



DANISH FILM  
INSTITUTE  
DFI.DK

# DANISH DOCUMENTARY FILM CATALOGUE

## IDFA 2023



# AFTERWAR / AFTERWAR

Set in Kosovo, AFTERWAR begins in 2008, where children sell peanuts and cigarettes in the streets of Pristina to help support their families after the war. They speak intimately to the camera, sometimes whispering secrets, and other times telling their stories with a confrontational clarity: 'The only reason I am talking to you is hunger! I am so hungry. I could eat your money!'. 15 years later, in 2023 the children have become adults. They still fight for a future, for dignity, and a better life for their own children in the never-ending afterwar. 'People think war is a moment in time. Something that happens and then it is over. That is wrong... AFTERWAR is a hybrid film, a group portrait made in co-creation with the cast.

In 2007, director Birgitte Stærmose met a group of children on the streets of Pristina. Together they made the short film 'Out of Love' (2009). The director and the cast stayed in contact, and in 2018, they decided to make a new co-creation: the feature hybrid AFTERWAR.

**Director** Birgitte Stærmose  
**Producer** Lise Lense-Møller  
**Production** Magic Hour Films

**Genre** Documentary  
**Status** Post-production  
**Running Time** 85 min.  
**International Sales**  
magichourfilms.dk



# AS THE TIDE COMES IN / FØR STORMEN

Something looms on the horizon of the tiny Danish Wadden Sea island, Mandø, with its 28 inhabitants. Climate change experts predict the warming of the ocean and the rising water level. The few remaining islanders pay no heed to these warnings. Caught up in their everyday lives they seem to be oblivious to this impending catastrophe. We meet Gregers, the island's last farmer, Ellen, who manages the smallest supermarket in Denmark, Ornithologist Niels, and Mie, getting ready for her 100th birthday. The islanders' oblivious attitude towards climate change doesn't come from a place of arrogance or recklessness. They know how to live off the land they inhabit and from the sea around them. The island is a reservoir of a particular knowledge about sustainable existence.

Juan Palacios was born in Spain and has lived in Denmark since 2011 working as a cinematographer and director. He holds a master's degree from The Netherlands Film Academy.

**Director** Juan Palacios,  
**Co-director** Sofie Husum  
Johannesen  
**Producer** Kasper Lykke Schultz  
**Production** Elk Film

**Genre** Documentary  
**Status** World premiere /  
IDFA 2023  
**Running Time** 86 min.  
**International Sales**  
elkfilm.dk



# BALOMANIA / BALOMANIA

In 1998, Brazil was the first country in the world to imprison people who released hot-air balloons.

BALOMANIA travels into the heart of Brazil's favelas where a hidden society of hot air balloon makers sacrifice everything to make their illegal creations fly. Under the wings of the legendary balloon maker Jabá, balloon hunter Ton and godfather Sergio, 19-year-old Sissel, the director, is initiated into the balloon brotherhood, where silk paper and delirious flying objects sweep her into an addictive kinship.

A coming-of-age film from inside a secretive gang scene in Brazil, where a passion for making, flying and chasing hot air balloons reigns alongside sacrifice, paranoia and obsessions.

Sissel Morell Dargis studied at the film school Escuela Internacional de Cine y Televisión in Cuba and the National Film School of Denmark.

**Director** Sissel Morell Dargis  
**Producer** Jesper Jack,  
Marie Schmidt Olesen  
**Production** House of Real

**Genre** Documentary  
**Status** Completed  
**Running Time** 92 min.  
**International Sales**  
houseofreal.net





# BEAST - MATTER OF LIFE / BEAST - MATTER OF LIFE

An investigation into what life really is. Through the globally disputed and emotional case concerning the culling of Marius the giraffe at Copenhagen Zoo, the film raises questions of: What defines the human connection to other species? Why do certain lives seem to mean much more to us than others? How are the various life forms connected? What is a life? With charm and humour, today's leading researchers discuss these questions - and they don't agree. The film will begin with the culling of Marius the giraffe at Copenhagen zoo and from there it will jump far and wide. It wants to give the viewer a new place to view ourselves from, a new discussion with the world. You are what you eat... but on the other hand; what you eat is also you. The curiosity of the director will take the film to distant corners of the scientific world.

Kestner graduated as documentarist from The National Film School of Denmark in 1997. He has worked in television, been teaching at the National Film School, and directed both documentaries and a feature film amongst others 'Max by Chance', 'Blue Collar White Christmas'

**Director** Max Kestner  
**Producer** Vibeke Vogel  
**Production** Bullitt Film

**Genre** Documentary  
**Status** Post-production  
**Running Time** Approx 90 min.  
**International Sales**  
bullittfilm.dk



# CAN'T FEEL NOTHING / REMOTE CONTROL

How is the Internet changing our emotions? It actually might be preventing us from feeling anything at all.

A science documentarian by trade, director David Borenstein goes off script to meet a cast of compelling and sometimes absurd characters who weaponize human emotion online. Emotion AI companies that try to stimulate any emotion in human subjects. Trolls in the US that harness the power of anger to swing elections. Chinese live-streaming factories that develop industrial techniques to make their viewers fall in love. Russian TikTok propagandists who use science to make Russians take pride in the war in Ukraine. Love, fear, anger, joy, pride...and many more.

How has emotional stimulation become the hottest new commodity? And, amidst an Internet-fueled mental health crisis, what does it mean for all of us?

**Director** David Borenstein  
**Producer** Mikkel Jersin, Katrin Pors, Eva Jakobsen, Jesper Jack  
**Production** Snowglobe

**Genre** Documentary  
**Status** Post-production  
**Running Time** 90 min.  
**International Sales**  
snowglobefilm.com



# DAUGHTER OF GENGHIS / DAUGHTER OF GENGHIS

The story of Gerel, a violent neo-nationalist, who wants to protect her country against foreign dominance and exploitation. For thousands of years the Mongols and Chinese have been enemies, and today the proudly nomadic Mongolia is a poverty stricken country, with 3 million people surrounded by China and Russia. We follow Gerel and her son Temuleen for 7 years, charting the dramatic changes in their life. In the beginning she raids brothels and gambling dens with her gang of women. She is fueled by a desire to change society, but Gerel's activism leads to neglect of her own son. She realizes that her hatred is connected to her own personal traumas. Gerel must revisit everything she holds dear to learn how to be a caring mother to her son.

All across the globe the far right is on the rise, and we want to understand its attraction. Mining by foreign companies dominate the Mongolian economy, and urban life has largely replaced the nomadic horse culture. This story exposes the challenges a globalized modern economy poses to vulnerable indigenous populations, and how hatred and violence has roots in personal trauma.

**Director** Christian Als,  
Kristoffer Juel Poulsen  
**Producer** Andreas Dalsgaard  
**Production** Elk Film

**Genre** Documentary  
**Status** Post-production  
**Running Time** 90 min.  
**International Sales**  
Creative Artist Agency  
caa.com





# DEATH OF A SAINT / DEATH OF A SAINT

Christmas Eve 1989, when Patricia was two years old, her mother was killed by two gunmen in their home in Uganda. Christmas Eve 2013, Patricia gave birth to a daughter and named Imelda after her mother. 30 years after the killing, Patricia is finally ready to return home and examine her traumatic past. Through a dissection of archival footage, conversations with family members and interviews with men who have killed women, Patricia will try to unravel her mother's brutal killing while at the same time attempting to get to know her and herself better in the process. Patricia must confront her traumas in order to set herself free from them.

The director wanted to use her own story as a magnifying glass to delve into death, trauma, and survival. Her ambition was to destigmatize death in a broad sense and face it. Personally, she wanted to reclaim what had been stolen from her. Patricia Bbaale Bandak is a graduate of the National Film School of Denmark in 2019. She directed the TV series 'Bad Bitch' for DR TV 2022.

**Director** Patricia Bbaale Bandak  
**Producer** Victor Rocha da Cunha  
**Production** Monolit Film

**Genre** Documentary  
**Status** Post-production  
**Running Time** 91 min.  
**International Sales**  
monolitfilm.dk





# ECHO OF YOU

## / EKKO AF KÆRLIGHED

ECHO OF YOU portrays a soon to be extinct generation, who has lived longer time of their life in a partnership than by themselves. Ten men and women (80+) from Denmark openly and honestly put their heartbreak and grief into words and losing their partner through a journey down memory lane. A hopeful, life-affirming, sensuous and poetic ensemble portrait of a unique generation, who will soon not be with us any longer.

Zara Zerny holds a bachelor's degree from Rietveld School of Art & Design in Amsterdam and graduated as a film director from the indie school Super16 in Copenhagen. Zara Zerny has worked with and portrayed elderly people and she continues to give a dying generation a voice, whose perception of love and partnership is unique and radically differentiates from later generations individualism.

**Director** Zara Zerny  
**Producer** Maria Møller Kjeldgaard  
**Production** Manna Film

**Genre** Documentary  
**Status** World premiere / IDFA 2023  
**Running Time** 76 min.  
**International Sales**  
mannafilm.dk



# THE END OF QUIET / THE END OF QUIET

In a remote rural community in West Virginia, a powerful radio telescope is listening into space to unlock the mysteries of the universe. Meanwhile, living in the quietest place on earth with no cell phones or WI-FI, the locals are faced with the mysteries of life itself. **THE END OF QUIET** digs deep into what seemingly is a simpler and less hectic and demanding life than the world most of us live in. The absence of wireless communication, social media and entertainment on demand seemingly paints a utopian picture that will resonate with the audience. However, things are never that simple and the grass is not always greener on the other side.

Both directors graduated from the National Film School in Lodz and have a long list of both documentaries and short fictions to their names. The film is a unique three-year-long collaboration between the directors and the internationally acclaimed editor Charlotte Munch Bengtsen. She recently edited the Oscar-nominated 'All that Breathes' and the multiple award-winning box-office-hit, 'The Truffle Hunters'.

**Director** Kasper Bisgaard,  
Mikael Lypinski  
**Producer** Sara Stockmann  
**Production** Sonntag Pictures

**Genre** Documentary  
**Status** Post-production  
**Running Time** Approx. 85 min.  
**International Sales**  
sonntagpictures.com



# FIGHTING DEMONS WITH DRAGONS

## / MED DRAGER OG DÆMONER

FIGHTING DEMONS WITH DRAGONS is a coming-of-age documentary about feeling excluded - and for the first time finding a community. The film follows three pupils at Østerskov Boarding School, where learning takes place through play, and where role-playing is an integral part of the teaching. The school attracts students who have been outsiders their whole life, been bullied or have diagnoses. Here, many of the children feel accepted and included for the first time. We meet Ask, Luca and Josephine who all long to be part of a community and yet still trying to hold on to their uniqueness. In the two years that we follow these students, they combat anxiety and insecurity while in costume and armed with swords. Filled with all the vulnerability, savagery, and courage of youth, they've embarked on a journey through the dim corridor connecting childhood and adulthood.

Camilla Magid deals with significant societal issues in her films, often with children as main characters. Camilla Magid is a Super16 graduate and her most prominent films are 'Land of the Free' and 'White Black Boy'.

**Director** Camilla Magid  
**Producer** Heidi Elise Christensen  
**Production** Final Cut for Real

**Genre** Documentary  
**Status** Post-production  
**Running Time** 93 min.  
**International Sales**  
cinephil.com





# GIRL AWAY FROM HOME / PIGE VÆK HJEMMEFRA

Nastia (13) is an elite gymnast in Kiev. Her teammates are her best friends. After months of hard work, they win the Ukrainian championship. A month after the win, a war breaks out in Ukraine. Nastia and her grandmother has to flee to Germany leaving friends and family in Ukraine. Nastia has a tough time in Germany. But when she joins a German gymnastics team, things start to brighten.

The film is co-directed by Simon Lereng Wilmont and Alisa Kovalenko. Both directors are prize-winning filmmakers. Simon Lereng Wilmont with their films 'Distant Barking of Dogs', 'A House Made of Splinters' and Alisa Kovalenko with 'We Will Not Fade Away'

**Director** Simon Lereng Wilmont,  
Alisa Kovalenko  
**Producer** Maria Stevnbak  
Westergren  
**Production** Toolbox Film

**Genre** Documentary  
**Status** World premiere/  
IDFA 2023  
**Running Time** 22 min.  
**International Sales**  
autlookfilms.com



# THE LIGHT / LYSET

The artwork 'Peace Sculpture' created by artist Elle-Mie Ejdrup for the commemoration of Denmark's liberation of the Nazi occupation on May 4, 1995. It was Denmark's largest work of art and sparked a historic controversy. The artwork, which involved a 532 km long laser beam along the bunkers on the west coast, triggered a heated national debate among former resistance fighters, politicians, and the Danish press regarding the dark past of the country. The controversy became so intense that the artist and her team received death threats, rape threats, and human feces by post. The scandal, fueled by sexist media coverage portraying Elle-Mie as incompetent, led her to be ostracized from the Danish art world for two decades.

THE LIGHT is a unique perspective on history and provides a platform for voices that have been marginalized and ignored for far too long.

Alexander Lind graduated from The National Danish Film School in 2013.

**Director** Alexander Lind  
**Producer** Emil Johnsen  
**Production** GotFat Productions

**Genre** Documentary  
**Status** Released domestically  
**Running Time** 70 min.  
**International Sales**  
gotfat.dk

**DANISH  
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**The Danish Film Institute** is the national agency supporting and encouraging Danish film and cinema culture.

We support the development, production and distribution of Danish films and offer funding for international co-productions.






Support programmes extend to digital games, film education and promotion at international film festivals. A minimum of 25 percent of all subsidies are earmarked for children and youth films.

Situated in central Copenhagen, the Danish Film Institute houses the national Cinematheque and also includes a library, a stills and posters archive and a film studio for children to explore the craft of filmmaking.

We manage the film archives and run the streaming sites filmcentralen.dk, stumfilm.dk and danmarkpaafilm.dk.

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