Bier was honoured with Best Director at the European Film Awards

Genre / Drama
Status / Released
Danish release / 15.01.2015
Running time / 105 min.
Director / Susanne Bier
Appearances / Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, Ulrich Thomsen, Maria Bonnevie, Nikolaj Lie Kaas
Producer / Sisse Graum Jørgensen
Production company / Zentropa
International sales / TrustNordisk
/ t +45 3686 8788
/ info@trustnordisk.com / www.trustnordisk.com

THE SHAMER'S DAUGHTER / SKAMMERENS DATTER



The Shamer's daughter, Dina, has unwillingly inherited her mother's supernatural ability. She can look straight into the soul of other people, making them feel ashamed of themselves. When the sole heir to the throne is wrongfully accused of the horrible murders of his family, Dina's mother is lured to Dunark under false pretenses to make him confess. Neglecting to use her ability for the wrong purposes, she is taken prisoner. It is now up to Dina to uncover the truth of the murders, but soon she finds herself whirled into a dangerous power struggle with her own life at risk. In a semi-realistic medieval fantasy world with Dragons and Witchcraft, Dina and her family are thrown into the adventure of a lifetime in order to put the rightful heir to the Kingdom of Dunark on the throne.

The Shamer's Daughter is Kenneth Käin's (Otto is a Rhino, *Pure Hearts*) fourth feature film. Based on a popular fantasy book series by Lene Kaaberbol.

Genre / Fantasy
Status / Completed
Danish release / 26.03.2015
Running time / 90 min.
Director / Kenneth Käin
Appearances / Peter Plagborg, Jakob Othfæbro, Søren Malling, Stina Eklblad
Producer / Nina Lyng, Eva Juel Hammenich
Production company / Nepenthe Film
International sales / TrustNordisk
/ t +45 3686 8788
/ info@trustnordisk.com / www.trustnordisk.com



LAND OF MINE / UNDER SANDET

Taking place in May 1945 only a few days after the end of the war, the film tells the story of how a group of German prisoners of war were brought to Denmark and forced to disarm the two million land mines that had been scattered along the West Coast by the German occupying forces. In charge of the enfeebled young men performing the dangerous task is Sergeant Carl Leopold Rasmussen. Like so many of his fellow Danes, he has a deep hatred for the Germans after having suffered five years of hardships during the occupation. He lets his rage rain down on the prisoners, until one day a tragic incident makes him change his view of the enemy even if it may be too late.

Genre / Drama
Status / Post-production
Danish release / 23.10.2015
Running time / 96 min.
Director / Martin Pieter Zandvliet
Appearances / Roland Møller, Mikkel Boe Følsgaard, Louis Hofmann, Joel Basman
Producer / Mikael Christian Riiks
Production company / Nordisk Film
International sales / K5 Media Group / Konradinstr. 5 / 81543 München / Germany

Martin Pieter Zandvliet's *Applause* won two awards at Karlovy Vary and was selected for Toronto. *Land of Mine* stars breakout actor Roland Møller (Northwest), 2012 Silver Bear winner and 2013 Shooting Star Mikkel Boe Følsgaard (A Royal Affair) and up-and-coming German actors Louis Hofmann and Joel Basman.



LONG STORY SHORT / LANG HISTORIE KORT

The story of Ellen and her friends, all in their late thirties/early forties, and their more or less self-inflicted complicated love life and longing for romantic redemption. The story is a summary of three years of love-related highs and lows for the group of friends told through eight chapters, each of them set at a party: a new Year's Eve, a surprise party, a naming ceremony, an anniversary and a round birthday. It is an ensemble story about a group of people who struggle with the conception of the perfect relationship and are bound to re-evaluate their take on what true love is.

Genre / Drama
Status / Completed
Danish release / 07.05.2015
Running time / 90 min.
Director / May el-Toukhy
Appearances / Milie Hoffmeyer
Lehfeldt, Jens Albinus, Trine Dyrholm,
Danica Curcic
Producer / Caroline Blanco, Christian Steengaard Potlivo
Production company / Miso Film
International sales / TrustNordisk
/ t +45 3686 8788
/ info@trustnordisk.com
/ www.trustnordisk.com

Feature film debut by May el-Toukhy, who has assembled an impressive cast of Trine Dyrholm (*The Celebration*, In a Better World), Jens Albinus (*The Idiots*, *Nymphomaniac*), last year's Shooting Star Danica Curcic (*The Absent One*) and Swedish actor Ola Karpac (Skyfall).

MEDINA / MEDINA



Yusuf, who is half Danish, half Arab, travels to the Middle Eastern city of Medina along with his pregnant Danish wife, Sarah. Yusuf wants to start a new life with his wife in his father's hometown. He is convinced that this is where he belongs and happiness lies ahead. But shortly after their arrival, Yusuf is unintentionally responsible for a beggar boy's death. The people of the street beat up Sarah and Yusuf. She miscarries. He is put in prison for murder. The only thing that keeps Yusuf's spirit up in the Arab prison is the thought of seeing Sarah again and his faith in God. But when he realises that he has to sit in a prison hole for the rest of his life, he loses his patience, faith and hope. All that is left is anger towards the Creator he used to love.

Sharawi made his debut as director with the feature film *Go with Peace Jamil* (2008), awarded generously at festivals – winning the VPRO Tiger Award in Rotterdam, the Church Prize and FIPRESCI Award in Göteborg, and Best Director in Transylvania.

Genre / Drama
Status / Post-production
Danish release / 2015
Running time / 90 min.
Director / Omar Sharawi
Producer / René Ezra, Tomas Radoor
Production company / Nordisk Film
International sales / TrustNordisk
/ t +45 3686 8788
/ info@trustnordisk.com
/ www.trustnordisk.com



MEN & CHICKEN / MÆND OG HØNS

A black comedy about two outcast brothers who reunite with their family and learn a brutal truth about themselves and their kin.

First film in 10 years by Academy Award winner Anders Thomas Jensen (short fiction *Election Night*). Box-office hit *Adam's Apples* (2005) screened at Sundance and Berlin. Jensen is one of the top screenwriters in Denmark, his credits including Academy Award winner In a Better World. Leading players are Mads Mikkelsen (*The Hunt*, *A Royal Affair*), Nikolaj Lie Kaas, David Dencik, Nicolas Bro
Producer / Kim Magnusson,
Tivi Magnusson
Production company / M&M Productions
Dencik (A Soap, *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*) and Nicolas Bro (*Dark Horse*, *Nymphomaniac*).

Genre / Comedy
Status / Released
Danish release / 05.02.2015
Running time / 100 min.
Director / Anders Thomas Jensen
Appearances / Mads Mikkelsen, Nikolaj Lie Kaas, David Dencik, Nicolas Bro
Producer / Kim Magnusson,
Tivi Magnusson
Production company / M&M Productions
/ t +45 4844 3072
/ time.klint@leveik.dk / www.leveik.dk



MINI AND THE MOZZIES / CYKELMYGGEN OG MINIBILLEN

The mini beetle Mini appears in a flea circus together with Egon and Dagmar. The flea-girl Miranda bullies Mini and tricks him into interfering in Dagmar's line dancing, making her fall and sprain her foot. Deeply ashamed, Mini runs away and meets a gang of robbers. The gang is led by the brutal beetle, Basse, who orders Mini to break into the bees' honey stock. But the bee-soldiers catch him, and he is sentenced to life-long hard labour. Meanwhile, Miranda regrets her bullying of Mini and together with Mini, who has managed to escape, and their brave friends, the ants, they succeed in recovering Egon's beloved racing bike, which has been stolen by the robbers.

The experienced animators Janrik Hastrup and Flemming Quist Møller have teamed up once again to make a second animated film centring on Quist Møller's timeless Danish children's book *A Tale of Two Mozzies*.

Genre / Children's animation
Status / Released
Danish release / 12.06.2014
Running time / 76 min.
Director / Janrik Hastrup, Flemming Quist Møller
Producer / Marie Bro
Production company / Dansk Tegnefilm
International sales / TrustNordisk
/ t +45 3686 8788
/ info@trustnordisk.com
/ www.trustnordisk.com

THE MODEL / THE MODEL



The film tells the story of emerging fashion model Emma who struggles to enter the Parisian fashion scene and develops a deadly obsession for male fashion photographer Shane White.

Second feature from award-winning director of *Teddy Bear*, for which he won Best Director at Sundance. Starting British actor Ed Skrein (*Game of Thrones*).

Genre / Drama
Status / Post-production
Danish release / 2015
Running time / 90 min.
Director / Mads Matthiesen
Appearances / Maria Palm, Ed Skrein, Charlotte Tomaszewska, Thierry Hancisse
Producer / Jonas Bagge
Production company / Zentropa
International sales / TrustNordisk
/ t +45 3686 8788
/ info@trustnordisk.com
/ www.trustnordisk.com



I AM HERE / I AM HERE

Maria is a successful business executive, struggling to fulfill her greatest wish of all: to bring a child into the world. After suffering yet another miscarriage, a doctor informs Maria that she's too old to carry a child - and her whole world comes crashing down. Devastated and unable to accept her fate, Maria sets out on a desperate and perilous quest to realise her dream of motherhood.

Fourth feature by Anders Morgenthaller who made his feature debut with the animated *Princess* (2006), which enjoyed its world premiere at Quinzaine des Réalisateurs in Cannes.

Genre / Thriller drama
Status / Released
Danish release / 06.01.2015
Running time / 90 min.
Director / Anders Morgenthaller
Appearances / Kim Basinger, Jordan Prentice, Peter Stormare, Sebastian Schipper
Producer / Marie Gade Denessen, Julie Lind-Holm
Production company / Zentropa
International sales / TrustNordisk
/ t +45 3686 8788
/ info@trustnordisk.com
/ www.trustnordisk.com



THE IDEALIST / IDEALISTEN

For a whole decade, one man never stopped hunting the truth about the worst nuclear cover-up during the Cold War.

Based on a true events. Second feature film by director Christina Rosendahl.

Genre / Political thriller
Status / Completed
Danish release / 09.04.2015
Running time / 114 min.
Director / Christina Rosendahl
Appearances / Peter Plaugborg, Søren Malling, Thomas Bo Larsen, Arly Jover
Producer / Jonas Frederiksen, Signe Leick Jensen, Ane Mandrup
Production company / Toolbox Film
International sales / Levelk
/ t +45 4844 3072
/ tine.klint@levelk.dk / www.levelk.dk



IN YOUR ARMS / I DINE HÆNDER

Maria is a young and caring nurse who wants to break free. Niels is an incurable patient who wants to travel to Switzerland to commit assisted suicide. Together they embark on an intense journey that will bring them closer to each other, but also closer to their dreams.

Samnou Achèche Sahstrøm's graduation film from the National Film School of Denmark in 2011. *Les Amours Perdus*, stars Emmanuelle Béart and Denis Lavant.

Genre / Drama
Status / Completed
Danish release / 21.05.2015
Running time / 88 min.
Director / Samnou Achèche Sahstrøm
Appearances / Lisa Carlehed, Peter Plaugborg, Johanna Wokalek, Kirsten Olesen
Producer / Sara Namer
Production company / Meta Film
International sales / Meta Film
/ info@metafilm.dk
/ www.metafilm.dk



ITSI BITSI / STEPPELVEN

1962. A young generation rebels against the Establishment. Peace activist Erik Skalse meets Iben and falls head over heels in love, but Iben refuses to commit herself to one man only. Desperately, Erik tries to win her over by transforming from poet to writer, nomad, junkie and eventually lead singer in the destined-to-become-legendary band Steppelvene.

The director's WWII drama *Flame & Citron* (2008) about two Danish resistance fighters was a huge domestic box-office hit. His comedy *Superdåske* (2011) was shortlisted for the Oscars.

Genre / Drama
Status / Completed
Danish release / 19.02.2015
Running time / 107 min.
Director / Ole Christian Madsen
Appearances / Joachim Fjellstrup, Marie Tourell Soderberg, Christian Gade Bjerrum, Johannes Nymark
Producer / Lars Bredo Rahbek
Production company / Nimbus Film
International sales / The Match Factory
/ t +49 221 539 709 0
/ info@matchfactory.de
/ www.the-match-factory.com



KEY HOUSE MIRROR / NØGLE HUS SPEJL

Lily and Max have been married for more than 50 years. Now, they live together in a nursing home, where Max has been reliant on professional care since his stroke. Lily has been putting her own needs aside and is desperately longing for excitement and intimacy in her life. When a man known as "the Pilot" moves in next door, Lily is immediately charmed by him and his passion for life. But neither her family nor the other residents at the nursing home are fond of her new acquaintance. Misunderstood by her family and trapped in her life with Max, Lily decides to fight to escape the bars of her invisible prison and claim her freedom.

The third feature by the acclaimed director of *Northwest* (2013) and *R* (2010) is premiering in Rotterdam and Göteborg.

Genre / Drama
Status / Completed
Danish release / 12.11.2015
Running time / 94 min.
Director / Michael Noer
Appearances / Ghita Nørby, Sven Wollter, Trine Pallesen, Jens Brenaa
Producer / Tomas Radoor, René Ezra
Production company / Nordisk Film
International sales / TrustNordisk
/ t +45 3686 8788
/ info@trustnordisk.com
/ www.trustnordisk.com



KLOWN FOREVER / KLOWN FOREVER

Follow-up to the domestic box-office hit comedy *Klown* (2011), which was a big audience hit at genre festivals and won awards at Fantastic Fest and Fantasia. Directed by Mikkel Nørgaard (*The Keeper of Lost Causes*, 2013, and *The Absent One*, 2014).

Genre / Comedy
Status / Post-production
Danish release / 17.09.2015
Running time / 90 min.
Director / Mikkel Nørgaard
Appearances / Frank Hvam, Casper Christensen, Mia Lyhne
Producer / Jesper Zartov
Production company / Nutmeg Movies
International sales / To be announced



Comedian Thomas Vang has wrecked his career and will do anything to return to the top. Even if it's just warming up for his friend, the successful Mads Andersen, he goes all out to get his career back on track. But when his cheeky teenage daughter, Frederikke, suddenly turns up out of the misty fog of oblivion, Thomas' life is turned upside down. She does whatever she can to sabotage his dreams, and before Thomas realizes what's hit him, he plummets with great accuracy into the abyss. Only Frederikke can save him – but is it even worth her while? One thing is certain, it will not be the comeback he envisioned.

Genre / Drama
Status / Post-production
Danish release / 06.08.2015
Running time / 90 min.
Director / Natasha Arthy
Appearances / Anders W. Berthelsen, Feder Thomas Pedersen, Sarah-Sofie Boussina, Roberta Reichardt
Producer / Morten Kaufmann
Production company & International sales / Toolbox Film
/ mail@toolboxfilm.dk
/ +45 2077 9047

Natasha Arthy's feature film debut *Miracle* (2000) was chosen for Kinderfilmfest in Berlin and awarded at festivals worldwide. Her teen kung-fu drama *Fighter* (2007) was selected for Berlin's Generation 14plus. The TV series *Heartless* (2014) is selected for Generation. *Comeback* stars Anders W. Berthelsen, who attended Berlin with *Mifune* (1999, Silver Bear winner) and *What No One Knows* (2008).

/ COMEBACK



Erik and Annam, an academic couple, and their daughter, Freja, establish a commune in Erik's big box of a house in suburban Hellerup. Centring on the little family, the film invites us into the dream of a true commune. We are there for house meetings, dinners and parties. There is friendship, love, family and community under one roof. But when Erik's mistress is allowed to move in, nears its end, reality intrudes, threatening to destroy the family, the friendship and the dream of togetherness.

Ulrich Thomsen and Trine Dyrholm from Cannes winner *The Celebration* (1998) reunite in Thomas Vinterberg's eighth feature, *Submarino* (2010) was selected for Berlin, and *The Hunt* (2013) won three prizes at Cannes and was nominated for an Oscar.

Genre / Drama
Status / Post-production
Danish release / 27.08.2015
Running time / 90 min.
Director / Thomas Vinterberg
Appearances / Ulrich Thomsen, Trine Dyrholm, Helene Reingaard Neumann, Lars Ranthe
Producer / Morten Kaufmann, Sisse Graum Jørgensen
Production company / Zentropa
International sales / TrustNordisk
/ +45 3686 8788
/ info@trustnordisk.com
/ www.trustnordisk.com

THE COMMUNE



As always, orderly chaos reigns in Crumb's family. Crumb wants to join the school race to impress Yrsa. But he doesn't have a bike. Crumb's sister, Stine, is going on a field trip to Paris, but doesn't have the money to pay for the trip. And she needs the lottery. Dad quits his job as a teacher because he wants to become an inventor. Two fraudsters are trying to get them kicked out of their home and steal dad's newly invented device. No wonder Crumb thinks it's hard to be 11 years old.

The fifth installment in the popular children's series *Crumbs*.
Genre / Children's films
Status / Released
Danish release / 02.10.2014
Running time / 85 min.
Director / Barbara Topsøe-Rothenborg
Appearances / Victor Stoiltenberg, Nielsen, Henning Valin, Lisbeth Wulff, Martine Ølbye Højle
Producer / Regner Grasten
Production company / Regner Grasten Film
International sales / Regner Grasten
filmrettigheder

CRUMBS – ALL AT STAKE

/ KRUMMERNE – ALT PÅ SPIL



Due to climate change, a new race of flesh eating predators arise who invade and eat everything living on earth. In a residential neighbourhood in a Danish suburb, nightmare-like scenes are being experienced first-hand through the eyes of two teenage brothers, who can't stand each other, but are now suddenly forced to barricade themselves in the basement together to avoid getting eaten. From one day to another, without parents and without electricity, food, water and contact to other people, the brothers have to learn to live together in their vital protection bunker, while monsters move past the basement windows and heavy sharp claws can be heard moving around upstairs on the wooden floors.

Second feature by Martin Barnewitz who made his feature debut with *Room 205* (2007). Won Best Short Film Award at Mannheim-Heidelberg for his psychological thriller *Glimt af mørke* (2004).

Genre / Youth drama adventure
Status / Released
Danish release / 09.10.2014
Running time / 90 min.
Director / Martin Barnewitz
Appearances / William Jøhnk Nielsen, Thomas Garvey, Peter Ganzler, Emilie Wemer Semmelroth
Producer / Christian Steengaard Potálivo, Caroline Bianco
Production company / Miso Film
International sales / TrustNordisk
/ +45 3686 8788
/ info@trustnordisk.com
/ www.trustnordisk.com

DANNY'S DOOMSDAY



The family's long awaited holiday at the wadden sea is threatened, when Dad is accused of being a burglar. The family tries to prove his innocence – but Dad's unlikely actions make him look more and more suspicious. In the end, Lille Per has to take action with his own hands. He decides to commit a felony in order to the find the real thieves. This almost goes horribly wrong, and soon the entire island is convinced that Dad is guilty. In the end, Lille Per finds a crucial clue in the hunt of the real thieves. And so a race against time begins, to make sure that the thieves doesn't escape the island.

Eighth feature in the children's series *Father of Four*.

Genre / Children's films
Status / Completed
Danish release / 01.10.2015
Running time / 90 min.
Director / Giacomo Campetio
Appearances / Sigurd Philip Dalgas, Karoline Hamm, Rasmus Johnbeck, Emilie Wemer Semmelroth
Producer / Henrik Møller-Sørensen, Marcella L. Dichmann
Production company & International sales / ASA Film
Production / +45 3961 3030
/ asa@asafilm.dk
/ www.asafilm.dk

FATHER OF FOUR – ON A WILD HOLIDAY

/ FAR TIL FIRES VILDE FERIE



The year is 1836. Danish botanist and visionary, Frederik Wulff, travels to Africa following orders from the king of Denmark. He is to monitor the work at a coffee plantation on the Gold Coast (now Ghana). The young Wulff writes about his desire to do good to his beloved Eleonora, but his best intentions and Christian belief is soon confronted with a harsh reality dominated by slave trade and unbelievable brutality.

Feature debut by acclaimed documentary director, editor and poet, Daniel Denck. Winner of the Keel Talent Award at CPH:DOX in 2012. Both *Moomtider* (2012) and *Expedition to the End of the World* (2013) was selected for Karlovy Vary and a number of other international festivals, including Hot Docs.

Genre / Historical drama
Status / Post-production
Danish release / 02.07.2015
Running time / 120 min.
Director / Daniel Denck
Appearances / Jakob Oftebro, Danica Curcio, Anders Heinrichsen, Adam Ild
Rohweder
Producer / Michael Haslund-Christensen
Production company & International sales / Haslund/Denck
Entertainment
/ haslundfilm@gmail.com
/ +45 2023 1388

/ ALBERT



Albert is born in Kellyville, the smallest city of the world, and he is the worst second in town. Because of Albert, every day is a challenge for the inhabitants of Kellyville, and then one day Albert crashes into the city statue and smashes it into a thousand pieces. Before anybody gets another chance to complain, Albert decides to rehabilitate his "good" name. He promises the villagers and his parents to venture out into the big world and come back as a hot-air-balloon-captain, in honour of Kellyville.

Based on a novel by the popular Danish children's book author Ole Lund Kierkegaard. Production company A. Film is a leading animation house in Denmark whose productions include *Terkel in Trouble* (2004) and *Journey to Saturn* (2008).

/ FASANDRÆBERNE

THE ABSENT ONE



In 1994, two young twins are found brutally murdered in a summer cottage. A number of clues points in the direction of a group of young upper class students from a nearby boarding school, but the case is closed as a local outsider pleads guilty and is convicted for the murders. When the case ends up on Carl's Mørck's desk 20 years later, he led on to an old emergency call from a desperate girl who seems to know the secrets of the murders. Soon they are plunged into an intense search for the girl, Kimme, who has been missing since the murders happened. But Carl and Assad are not the only ones trying to track her down.

The second of four films based on the international bestselling crime novels by Jussi Adler-Olsen.

/ 9. APRIL

APRIL 9TH



In the early morning of April 9 1940 the Danish army is alerted. The Germans have crossed the border; Denmark is at war against Europe's strongest army. In Southern Jutland Danish bicycle and motorcycle companies are summoned in order to hold back the forces, until the Danish reinforcements can be mobilized. During these crucial hours we follow second lieutenant Sand and his bicycle company. They will, as the first Danish soldiers, meet the enemy in combat on April 9, 1940.

Pilu Asbæk plays the lead in Roni Ezra's feature debut, written by award-winning writer-director Tobias Lindholm (*A Hijacking*, *The Hunt*). Producer team Tomas Radoor and René Ezra from Nordisk Film are regular collaborators with Lindholm and Michael Noer.

Genre / Children's animation
Status / Completed
Danish release / 26.02.2015
Running time / 90 min.
Director / Tivi Magnusson,
Kim Magnusson, Anders Mastrup
Production company / M&M
Productions, A. Film
International sales / Sola Media
GmbH / t +49 711 479 3666
/ post@sola-media.net
/ www.sola-media.net

Genre / Thriller
Status / Released
Danish release / 02.10.2014
Running time / 119 min.
Director / Mikkel Nørgaard
Appearances / Nikolaj Lie Kaas,
Fares Fares, Pilou Asbæk, David Dencik
Producer / Louise Vesth,
Jonas Bagger, Peter Aalbæk Jensen
Production company / Zentropa
International sales / TrustNordisk
/ t +45 3686 8788
/ info@trustnordisk.com
/ www.trustnordisk.com

Genre / Drama
Status / Post-production
Danish release / 12.03.2015
Running time / 90 min.
Director / Roni Ezra
Appearances / Pilou Asbæk,
Gustav Dyekjær Giese, Lars Mikkelsen,
Joachim Fjølstrup
Producer / Tomas Radoor, René Ezra
Production company / Nordisk Film
International sales / TrustNordisk
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/ BRIDGEND



Sara and her dad Dave move to a small village, which is haunted by suicides among its young inhabitants. Sara falls dangerously in love with one of the teenagers, Jamie, while Dave, as the town's new policeman, tries to stop the mysterious chain of suicides. The film focuses on the relationship between vulnerable teenagers and their parents who are left in the dark as the inexplicable suicides gradually take on the character of a punishing ritual.

First fiction feature by Jeppe Rønde who is acclaimed for his documentary films *Jerusalem My Love* and *The Swenkas*. The story of the film is based on a mysterious suicide cluster that took place in Bridgend County, a small former coal mining province in Wales.

Genre / Drama
Status / Completed
Danish release / 2015
Running time / 99 min.
Director / Jeppe Rønde
Appearances / Hannah Murray,
Steven Waddington, Josh O'Connor,
Adrian Rawlins
Producer / Michel Schønemann,
Malene Blenkov
Production company / Blenkov &
Schønemann Pictures
International sales / Blenkov &
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/ t +45 3333 7525
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/ ANTBOY – DEN RØDE FURIES

RED FURY

ANTBOY – REVENGE OF THE



Antboy has defeated his archenemy The Flea, who is now locked away in a padded cell. He is more popular than ever and enjoying life as a superhero. But his powers are useless against Christian, the new boy in school. Antboy has a crush on Ida, but trying to steal her away from him. As if that wasn't bad enough, our hero also finds himself being hunted by a mysterious invisible enemy: The Red Fury has announced her arrival.

Selected for Generation Kplus at Berlin 2015. *Antboy 1* premiered at Toronto International Film Festival and was released in American cinemas in the spring 2014.

Genre / Children's films
Status / Released
Danish release / 25.12.2014
Running time / 90 min.
Director / Ask Hesselbalch
Appearances / Oscar Diez,
Nicolas Bro, Amalie Kruse Jensen,
Samuel Ting Graf
Producer / Eva Jakobsen
Production company / Nimbus Film
International sales / Attraction
Distribution
/ t +1 514 846 1222
/ info@attractiondistribution.ca
/ www.attractiondistribution.ca

/ ALL INCLUSIVE



The chaotic thirty-year-old Ditte and her older sister – the much too sensible Sigrid – travel to Malita with their mother, Lise, to celebrate her 60th birthday. Lise's husband, the girls' father, has just left her, and the two sisters don't exactly see eye to eye on how to cheer up their dejected mother. As the holiday progresses, it develops into an absurd love triangle with the sisters stubbornly fighting over Lise's love and attention – all in a whirlwind of a package holiday full of jealousy, family patterns, lies, disco and a dexterous bartender named Antonio.

After a series of stage, TV and film performances, Hella Joof made her debut as feature film director with *Shake It All About* (2001) which made the Danes flock to the box office – as did her second feature *Oh Happy Day* (2004). *All Inclusive* is Joof's seventh feature film.

Genre / Comedy
Status / Released
Danish release / 25.12.2014
Running time / 86 min.
Director / Hella Joof
Appearances / Bodil Jørgensen,
Danica Curcic, Maria Rossing,
Carsten Bjørnlund
Producer / Mlie Andreasen
Production company /
Happy Ending Film
International sales / Happy Ending
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