



Home for Christmas

Regie Bent Hamer 

Nederlandse release 2 december 2010

Jury Prize Best Screenplay op het filmfestival van San Sebastian

Home for Christmas - Synopsis

In een klein Noors dorpje zijn verschillende mensen op de avond voor Kerst op weg naar huis. Een gescheiden man verkleedt zich als de kerstman om toch zijn kinderen en zijn ex-vrouw te kunnen zien op kerstavond. Een vrouw hoopt wanhopig maar vergeefs dat haar minnaar zijn echtgenote na kerst eindelijk zal verlaten en een protestants jongetje vertelt zijn klasgenootje die moslim is dat zijn familie net als haar familie geen kerst viert zodat hij de avond bij haar kan doorbrengen.

Regisseur Bent Hamer (FACTOTUM, KITCHEN STORIES) schetst een microcosmos van mensen die willen terugkeren naar zaken waar het werkelijk om gaat in het leven: hoop en liefde. De ene keer absurd humoristisch, dan weer tragisch, HOME FOR CHRISTMAS is vooral een heel menselijke vertelling.

Gebaseerd op de bundel met korte verhalen *Only soft presents under the tree* van Levi Henriksen. HOME FOR CHRISTMAS won de Jury prize Best Screenplay op het San Sebastian Film Festival.

Noorwegen/Duitsland/ Zweden/ 2010/ 90 minuten/ Noors, Engels en Servisch gesproken



Home for Christmas - Nederlandse release

HOME FOR CHRISTMAS (HJEM TIL JUL) wordt in Nederland uitgebracht door ABC/ Cinemien. Beeldmateriaal kan gedownload worden vanaf: www.cinemien.nl/pers of vanaf www.filmdepot.nl

Voor meer informatie kunt u zich wenden tot Gideon Querido van Frank, +31(0)20-5776010 of gideon@cinemien.nl



Home for Christmas - Cast

Goran	ARIANIT BERISHA
Anka	SANY LESMEISTER
Gorans moeder	NADJA SOUKUP
Moeder/ Sniper	NINA ZANJANI
Vader	IGOR NECEMER
Paul	TROND FAUSA AURVAG
Knut	FRIDTJOV SAHEIM
Thomas	MORTEN ILSENG RISNES
Bintu	SARAH BINTU SAKOR
Bintus' vader	ISSAKA SAWADOGO
Simon	JOACHIM CALMEYER
Jordan	REIDAR SORENSEN
Karin	NINA ANDRESEN-BORUD
Kristen	TOMAS NORSTROM
Elise	CECILE MOSLI

Home for Christmas - Crew

Regisseur	BENT HAMER
Scenario	BENT HAMER
Producent	BENT HAMER
Uitvoerend producent	JEREMY THOMAS/ ANDREW LOWE
Fotografie	JOHN CHRISTIAN ROSENLUND
Montage	PAL GENGEBACH/ SILJE NORSETH
Geluid	PETTER FLADEBY
Kleding	KAREN FABRITIUS GRAM
Make up	THERESE RODSAND GAARDE

Home for Christmas - Regisseur Bent Hamer

Bent Hamer (Noorwegen, 1956), regisseur, scenarioschrijver, producent en oprichter van het productiebedrijf BulBUI Film, studeerde film- en literatuurwetenschap aan de Universiteit van Stockholm en de Stockholms Filmskola.

Bent Hamer heeft inmiddels een aantal speelfilms op zijn naam staan die werden geselecteerd voor belangrijke internationale filmfestivals en in meer dan 40 landen werden uitgebracht.

Zijn films FACTOTUM (2005 met oa Matt Dillon) KITCHEN STORIES (2003) en EGGS (1995) beleefden hun première tijdens de Directors' Fortnight in Cannes. Ook O'HORTEN (2008) werd geselecteerd voor Cannes in 2008 als onderdeel van het programma Un Certain Regard. Daarnaast was O'HORTON evenals KITCHEN STORIES een aantal jaren eerder, de officiële inzending voor de Oscar voor Noorwegen.

Bent Hamer kreeg voor zijn films vele belangrijke filmprijzen waaronder tweemaal de FIPRESCI (International Film Critics Award) voor zowel EGGS als KITCHENSTORIES.

HOME FOR CHRISTMAS beleefde zijn wereldpremière tijdens het filmfestival van Toronto dit jaar en zijn Europese première op het Filmfestival van San Sebastian.



Filmografie Bent Hamer

2010: Home for Christmas
2008: O'Horten
2005: Factotum
2003: Kitchen Stories

Home for Christmas - Maria Mena



De populaire Noorse popzangeres Maria Mena zingt, op verzoek van regisseur Bent Hamer, een zelfgeschreven liedje in zijn film HOME FOR CHRISTMAS.

SCREENDAILY

The Yuletide tends to reveal the best of human nature in Bent Hamer's *Home For Christmas*, a bittersweet but tender-hearted seasonal ensemble that delicately interweaves tales of love and longing, new life, fresh hope and sad farewells. Veering more towards the sentimentality of *Love, Actually* rather than the bleakness of *Short Cuts*, the film is a slow-burner that casts a warming, satisfying afterglow.

Door: Allan Hunter

Hamer imbues the whole of *Home For Christmas* with his trademarks of soulful contemplation and dry, understated wit.

It should prove irresistible for fans of Hamer's past work and for those incurable romantics who like to wallow in the joys and sorrows of the snow-dusted season. Commercial prospects are potent in Hamer's native Norway and the film should also work as a classy, accessible European attraction in many international territories with the longer term potential to become a Christmas perennial in ancillary markets.

Hamer's screenplay is adapted from Levi Henriksen's *Only Soft Presents Under The Tree* and is a model of economy in the way it finds the breathing space for individual stories to unfold in the course of a commendably trim running-time. There is the initial fear that the film may suffer the curse of many a multi-story drama in that some stories prove more intriguing than others but *Home For Christmas* gets the balance just right and grows more engrossing as connections are made, pieces of the bigger picture slot into place and we gradually realise the way individual lives are connected.

Set in a small Norwegian town on Christmas Eve, the film offers a vision of sparkling snow covering the ground beneath steely blue skies, bright lights twinkling from cosy family homes and a sense of a community wrapped up in the bleak mid-winter. Doctor Knut (Fridtjov Saheim) ventures outdoors and winds up delivering a baby. His friend Paul (Trond Fausa Aurvag) is embittered by the collapse of his marriage and determined to see his children for the first time in seven weeks.

Schoolboy Thomas (Morten Ilseeng Risnes) lies about his family never celebrating Christmas so he can spend time with his Muslim schoolmate Bintu (Sarah Bintu Sakor); Karin (Nina Andresen-Borud) prepares for a night of passion with her married lover safe in the knowledge that he has vowed to leave his wife after Christmas. Bedraggled wino Jordan (Reidar Sorensen) is the one determined to make it back home for Christmas and is helped by an unexpected encounter with his childhood friend Johanne (Ingunn Beate Oyen).

Elegantly shifting focus throughout the film, Hamer never allows us to lose sight of any one story and imbues the whole of *Home For Christmas* with his trademarks of soulful contemplation and dry, understated wit. There is a sense of sadness and disappointment in many of these lives but the prevailing mood is one of good will towards all. Closing beneath the twinkling colours of the Northern Lights the film should leave all the but the cynical and stony-hearted feeling warm and fuzzy inside.



A Match Factory presentation of a BulBul Film, Pandora Filmproduktion, Filmimperiet, ZDF/Arte production. (International sales: The Match Factory, Cologne.) Produced by Bent Hamer. Executive producers, Jeremy Thomas, Andrew Lowe. Co-producers, Christoph Friedel, Claudia Steffen, Jorgen Bergmark. Directed by Bent Hamer. Screenplay, Hamer, from the book "Only Soft Presents Under the Tree" by Levi Henriksen.

With: Arianit Berisha, Sany Lesmeister, Nadja Soukup, Nina Zanjani, Igor Necemer, Trond Fausa Aurvag, Fridtjov Saheim, Morten Ilseng Risnes, Sarah Bintu Sakor, Issaka Sawadogo, Joachim Calmeyer, Reidar Sorensen, Nina Andresen-Borud, Tomas Norstrom, Cecile Mosli, Ingunn Beate Oyen, Levi Henriksen, Kristine Rui Slettebakken, Kyrre Haugen Sydness, Aina Emilie Boekkevold, Marcus Eiel Fagervik. (Norwegian, English, Serbian dialogue)

Highly sentimental but never sappy, "Home for Christmas" is cause for celebration. Norwegian writer-director Bent Hamer's trademark deadpan humor (as in "Eggs" and "O'Horten") gets a lively boost from the pic's emotive ensemble, as a multiplicity of steadfast characters in snowy Skogli manages to transcend holiday-season loneliness, anxiety and depression. Hamer's vignette style appears at once loose and assured, building toward a quiet epiphany that viewers of any religious persuasion can appreciate. Given the proper seasonal push in territories far and wide, the crowd-pleasing "Home" could well hit auds where they live.

Hamer's harrowing first scenes hardly prep the viewer for the sweetness that follows. The pic (based on Norwegian author Levi Henriksen's "Only Soft Presents Under the Tree") opens in the former Yugoslavia, with a young boy named Goran (Arianit Berisha) dragging a Christmas spruce through a vacant factory yard and getting caught in a sniper's crosshairs. From there, the film embarks on its winding path to peace.

In small-town Skogli on Christmas Eve, two kids (Sarah Bintu Sakor, Morten Ilseng Risnes) meet cute while window-shopping. Seen from above, a middle-aged couple (Tomas Norstrom, Nina Andresen-Borud) hits the skins with wild abandon, even though the man insists he can't leave his wife. An old man (Joachim Calmeyer) at home struggles to carry a table downstairs. Scruffy Paul (Trond Fausa Aurvag) complains to his doctor, Knut (Fridtjov Saheim), that his wife (Kristine Rui Slettebakken) has changed the locks on their door and taken up with another man (Kyrre Haugen Sydness).

Thrown off a train, a grizzled "wino" (Reidar Sorensen) stumbles upon friendly Johanne (Ingunn Beate Oyen), who sells Christmas trees in a wintry trailer park. Making house calls, Knut is held at knifepoint in his car by a Serbian man (Igor Necemer), who's desperate to get medical attention for his pregnant wife (Nina Zanjani), an illegal immigrant from Albania.

Whether, how and when Hamer's discrete stories will intersect gives the pic a measure of intrigue even beyond the sketches' own considerable charms. Meantime, everyone soldiers on amid darkly comical end-of-year stressors, and the film gradually becomes gentler, with unexpected companionship and semi-random acts of kindness epitomizing the holiday spirit.

As in much of Hamer's past work, the expressive acting, often without words, tenderly harks back to that of silent cinema. Shot under Northern Lights as snow falls, the pic sports exquisitely colored widescreen cinematography by John Christian Rosenlund, Hamer's collaborator on "O'Horten" and "Factotum." John Erik Kaada's orchestral score is alternately haunting and uplifting, like the film itself.

Camera (color, widescreen), John Christian Rosenlund; editors, Pal Gengenbach, Silje Norseth; music, John Erik Kaada; production designers, Eva Noren, Tim Pannen; costume designer, Karen Fabritius Gram; sound (Dolby Digital), Petter Fladeby; line producer, Catho Bach Christensen; casting, Celine Engebrigtsen. Reviewed at Toronto Film Festival (Contemporary World Cinema), Sept. 16, 2010. (Also in San Sebastian, London film festivals.) Running time: 85 MIN.