 Locarno Festival  
Concorso internazionale

# WINTER BROTHERS

A LACK OF LOVE STORY BY HLYNUR PÁLMASSON  
DENMARK, ICELAND 2017



# LOGLINE

A brother odyssey set in a worker environment during a cold winter. We follow two brothers, their routines, habits, rituals and a violent feud that erupts between them and another family. A lack of love story, focusing on the younger brother Emil and his need for being loved and desired.



# SYNOPSIS

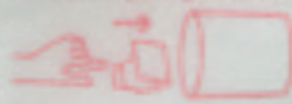
A brother odyssey set in a rural chalk-mining community during a cold winter. We follow two brothers working in this harsh environment focusing on the younger brother Emil, who distills moonshine made from stolen chemicals from the factory. Emil is an outsider, an oddball, who made a conscious choice for loneliness and is only accepted by the mining community due to his older brother Johan. Emil longs for passion, for being wanted and loved.

When a fellow worker becomes sick, the moonshine and Emil are prime suspects. Gradually a violent feud erupts between him and the tightly-knit mining community. Parallely, Emil feels betrayed by his brother when he finds out that the neighbor girl Anna, the subject of his unfulfilled desires, chooses his older brother instead of him. Revenge, loneliness, and lack of love pervade this modern brother odyssey.





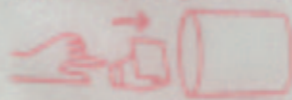
Содержание в ящике



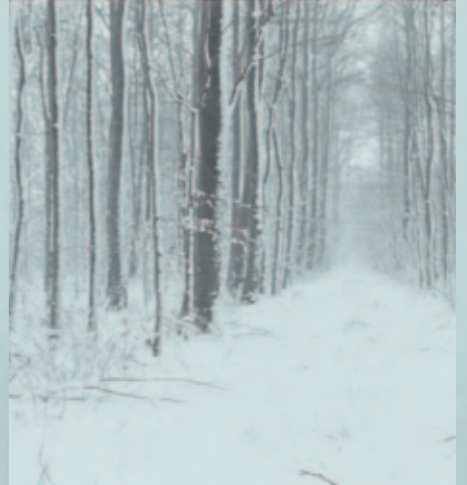
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Содержание в ящике



01	02	03	04	05	06	07
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21



# INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR

## **Can you tell more about the location where the film was shot?**

The film was shot around a limestone factory and a valley in a small town called Faxe in Denmark. Everything was shot within 2 km² area. This made the team very flexible and we were able to have a 100% access to all locations 24/7. This was very important for us to be able to film each scene with the appropriate weather and atmosphere. The locals and the factory workers were very supportive throughout the whole process of making the film and collaborated on set as actors.

## **You have a background as a visual artist. How did this influence the film?**

I see myself as an artist working with audio and visual material. In the process I find out if what I'm working on becomes a film or a video instillation, a painting, a sculpture or a series of stills. I think some projects tend to transform into a bigger narrative and slowly in the process they begin to talk and move and take on a cinematic form. I enjoy working in parallel with different projects and material. Most of the time these projects feed into each other in a quite organic way and push beyond their limitations.

## **The camerawork is very strong in the film. In the process of writing did you have these images in your head first and then wrote the scenes or the other way round?**

For me, cinema is all about listening and seeing. When I dive into the process I slowly begin to see images and hear sounds. I write and develop my scripts on location, so everything is written for a specific space. I'm very interested in the internal space of a film and I really think it's something that has to be looked after and nurtured through the whole process of making a film. I see the process as being very fragile and mysterious, so I basically try to allow things to happen in the process of digging deeper into the material, the script, the characters, the location etc. I think it's a linear process; emotion and vision emerge at the same time. In that sense, everything is equally important, the dialog is equal to the image and the emotion equal to the narrative.

## **The film has a very special sound design. How did you achieve that? What was your inspiration?**

I'm very interested in sound and it's already present in the early stages of writing. I think that sound plays an important role in how we experience the film and is a narrative thread in itself. It's not just there to support or make a scene work or feel realistic. I remember being conscious of not wanting the sound to do the exact same thing as the image. In many ways it feels like the sound is the interior of the film and the image the exterior.



**You are based between Denmark and Iceland. How do these two cultures and perspectives influence your work?**

In a way, I'm between countries and I think both influence my work. If I divide myself into the past, present and future, then my past is very deeply rooted in Iceland. I see this clearly in my earlier and present work, using fresh fish as sculpture material or the repetitive usage of the form or image of a boat and following the process of a decaying horse. All of these things explore something that connect very strongly with my roots and have played a big role in shaping Iceland for the last hundred years. The present or the now is probably influenced by my time spent here in Denmark and the people around me, but also through my longing for home. The future is unknown, but still a big part of what influences me through my visions and dreams. I think I'm torn between the two countries that I both love and hate and I enjoy being able to balance myself and my work through collaboration and working with both countries.

**Where did the idea of incorporating the VHS instruction films into the film come from?**

I think I was just so fascinated by these army tutorial videos that were full of humor and made with an incredible touch for details. It started from an idea of a factory tutorial where one learned how to use a shovel, which later evolved into a M1 army rifle tutorial video. I think it has something to do with the film having a naive side to it and I really felt it was important to embrace that quality.

**Who is Emil for you and what would you like the viewers to understand about him?**

With Emil, I'm exploring the lack of love or the want and need to be desired and loved. I wanted to depict all of this in Emil, in a film language. Emil is desperate to cling on to someone or something but at the same time he's alien in the presence of it. I tried to strip him from everything except his very basic instincts. Maybe this is why he suffers so much. He is the wise idiot and perhaps a bit out of tune with time.

**The film has an amazing ensemble cast. Can you say some more about the process of casting?**

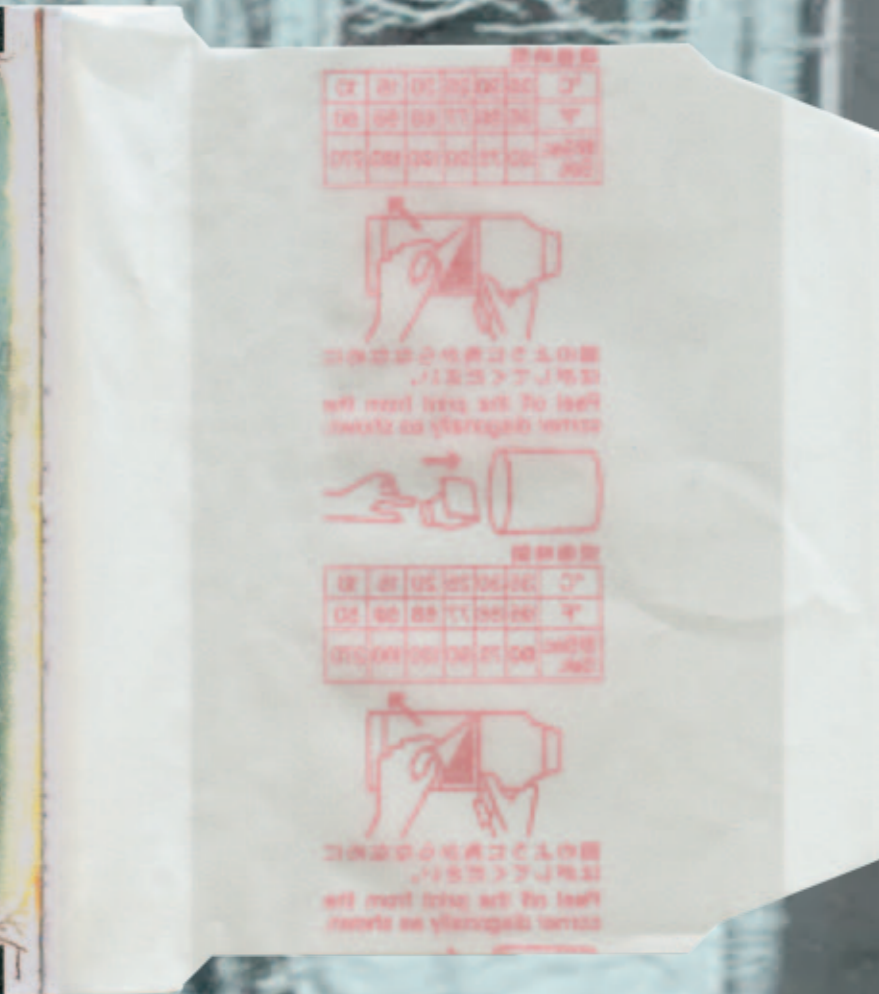
Casting started in parallel with the process of writing and I was fortunate enough to be able to work with my first choices and I'm very grateful for that. My casting director Rie Hedegaard was a big part of this process. She is completely absorbed in the performance scene in Denmark and this part of her expertise helped me a great deal. I think I'm looking for very different things in each character. With some people I just want them to be present, I just think they look and feel right. Others have more technical functions and have to have the skill to tackle long scenes with difficult dialog or have some sort of authority in their presence. But mostly it's about finding some kind of humanity in each character and the want and need to work and collaborate with this person within the film's world. It's an intuitive process and I go with what feels right, I'm not very rational or logical. I found my protagonist Emil that is

played by Elliott Crosset Hove before writing the script and we did all sorts of things during the writing and developing process. We made photography sessions, dialogs, scenes, interviews and trips to the location and Elliott also worked on a Lou Reed performance with our protagonist's favorite song Street Hazzle.

**Icelandic cinema has been very successful in recent years with films, such as *Rams*, *Fusi* or *Sparrows*. Where do you see *Winter Brothers* in that landscape?**

*Winter Brothers* is my debut feature film and it's a continuing extension and expression of my earlier work. I don't think it's a surprise that it's quite different from Icelandic or Danish cinema we have seen lately. I think my earlier work was already pointing in another direction, I was obviously exploring something else. But I think no two filmmakers are the exact same, so therefore if you are completely truthful in your work, then you are creating something that no one else can create. I think it's the individual artist and his temperament and personality that gives color and life to today's cinema.





# CAST & CREW



ELLIOTT CROSSET HOVE  
ACTOR

Born 1988 in Copenhagen Denmark. Son of acclaimed Danish actor Anders Hove. Graduated from The Danish National School of Performance Arts in 2015. Elliott Crosset Hove has quickly established himself as one of the most interesting Danish actors. With his combination of subdued charisma and his relatable yet secretive face he has had significant parts in *Parents* (feature, 2016), which he was nominated for The Danish Academy Award, Robert, and *In the Blood* (feature, 2016), which brought him nominations for both The Danish Critic Association Award, Bodil and The Danish Academy Award, Robert. He has also featured in the World War II drama *April 9th* (feature, 2015). Also parts in tv-series such as *The Bridge* (season 4) and *Follow the Money* (season 1). He has also established himself in the Danish theater industry and has just received Årets Reumert Talentpris 2017, and he is set to play *Hamlet* in the fall.



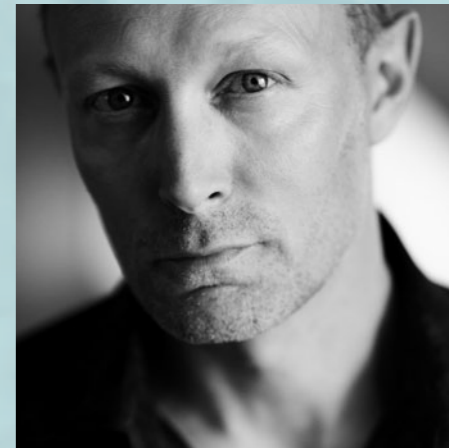
SIMON SEARS  
ACTOR

Simon Sears is a 33 years old actor and a relatively new name in Danish film. He graduated from the Danish National School of Theatre in 2014 and had his first performances in the first season of DR's drama series *Follow The Money* and the war movie *April 9th*. In 2016 Simon was awarded The Reumert Talent Prize (Danish main awards for theatrical achievements) for his performance in the play *Sidst På Dagen Er Vi Alle Mennesker/At The End Of The Day We Are All Human*. In 2017 he's starring in *Winter Brothers* and in DR's next drama series *Rides Upon The Storm*.



VICTORIA CARMEN SONNE  
ACTRESS

Victoria Carmen Sonne is a 23 years old actress educated from The Danish National School of Theatre in 2016. She had her first big performance in Rasmus Heisterberg's *In The Blood*, for which she won in the category Best Supporting Actress at the Danish Critic Association Awards, Bodil Awards. Same year she also played the lead in the short film *Melon Rainbow* for which she was nominated for Best Actress at EKKO Shortlist Award 2016. In 2015 she did *The Elite* and played the lead in *Copenhagen - A Love Story*. In 2017 she is starring in *Winter Brothers* and has just finished shooting the films *North* and *Holiday*, which will premiere in 2018.



LARS MIKKELSEN  
ACTOR

Born 1964 in Copenhagen, Denmark. Graduated from National Theatre School of Denmark in 1995. Lars Mikkelsen is best known to international audiences for his roles as Copenhagen mayoral election candidate Troels Hartmann in the drama series *The Killing*, Charles Augustus Magnussen, the primary villain in the third series of *Sherlock* and the Russian president Viktor Petrov in the acclaimed Netflix series *House of Cards*. In 2011 he won the Reumert Prize of honour.



HLYNUR PÁLMASSON  
DIRECTOR

Hlynur Pálmason is an artist / filmmaker born in 1984 in Iceland. He started out as a visual artist and continued his career in filmmaking by pursuing education at the Danish National Film School. His graduation film, *A Painter* (2013), won best short film at Odense IFF, Reykjavík IFF and was nominated for The Danish Film Academy. His latest short film, *Seven Boats* (2014) premiered at Toronto IFF. His debut film *Winter Brothers* will premiere in the main competition in Locarno in 2017. Hlynur lives in Copenhagen with his fiancé and three children and is currently working on his second feature, *A White, White Day*, parallel with exhibiting art work and video installations.

FILMOGRAPHY

*Winter Brothers*, 2017, Feature  
*Seven Boats*, 2014, Short  
*En Maler (A Painter)*, 2013, Short  
*En Dag Eller To (A Day Or Two)*, 2012, Short

MASTERPLAN PICTURES  
PRODUCER

Founded in 2013 by producers Julie Waltersdorph Hansen and Per Damgaard Hansen. Masterplan Pictures is a Copenhagen-based company that aim to produce high quality films with a strong artistic vision. During the company's first years it has produced the Toronto Film Festival-selected short film *Seven Boats* another short *In the Dark Room* and the feature film *Winter Brothers*. The production company has several projects in development including feature films, TV-series and other short films.

Julie Waltersdorph Hansen graduated from the Producer's Programme in 2013 from The National Film School of Denmark. She graduated with the acclaimed film *A Painter*. Right after she founded the Copenhagen based film company Masterplan Pictures, with producer Per Damgaard Hansen.

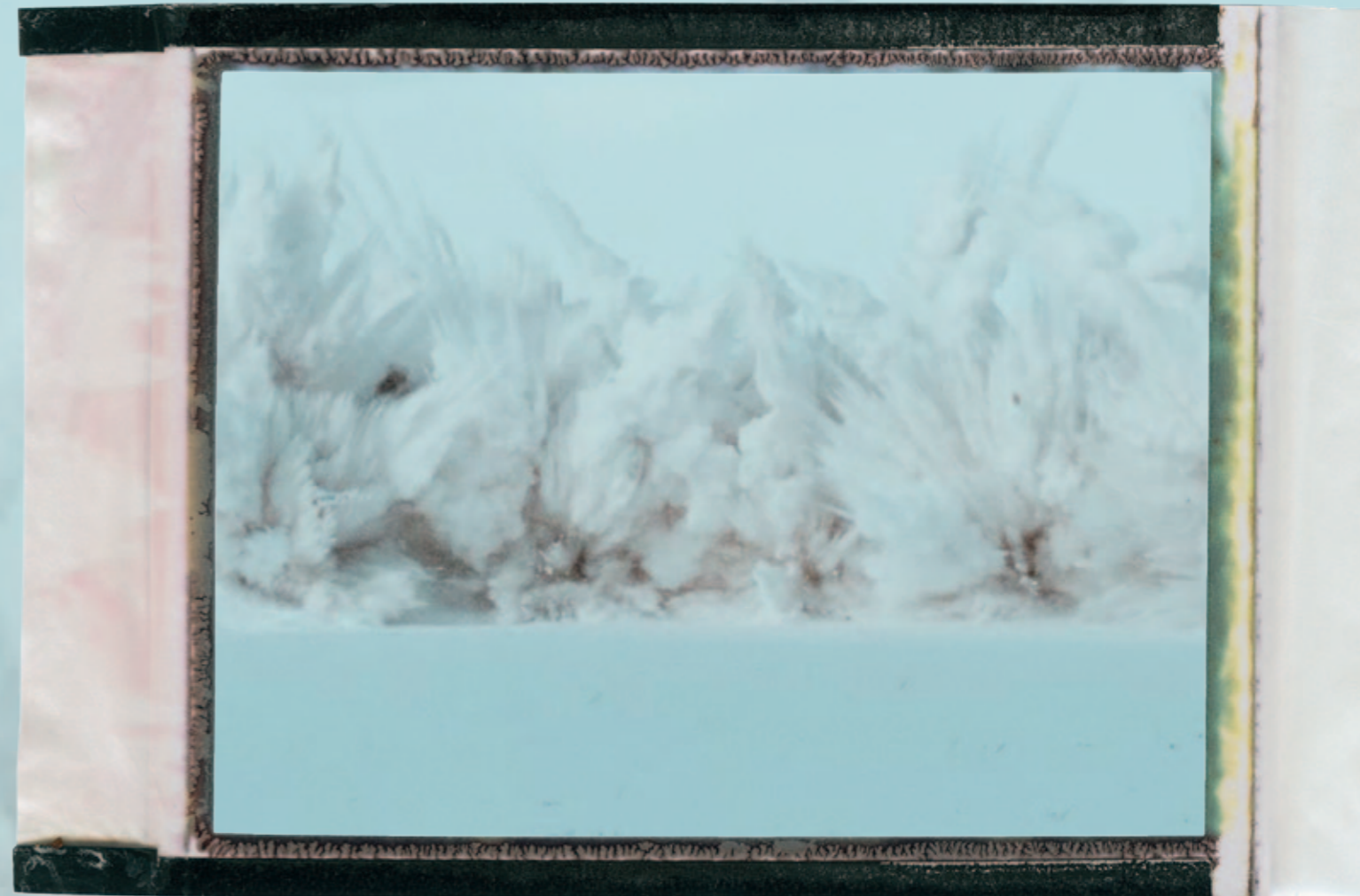
Per Damgaard Hansen holds a BA in Film and Media Studies from the University of Copenhagen and is a graduate from the Producer's Programme at the National Film School of Denmark. Per Damgaard Hansen is also Board Member of the Danish Film Academy and a selected participant for the EAVE Producers Workshop 2017.

JOIN MOTION PICTURES  
CO-PRODUCER

Join Motion Pictures (JMP) was founded in Reykjavík, Iceland 2007 and is owned by producer Anton Máni Svansson and writer/director/producer Guðmundur Arnar Guðmundsson. The company focuses on building up close working relationships with talented writer-directors. JMP currently develops, produces and co-produces a nuanced selection of film and TV with high artistic value and potential for broad international distribution.

The company World Premiered its first feature, *Heartstone*, in September 2016 in the Venice Days competition of the 73rd Venice Film Festival. The coming-of-age drama, by Guðmundur Arnar Guðmundsson, began its journey by winning the Queer Lion Award in Venice and has since then collected in total 37 International Awards in addition to 9 Icelandic Film & TV Academy Awards. The company then recently closed its first minor co-produced feature film, *Winter Brothers* by Hlynur Pálmason.

Both writer/directors are now developing their second feature with the company but earlier JMP also produced short fiction films of theirs, films that have in total won over 70 international awards, among them a Special Mention in the Official Competition at the Cannes Film Festival in 2013.



# WINTER BROTHERS

## FESTIVALS

World Premiere:  
Locarno Film Festival

## FILM INFORMATION

Original title: Vinterbrødre  
English title: Winter Brothers  
Genre: drama  
Country: Denmark, Iceland  
Language: Danish, English  
Year: 2017  
Duration: 94 min.  
Picture: color  
Aspect ratio: 1:1.66  
Sound: 5.1  
Available format: DCP

## CAST

Elliott Crosset Hove  
Simon Sears  
Victoria Carmen Sonne  
Peter Plaugborg  
Lars Mikkelsen

## CREW

Director: Hlynur Pálmason  
Screenplay: Hlynur Pálmason  
Cinematography: Maria Von Hausswolff  
Editing: Julius Krebs Damsbo  
Sound Design: Lars Halvorsen  
Production Design: Gustav Pontoppidan  
Music: Toke Brorson Odin  
Production company: Masterplan  
Pictures ApS  
Producers: Julie Waltersdorph  
Hansen  
Per Damgaard Hansen  
Hlynur Pálmason  
Co-production  
company: Join Motion Pictures  
Co-producer: Anton Máni Svansson  
With support of: New Danish Screen  
– Danish Film Institute  
Icelandic Film Centre  
Nordisk Film  
& TV Fond

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