

North Sea Texas

A FILM BY BAVO DEFURNE

PRESS BOOK





North Sea Texas

A FILM BY BAVO DEFURNE

PRODUCED BY

INDEED FILMS
Yves Verbraeken
Torhoutsesteenweg 35 #003
8400 Oostende
Belgium
Tel. +32 (0)486 46 37 70
yves@indeedfilms.be
www.indeedfilms.be

WORLD SALES AGENT

WAVELENGTH PICTURES
John Flahive
24 Alexandra Grove / Apt 4
London, N4 2LF
United Kingdom
Mob. +44 7968 772792
john.flahive@wavelengthpictures.co.uk
www.wavelengthpictures.co.uk

PRESS CONTACT

INDEED FILMS



MOVIE FACT SHEET

NORTH SEA TEXAS (Noordzee Texas) is Bavo Defurne’s long awaited feature debut which develops the themes of his much admired short films on a larger canvas. Hugely successful at festivals, Bavo Defurne’s short films had the rare distinction of compilation DVD releases around the world by leading independent distributors.

Bavo Defurne’s filmmaking is renowned for being beautifully poetic, dream-like examinations of gay love, longing and loss. Critics have noted influences as varied as Pierre et Gilles, Herbert List, Dreyer and Eisenstein.

For Defurne an important part of capturing the poetic innocence of his young characters was to cast actors of the same age. In the closing credits of **NORTH SEA TEXAS** Bavo Defurne dedicates the film to “**all the kids whose parents wouldn’t let them take part in this film**”. It still seems that certain taboos remain even in these enlightened times.

Short Synopsis: Pim lives with his ex-beauty queen, single mother in a small town on the Belgian coast. An introverted boy, Pim brightens up his days with drawing and dreaming up fantasy lives. He expresses his emerging desires through a secret collection of “borrowed” objects that he keeps in a shoebox.

With teenage years comes sexual awareness and he now draws and dreams of Gino, the older boy next door, his motorcycling hero. But this first love seems likely to end in disappointment.

Pim’s mother Yvette has dreams of her own. Tired of unwanted suitors and bored with small town life, she longs to leave everything behind and to see the world. Pim and Yvette’s dreams collide when handsome Zoltan arrives in town with the fun-fair and becomes their new lodger.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Original title, Noordzee Texas
English title, North Sea Texas
Original Language, Dutch
Duration, 96 minutes
Original theatrical release format, DCP Jpeg 2000
Available formats, HD Cam SR, HD Cam, Pal Digital Betacam
Ratio, 2.35 (cinemascope)
Sound, Dolby Digital SRD

NORTH SEA TEXAS was shot on locations near Ostend on the Belgian North Sea coast from 17th July to 25th August 2010. It was shot on High Definition using the Red One camera. Post production was completed on the 3rd March 2011.



“I DON’T WANT TO SHOW PEOPLE WHAT THEY SEE WHEN THEY LOOK OUT THEIR WINDOWS, I WANT TO SHOW WHAT THEY CAN SEE WHEN THEY CLOSE THEIR EYES.”

Introduction by Bavo Defurne

As a filmmaker I want to touch audiences with beauty, I’m not interested in social realism. Whilst I seek an authenticity which lies beneath the surface with my film-making, the surface itself is a quest for beauty that I feel can touch emotionally. Though this film is set in a social and emotional environment that’s mundane and everyday, I didn’t want to make another gritty realist movie about a neglected boy in a grey world. There’s more to life than the everyday world we see around us and I think it’s much more exciting to work with contrast.

The colourful visuals and romantic music make this film an uplifting viewing experience, and provides a different perspective with which to explore the inner world of the characters. It adds the poetry and irony that social realism tends to understate.

The author of the book, André Sollie, had seen my short films before he wrote his book. We are kind of soulmates, touching the same themes of first love. We are both interested in these precious moments where friendship becomes love. This theme is very present in my short films, together with the themes of longing and rejection. But the novel gives hope at the end, whilst my short films mostly had quite sad endings.

With this film I really wanted to make a point by leaving out the traditional tragic gay finale. We have too often seen how gay love leads to a life of disappointment, violence or even death and I didn’t want to add another film to this cycle. I wanted to show that the life that wasn’t possible for the boys from ‘Brokeback Mountain’ is not beyond everybody’s reach.

The screenplay states “Our youth, some decades ago.” We wanted to give the film a certain timelessness. The story plays in the world of our youth, whenever this was. We looked for ‘retro classics’ rather than pointing out a precise date. I thought this was the perfect background for the emotional story that I am telling. I wanted a balance between individual connection and universality.

While the visual world of my films is very stylized, I do not like stylized acting. I really wanted the actors to be very authentic. This naturalistic pure approach to acting inspired me to really seek the actors of the same age of their characters. We were blessed with young actors who have the physical looks of their age and a strong connection with their character. At the same time they were all able to keep a professional distance.



They were mature enough to understand the complex emotional fabric of their characters, yet young enough for it to be very believable.

Personally, I feel this is a universal film, a film about love. The fact that this love is unrequited is our major theme. Whether this love is gay or not, we don't really make a point of it. This is how I worked with the cast and crew. Rather than stressing the differences between gay and straight, we worked with the similarities. Basically love stories have elements of longing, rejection, deception, passion,... and these emotions were our guides in creating the journeys of our characters. The word "gay" is never mentioned in the film. I honestly think that everybody who has been young and in love will be able to connect to the love story of Pim and Gino. The film

is sometimes called a gay film because one rarely sees a film about two boys falling in love with each other. We would never call 'Titanic' a straight movie because straight love is not rare in cinema.

It also made it more difficult to cast the younger actors. For the role of Sabrina only 4 girls were auditioned, but we had to test more than 200 actors before the right Pim and Gino were found. Most teenage boys are afraid of playing a gay character and make a fuss of doing things with a boy that would not be problematic if their partner were a girl. Many of the candidates did not show up to the auditions. Some parents forbade their kids from attending to the auditions. One actor called me, crying. "My father forbids me to kiss a boy, even if it's only for a movie." Finally we found two great actors

who are professional and cool and very motivated to do it. Their parents support their professional choices, which is very valuable at that age. Jelle (Pim) is training as a ballet dancer, Mathias (Gino) sings in a punk rock band. What binds these young guys is that their ability to make strong and independent choices in life.

Bavo Defurne



BAVO DEFURNE BIO

Born in 1971 and a graduate of the St Lukas Art School in Brussels, artist, photographer and filmmaker Bavo Defurne established himself as an exciting new talent with a sequence of critically acclaimed prize winning short films, that examine his regular themes of gay love and loss, the body and the power of nature and silence.

CAMPFIRE (2000) was a climax of Bavo Defurne’s short filmmaking, receiving invitations to screen at major festivals and winning several prizes. It was bought for television by leading broadcasters including Canal+ in France and Channel 4 in the UK.

Bavo Defurne has achieved the rare feat of his shorts being released in a feature length compilation in cinemas and on DVD by leading independent distributors around the world, including Strand Releasing (USA), Mikado (Italy), British Film Institute (UK), Salzgeber (Germany) and Cinemien (Benelux).

Bavo Defurne’s work has also found its way into art galleries. In addition to its acclaim on the festival circuit SAINT (1997) is widely regarded as a highly significant artistic representation of Saint Sebastian – a figure who has inspired many artworks over centuries. It has shown at exhibitions in the Kunsthalle, Vienna and Sala Kubo-Kutxa in San Sebastian.

2011 sees the release of Bavo Defurne’s long awaited first feature film, NORTH SEA TEXAS (Noordzee Texas) which advances the themes of his acclaimed short films.

Bavo Defurne summarises his filmmaking philosophy as follows –, **“I don’t want to show people what they see when they look out their windows, I want to show what they can see when they close their eyes.”**

Bavo lives in the port city of Ostend in Belgium, on the coastline where NORTH SEA TEXAS was made.

FILMOGRAPHY & ART PROJECTS

NORTH SEA TEXAS / NOORDZEE TEXAS (feature), 2011
PROTECTION (video art), 2009

CAMPFIRE/ KAMPVUUR (short), 2000 (Film Four Short Film Prize, London Lesbian & Gay FF, 2000, Special Jury Mention & Audience Award, Torino Lesbian & Gay FF, 2000, TV broadcasts include Canal + France and Channel 4, UK)

SAILOR / MATROOS (short), 1998 (TV broadcasts include ARTE and RTP Portugal)

SAINT (short), 1996 (Special Jury Mention, Hamburg, 1996, TV broadcasts include SBS Australia and Film4, UK)

PARTICULARLY NOW, IN SPRING (short), 1995, (TV broadcasts include SBS Australia and Film4, UK)

LUDODROME (video art), 1993 (Audience Highlight, Arnhem, 1995)
ROHYPNOL (short), 1992

ATLANTIS (short), 1990

CAST BIOS



JELLE FLORIZOONE (°1995) grew-up in Ostend, the Belgian port city on the North Sea where NORTH SEA TEXAS was filmed. He was one of about 200 teenage boys who auditioned for the part of Pim, and was the immediate choice for the filmmakers. Jelle always wanted to be an actor and had small parts in a youth series on Belgian television. NORTH SEA TEXAS is his first appearance on the big screen and a dream come through. He studied ballet at the Royal Ballet Academy in Antwerp. Following completion of the film he decided to continue this path and to start formal training as an actor.



EVA VAN DER GUCHT (°1977) who plays Yvette, is well known to television audiences in The Netherlands and Belgium, having starred in many successful TV productions. She is best known internationally for her well received performance in Everybody Famous, the Dominique Deruddere film that received an Oscar nomination for Best Foreign Film in 2001.



MATHIAS VERGELS (°1992) who plays Gino, studied at the Kunsthumaniora, in Antwerp. North Sea Texas is his second big screen appearance after Bo by Hans Herbots where he played opposite Ella-June Henrard who plays his girlfriend Françoise in North Sea Texas.



NINA MARIE KORTEKAAS (°1995) plays Sabrina. She comes from a film industry family, daughter of set designer Niek Kortekaas and actress Mieke De Groote. She studies at the Royal Lyceum of Antwerp and North Sea Texas is her feature film debut.



KATELIJNE DAMEN (°1960) plays Marcella, the mother of Gino and Sabrina. She has appeared in many stage, film and television productions, of which the best known internationally include De Man Van Staal by Vincent Bal and Anyway The Wind Blows by Tom Barman.



LUK WYNS (°1959) who plays Etienne in North Sea Texas, is an actor, writer and director with a long list of credits including the films Boys and Los by Jan Verheyen. He's famous in Belgium for his role in the ratings topping series Matryoshka's.



THOMAS COUMANS (°1984) who plays Zoltan is a regular performer on stage and in feature films in France and Belgium, with his best known roles including Les Yeux De Sa Mère by Thierry Klifa and Elève Libre by Joachim Lafosse.

CREW BIOS



YVES VERBRAEKEN | PRODUCER (pictured)
Yves has worked with Bavo Defurne for many years. In addition to producing he also collaborated with Bavo in writing the screenplay for NORTH SEA TEXAS. In February 2010 he set up Indeed Films, a production company specializing in fiction feature films. In addition to working with Bavo Defurne he has nurtured many different projects by new young talents. Following his graduation from the Brussels Free University where he studied Art History, Yves began in the industry working as an art director and combined these skills with producing when working on Bavo’s short films.

ANTON MERTENS, SBC | DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY
In 2007 Anton Mertens was awarded the “Best Cinematography Prize” for the short FREE ADMISSION by Roberto Gasparini at the Cyprus intl. film festival. He is a popular DOP that regularly works for television, commercials and video clips.

ADRIANO COMINOTTO | COMPOSER
Adriano Cominotto, composed the original score for North Sea Texas. He worked with Adamo, Alain Bashung, Arno and Vaya Con Dios. For this film, he collaborated with the enchanting Renée Sys who wrote lyrics for the song “Paper Wings” and “Wooly Clouds”.

ANDRÉ SOLLIE | WRITER ORIGINAL NOVEL
André Sollie wrote the book “Nooit Gaat Dit Over” (literal translation “This Is Everlasting”) on which NORTH SEA TEXAS is based. He studied at the St. Lukas Art School in Brussels and first worked as an illustrator of children’s books and it was through poetry that he first made an impact as a writer before becoming a novelist. In 2008 he received the Flanders Cultural Prize for his work.

NORTH SEA TEXAS | MAIN CREDITS

CAST

Jelle FlorizoonePim
Eva Van Der Gucht..... Yvette
Nina Marie KortekaasSabrina
Mathias VergelsGino
Katelijne Damen Marcella
Luk Wyns..... Etienne
Thomas CoumansZoltan
Ben Van Den HeuvelYoung Pim
Patricia Goemaere Simone
Nathan Naenen.....Young Gino
Noor Ben Taouet.....Young Sabrina
Ella-June Henrard..... Francoise

CREW

Director Bavo Defurne
Script Bavo Defurne and Yves Verbraeken
Producer..... Yves Verbraeken
Director of Photography..... Anton Mertens
SoundJohan Somers
Editor Els Voorspoels
Production Design.....Kurt Rigolle
Art DirectorMerijn Sep
Score Adriano Cominotto
First Assistant DirectorJoke Pevenage
Make UpMariel Hoevenaars
CostumeNathalie Lermytte
Production CompanyIndeed Films
Co-production CompaniesVRT|één, Mollywood

Adapted from the book
“Nooit Gaat Dit Over” by André Sollie
Published by EM. Querido’s Uitgeverij Amsterdam





PRESS QUOTES

“Bavissimo!... Bavo Defurne is probably the best kept secret in Belgian Cinema... the romance between Pim and Gino will bring back memories for everybody who sees this film, memories of first love, the first kiss, the first heartache. North Sea Texas, now in theatres, soon in your heart.”
ERIK STOCKMAN, HUMO, 15/03/2011

“...Everybody must see this film... this warm, generous film has something irresistible...”
PATRICK DUYNLAEGHER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF THE FILM FESTIVAL GHENT THEN CHIEF EDITOR AT KNACK FOCUS ON FACEBOOK, 16/03/2011

“...One person’s innocence is another’s taboo... the film tells its story with a great deal of respect for all of its characters and refreshingly leaves behind that so often tragic gay finale...”
LISA BRADSHAW, FLANDERS TODAY, 16/03/2011

“...It’s clear that Defurne wanted to create an archetypal dreamworld, a homely place where nostalgia hasn’t been overhauled by reality yet, where the character’s dreams have a chance of coming through... North Sea Texas has been made with a warmth and feeling that’s irresistible.”
JANA OSTYN, DIGG, 23/03/2011

“...Stylised teenage angst,infused with timeless charm and a touch of homo-eroticism...”
DAVE MESTDAGH, KNACK FOCUS, 16/03/2011

“North Sea Texas is a delicate and finely polished coming-of-age story that fully benefits from the performance of angelic Jelle Florizoone...”
LIEVEN TRIO, METRO, 16/03/2011

“Jelle Florizoone delivers a star-making debut performance... North Sea Texas is a debut feature that combines lyricism and social realism with flair.”
STÉPHANIE GROFILS, LA LIBRE BELGIQUE, 16/03/2011

“...at the premiere on monday evening we heard loads of positive words for this new flemish film. “Touching” was without a doubt the most frequently heard word at the reception afterwards...”
DIMITRI VANLOMMEL, WWW.THETOPOFMUSIC.BE, 17/03/2011

“...In short, we are still daydreaming thanks to this this wonderful curiosity...”
SVEN DE HONDT, WWW.CUTTINGEDGE.BE, 22/03/2011

North Sea Texas

WWW.NORTHSEATEXAS.COM

