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presenteren / présente:

KISS *of* LIFE



een film van / un film de Emily Young

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KISS OF LIFE - synopsis (NL)

Helen (Ingeborga Dapkunaite) leeft in Londen met haar vader en haar twee kinderen. Haar man John (Peter Mullan) werkt als hulpverlener in een grimmig land ergens in zuidoost Europa en is al maanden weg. Hun relatie staat onder druk door de afwezigheid van John in het dagelijkse leven van het gezin. Helen mist hem en dringt er op aan dat hij naar huis komt. Wanneer ze de kinderen vervolgens naar school brengt, komt Helen bij een auto-ongeluk om het leven.

Gevangen in een schemerwereld beweegt ze verder tussen leven en dood. Ver weg in de door oorlog verwoeste Balkan is John zich niet bewust van haar overlijden. Maar wel voelt hij de urgentie om hoe dan ook naar huis terug te keren. Zo beginnen de drie dagen waarin opa en de kinderen zich neer moeten leggen bij het harde feit van Helens heengaan terwijl John een moeizame reis door Europa maakt.

Helen observeert hen allen en daarmee het einde van haar leven - tot ze vrede sluit met John en daarmee het aardse los kan laten.



Kiss of Life beweegt zich vloeiend tussen tijdzones en landen, tussen realiteit en verbeelding, tussen leven en dood. De gestileerde complexiteit blijft daarbij altijd gerelateerd aan de belevingen van de verschillende familieleden, overtuigend verbeeld door een voortreffelijke cast.

KISS OF LIFE
86 mins / 35mm / Dolby SRD / Verenigd Koninkrijk - Frankrijk 2003
kijkwijzer:  

Theatrale uitbreng in Nederland: Cinemien www.cinemien.nl
Theatrale uitbreng in België: ABC Distribution www.abc-distribution.be
Uitbreng op DVD: Homescreeen www.homescreeen.nl

KISS OF LIFE - synopsis (FR)

Helen (Ingeborga Dapkunaite) vit à Londres avec ses deux enfants et son père. Son mari John (Peter Mullan) travaille en Europe de l'Est pour une organisation humanitaire. Il est parti il y a quelques mois et Helen attend désespérément son retour. Un matin, quand elle amène ses enfants à l'école, elle est tuée dans un accident.

Elle se retrouve prisonnière dans un espace indéfini entre la vie et la mort. John est ignorant de sa mort tandis qu'il sent l'impulsion urgente de retourner aux siens. Ainsi commence une odyssée de trois jours dans lesquels les enfants et leur grand-père doivent s'incliner devant la mort tragique de Helen et dans lesquels John traverse l'Europe.

Helen les observe tous et regagne son amour avec John ce qui lui permet de partir en paix.

Kiss of life voyage entre la réalité et la fantaisie, la vie et la mort, le temps et le lieu.

La complexité des situations est mise en relation avec les rapports fragiles entre les différents membres de la famille, chacune interprétée de façon convaincante.

KISS OF LIFE

86 min / 35mm / Dolby SRD / Royaume-Unis - France 2003

Sortie théâtrale en les Pays-Bas: Cinemien www.cinemien.nl

Sortie théâtrale en Belgique : ABC Distribution www.abc-distribution.be

Sortie sur DVD : Homescreen www.homescreen.be

KISS OF LIFE - crew

Regie/réalisation	: Emily Young
Scenario/scenario	: Emily Young
Camera/camera	: Wojciech Szepel
Geluid/son	: Ron Bailey
Editor/montage	: David Charap
Muziek/compositeur musique	: Murray Gold
Producent/produit par	: Gayle Griffiths



KISS OF LIFE - cast

Helen	: Ingeborga Dapkunaite
John	: Peter Mullan
Helens vader	: David Warner
Kate	: Millie Findlay
Telly	: James E. Martin

KISS OF LIFE - Over de acteurs

Ingeborga Dapkunaite (Helen) is het meest bekend van haar rol als moeder in Nikita Mikhalkov's *Burnt by the Sun*. Ook speelde zij in Brian De Palma's *Mission Impossible* en in Jean Jaques Annaud's *Seven Years in Tibet*. Geboren in Litouwen ontving ze in haar vaderland vele onderscheidingen voor haar werk in film en theater, waaronder de Kinotavr Award voor Beste Filmactrice voor haar rol in *Cynics*, de Speciale Juryprijs voor haar titelrol in *Katia Ismailova* en de Russische NIKA Award voor Beste Actrice. Tegenwoordig woont Ingeborga Dapkunaite in Londen.

Acteur en schrijver/regisseur **Peter Mullan** (John) is bekend van zijn magnifieke prestatie in Ken Loach's *My Name is Joe*, waarvoor hij de Prijs voor Beste Acteur won op het Filmfestival van Cannes in 1998. Andere rollen speelde hij in Michael Winterbottom's *The Claim*, Mike Figgis' *Miss Julie*, Mel Gibson's *Braveheart*, Danny Boyle's *Trainspotting* en *Shallow Grave*, Ken Loach's *Riff Raff* en David MacKenzie's *Young Adam*. Als schrijver-regisseur won Peter Mullan de Gouden Leeuw op het Filmfestival van Venetië in 2002 voor zijn tweede lange speelfilm *The Magdalena Sisters*. Ook zijn eerste speelfilm *Orphans* ontving talrijke prijzen. Als theateracteur werkte hij vooral veel in het Schotse theater.

David Warner (Vader) maakte zijn speelfilmdebuut in 1963 in *Tom Jones*, gevolgd door de titelrol in *Morgan: a Suitable Case for Treatment*. Sindsdien werkte hij aan de lopende band zowel in het theater als voor de camera. Zo speelde hij in Tim Burton's *Planet of the Apes*, *Scream 2*, *Titanic* (1997), *Leading Man*, *In the Mouth of Madness*, *Dark at Noon*, *Star Trek 5 & 6*, *The Company of Wolves*, *The Man with the Two Brains*, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, *Time Bandits*, *39 Steps*, *Providence*, *Cross of Iron*, *The Omen*, *Little Malcolm*, *A Doll's House* en *Straw Dogs*. Hij ontving een Emmy Award voor Best Supporting Actor voor zijn rol in *Masada*. In het theater speelde hij de titelrol in *Henry V*, *Richard II* en *Hamlet* voor de RSC en Claudius in *I Claudius* bij het Queens Theatre.

KISS OF LIFE - over regisseur Emily Young

Emily Young studeerde Engels aan de Universiteit van Edinburgh, en studeerde aan de Poolse Nationale Film Academie in Lodz. Ze studeerde af met twee korte speelfilms, *The Tower of Babel* en *Second Hand*. Laatste titel won in Cannes in 1999 de Cinéfondation Competitie, de Gouden Leeuw op het Taipei Film Festival, en de Speciale Juryprijs op het Buenos Aires Independent Film Festival 2000.

Emily Young begon met het schrijven van het scenario van *Kiss of Life* in 1999. Drie jaar later, in oktober 2002, begon ze met draaien.

Ze werkt momenteel aan een adaptatie van Andrea Ashworth's bestseller *Once in a house on fire*.

2003 Kiss of Life
1999 The Tower of Babel
1998 Second Hand
1997 Room; I'm Listening
1996 Earth Up There
1995 Into the Garden
1994 Life without Daphne

KISS OF LIFE - Emily Young, réalisatrice de Kiss of Life

De nationalité britannique. Née en 1970 à Londres (Angleterre). Après des études à l'université de Pennsylvanie (USA) et l'obtention d'une maîtrise en littérature anglaise à l'université d'Édimbourg (Écosse), Emily Young quitte Londres en 1993 pour suivre les cours à la Polish National Film School de Lodz en Pologne, section réalisation.

Pendant ses études à Lodz elle a réalisé plusieurs courts-métrages de fiction et documentaires et elle développe actuellement des idées de long-métrage. *Second Hand* est son premier film en langue anglaise.



Emily Young makes her writer/director feature debut with *Kiss of Life*, an emotive and sensitively-told story about a family plunged into crisis. *By Matt Arnoldi.*

Your film, like Truly, Madly Deeply, looks at the way we react to grief.

"My mum died when I was 19. The more distant I get from that, the more curious I am about what happens to the family left behind."

Her sources it turns out, are far-reaching.

"I wanted to show the way it brings a family together. I read the Tibetan Book of the Dead which gave a structure to this and a poem by a modernist poet entitled 'Helen in Egypt' which looks at the death of Helen of Troy. Both helped me to focus on what would happen if we died at a moment when there are still unresolved issues in our lives."

Peter was a name high on the list for the male lead following his impressive performance in Ken Loach's My name is Joe. What happened I wondered with the casting of Helen which can't have been easy?

"When Katrin died (Katrin Cartlidge, the actor she originally cast), it was difficult to know where to turn. I met many actresses but it was Peter who said he felt Katrin had a uniquely unplaceable quality and didn't seem particularly English. That led me to think of Ingeborga since I had been impressed with her performance in *Burnt by the Sun*. She had an intensity, directness and elusive quality that I had been looking for."

As much as possible you shot chronologically, which included shooting in Croatia.

"Much of the time in Croatia, we were with just Peter and a great many Croatian actors. Peter was brilliant. He wanted to go the distance and there were moments of his performance that I didn't even pick up on until I got back and saw the rushes in London."

Shooting over there as one might expect, was not easy.

"Because of what we were shooting and where, we had to be a lot more loose and responsive - more documentary style which fortunately I love. The two days we spent in Grahova, where we shot a destroyed town, were quite affecting. We didn't 'dress' the apartment block at all, it's exactly as you see it. Life's coming back but it isn't easy there."

*An inspiration for *Kiss of Life*, was the Japanese film *Afterlife*. What particularly I wondered was it about that film that inspired you?*

"I liked that film, because the experience after death was both real and tangible, complete with steaming mugs of tea in cold rooms. That film though was set on the other side of life whilst mine is on the cusp between states."

A final question : what would you hope audiences might take away from the film?

"I hope an audience would feel that they've been with this family through an intense, ultimately cathartic, and perhaps unexpectedly positive experience. Maybe they will think about their own families and the importance of love."

KISS OF LIFE - Interview met regisseur Emily Young in Cannes

Bron: The Guardian
By Andrew Pulver

"It came out later that she was ill, but she didn't know about it at the time. It was a catastrophe. We hadn't actually done any rehearsals, I'd just talked to her... you see, it's quite an elusive part, and if she'd have made it, it would have been quite a different film." Emily Young is talking about Katrin Cartlidge, the actor she originally cast in her debut feature film, *Kiss of Life*, which has just premiered in the Un Certain Regard section of the Cannes film festival.

Cartlidge's death, in September last year, happened only two weeks before the *Kiss of Life* shoot was set to start. With finance in place, and cast and crew poised, filming could only be delayed for a matter of weeks. Frantic recasting resulted in the participation of Lithuanian actor Ingeborga Dapkunaite, whom Young knew from Nikita Mikhalkov's Russian masterwork *Burnt by the Sun*. "I just loved her in that," she says, "but it never occurred to me I could use her. Then after meeting her, and a whole lot of other actresses, I saw she had some kind of quality that made sense for the story."

Kiss of Life's arrival in Cannes completes a remarkable journey that the 33-year-old Londoner has made - via Edinburgh, Poland and Peckham - to arrive here in the south of France, in a tropical garden behind the extremely grand Grand hotel. To have her debut film here is an exceptional privilege, as well as being only one of three British directors (alongside Peter Greenaway and David Mackenzie) in the official festival selection. In one sense, Young is in a fortunate position as far as Cannes is concerned: her short film, *Second Hand*, won the Cinéfondation film school prize back in 1999, and such an award practically assures a favourable response to a debut feature. *Second Hand*, a quiet, introspective story of a schoolgirl who has stolen a school uniform from a second-hand sale, was actually made as part of Young's coursework at Lodz film school - the renowned Polish training academy - where she spent five years after leaving university in Scotland.

"Why did I go to Lodz? I'm not sure, really. I knew it was a good school. And I was drawn to it because of all the Polish theatre I'd seen at the Edinburgh festival, like *Provisorium*. But when I went there, I knew nothing about films, and the only experience of making them, apart from a couple of amateurish super-8s I made in my final year at Edinburgh." Here she laughs, embarrassed. "But at Lodz you're pushed to make your own thing, you're never encouraged to emulate anyone. They try to destroy your ego a little bit. You have to think about what story you want to tell, and how you really want to tell it."

Lodz, she says, couldn't have been a more different environment from Britain's National Film and Television School, where she ended up editing *Second Hand*. "In Poland there was no hint as to how to make your life work after the school. It was all about moulding your character, but how you dealt with the practicalities of life after, forget it. On the other hand, it was the NFTVS who entered *Second Hand* for Cannes. I had no idea they were entering it. Lodz would never have been that efficient."

After *Second Hand* emerged victorious, Young began developing *Kiss of Life* - which was originally titled *Helen of Peckham*. The best way to describe it is, perhaps, as a non-scary ghost story: it's about a woman killed in a car accident who doesn't quite understand she's dead, and who seeks to

repair relationships with her aid-worker husband (Peter Mullan) and children. It's a bold, thematically ambitious film, and Young cites a plethora of unusual influences, including the Tibetan Book of the Dead, and Helen of Egypt, a verse by imagist poet and sometime lover of Ezra Pound, Hilda Doolittle.

"Yes, there were lots of things in there," she says, with a hint of asperity. "But Mr Benn was just as important." But where did the story come from? "This really isn't an autobiographical film at all, but my mum died when I was 19. The more distant I get from that, the more curious I am about what happens to the family left behind - you know, those strange days when everything is... a bit odd. And what the role of the dead person is in that experience. It's certainly not separate. Thematically, I guess my short film and *Kiss of Life* are both about interior life, about a very subjective experience of objectively not a very remarkable situation. Obviously someone getting killed in a car accident is a traumatic event, but not that much happens in the film. So I suppose this is trying to go under the surface and find someone's experience of a moment."

The setting of the film's British sections, Peckham carries no especial significance, it turns out - "we found a nice little street to shoot in" - but the shoot, says Young, went relatively smoothly. "Having all that difficulty made it somehow a very good atmosphere. It was difficult to get the film off the ground, there is no denying it, and pre-production was extremely tough. Katrin, of course - that was the worst one. There were lots of delays. We were very dependent on other people, waiting for them to get back to us. It was a tortuous process. Trying to get that many bodies to agree to provide the money at the same time and on those terms - I suppose that's the future of film-making, but it was complicated." *Kiss of Life* attracted support from the Film Council, and the BBC came on board just before filming began. David Thompson, head of BBC Films, is also in Cannes to support *Kiss of Life*, as well as *The Mother* and the BBC's other productions, and he is determinedly complimentary to his protege.

"I think it's fair to say we were most heavily involved in the post-production, because our experience is that, with first-time film-makers, the crucial stage is the editing. You have to leave enough time. There's a fine line in the cut between a film that does work and one that doesn't, and you need the time and the patience to make that process work.

"We want to work with directors who have a very strong vision and know what they want to do, but also frankly, who are open to listening - and Emily is exactly that. She's very determined and uncompromising - you need to be uncompromising to get a film made - but she's also a team player. I think she's going to go on and make great films."

Whether or not Young wins Cannes' first-time film-maker prize the Camera d'Or - she's the only Brit eligible to do so - she still makes the most unlikely national standard-bearer. She's looking forward to the official screening of her film later in the afternoon ("It's not an evening do, thank God, so we don't have to dress up"), but seems strangely unperturbed by the fuss that is surrounding her film. Perhaps it's because she's already looking forward to her next project, an adaptation of Andrea Ashworth's Manchester-childhood memoir, *Once in a House on Fire*. Even so, a lot of people want Young to succeed. *Kiss of Life* - the Cannes jury permitting - could be the ideal start.