

INTO THE DARK

A FILM BY THOMAS WANGSMO

AWARDS

Bronze Zenith – Montreal World Film Festival 2012

FESTIVALS

2012 Tromsø International Film Festival – World premiere

2012 Montreal World Film Festival – International premiere

2012 Festroia International Film Festival – European premiere

2012 Camerimage International Film Festival of Cinematography

2013 Cinema Jove Valencia International Film Festival

2012 | Norway | 88 min | Norwegian w/English subtitles | 2.39:1

DCP: 2K | 88 min | 24 fps | 5.1 surround | Norwegian w/English subtitles | 2.39:1

ProRes: 2K | 85 min | 25 fps | 5.1 surround | Norwegian w/English subtitles | 2.39:1

Print contact:

Stine Oppegaard
The Norwegian Film Institute
Filmens Hus
P.O. Box 482 Sentrum
0105 Oslo
Norway
T: +47 22 47 45 00
M: +47 90 85 96 38
F: +47 22 47 45 97
stine.oppegaard@nfi.no
www.nfi.no

Distribution contact:

Thomas Wangsmo
Frydens gate 4 B
0564 Oslo
Norway
T: +47 41 04 71 64
post@thomaswangsmo.com
www.thomaswangsmo.com

Clips, images, notes: thomaswangsmo.com/intothedark

HD-screener (requires password): thomaswangsmo.com/intothedark/download

Trailer: thomaswangsmo.com/features – vimeo.com/thomaswangsmo/intothedark

SYNOPSIS

Short synopsis:

On a dark winter evening, driving home with his family, Jan runs over his neighbours' eight-year-old son, and a deep rift develops between the two families.

Longer synopsis:

On a dark winter evening, driving home with his family, Jan runs over his neighbours' eight-year-old son. The boy survives, but is left in a coma, and a deep rift develops between the two families. As time passes, the immediate sorrow and disbelief of the boy's father starts to give way to suspicion. A dangerous struggle for truth and justice ensues, leaving both men trapped in a downward spiral of desperation that threatens to lead to their undoing.

Longest synopsis:

Svein and Sigrun experience every parent's worst nightmare when their eight-year-old son Nicolai is severely injured in a car accident just down the street from their home. Driving the car was their neighbour Jan and his family. The boy survives, but is left in a coma. Will he wake up, and if he does, will he be the same? That is the question that haunts the devastated parents in this harrowing drama that explores the difficult emotions of grief, guilt, suspicion, fear, anger and despair in the wake of a tragic accident.

How do good neighbours attempt to move beyond such a horrific event? How does one forgive a friend who nearly caused the death of your child? How long does it take before your suspicions get the better of you, and you start drifting into the dark recesses of your mind?

After coming to grips with the effects of the accident, and the hospitalised state of his son, Svein starts thinking about how the accident happened. He drives through the intersection that was the scene of the crash one night, just as Jan's son comes riding his bike from the other direction, the same way Nicolai did on that fateful evening. Svein sees the boy clearly, and has plenty of time to slow down for him. After parking his car at the house, Svein walks back to the intersection to have a closer look. He can't make sense of it. He can't make sense of Jan's explanation.

As the days go by, Nicolai is showing few signs of recovering, and Svein is growing ever more suspicious of Jan's role in the accident; he becomes convinced that it was all Jan's fault. Meanwhile, Jan is plagued with guilt about his actions, and as Svein closes in on the truth, both men are trapped in a downward spiral of desperation that threatens to lead to their undoing.

ABOUT THE FILM

Into the Dark is a stark Norwegian drama set in early winter in a suburb just outside Oslo, in which we follow four neighbouring parents struggling to carry on with their lives after a tragic traffic accident. Making this story of grief, guilt, suspicion and anger come to life took a great toll on both the actors and the small crew, both mentally and physically, because as if dealing with the complex and painful emotions of the story wasn't difficult enough, Oslo experienced the coldest November and December it had seen for several decades.

The night before commencing principal photography, everything looked so good, at least concerning the weather. The start of the winter had been a pleasant one, without a trace of snow, which was exactly what we wanted, and temperatures lingering just above freezing point. Even the production was on track, although we were experiencing some problems familiar to low budget productions, such as securing one of the most important props – the main character's car – at the right price. We finally did get the car, at a right-ish price, just as we were ready to start rolling on the first shot of the film, but by then we had begun to notice the temperature dropping, literally by the hour. It didn't get too bad on that first night, but already on our second day, temperatures dropped down to about -20°C (-4°F), where it stayed for the rest of the shoot. It was time to put on our wool socks, long underwear and down jackets. We were in for three of the coldest weeks of our lives.

After a few days, everyone seemed to adjust to the cold, or at least we were all putting on brave faces. Morale was surprisingly high, even if we were spending more than half our time on increasingly cold exterior locations. One of those locations was the one most central to the film; the intersection where the opening accident takes place. We spent two days and two nights filming at this location, and for the first three working days, everything went fine. Yes, it was terribly, infuriatingly cold, but we are Norwegians after all, so we soldiered on, knowing that at the end of each freezing day, we were one day closer to wrapping. And hey, at least it wasn't snowing. That is, until the night before we were shooting the big accident scene.

As I said, we already had three full shooting days worth of material from this intersection, containing scenes that were supposed to take place in the days following the accident. And in all of those scenes, there was hardly a trace of snow. How can we now then, have an intersection completely covered in white? How can we motivate that the boy who falls victim to this accident is out riding his bike in ten inches of snow? We couldn't, so the only answer was to remove it. Hiring a snow removal car, we had about five hours before shooting to clear as much of the road as was necessary to work with the continuity of our other scenes. We planned all our shots so that we would only see down two of the four roads leading from the intersection, and with barely a minute to spare, cleared all the snow we needed in order to make the scene work. Disaster avoided, and after that near accident shooting the accident scene, the last few days of the shoot went by without a hitch. But it never did get any warmer that winter.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

THOMAS WANGSMO (writer/director/producer) is a Norwegian screenwriter and director, and a film graduate from Concordia University in Montreal, Canada. He has written and directed one feature and more than twenty short films. His first feature film, *Into the Dark*, was released in Norway in February 2012, and premiered internationally at Montreal World Film Festival in 2012, where it won the Bronze Zenith Award. His short film *Amor* won the EFA Best Short Award at Ghent International Film Festival in 2009, and was a Best Short nominee at the European Film Awards in 2010. In addition to writing and directing, Wangsmo has edited all his films, and occasionally also photographed and produced them. He is a member of the Norwegian Writer's Guild, and teaches filmmaking at an arts college in Oslo, Norway, in addition to working as a filmmaker. *Web: www.thomaswangsmo.com*

Feature films: *Into the Dark* (2012)

Selected shorts: *The Forest Deep* (2012), *Reunion* (2010), *The Secret* (2010), *Amor* (2009), *The Proposition* (2009), *Elegy* (2008), *On the Bottom* (2007), *Flight* (2005)

DANIEL HENRIKSØ (producer) was a Norwegian producer who tragically died in a drowning accident during a storm off the west coast of Norway in November 2011. He was only 27 years old. Daniel worked with director Thomas Wangsmo for nearly four years before his untimely death, producing four of the director's short films in the period, as well as their feature film debut, *Into the Dark*. Working his way up from a production assistant and later production coordinator for Norwegian veteran producer Petter Vennerød, he made a bold decision in 2008 to start his own production company, Vidvinkel Film, and never looked back. In his short career, he found time to produce numerous short films with a handful of young, talented Norwegian directors, and two feature films, one of which is yet to be completed.

PATRIK SÄFSTRÖM (cinematographer) is a Swedish cinematographer who immigrated to Norway just eighteen years old. Working his way up as a camera assistant in the 1990s, Patrik is one of the most seasoned filmmakers in Norway, having worked in the camera department on over fifty productions. His first feature film as a cinematographer was the 2003 film *Destination Moscow (Mot Moskva)*. *Into the Dark* is his third feature as cinematographer. *Web: www.vimeo.com/patriksafstrom*

ABOUT THE CAST

THORBJØRN HARR (Jan) is a graduate of Oslo National Academy of the Arts, where he attended 1997-2000. He has portrayed many roles at Oslo's National Theatre, amongst others: Figaro in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Ragnar Brovik in *The Master Builder*, Sivert in *The Growth of the Soil*, Tom in *The Glass Menagerie*, Einar in *Brand*, and Jacob in *Erasmus Montanus*. He also starred in and directed *Chet Doesn't Play Here Anymore*, for which he won the Theatre Critics' Award. From 2010-12 he was part of the artistic leadership of the Torshov Theatre, and won the Hedda Award for Outstanding Artistic Achievement for his work. His film roles include *Reprise, Toward Moscow*, earning him a nomination for the Amanda Award for Best Actor, *House of Fools* and *Mars & Venus*. Harr has also received the Per Aabel Award and the Radio Theatre's Blue Bird Award for his acting.

FRIDTJOV SÅHEIM (Svein) was educated at The National Academy of Theatre 1991-94. Some of his roles at the National Theatre in Oslo include: Molvik in *The Wild Duck*, the title role in *Raskolnikov*, Arnholm in *The Lady from the Sea*, Heyerdahl in *The Growth of the Soil*, The Other in *I am the Wind*, Agamemnon in *Ifigenia* and Dmitrij in *The Brothers Karamasov*. He is also an experienced film actor, with roles in films such as *Kissed by Winter, Comrade Pedersen, The Art of Negative Thinking, Together, Home for Christmas* and *Hawaii, Oslo*, as well as roles in television series such as *Lilyhammer* and *The Half Brother*. He has also directed several productions both for the theatre and television. Såheim has been nominated for the Amanda Award for Best Actor and Best Actor in a Supporting Role, Gullruten for Best Actor twice, and the Kanon Award for Best Actor.

ELLEN DORRIT PETERSEN (Anita) was educated at Oslo National Academy of the Arts 2002-05. Her first feature film role was only four years ago in *Troubled Water*, but since then she has burst onto the Norwegian film scene, with leading roles in *Ice Kiss*, earning her an Amanda Award for Best Actress, *Pax, The King of Devil's Island, The Mountain*, earning her another nomination for the Amanda Award for Best Actress, and most recently in the upcoming film *Blind*. She has also portrayed several roles at The Norwegian Theatre, including: Mary Magdalene in *Jesus Christ Superstar*, the title role in *Andromake*, The Girl in *The Name* and Otilie Klamroth in *Before Sunset*.

LAILA GOODY (Sigrun) was educated at The National Academy of Theatre 1991-94. Some of her numerous roles at the National Theatre include: Thomasine Coverly in *Arcadia*, Rebecca West in *Rosmersholm*, Hilde in *The Lady from the Sea*, the title role in *Mary Stuart*, Gina Ekdal in *The Wild Duck*, Clytemnestra in *Ifigenia*, Desdemona in *Othello* and Dolly in *Anna Karenina*. She has also done several film roles, including *Jonny Vang, Cry in the Woods* and most recently the upcoming film *I Belong*. Goody has won many awards for her work as an actress, including the Hedda Award for *Evidence*, Gullruten for Best Actress in *Rosmersholm*, Gösta Ekmans Nordic Memorial Fund Award and the Per Aabel Honorary Award.

CREDITS

CREW

Written and directed by Thomas Wangsmo

Produced by Daniel Henriksbø and Thomas Wangsmo

Cinematography Patrik Säfström

Sound Design Håkon Lammetun

Edited by Thomas Wangsmo

Art Direction Reinert Kiil

Production Company Vidvinkel Film

Executive Producers Jørn Landbakk and Pål Granlund

CAST

Jan Thorbjørn Harr

Svein Fridtjov Såheim

Anita Ellen Dorrit Petersen

Sigrun Laila Goody

Martin Fredrik Grøndahl

Nicolai Fredrik Frafjord

Arild Kåre Conradi