

PRODUCTION NOTES

SPEAK NO EVIL

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY:

Christian Tafdrup graduated from The Danish National School of Performing Arts in 2003. As an actor Tafdrup has starred in both feature films and tv. Among other things he starred in Susanne Bier's Academy Awards nominated 'After the Wedding' (2006), the BAFTA winning tv-series 'Borgen' (2010-), the TV-2 series 'Park Road' (2009-2010) and several other films and tv.

Besides his acting Tafdrup has directed three shorts. In 1999 he wrote and directed the short 'The Copier', and followed it up with 'Debutanten' (2003). His third short 'Awakening' (2008) won the Robert-award (Danish Academy Award) for 'best short' as well as several other awards on festivals. His feature film debut as a writer/director 'Parents' (2016) was nominated for 'Best International Feature Film' at the Tribeca Film Festival, and won a Robert for 'Best Director', a Bodil-award (Danish Critics Award) for 'Best Screenplay' and both a Robert and Bodil for 'Best Actor'. His second feature 'A Horrible Woman' (2017) sold more than 200.000 tickets across Europe and was selected for multiple festivals. The film received a Bodil as well as a Robert-award for 'Best Actress' and a Robert for 'Best Original Screenplay'. Tafdrup is known for his razor-sharp satirical tone in his films, where he mixes comedy and drama in order to examine the relation between people in our modern western society.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT:

How often have I gone wrong with something, because I'm a polite human being? Like the summer when my family met another family during a holiday in Italy, and we visited them in their home, 6 months later. It became a long and awkward weekend. The chemistry we had at the vineyard was gone, and we put up with a lot of things. They weren't very nice to be around, but we stuck it out behind our facade of wide smiles, and made no objections at any point. We were guests in their house and weren't interested in offending them. When we left, it felt like we had committed an assault on ourselves. Why didn't we do anything? Why was it easier to stick it out than to say no to their unpleasantness? Like we would rather die than lose face.

Among modern western people I think there's a tendency to make decisions based on a cultural dictation about how we should behave, rather than from our own natural judgment. You don't want to be less than what you're mandated, and your self-perception weighs heavier than the truth about who you really are. That is, a genuine human being, for better or for worse. We disguise ourselves, while we long to be authentic. But do we even know ourselves as authentic beings in our controlled societies?

I think we live in a correctness culture. A culture in which we are willing to sacrifice ourselves in the attempt of behaving like proper human beings.

To me, the modern western human being has refined itself to death. It may be because we, in our protected and highly developed societies, have learned to do all the right things and behave so correct, that we don't know what to do when we encounter darker forces? Neither in ourselves nor in others. We live in a time where evil cannot exist. So, we repress it so bad, that we also want it. We're attracted to what we fear.

Speak No Evil is a satirical horror movie. Satirical, because it revolves around ordinary people's absurdly recognizable ways of behaving. A horror movie, because the film is dark, evil and willingly foul. I hope it will become both funny and terrifying.



With my two latest films I've been lucky enough to try and make both an independent and a mainstream film. The first one 'Parents' (2016) experimented with the cinematic expression, but wasn't seen by that many people. My second film 'A Horrible Woman' (2017) became a more accessible experience, which dealt with something everyone could recognize: horrible women (and men). With Benelux I wish to make a film that can do both. A radical aesthetic film breaking with conventions, but also an entertaining film that reflects its audience. A film, critical to society, which impales the modern privileged human being, and a poetic and visual experience, larger than life. It's an evil film, but an important film. Fascinating and repulsive. Mainstream, but completely without pleasing.

PRODUCER'S BIOGRAPHY:

Jacob Jarek was born in Krakow, Poland and grew up in Norway. Jarek has a master's degree in media production from the University of Trondheim and graduated from the National Film School of Denmark in 2011. Before the film school Jarek went to the European Film College 2003-2004 and worked as an assistant producer at Nimbus Film, where he worked on Nicolas Winding Refn's 'Valhalla Rising' (2008) among other things.

Jarek has produced multiple award-winning short among others '1989 (when I was 5 years old)' which premiered at Sundance Film Festival as well as 'Two Friends' (2010) and 'Weekend Dad' (2013), both of which won a Robert (Danish Academy Award). Jarek was a co-producer on Nicolas Winding Refn's 'Only God Forgives' (2013) which premiered at the Cannes Film Festival, and on the Icelandic/Danish feature film 'Rams' (2015), which won the Un Certain Regard award at the Cannes International Film Festival. Jarek produced the feature film 'Shelley' (2015) directed by Ali Abassi, which premiered in the Panorama-programme at the Berlin International Film Festival. Jarek was an executive-producer on Rasmus Heisterberg's 'In the Blood' (2016), which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and won the Bodil-award (Danish Critics Award) for 'Best Feature Film'. He produced the critically acclaimed 'Darkland' (2017) directed by Fenar Ahmad, which topped the box-office lists in Denmark as well as Jens Dahl's thriller '3 Things' (2017) starring Nicolaj Coster-Waldau and Birgitte Hjort Sørensen in the leads. Jarek co-produced Hafsteinn Gunnar Sigurðsson's 'Under the Tree' (2017), which premiered in the Orizzonti section at the Venice International Film Festival. Furthermore, he co-produced the Icelandic comedy-drama 'The County' (2019), which played at the Toronto Film Festival as well as Giraffe, which was nominated for an award at the San Sebastián International Film Festival. Lately Jarek produced Fenar Ahmad's adaptation of Peter Madsen's epic fantasy graphic novel 'Valhalla' (2019), which won the Robert award for 'Best Visual Effects'.

Jarek is currently working with Ali Abassi's new feature film. Furthermore, he's working on the first Danish HBO-series 'Kamikaze' as an executive-producer and Bent Hamer's upcoming feature film 'The Middle Man' as co-producer.

Besides films Jarek has also produced the Robert-winning third season of the DR-series 'Follow the Money' (2019).

Jarek was a board member of the Danish Film Academy from 2010-2016 and participated in the producers-programme Inside Pictures in 2013. Jarek received the Ib-award from the Danish Film Directors in 2017.

CAST LIST:

BJØRN: Morten Burian

LOUISE: Sidsel Siem Koch

PATRICK: Fedja van Huêt

KARIN: Karina Smulders

AGNES: Liva Forsberg

ABEL: Marius Damslev

MUHAJID: Hichem Yacoubi

JONAS: Jesper Dupont

FIE: Lea Baastrup Rønne

DEREK: Adrian Blanchard

HANNAH: Sarina Maria Rausa

BABY SITTER: Ilaria Di Raimo

OPERASINGERS:

Alessio Barni

Ilaria Casai

Martina Barreca

LUTSPLAYER: Andrea Benucci

WAITER: Sieger Sloom

MAIN CAST BIOGRAPHIES:

Morten Burian (Bjørn)

Morten Burian graduated from The Danish School of Performing Arts at Aarhus Theatre in 2000. He has performed at The Royal Theatre in the event plays 'Hvem myrdede Regitze Rio' (2011), 'Amandaværelset' (2014) and 'Pang!' (2017). Burian started his career as a part of the ensemble at Aarhus Theatre 2001-2004, where he was a co-founder and host at the Culture-saloon Absinth. From 2004 to 2009 he was a part of the ensemble at Aalborg Theatre, where he came up with the idea for and was the daily executive of Trasmator the theatre's satellite-scene. Burian has since 2009 worked at multiple theatres in Copenhagen – and of his essential parts one might mention: 'UTERUS' at Husets Theatre, the role of Hamlet in 'The Tiger Lillies perform Hamlet' (2012) at Republique, 'All my dreams come true' (2013) at Aarhus Theatre /The Café Theatre, 'Sne' (2014) at Husets Theatre, 'Living Dead' (2016) at Sort/Hvid, 'Status' (2017), 'ROCKY!' (2017) and 'Richard III' (2018) all of which were at Husets Theatre. Furthermore, he created and starred in the play 'Mand Kvinde Hund' (2016) at Husets Theatre. Lately Burian has created the play 'Hvid tegner sort model' (2019) at Sort/Hvid. Since the fall of 2015 Burian has been an associated teacher at The Danish School of Performing Arts in Copenhagen, where he staged the graduation play 'Caligula' with Mikkel Flyvholm at The Royal Theatre's Small Stage.

Besides theatre he has also starred in the TV2 series 'Dicte' (2014), the Robert winning series 'Follow the Money' (2016), the International Emmy winning series 'Ride Upon the Storm' (2017) as well as the DR series 'Replay' (2019).

Sidsel Siem Koch (Louise)

Sidsel Siem Koch has been performing on theater stages all the way from childhood. She graduated the The Danish School of Performing Arts at Odense Theater in 2013 and has since appeared on several theater scenes across Denmark. Koch has appearances on Aalborg Theater, Odense Theater, Vendsyssel Theatre, Husets Theatre as well as Folketeatret. Outside of her performances on the stage Koch has also starred in both films and tv-series. Koch recently starred in Ole Christian Madsen's film 'The Day We Died' (2020) as well as Madsen's previous film 'Itsi Bitsy' (2014), which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival. Furthermore, Koch had a leading role as Queen Ingrid in the DR documentary

series 'Fredrik IX' (2020), she starred in the hugely popular tv-series 'Seaside Hotel' (2016) as well as the Ole Bornedal series '1864' (2014) which was nominated for several Robert awards.

Fedja van Huêt (Patrick)

Fedja van Huêt is one of the most famous and celebrated Dutch actors of his generation. Before graduating from the Maastricht Theatre Academy, Mike van Diem cast him to play the lead in his Oscar-winning film 'Character' (1997), which won the Academy Award for 'Best Foreign Language Film'.

Fedja was an ensemble member of Johan Simons' legendary theater group Hollandia from 1996 to 2005. Hollandia toured throughout Europe and won the coveted European Prize New Theatrical Reality in 2000. From 2005-2013, he was part of the ensemble of the renowned International Theatre Amsterdam (formerly Toneelgroep Amsterdam) under the direction of Ivo van Hove and performed in 'Angels in America', 'Opening Night', 'Coriolanus', 'Platonov' and 'MacBeth', which was nominated for a Louis d'Or. In 2013, Fedja received the Mary Dresselhuys award for extraordinary achievements as a theater actor.

During these years, Fedja continued to act in film. He starred in Erik de Bruyn's 'Wilde Mossels' (2000), which won Dutch film press's award for 'Best Film'. Fedja won his first Golden Calf for 'Best Actor' for his leading role in Martin Koolhoven's 'Amnesia' (2001), which premiered at the International Film Festival Rotterdam. In 2002, Fedja was chosen as a EFP Shooting Star at the Berlin International Film Festival.

He went on to act in 'Rosenstrasse' (2003) from Margarethe von Trotta, which was nominated for a Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival and in 'Guernsey' (2005), which premiered at the Cannes Film Festival and 'Wolfsbergen' (2007), which premiered at the Berlin International Film Festival, both of which were directed by Nanouk Leopold. Recently, Fedja starred in the Dutch films 'Soof' (2013), 'Bloed, Zweet en Tranen' (2015) and 'Baantjer het Begin' (2019). Television audiences know him from major roles in the German production 'Der Amsterdam Krimi' (2018-2020), and the Dutch series 'Penoza' (2010-2012) and 'Overspel' (2011-2015). Recently, he starred in the historical miniseries Turbulent Skies' (2020-) and this year, he will play the lead role in 'The Judgement', based on the Deventer murder case.

Karina Smulders (Karin)

Karina Smulders (Utrecht, 1980) was cast for the popular daytime *Onderweg naar Morgen* when she was sixteen years old. After two years, she left the show and was admitted to the Academy of Performing Arts in Amsterdam where she graduated with honor in 2002. A year earlier, as an apprentice, she created the role of Katalijne in Lot Vekemans' *Truckstop* by the Muztheater. She appeared in many feature films, including 'Ik omhels je met 1000 armen' (2006), 'Wolfsbergen' (2007), 'Kom niet aan mijn kinderen' (2010), 'Sum of Histories' (2015) and her star turn as Ada van Holland in 'Bride Flight' (2008).

From 2002 till 2012 Karina was an ensemble member of Toneelgroep Amsterdam, the most renowned Dutch theatre company, led by Ivo van Hove. She performed in numerous plays, both classical and modern: 'True Love', 'Othello', 'Hedda Gabler', 'The Taming of the Shrew', 'Cries and Whispers', 'After the Fall', 'Roman Tragedies' and 'The Russians!'. Her role in 'After the Rehearsal / Persona' in 2013 earned her a nomination for the Theo d'Or for best leading actress performance in play.

After her time with Toneelgroep Amsterdam, Karina worked as a freelance actress with several different theatre companies. She was again nominated for the Theo d'Or in 2017 for her role as Hedda in 'Hedda Gabler'.



In addition to her work on stage, Katrina has been seen in many tv-series including 'Familie Kruys' (2015-2019), 'Divorce' (2016) and 'Nieuwe Buren' (2016-2018). Most recently she starred as Xandra in the tv-series 'Keizersvrouwen' (2019-2020) directed by Ben Sombogaart and she played in the film 'Jackie & Oopjen' (2020).