



PRESS RELEASE 4 September 2014
For immediate release

Nearly 40 international guests will visit HIFF in September

LOVE & ANARCHY GALA

Brontis Jodorowsky

Brontis Jodorowsky was born in Chile in 1962 and has had a long career as an actor in France. He got his first role in a film as a six-year old, acting in the cult movie *El Topo* directed by his father, legendary director **Alejandro Jodorowsky**. During the years, the two have worked together on theatre plays, but *THE DANCE OF REALITY* is the first movie they shoot together in a long time. In the film the younger Jodorowsky plays his grandfather, a Ukranian-Jewish immigrant who makes his son's life a living hell.

Brontis Jodorowsky in Helsinki 24–27 September. Interview requests Mika Siltala, Cinema Mondo, mikas@cinemamondo.fi

SPOTLIGHT SELECTION

Andrew Scott

Andrew Scott, born in 1971, is an awarded Irish actor with vast experience from TV, film and theatre. Scott is best known as the bad guy Jim Moriarty from *Sherlock*, for which he was awarded a BAFTA for Best Actor in a Supporting Role. Scott did his film debut when he was only 17 years old, and during the recent years he has performed in many quality films and series as well as in the Broadway play *The Vertical Hour* together with **Julianne Moore**. Scott has described his relationship with acting as a "healthy obsession". HIFF screens *JIMMY'S HALL*, a film situated in the 1930s in which Scott's character, the catholic priest Father Seamus tries to stop the protagonist Jimmy from establishing a community hall in the village.

Andrew Scott visits Helsinki 19–21 September

NORDIC COUNCIL FILM PRIZE

Benedikt Erlingsson

Benedikt Erlingsson, born 1969, is an Icelandic actor, scriptwriter, and director. As an actor, he has performed, for example, in **Lars von Trier's** film *The Boss of It All*. HIFF screens Erlingsson's internationally esteemed debut as a director, *OF HORSES AND MEN*, which shows the tragicomic behaviour of people through the eyes of horses. The Reykjavik-born director has personal experiences from working with horses at a farm in Northern Iceland when he was a teenager. He has stated that *Of Horses and Men* can be seen as a therapeutic piece, through which he was able to face traumatic youth encounters with rural lifestyle and the four-legged animals ruling it.

Benedikt Erlingsson visits Helsinki 21–24 September.

NORDIC EXCELLENCE

Patrik Andersson

Patrik Andersson is a Swedish producer and Development Manager for the international production company B-Reel. He started his career within marketing and film distribution, but navigated towards producing films. Andersson comes to HIFF to present *HOTELL*, a drama film about a young woman who gets depressed after the birth of her first child and escapes reality with her therapy group, staying at different hotels where no one knows them. *Hotell* is written and directed by the Guldbagge-awarded **Lisa Langseth**.

Patrik Andersson In Helsinki 24 –26 September

Christoffer Boe

Christoffer Boe is a Danish film director, who has studied at the prestigious National Film School of Denmark. During his student years, Boe led a collective called Hr. Boe & Co., established by five filmmakers in search of "the perfect picture". The collective's first film, *The Reconstruction*, was directed by Boe and won the Golden Palm for Best Cinematography in Cannes. He was also awarded the Best Director prize at San Sebastian Film Festival. The same group is behind Boe's other films as well. Even though it might seem unbelievable, *SEX, DRUGS AND TAXATION* is based on a true story about two hedonistic partners in business and friendship. The film follows **Simon Spies** and **Mogens Glistrup** as they launch the first cheap flight company in Denmark and get the taste of wild jet set life. Boe interprets facts loosely and questions the Danish collective memory, which regards Spies and Glistrup as living legends.

Christoffer Boe visits Helsinki 19–21 September

Iram Haq

Iram Haq, born in 1976, is a Norwegian director and actress, who has performed on stage as well as in films and TV series. Haq had her directorial debut with short film *Little Miss Eyeflap*, which premiered at Sundance Film Festival. HIFF screens her first feature film *I AM YOURS (Jag er din)*, which premiered at Toronto Film Festival in 2013 and was chosen as Norway's nominee for the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film. The film is partly based on Haq's own experiences as the daughter of Pakistani immigrants in Norway. *I Am Yours* depicts a single mother, who tries to find love and her own place in between two cultures. Haq has said that she wanted to tell a story about how to show love to a child if you haven't experienced it from your own parents.

Iram Haq visits Helsinki 19–21 September

Henrik Hellström

Swedish Henrik Hellström (born 1964) is a filmmaker with a background in filmmaking. Hellström, who graduated from Malmö's theatre academy rose to fame through his debut feature *Burrowing (Man tänker sitt, 2009)*, which premiered at Berlin Film Festival and was also seen at HIFF. Hellström's interest in film directing sprung from an urge to control the environment of his stories. The world he creates in his films has been described as dreamy and existentially searching. *THE QUIET ROAR* depicts Marianne (**Evabritt Strandberg**), a 68-year-old woman diagnosed with a terminal disease. Left with angst, she seeks therapy at a clinic where she's treated with psilocybin (LSD) and meditation with a counselor, Eva (**Hanna Schygulla**). She is transferred to her subconscious, where she meets and confronts her 25-year-old self and her former husband.

Henrik Hellström in Helsinki 19–22 September

Ole Christian Madsen

Ole Christian Madsen (b 1966) is a Danish film director and screenwriter, who studied film at the highly esteemed National Film School of Denmark. He has directed several films and television series that have become highly popular in his home country, such as the comedy *SuperClásico* (2011) and the drama *Flame & Citron*, which was the most expensive Danish film production when it premiered in 2008. HIFF screen's Madsen's new film *ITSI BITS!*, a hippie love story set in the 1960s.

Ole Christian Madsen in Helsinki 21–23 September

Anna Odell

Anna Odell, born in 1973, is a Swedish artist and film director. Odell drew attention in Sweden in 2009 with her film *Unknown, woman 2009-349701 (Okänd, kvinna 2009-349701)*, which was her Bachelor's degree project at Konstfack University College of Art, Crafts and Design. The film discusses the role of the mentally ill in society. In her performance, Odell pretended to go on a rampage from a nervous breakdown on the Liljeholm Bridge in Stockholm. In consequence, the police forcefully took her to the hospital's psychiatric ward. The next day, Odell announced she was well and said the incident had been part of her personal art project. Odell's first feature film, *THE REUNION (Återträffen, 2013)*, examines the break down of social norms. Facades and expectations crumble when old classmates meet each other after many years. Odell plays herself, whereas professional actors play the classmates like Odell imagines them being today. The film was awarded the Guldbagge Prize for the Best Film and Screenplay as well as Dagens Nyheter's Kulturpris.

Anna Odell visits Helsinki 18–21 September. Interview requests: Mika Siltala, Cinema Mondo, mikas@cinemamondo.fi.

BALTIC CHAIN

Andres Maimik

Andres Maimik (b 1970) studied at Tartu Art College and the Estonian Institute of Humanities. He graduated from Tallinn Pedagogical University in 2009 with a degree in directing documentaries. He has worked as a journalist, film director and editor, scriptwriter and copywriter. He comes to HIFF with his newest film *CHERRY TOBACCO*, which he has co-directed together with his wife **Katrin Maimik**. *Cherry Tobacco* is a youthful relationship drama about falling in love for the first time as a young woman. Because of both psychological reasons and societal norms making decisions is difficult, especially if the awakening feelings are directed towards an older man. Maimik is known in Estonia for example for the film *Kuku: I will stay alive (Kuku: Mina jään Ellu, 2011)*.

Andres Maimik In Helsinki 19–21 September

Katrin Maimik

Katrin Maimik (1982) is an Estonian director and screenwriter. She received a Bachelor's degree in dramatic theory from the University of Tartu in 2005 and an MA in scriptwriting from Tallinn University's Baltic Film and Media School in 2013. Her feature debut *CHERRY TOBACCO* is screened at HIFF this year. *Cherry Tobacco* is a youthful relationship drama about falling in love for the first time as a young woman. Because of both psychological reasons and societal norms making decisions is difficult, especially if the awakening feelings are directed towards an older man. Maimik comes to Helsinki together with her husband **Andres Maimik**, who co-directed the film.

Katrin Maimik in Helsinki 19–21 September

Mait Malmsten

Mait Malmsten (b 1972) is an Estonian actress who comes to Helsinki to present **Ilmar Raag's** KERTU. LOVE IS BLIND. Malmsten has studied acting in Tallinn and acted in Estonia's National Theatre since 1993 as well as in several films and television series.

Mait Malmsten in Helsinki 22–25 September

Veiko Õunpuu

Veiko Õunpuu (1972) has been a worker, a carpet salesman, a university dropout on three different occasions, a backpacker and a painter. In 2006, he founded production company Homeless Bob Production. His debut feature *Autumn Ball* premiered at Venice IFF in 2007 and won the Orizzonti Award. He received the European Talent Award for *The Temptation of St Tony*, which later premiered internationally in Sundance in 2011 and was nominated for the best production design at the European Film Awards. Õunpuu was chosen as one of the 100 most intriguing contemporary film directors in the book *10*10 in Film* by Phaidon Publishing. He comes to HIFF with his new feature *FREE RANGE*, a story of a promising young man with exciting career opportunities and looming marital bliss.

Veiko Õunpuu in Helsinki 20–22 September

Ilmar Raag

Ilmar Raag, born in 1968, is an Estonian scriptwriter, director and media professional. He has studied at University of Tartu, and has a MA in scriptwriting from University of Ohio. Raag has a versatile background in television – from 2002 to 2005 he managed the Estonian Public Broadcasting Company, but recently he has focused on filmmaking. Raag is most renowned for his 2007 film *The Class (Klass)* about school violence. The film won numerous awards at festivals all around the world and was also the Estonian candidate for Oscar nomination in the category of Best Foreign Language Film. HIFF screens two of Raag's latest films: *KERTU. LOVE IS BLIND* (2013) and *I WON'T COME BACK* (2014). In *Kertu*, quiet and withdrawn Kertu meets local playboy Villu at a village festival in Saaremaa. Power, love, and desire form dark clouds above the community, where people turn the blind eye on big and scary secrets. *I Won't Come Back* is the story of Anya, who has her all worked out. She spends her days as a professor's assistant and her nights as a lover. An inconvenient conflict forces her to leave everything behind. On the way she finds hospitality and compassion, but also perversions and violence.

Ilmar Raag visits Helsinki 23–26 September

Lembit Ulfsak

Lembit Ulfsak (b 1947) is a well-known actor in his native Estonia. He graduated with a degree in acting from the Tallin conservatory in 1970. Since then he has worked extensively in film and theatre, and has also directed two films. Ulfsak stars in **Zaza Urushadze's** film *TANGERINE*, which takes place in war-ridden Abkhazia in 1990. Ulfsak's character Ivo is an Estonian man who has stayed behind to harvest his crops of tangerines. After a bloody conflict at his door, a wounded man is left behind, and Ivo is forced to take him in. Lembit Ulfsak's son **Juhan Ulfsak** is familiar to the Finnish audience through his performances in *Concrete Night* and *Mushrooming*, which were both screened at HIFF in 2013.

Lembit Ulfsak in Helsinki 25–27 September

EAST SIDE STORIES

Ádám Császi

Ádám Császi has a Master's Degree in English literature and is currently studying filmmaking in Hungary. Before directing his first feature film, LAND OF STORMS (2014), Császi directed short films that have been screened and awarded around Europe. LAND OF STORMS, which tells the love story of two Hungarian athletes, is a film of deep emotions and sexual tension.

Ádám Császi visits Helsinki 20–22 September

Bodo Kox

Bodo Kox (b 1977) is one of the most original rising indie filmmakers of Poland. Working as a director and screenwriter, he is strongly associated with independent cinema, which all of his films to date have represented. Kox has received numerous awards at independent film festivals in Poland and abroad. He also has experience as an actor. He was commended for his roles in well-known 'off' films such as *Nosebleed (Krew z nosa)* and *Fallow Land (Ugór)*. He is currently studying directing at the Leon Schiller National Higher School of Film, Television, and Theatre in Łódź. He completed in the Development Lab's feature programme at the Wajda School. THE GIRL FROM THE WARDEROBE is his feature debut.

Bodo Kox In Helsinki 23–26 September

SING ALONG WITH THE COMMON PEOPLE

Nick Banks

Nick Banks, born in 1965 in Rotherham, England, is known as the drummer of Pulp. He began playing drums when he was 14 and idolised drummers such as **Paul Cook** from Sex Pistols and **Clem Burke** from Blondie. In 1987, Banks joined Pulp, which was his favourite band at the time. In 2008, Banks became drummer for another Sheffield band, Pollinates. Currently, Banks lives in Sheffield with his wife and two children and manages a family-owned pottery company, Banks Pottery. Banks will be the guest of HIFF together with the producer of PULP: A FILM ABOUT LIFE, DEATH & SUPERMARKETS **Alex Boden**. He will also do a rare DJ gig at the festival's opening party in Le Bonk 18 September.

Nick Banks visits Helsinki 18–21 September

Alex Boden

Alex Boden is a British film producer, who will visit Helsinki with his film PULP: A FILM ABOUT LIFE, DEATH & SUPERMARKETS. Boden is the founder and co-owner of the production company Pistachio Pictures, which has produced many award-winning films since 1999. Boden also has experience in selling and distributing films, and he likes thrillers in particular. It was Boden's idea to change the name of the documentary from *Sheffield the Sex City*, which director **Florian Habicht** opposed at first. Boden also speaks German and French.

Alex Boden visits Helsinki 18–22 September

Florian Habicht

Florian Habicht is a New Zealander film director, producer and scriptwriter whose two films will be screened at HIFF. The first of them, PULP: A FILM ABOUT LIFE, DEATH & SUPERMARKETS, is a music documentary about the band Pulp, and the second LOVE STORY (2011), an original love story situated in New York. Habicht met the singer of Pulp, **Jarvis Cocker**, for the first time in 2012 in a

screening of *Love Story* in London. Cocker has later said that he wanted Habicht to direct the documentary because he admired the director's capability to jump into dangerous and embarrassing situations, as well as his New Zealand background. Awarded at different festivals, *Love Story* is a romantic comedy, resembling films by **Woody Allen**, and stretching the line between fact and fiction. Habicht's earlier works include imaginative *Woodenhead* (2003) that became a cult classic in New Zealand, and *Kaikohe Demolition* (2004), which is a beautiful and poetic documentary of demolition derby in a small village. Habicht will visit Helsinki with the producer of the Pulp documentary, **Alex Boden**, and the drummer of the band, **Nick Banks**.

Florian Habicht visits Helsinki 18–21 September

INDIE DARLINGS

Daniel Sánchez Arévalo

Daniel Sánchez Arévalo, born in 1970, is a Spanish director, scriptwriter, and producer. HIFF screens his fourth feature film, *FAMILY UNITED (La Gran Familia Española)*. The comedy, which has been a blockbuster in Spain, is situated in 2010 when Spain won the football World Cup. Secrets are revealed as a big Spanish family gathers to celebrate the wedding of their youngest son as the guests watch the thrilling final game of the World Cup. The film was nominated for as many as 12 Goya Awards. Even though Arévalo comes from a family of artists (his father is an artist and his mother an actress), the director wasn't interested in arts until he was 23. After pursuing a degree in economics, he started to look for a career in insurance business, and went from one job interview to another, getting so bored that he started writing stories and scripts to amuse himself. As it happened, Arévalo was employed as a scriptwriter before he could find a job in an insurance company. The director has stated that filmmaking is a form therapy for him, and in fact, he has been going to therapy for 16 years and started writing scripts partly to disentangle some of the knots in his own life.

Arévalo visits Helsinki 20–23 September

Pierfrancesco Diliberto

Pierfrancesco Diliberto, known as Pif, was born in Palermo in 1972. At the start of his career, he worked as assistant director to **Franco Zeffirelli** in *Un tè con Mussolini* (1998) and a year later to **Marco Tullio Giordana** in *I cento passi*. In 2000, Pif took part in a Mediaset course and became a television writer. He became famous thanks to one of the group's most popular shows, the investigative current affairs programme *Le Iene*, where he worked as author and reporter from 2001 to 2010. He created *Il Testimone* for MTV in 2007, his first individual programme and one of the most original and innovative in the current TV sector. Since 2011, he has been involved with *Il testimone VIP*, which gives detailed accounts of the daily life of prominent figures from the worlds of sports, politics and show business. *MAFIA ONLY KILLS IN THE SUMMER* is his directorial debut, set between 1970 and 1990 in the Mafia-ridden Italian city of Palermo. The film has been called a new way of portraying the Mafia, showing the humanity of the heroes who fought against the Mafia.

Pierfrancesco Diliberto in Helsinki 19–21 September

David Lambert

David Lambert (b. 1974) is a scriptwriter and director from Belgium, who was a theatre dramaturge and director before going into cinema. His first feature film *Beyond the Walls (Hors les murs)*, 2012) aroused plenty of attention and was chosen for the esteemed Critics' Week in Cannes. HIFF screens Lambert's romantic comedy *ALL YOURS*, in which he has made bold musical and visual choices. The film was premiered in the Official Selection of Karlovy Vary Film Festival in July. *All Yours* is a

mercurial and surprising, cross-loving love triangle, in which a young playboy is caught up in between the urges and desires of a middle-aged baker and a single mother working for him.

David Lambert visits Helsinki 19–22 September

Bryan Reisberg

Bryan Reisberg is an American filmmaker, who has studied Film and Television in the Tisch School of Arts in New York University. With his production company Uncorked Productions, Reisberg has made commercials and music videos together with producer **Andrew D. Corkin**. Reisberg demonstrated his skills as a director with his debut short film *Father/Son* (2012), which premiered in London BFI. Later, Reisberg directed the web series *The Walker*, starring **Carey Mulligan**. 26-year-old Bryan Reisberg comes to Helsinki to present his first feature film, **BIG SIGNIFICANT THINGS**, starring **Harry Lloyd** from *The Game of Thrones* and Finnish **Krista Kosonen**.

Bryan Reisberg visits Helsinki 19–21 September

ANGELIC NIGHTMARES

Ignas Jonynas

Ignas Jonynas, born in Lithuania in 1971, has worked with short films, commercial productions, and theatre before his first feature film. He has also worked in fields other than art, as a construction worker, radio host, medicine doser for psychiatric hospital, and bartender. HIFF screens Jonynas' *THE GAMBLER*, which is a story of emergency unit worker Vincentas, who spends his spare time gambling. Vincentas decides to create a game based on his work and ends up gambling with his life.

Ignas Jonynas visits Helsinki 20–22 September

BALKANIZE!

Darko Lungulov

Darko Lungulov a film director originally from Serbia, moved to New York City where he obtained BFA in film and video from City College of New York. From 1997 to 2003 he worked as director of documentaries at the production company Spiral Pictures / Ross Institute. In 2009, Darko's debut feature film *Here and There* won the Best NY Narrative Award at Tribeca festival – its world premiere. Subsequently it won 20 awards at more than 50 international festivals around the world. The dark comedy *MONUMENT TO MICHAEL JACKSON* is Darko's second feature film. In a dying Serbian town an old communist-era monument is removed from the Square. In order to save his town and seduce his estranged wife again, daydreamer Marko comes up with the idea to replace it with a monument to Michael Jackson. His absurd idea attracts supporters and enemies alike. Lungulov arrives in Helsinki with his wife **Zora Lungulov**, who is the costume designer for the film.

Darko Lungulov in Helsinki 22–25 September

Tomislav Mrsic

Tomislav Mrsic was born in Zagreb in 1972. He became involved in film while studying at the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Zagreb, which he graduated from in 1998. He is the author of numerous documentaries and television shows. He received the best debutant award at the Days of Croatian Film Festival in 2002 for his film *Sala nije na liniji 310*. His documentaries have been screened at all major film festivals in the region. Along with documentaries, he directs short feature films and promotional videos, and also assists directors on television series and feature films.

Tomislav Mrsic in Helsinki 26–28 September

Suzana Pandek

Suzana Pandek (born 1973) is the producer of the Croatian film *COWBOYS*. Pandek has a journalistic background, having studied communication at Zagreb university and having worked in childrens' shows on tv, on *Cosmopolitan* and other lifestyle magazines and in the marketing industry.

Suzana Pandek In Helsinki 26–28 September

Robert Budina

Robert Budina is an Albanian filmmaker, who has graduated as a theatre director, and also works as a producer in the ERAFILMS company he has founded. HIFF screens Budina's first feature film *AGON*, which was the Albanian nominee for the Oscar for the Best Foreign Language Film. Budina worked intensively with his film on immigration. Before shooting the film, Budina and the actors moved to Greece, where the film is situated and tried to adjust to the culture in order to gain psychological depth in the characters.

Robert Budina visits Helsinki 18–21 September

CREATIVE WONDERS

Mark Cousins

Mark Cousins is an Irish film director and critic living in Scotland. The Finnish cinema audience knows Cousins from his 15-part TV series on the history of film, *The Story of Film: An Odyssey*. Cousins has worked hard for the film culture. Together with **Tilda Swinton**, he launched a travelling film festival during which a group of film lovers took a 35-ton cinema truck through the Scottish highlands in 2009 and 2011. HIFF screens Cousins' documentary *A STORY OF CHILDREN AND FILM* in which he examines the most remarkable child scenes in the history of cinema. It may come as a surprise to the Finnish audience that one of Cousins' favourite scenes is from **Erkki Karu's** film *Finlandia* from 1922. Cousins has stated that film is an incomparable form of art to tell the truths of childhood, because the child is more actively involved in the process than in literature, for example. HIFF also screens Cousins' latest film *LIFE MAY BE*, in which he engages in a cinematic discussion on culture, gender roles and artistic creativity with director and actor **Mania Akbar**. In a discussion organised by HIFF, Professor of Film and Television Studies **Henry Bacon** will discuss the subject "How to maintain the understanding of film culture in an abundant media environment?" with Mark Cousins in Andorra 4 September at 16:30. Cousins has also promised to reveal some forgotten themes and blind spots of film history which he finds important.

Mark Cousins visits Helsinki 4–5 September

Ivo Felt

Ivo Felt works as a film producer, sound engineer and sound designer both in Estonia and Finland. Felt's sound work can be heard for example in *Palsa* (**Pekka Lehto**, 2103) and **Leena Kilpeläinen's** *VOICE OF SOKUROV*, which screens at HIFF this year. In 1995 Felt founded the production company Allfilm, which has produced **Petri Kotwica's** film *Rat King* among others. Felt is also a teacher at the Baltic Film and Media School in Tallinn. He arrives in Helsinki together with actor **Lembit Ulfsak** to present the film *TANGERINE*, which Felt has produced and **Zaza Urushadze** has directed. Felt has also worked as a sound engineer in the film *FREE RANGE* by **Veiko Õunpuu**, who also visits the festival.

Ivo Felt in Helsinki 24–27 September

Henrik Skram

Henrik Skram (b 1973) is a Norwegian composer who has composed the music for **Kenneth Elvebakk's** *BALLET BOYS* documentary featuring three young men studying at the Norwegian Ballet Academy, dreaming of becoming professional dancers. Skram studied composing in London and Norway and he has composed music for several films, plays and concerts. He was shortlisted for the Norwegian Amanda prize for his music in the film *90 Minutes* (**Eva Sørhaug**, 2013) and won the audience award at The World Soundtrack Award for the same composition.

Henrik Skram in Helsinki 26–28 September

Frédéric Tcheng

Frédéric Tcheng is a French director, who graduated as an engineer before starting his film studies at Columbia University in New York. HIFF screens Tcheng's documentary *DIOR AND I*, which provides a peek behind the scenes at Dior, where the new Creative Director **Raf Simons** finalises his haute couture collection. The film follows Simons, known for his avant-garde style, as he tries to adjust into the practices of the traditional fashion house, where the spirit of **Christian Dior** seems to be ever present. Tcheng was inspired by **Hitchcock's** *Rebecca* when depicting how Simons is trying to find his voice as the reformer of the prestigious fashion house. The director has delved into the secrets of the fashion world also in his documentary *Diana Vreeland: The Eye Has to Travel*, which he directed together with two of his colleagues. Fashion was also strongly present in the Oscar nominee

Valentino: The Last Emperor, which was edited by Tcheng. Currently Tcheng is working on the script of his first fiction film.

Frédéric Tcheng visits Helsinki 23–26 September

JUST KIDS

Ragnar Bragason

Director Ragnar Bragason (b. 1971) has established his position in the front row of new Icelandic cinema. In addition to 24 EDDA awards and 55 nominations, Bragason has been awarded Best Director three times in a row, and won many other awards at international film festivals. He is also the Chairman of the Association of Icelandic Film Directors, and member of the board of The Federation of Icelandic Artists. Bragason grew up in the village of Sudavik and started making short films and music videos as a young student. He finished his debut feature film, *Fiasco*, in 2000. He is also known for his TV series trilogy *The Night Shift*, *The Day Shift* and *The Prison Shift*. *METALHEAD*, which will be screened at HIFF, is his fifth feature film. Like the main character Hera, Bragason was a heavy metal fan while growing up. He has stated that his own passion for metal music was the starting point for his dark film dealing with loss.

Ragnar Bragason visits Helsinki 19–22 September

Sofia Norlin

Sofia Norlin, born in 1974, is a Swedish director. She has been working with theatre and cinema for ten years in her home country and in France, where she has been living for the past 18 years. There she has worked, for example, as an art teacher in Paris. HIFF will screen her first feature drama, *BROKEN HILLS BLUES*, which is a story of youth struggling with life changes in the Northern Swedish town of Kiruna, which is going through changes as well. The town is literally falling apart as the mine, which is so central to the city, is digging in under the dwellings. Explaining the poetic film with its space dialogue to funders was not easy, so the scholarship for female directors granted by the Stockholm Film Festival was vital for Norlin. Currently, Norlin is writing her next film, which is about orphan child soldiers coming from Congo to France.

Sofia Norlin visits Helsinki 19–21 September

SHALL WE OVERCOME?

Niels Pagh Andersen

Niels Pagh Andersen is a film editor and teacher born in Denmark in 1958. Andersen, who resides in Helsinki, has edited over 250 films during a career that has spanned more than 30 years and many of his films have received important film prizes. Andersen has edited, among others, **Pirjo Honkasalo's** *Concrete Night* and last year's audience hit at HIFF, **Joshua Oppenheimer's** documentary *The Act of Killing*. Andersen has also edited the sequence to *The Act of Killing*, which is called *THE LOOK OF SILENCE* and which will be screened at HIFF. The film received rave reviews at its premiere at the film festival in Venice at the beginning of September. In 2005, The Danish Film Institute awarded Andersen with the Roos lifetime achievement award for important achievements within documentary filmmaking. Andersen will host an open Masterclass for HIFF's audience 25 September, where he will shed some light on his work as an editor.

Noaz Deshe

Noaz Deshe is a versatile artist residing in Berlin and Los Angeles. In addition to filmmaking, he also composes music and writes. Deshe composed the score for **Iran Jalal's** film *Frontier Blues*, and his first novel *In Case We Never Meet Again* will be published soon. *WHITE SHADOW* is Deshe's debut

film. In Tanzania, Congo and Kenya, albinos are desired merchandise and their body parts are believed to bring health and prosperity. Based on this belief, albino children are chased and brutally murdered. As the Tanzanian saying goes, "Albinos don't die, they disappear." *White Shadow*, which is a story of an albino boy called Alias, premiered at Venice Film Festival, where Deshe won the Lion of the Future award. Deshe and his crew faced massive difficulties while filming in Tanzania. Several members of the crew got malaria and suffered from severe skin symptoms, and one of the child actors did not speak for a month after barely escaping from an explosion in an old armoury in the village. During one day of the filming, the location was changed at the last minute, which was very fortunate, because a lion killed ten people at the original location.

Noaz Deshe visits Helsinki 19–22 September

Orwa Nyrabia

Orwa Nyrabia (b. 1977) is a Syrian producer, filmmaker, actor, and columnist, who, together with his wife, has launched the DOX BOX International Doc Film Festival in Syria. In 2002, Nyrabia was involved in the founding of Proaction Film, which is the first independent film production and distribution company in Syria. HIFF screens RETURN TO HOMS, a documentary produced by Nyrabia and directed by **Talal Derk**. The documentary follows a football star, who first becomes a central character in the non-violent protesting, but later takes up arms in the battle against **Bashar al-Assad**. The dramatic battle footage from the streets of Homs under siege will haunt the viewer for a long time. The film won a prize for best documentary at Sundance Film Festival, and it was the first film from an Arab country to open the esteemed International Documentary Film Festival in Amsterdam, IDFA. Orwa Nyrabia has been active in the opposition movement in Syria and done humanitarian work in Homs, among other places. His father **Mouaffaq Nyrabia** is the Syrian National Coalition's representative in the European Union.

Orwa Nyrabia visits Helsinki 20–23 September

Matt Stoecker

Matt Stoecker is an American biologist, cameraman and the producer of the film DAMNATION. In his work, Stoecker has focused on the preservation of rivers and fish populations. Stoecker is an enthusiastic trout fisher, and filming the underwater world started his environmental awakening. Stoecker has produced underwater material for several films before his own documentary *DamNation*, which will be screened at HIFF. Stoecker will be present in a seminar, led by Minister for International Development **Pekka Haavisto**, where high-level politicians, researchers, aquatic activists, and representatives of hydroelectric power stations discuss the environmental impacts of hydroelectric power on rivers and fish populations.

Matt Stoecker visits Helsinki 23–26 September

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