

## THE FINNISH FILM FOUNDATION

The Finnish Film Foundation supports and promotes the Finnish film industry by allocating public funding for professional film production, exhibition and distribution. It is also responsible for the festival distribution and international promotion of Finnish films.

Founded in 1969, the Finnish Film Foundation operates under the Ministry of Education and Culture. It receives its budget from lottery and pools funds allocated for promoting cinema and hands out around EUR 25 million annually.

The Finnish Film Foundation is the main financer of film production in Finland. It provides production support for feature, documentary, short and animation films as well as television series. The Foundation also funds international co-productions with a Finnish co-production partner.

ses.fi/en



**POPULATION:** 

5,5 million

**CINEMA SCREENS:** 

over **300** 

**CINEMA ADMISSIONS:** 

8-9 million

**CINEMA BOX OFFICE:** 

ver **90** million €

**DOMESTIC FILM RELEASES:** 

30

**DOMESTIC MARKET SHARE:** 

20-25 %





#### **Contacts at The Finnish Film Foundation**

Kanavakatu 12, 00160 Helsinki, Finland • Tel. +358 9 6220 300 • ses@ses.fi

## **Festival Contacts for Feature Films**



Jaana Puskala Head of International Department jaana.puskala@ses.fi tel. +358 9 6220 3026



Arttu Manninen International Promotion Assistant arttu.manninen@ses.fi tel. +358 44 491 9069



Jenni Domingo International Promotion Coordinator jenni.domingo@ses.fi tel. +358 40 841 2849





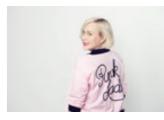


90 min • Summer 2020



Eden is a coming-of-age film about a Protestant Confirmation camp on a summer's week, set in the archipelago of Helsinki. Aliisa is the intellectually confident non-believer, Jenna is the queen bee and Panu is the scared bird.

The experience of these teenagers is affected by Tiina, a young and eager priest. Tiina is irritated by the mild and liberal attitudes of the other counselors, and she decides to revamp the camp towards religious ecstasy. Eden is a film about group identities and about conforming to the values of others.



Ulla Heikkilä (b. 1989) is a Helsinkibased director-screenwriter. She holds an MFA in film directing from Aalto University. Heikkilä has directed several short films and theatre, and she has worked as a staff writer in TV. Her latest shorts are #Barewithme (2018) and Let Her Speak (a part of the anthology One-Off Incident, 2019).

Director: Ulla Heikkilä Script: Ulla Heikkilä Cinematography: Pietari Peltola Editor: Hanna Kuirinlahti Music: Mikko Pykäri Cast: Aamu Milonoff, Linnea Skog, Bruno Baer, Satu Tuuli Karhu, Tommi Korpela Producer: Miia Haavisto Production company: Tekele Sales: Film Republic

# Feature Films for Children and Youth

#### **Hayflower, Quiltshoe and the Feisty First-grader**

Heinähattu, Vilttitossu ja ärhäkkä koululainen • 75 min • Domestic premiere: February 2020



Hayflower has started school, where she learns a lot of exciting new things. Quiltshoe doesn't like to stay at home without a sister to play with. When Hayflower tells her about an upcoming fishing trip with her class, Quiltshoe comes up with a complicated plan: it will be Quiltshoe attending the trip instead of Hayflower. The trip evolves into a memorable and chaotic event.

Hayflower & Quiltshoe are the beloved brainchildren of novelists Sinikka and Tiina Nopola. They have had adventures already in 18 books which have sold millions of copies in several languages. Hayflower, Quiltshoe and Feisty First-grader is the third film adaption of the books and the second from Yellow Film & TV starring the same adult cast. The previous film was released in 2017 and was a local box office hit.



Lenka Hellstedt (b. 1968) is a director and writer. Hayflower, Quiltshoe and Feisty First-grader is Hellstedt's fourth feature film. Her earlier films are Me and Morrison (2001), Ground Under Water (2009) and Winning Ticket (2018). Hellstedt has also directed several television



#### **Ricky Rapper and the Wrong Vincent**

Risto Räppääjä ja väärä Vincent • 84 min • Domestic premiere: October 2020



Rauha Rapper gets a strange prediction: a genius has been born to her immediate family. When Rauha finds a drawing Ricky has made, she is certain that Ricky is Vincent Van Gogh reborn. She decides to show Ricky's drawing to the intendent of the Art Museum. At the same time, a sketch of one of Van Gogh's paintings is found in Finland! This discovery starts an exciting chain of events, and in the end, the janitor of the Art Museum, a keen amateur detective, helps Ricky and Nelly to solve the mystery.

Ricky Rapper and the wrong Vincent is a musical comedy-thriller and a family film. It's the eighth Ricky Rapper film.



Maria Sid is a well-known film, TV and theater actress and theater director. This is her debut feature as a film director.

Director: Maria Sid Script: Sinikka Nopola, Tiina Nopola, Josefiina Rautiainen, Maria Sid Cinematography: Robert Nordström Editing: Joona Louhivuori Music: Iiro Rantala Cast: Silmu Ståhlberg, Lumi Kallio, Minka Kuustonen, Ylermi Rajamaa, Kristiina Halttu, Mika Nuojua, Jenni Kokander, Eero Ritala, Carl-Kristian Rundman Producers: Rimbo Salomaa, Markus Selin, Jukka Helle Production company: Solar Films Co-production company: Ricky Rapper

#### Sihja

80 min • Autumn 2020



Sihja is a young, charming and a little outrageous fairy who leaves her home in the forest. On arrival in the city, she meets a sensitive new friend, a lonely human boy Alfred.

Sihja loves the organized urban shapes and orderly habits that the city people have. Sihja and Alfred bond quickly, and have a lot of fantastic fun, until one day dead birds appear on the city streets. The two friends must find out what is threatening the nature.



Marja Pyykkö graduated as a film director from the Finnish Film School UIAH. She is an experienced director of both popular TV series, including the internationally distributed Hooked and Black Widows, and films such as Run Sister Run (2010), Village People (2013) and the box office hit Man and a Baby (2017).

Director: Marja Pyykkö Script: Kirsikka Saari, Jenni Toivoniemi Cinematography: Remko Schnorr Editing: Jon Endre Mørk Music: Ginge Cast: Elina Patrakka, Justus Hentula, Pirjo Lonka, Elena Leeve, Eero Ritala, Elmer Bäck Producers: Venla Hellstedt, Elli Toivoniemi Production company: Tuffi Films Co-production companies: Windmill Film (The Netherlands), Den Siste Skilling (Norway) Sales: Dutch Features Global Entertainment



Hetkenä minä hyvänsä • 95 min • Spring 2020

**Forest Giant** 

Bahman, Mahtab, Ramin and Donya Mehdipour are enjoying a perfect summer in a small Finnish town. Their routines are fractured by a negative decision on their application for asylum by the Finnish Immigration Service. But life must go on and the 13-year-old Ramin is about to enter an entirely new school, junior high. The Mehdipours use their last chance to appeal but continue their everyday lives, fuelled by their exceptionally positive outlook and attitude.

Any Day Now is a debut feature by Hamy Ramezan, whose short films have won over 50 prizes at international festivals. His previous short film Listen (with Rungano Nyoni) premiered in Directors' Fortnight in Cannes and was nominated for the best short film by EFA. Any Day Now is produced by Hamy's long term partners Jussi Rantamäki and Emilia Haukka who also produced Un Certain Regard winner The Happiest Day in the Life of Olli Mäki.



Hamy Ramezan is a Finnish-Iranian film director and screenwriter. Having fled persecution in Iran, and survived Yugoslav refugee camps as a young boy, Ramezan and his family arrived in Finland in 1990. He graduated from the film school at UCA. Franham in 2007 and has since completed several short and documentary films.



Pasi returns to his childhood town, asked to reconfigure the local forest factory. With a child on the way with his upper-class wife, Pasi sees an opportunity - this is his ticket to climb the professional ladder in the company. On arrival, he bumps into his childhood friend Janne, who works in the factory he is about to downsize. Pasi begins to struggle with the fact that he is supposed to care for the profits - not for the people.

Forest Giant is comedy-drama taking place in a small factory town in the mid-1980s and in the present. It's based on Miika Nousiainen's bestselling novel of the same name.



Ville Jankeri graduated from the National Film and Television School (NFTS). In 2007, Ville was chosen to make a short film The Last Wash for the Berlin Today Award competition. Sixpack (2011), his first feature film was both a critical and commercial success. His second feature Gold Digger (2016) was also successful in the box office. Forest Giant is his third feature.

Director: Hamy Ramezan Script: Hamy Ramezan, Antti Rautava Cinematography: Arsen Sarkisiantis Editing: Joona Louhivuori Cast: Shahab Hosseini, Shabnam Gorbani, Aran-Sina Keshvari, Kimya Eskandari, Laura Birn Producers: Jussi Rantamäki, Emilia Haukka Production company: Aamu Film Company Sales: New Europe Film Sales

Director: Ville Jankeri Script: Ville Jankeri, Timo Turunen Cinematography: Aarne Tapola Editing: Harri Ylönen Music: Marko Nyberg Cast: Jussi Vatanen, Sara Soulié, Hannes Suominen, Anu Sinisalo, Philip Zanden, Tommi Korpela Producers: Rimbo Salomaa, Markus Selin, Jukka Helle Production company: Solar Films

#### **Games People Play**

Seurapeli • 119 min • World premiere: Göteborg Film Festival 2020



A group of old friends gathers to celebrate Mitzi's surprise birthday party over a nostalgic weekend at an idyllic seaside villa – just like they used to do as teenagers. Familiar surroundings and the old rituals get to the core of the group and make them forget their adulthood. Revelations, not meant to harm the balance, make them reassess their past as well as their present.

"A few years ago, many of my friends got divorced and suddenly I was in parties where people behaved like they were teenagers again. The denial of aging and longing for a carefree youth that never existed in the first place intrigues me. I believe we all are several different versions of ourselves at the same time, and we need nostalgia and regression to visit those former identities." – Director's note



Jenni Toivoniemi (b. 1978) is a writer-director. Her short comedy The Date (2012), was awarded at the Sundance Film Festival and at the Berlinale Generation 14+. Her other short films include The Committee (2016, with Gunhild Enger) and The Door (2017). Toivoniemi has written the feature film Korso (2014) together with Kirsikka Saari and their latest collaboration, children's film Sihja, will premiere in 2020. Toivoniemi was also part of the writer-director team of Force of Habit (2019).





#### **The Gravedigger**

Haudankaivaja • 80 min • Spring 2020



The Gravedigger is the story of a family that, in times of misfortune, have to push themselves to the limits in order to find enough strength to be able to re-unite.

Middle-aged Guled, a struggling gravedigger living in the slums of Djibouti City, is working hard to make ends meet. His 13-year-old runaway son Mahad lives on the streets with other homeless children, and his beloved wife Nasra, who suffers from a chronic kidney disease, desperately needs a transplant. In order to save Nasra's life, Guled and Mahad have two weeks to come up with the money. But how far are they willing to go?



The Gravedigger is writer-director **Khadar Ahmed**'s (b. 1981) first feature. Previously he has directed several successful short films, for example The Night Thief (2017) which has screened at numerous film festivals around the world. He has written, among others, the short film Citizens (2008) by Juho Kuosmanen and Unexpected Journey (2017), written together with director Samuli Valkama.

**Director**: Khadar Ahmed **Script**: Khadar Ahmed **Cinematography**: Arttu Peltomaa **Editing**: Sebastian Thümler **Music**: Andre Matthias **Cast**: Omar Abdi, Yasmin Warsame **Producers**: Misha Jaari, Mark Lwoff **Co-producers**: Thanassis Karathanos, Stépane Parthenay, Robin Boespflug-Vonier **Production company**: Bufo **Co-production companies**: Twenty Twenty Vision Film Produktion (Germany), Pyramide Productions (France)

#### петепе

122 min • Domestic premiere: January 2020



In 1913, Helene Schjerfbeck was a forgotten artist, living together with her elderly mother in the Finnish countryside. She had kept painting for passion only, not for glory. An art dealer decides to organise a huge solo exhibition for Helene and introduces her to Einar Reuter, a passionate admirer of Helene's work. She falls deeply in love with him, despite their age difference. Through the tragic relationship, Helene grows more independent and becomes a stronger artist than ever before.

Helene Schjerfbeck (1862–1948) is Finland's most popular female artist who has also attracted international fame. Schjerfbeck was not only a master of painting, but also an expert with words. This film is about her art, of course, but first and foremost a beautiful love story.



Antti J. Jokinen won the Best
Director Award at Shanghai IFF with
his previous film Flowers of Evil
(2016). His debut film was the thriller
The Resident (2011), starring Hilary
Swank and Jeffrey Dean Morgan. He
is known also for his music videos for
artists such as Beyoncé, Eminem and
Celine Dion, and for the historical
dramas Midwife (2015) and Purge
(2012) which won five Jussi awards.



Inkeri, 75, has hit her husband on the head with a solid iron frying pan and is planning to bury him in their garden. Before facing the rest of her life in prison, there may yet be a moment left to really live. Inkeri makes her sisters Sylvi and Raili join her on a trip to the Koli National Park. Will Inkeri find in her that free young woman who desired a feminist revolution in the 70s?

Ladies of Steel is about life choices, circumstances, escaping responsibilities, dreams, finding yourself and your own voice. It's about the importance of living in the moment and that it is never too late to start living to the potential one aims for. Ladies of Steel is a celebration of older age and life.



Pamela Tola is a Finnish actress, writer and director. She's a household name with three Jussinominations and has starred in films such as Frozen Land (2005), Lapland Odyssey (2010) and Aurora (2019). She has a MA in Theatre Arts from the Theatre Academy of Helsinki. Ladies of Steel is her second feature film as a writer and director.

Director: Antti J. Jokinen Script: Antti J. Jokinen, Marko Leino (based on the novel Helene by Rakel Liehu)

Cinematography: Rauno Ronkainen F.S.C. Editing: Benjamin Mercer F.C.E. Music: Kirka Sainio Cast: Laura Birn, Johannes Holopainen, Pirkko Saisio, Krista Kosonen, Eero Aho, Jarkko Lahti Producers: Mikko Tenhunen, Antti J. Jokinen Coproducer: Evelin Penttilä Production company: Finland Cinematic Co-production company: Stellar Film (Estonia) Sales: Picture Tree

Director: Pamela Tola Script: Pamela Tola, Aleksi Bardy Cinematography: Päivi Kettunen F.S.C. Editing: Antti Reikko F.C.E Music: Panu Aaltio Sound designer: Panu Riikonen Production designer: Heini Erving Costume designer: Tiina Kaukanen Make-up designer: Riikka Virtanen Cast: Leena Uotila, Seela Sella, Saara Pakkasvirta, Heikki Nousiainen, Pirjo Lonka, Jani Volanen Producers: Aleksi Bardy, Dome Karukoski, Sirkka Rautiainen Production company: Helsinki-filmi Sales: The Yellow Affair

Livet efter döden • 80 min • Domestic premiere: March 3, 2020

Nisse's wife Leila has just died but he feels he's done enough mourning. Friends and family are overrun by Nisse who just wants the funeral to be over and done with. No fuss and no mourning here! Nisse demands to be left alone. So, there he is, with the only thing remaining – the sorrow. Nisse grows to understand that even a deep loss is no excuse to eliminate everyone and everything.

Life After Death is a tragicomic film about an older man who manages to push the people around him away when he would need them the most. Despite the serious theme, the film has a comic tone. The characters' inability to understand each other is simultaneously deeply tragic and comic. Life After Death is the first autobiographical film by Klaus Härö.



Klaus Härö (b. 1971) is one of Finland's best-known film directors. His films are known for their humane and relatable themes and have won over 60 awards at international film festivals, including the Crystal Bear at the Berlinale and the Ingmar Bergman Award. In 2016, his film The Fencer was shortlisted for the Oscars and nominated for the Golden Globe award.



Mervi is a gay girl living in the hipster quarters of Helsinki. She has been living together with Kata for a year – now they are encouraged by the circumstances to finally come out of the closet. First they'll tell Mervi's parents – it's an easy start since Kata has a muslim backround. Kata's parents still live in Berlin and her mom is a well-known black muslim politician – soon they are going to come to Finland.

There is a barricade that has divided the western world in two different groups: the tolerant and the intolerant. These groups do not communicate with each other. Repelling, rejection and violence run wild. But how tolerant are we tolerant people, really? A comedy about intolerance among tolerant people. Yes, a comedy about a deadly serious and relevant subject.



Teemu Nikki is a self-educated, award winning filmmaker and son of a pig farmer from Sysmä, Finland. His latest feature, Euthanizer, has been a festival success and was the official Finnish Oscar entry for the 2019 Academy Awards. Nikki has also directed numerous short films and popular TV series. Nikki's style is best described as a good-willed yet unapologetic political satire of humanity.

#### **The Potato Venture**

Peruna • 120 min • Domestic premiere: October 2020



The Potato Venture is a comedy about an early start-up entrepreneur, who tries to import potato into Finland in the 17th century. The new class of bourgeoisie is emerging and shaking up the stagnant spirit of the era. But nobody believes in potato, and the Turnip Vendors' Guild decides to squash the disruption caused by the young entrepreneurs.

The concept is created by Pekko Pesonen who is also the author behind The Lapland Odyssey trilogy which has been a major box office hit in Finland. Pekko Pesonen has won the national film Jussi award twice as a screenwriter.



Joona Tena is has worked both in film and television, writing and directing a variety of genres including dramas, thrillers, and comedies. Before The Potato Venture, he directed three feature films: Super Furball (2018), Body of Water (2011) and FC Venus (2005). His latest works as a director are the drama series Roba (2012–2015) and Nurses (2014).

Director: Joona Tena Script: Pekko Pesonen Cinematography: Konsta Sohlberg F.S.C Editing: Jyrki Levä Music: Panu Aaltio Cast: Joonas Nordman, Kari Hietalahti, Kari Ketonen, Mikko Penttilä, Linnea Leino, Alex Anton, Mimosa Willamo, Antti Luusuaniemi, Petteri Pennilä, Lasse Karkjärvi, Linda Manelius, Lauri Maijala, Ville Myllyrinne, Mikko Kouki, Eero Herranen, Tommi Korpela Producers: Marko Talli, Olli Haikka Production company: Yellow Film & TV





#### **Diva of Finland**

Youth drama • 91 min • Domestic premiere: October 2019

A story about the painful subject of envy among teenage girls. Henna, a small-town girl from the north, becomes literally blind because of her envy towards the new girl from the south, Silja. Taking part in a TV talent show teaches Henna the true meaning of friendship.

**Director**: Maria Veijalainen **Script**: Maria Veijalainen **Producers**: Mika Ritalahti, Niko Ritalahti **Production Company:** Silva Mysterium



#### **Dogs Don't Wear Pants**

Drama • 106 min • World premiere: Directors' Fortnight, Cannes 2019

Juha has lost his wife in a drowning accident. Years after he still feels numb and unable to connect with people. Meeting Mona, a dominatrix, changes everything. Dogs Don't Wear Pants is a darkly humorous story of loss, love and the sweet pain of being.

**Director**: J-P Valkeapää **Script**: J-P Valkeapää from an idea by Juhana Lumme **Producers**: Aleksi Bardy, Helen Vinogradov **Production Company:** Helsinki-Filmi **Sales**: Yellow Affair



#### **Force of Habit**

Drama • 75 min • Domestic premiere: September 2019

Force of Habit is a film to disclose and deconstruct the invisible exercise of power towards women, in private lives as well as in the society. The film follows six different women who experience sexual harassment, judgement, underrating and exclusion.

Directors & script: Kirsikka Saari, Elli Toivoniemi, Anna Paavilainen, Alli Haapasalo, Reetta Aalto, Miia Tervo, Jenni Toivoniemi Producer: Elli Toivoniemi Production Company: Tuffi Films Sales: Totem Films



#### **Maria's Paradise**

Historical drama • 111 min • World premiere: Toronto IFF 2019

The angelic preacher Maria Åkerblom leads her followers to Helsinki, among them the adoring teenager Salome. Maria is soon sentenced to prison, accused of violent crimes. Meanwhile, Salome has befriended a streetgirl, Malin, and is now torn between her newfound freedom, and the ever more dangerous Maria's all-consuming love.

**Director**: Zaida Bergroth **Script**: Anna Viitala, Jan Forsström **Producer**s: Daniel Kuitunen, Kaisla Viitala **Production Company:** Komeetta **Sales:** LevelK

20



#### **Master Cheng**

Romantic drama • 114 min • Domestic premiere: September 2019

Cheng, a restaurant owner from China, has travelled with his young son halfway around the world to a remote village in Finland. His wife died recently in an accident, and Cheng wanted to have a break from everything. In Finland, he meets Sirkka, an owner of a small restaurant who will help Cheng find what he is looking for.

Director: Mika Kaurismäki Script: Hannu Oravisto Producer: Mika Kaurismäki Production company: Marianna Films Sales: Yellow Affair



#### In Production



#### **Hatching**

Pahanhautoja • horror, drama • early 2021

12-year-old gymnast girl Tinja finds a strange bird's egg. A creature hatches from the egg and Tinja names it Alli. Slowly Alli becomes Tinja's doppelgänger and violently acts out Tinja's buried aggressions.

Director: Hanna Bergholm Script: Ilja Rautsi Producer: Mika Ritalahti / Silva Mysterium Sales: Wild Bunch

#### **Memory of Water**

Veden vartija • sci-fi • late 2021

A young woman finds courage to start a battle over fresh water in the Scandinavian Union, a land dried by eco disasters and controlled by a harsh military government.

Director: Saara Saarela Script: Ilja Rautsi Producers: Misha Jaari, Mark Lwoff / Bufo

#### **Tale of a Sleeping Giant**

Tunturin tarina • mythological nature film • late 2020

Filmed entirely in Lapland in the most fantastic wilderness, the film is a journey into the rich mythology of the ancient Scandinavia.

Director: Marko Röhr Script: Marko Röhr, Antti Tuuri Producers: Hanna Kauppi, Marko Röhr / MRP Matila Röhr **Productions** 

#### **Tove**

biopic • late 2020

The true story of the artist Tove Jansson's love story with the female theatre director Vivica Bandler in post-war Helsinki in the late 1940s.

Director: Zaida Bergroth Script: Eeva Putro Producers: Aleksi Bardy, Andrea Reuter / Helsinki-filmi Sales: LevelK

#### Vinski and the **Invisibility Powder**

children's film • late 2020

10-year-old Vinski feels like an outsider and invisible among his friends, and even with his single mother. Then he meets a mysterious pharmacist who gives him a magical powder.

Director: Juha Wuolijoki Script: Mauri Ahola, Juha Wuolijoki Producer: Juha Wuolijoki / Snapper Films

#### **Yellow Sulphur Sky**

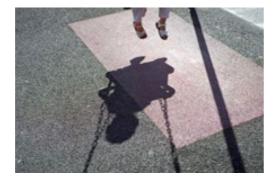
drama • late 2020

A bittersweet film about love and the difficulties to maintain it. A story about friendship, class distinction and our times.

Director: Claes Olsson Script: Claes Olsson, Erik Norberg Production: Jukka Helle, Hanna Virolainen, Claes Olsson / Solar Films



# Minority Co-Productions





#### **Goodbye, Soviet Union**

Goodbye Soviet Union is a humoristic comingof-age story about Johannes, who is born prematurely to a young single mother, and about his destiny to be always separated from his loved ones in a society that is collapsing under Perestroika.

**Director & script**: Lauri Randla **Producers**: Peeter Urbla, Misha Jaari, Mark Lwoff **Production companies**: Exitfilm (Estonia), Bufo (Finland)

#### **The Innocents**

A secret and magical world opens up when a group of children play away from the gaze of the grown-ups.

Director & script: Eskil Vogt Producers: Maria Ekerhovd, Lizette Jonjic, Mark Lwoff, Misha Jaari, Katrin Pors Production companies: Mer Film (Norway), Zentropa Sweden, Film i Väst (Sweden), Bufo (Finland), Snowglobe (Denmark)



#### **The Last Ones**

A car crash in slow motion, a love letter to a disappearing world.

**Director**: Veiko Õunpuu **Script**: Heikki Huttu-Hiltunen, Eero Tammi, Veiko Õunpuu **Producers**: Katrin Kissa, Misha Jaari, Mark Lwoff, Ellen Havenith **Production companies**: Homeless Bob (Estonia), Bufo (Finland), PRPL (The Netherlands)

### **Digitised Classics**

The Finnish Film Foundation provides select internationally acclaimed filmmakers' works for retrospective and other screenings. Our digitized classics catalogue includes films from Aki Kaurismäki, Pirjo Honkasalo, Markku Lehmuskallio and Anastasia Lapsui and others. See catalogue.ses.fi for details.





