### **Aamu Film Company Presents**



FESTIVAL DE CANNES
COMPETITION
2021 OFFICIAL SELECTION

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### **WORLD SALES**

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### SEIDI HAARLA YURIY BORISOV

# COMPARTMENT No. 6

(HYTTI NRO 6) A FILM BY JUHO KUOSMANEN

2021 / FINLAND, GERMANY, ESTONIA, RUSSIA / 106 MIN / 35MM/ 1:2.35 / DOLBY ATMOS / RUSSIAN, FINNISH

### LOGLINE

As a train weaves its way up to the arctic circle, two strangers share a journey that will change their perspective on life.

### **SYNOPSIS**

A young Finnish woman escapes an enigmatic love affair in Moscow by boarding a train to the arctic port of Murmansk. Forced to share the long ride and a tiny sleeping car with a Russian miner, the unexpected encounter leads the occupants of Compartment no. 6 to face the truth about their own yearning for human connection.

### DIRECTORS NOTE

Compartment No 6 is an arctic road movie, perhaps it could be seen as a clumsy attempt to find harmony and peace of mind in a world of chaos and anxiety.

The core of the story lies in the notion of acceptance. It's a hard duty to accept that you are part of this chaotic world, and that you exist as you do. Our hero, Finnish student Laura, takes a long train ride to visit some ancient petroglyphs. She quotes a man she met: "To know yourself, you need to know your past". She would like to be an archaeologist who gets fulfilment out of these kind of things, petroglyphs and such. But is she really that person? Or is this just a stolen dream from a person she would like to be?

On the train she meets Ljoha, an annoying Russian miner who follows her like a shadow. She wanted to know her past, and Ljoha is the embodiment of it. It's unpleasant and banal, but it is what it is.

Road movies are often about freedom. In a car you can go where you want, every crossroad is possibility. But I tend to think that freedom isn't an endless number of options but rather, the ability to accept your limitations. A train ride is more like destiny. You can't decide where to go, you just have to take what it gives you.

- Juho Kuosmanen



How did you first learn about this novel? At what point did you decide to make a film about it, and what was the heart of this story's interest for you? Were there any key changes you decided to make when adapting the script?

My wife was reading it when it came out in 2010. I glanced at the back cover and asked if it would be possible to make a film adaptation out of it. She said, "Why not, it's an interesting story."

It certainly was interesting, but it's a book. So the story spreads in many different directions, and for a film adaptation, that creates the question: which direction to take? When I finished the book, I felt it was too hard to adapt. But with the passing of time, and my short memory, I 'lost' most of the book, and I started to feel the possibility again. Then I read it again, and felt, no, it's not possible.

But then I met the book's author, Rosa Liksom at an event, and we talked about a possible adaptation. I told her my thoughts and doubts and she said that I was free to do whatever I want with the book. And so we did. So the final film is more inspired by, rather than based on, Rosa Liksom's novel. After location scouting and casting, everything changed once again. We took big steps away from the texts. We changed the route, the decade and with that, the country changed from the Soviet Union to Russia, we changed the age of the male character and we even changed his name from Vadim to Ljoha. (Ljoha was the name of a crazy guy we met on the train during location scouting. So it seemed fitting.) We changed so much that it's not really a question anymore of what was changed.

The film begins with romance, including its challenges and failings. But then moves in a completely different direction. How was this narrative turn interesting to you as a filmmaker?

In a way, the film starts when Laura steps on the train, but I wanted to show the complicated situation that she is escaping from. For me it's not about a narrative turn, it's more about contrast. In the beginning she is disconnected, in the end she is connected. Basically in the beginning she would like to be like Irina, intellectual, a Muscovite. And during this trip she realises that she is actually more like Ljoha. Incorrect, clumsy and lonely.

Your first feature THE HAPPIEST DAY IN THE LIFE OF OLLI MÄKI was a love story, what was exciting about doing something different?

Basically it's the same process, trying to find out why this interests me and what is it really about. Olli Mäki was a love story, but my personal connection to the story was more about the difficulties in facing expectations. Olli was having a world title fight, I had my debut film to make, it's not the same but there were surprisingly many common feelings that I could relate to. It's easier to deal with your personal emotions when there is certain distance. A story about boxer in the 60's was far enough away for me. Film making is very open and variable process. You go towards something strange, something that is only but a glimmer. It stays a mystery for quite a long time, but when you keep going, you start to find something that resonates in your soul. It's a really unconscious process. When it's ready, you might understand what was there that kept you going. I hate the moment at the beginning of the process when you need to say what kind of film it is. You need a good answer to convince the financiers but the fact is, you don't really know the answer.

Both films also have a timelessness about them. Do you intentionally seek out this 'classic feel' or does it come naturally to your filmmaking?

Michael Cabon said that "Nostalgia is the emotional experience — always momentary, always fragile — of having what you lost or never had, of seeing people you missed seeing, of sipping coffee in the storied cafés that are now hot-yoga studios. It's the feeling that overcomes you when some minor vanished beauty of the world is momentarily restored." I've always said I'm not nostalgic, but this is pretty much the emotional core of my films. So maybe, I'm a bit nostalgic and this "classic" feel comes out of this.



The film also establishes a different kind of on screen 'couple.' Do you think audiences are overly conditioned to expect on-screen romance, or some kind of sexual tension?

Wim Wenders said that sex and violence was never his thing, he prefers SAX and violins. And I'm not really into any of these. Especially not the saxophone. What really interested me were the feelings that are beyond sexual tension. Romantic love stories are often too narrow, do they fall in love? If so, when do they have sex? This kind of storytelling is more about abusing the viewers voyeurism, it sells tickets, but is it really interesting? I don't really care who has sex with who, it's not my business. My interest lays in those complicated feelings behind different kinds of relationships, I'd like to understand why we feel like we do. If it involves sex, fine, but that's not the place to set the camera.

For me this story is a lot about connection and I think Laura and Ljoha share something deeper than a sexual need. They are more like long lost siblings, I like to think that they share the same unspoken feelings. It's more like having the same kind of childhood than same idea of politics or whatever. They are connected on an emotional level, but not by sharing cultural touchstones.

Was the subject of 'difference' or 'the other' at the front of your mind when depicting the relationship between Laura and Ljoha? Why do you think the time when we encounter the 'other' is the time when we become 'most ourselves'?

Encounters with the 'other' is absolutely one of the main subjects at the heart of this film. We talked with Livia and Andris a lot about the idea of Ljoha. Who or even what is he? He is the 'Other', but he is also a mirror to Laura's own image that she tries to avoid. I think the story is equally about the encounter with the Other and diving into your own inner self and attempting to understand and accept who you are. These are not two mutually exclusive themes, because when you meet someone new, there is the

opportunity to re-start, to pretend to be something that you would like to be. Or a chance to open up, to learn something new about yourself. There is certain kind of "comfort in strangers". Depending on their gaze and presence of the other, you either start to pretend or you might let go and finally just be yourself.

There is a long lineage of Finnish-Russian stories, which often have a particular flavor. How you fee this part of the world might breed a particular kind of tone, storytelling, humor?

This is hard to answer because I might be too deeply inside it. So I don't really see it. As I said, film making is unconscious thing for me. I think humour and tone of storytelling are something that to most, you don't need to explain, and to most, there is no reason to explain. Some people say it's the darkness, the coldness of this part of the world... I don't know. But there are the same 'dark souls' every where in the world, and they like to laugh as well.

I get more satisfaction when I can make sad people laugh, maybe that's why there is certain kind of darkness always combined with the laughter. Carefree laughing is fun, but not interesting enough to write home about.

In the end, the film could almost be a love story. But not a romantic or sexual one. In what ways do you feel Laura's journey speaks to a more universal, all encompassing kind of love for your fellow human being? Is this something you feel that we, or parts of the world, are losing track of as a society?

We are losing tracks on many levels, and this is one of those. This idea of meeting the 'Other' and resigning our own pre-determined ideas we have about each other is definitely one key to a better world. It's no wonder that the theories of the 'Other' started to interest the world after the catastrophe of WW2 when we were also so strongly divided.

What kind of restrictions did setting most of the film on a train put on the shoot?

It was much better idea on paper than in practice! Sound was recorded with hidden microphones, the crew was really small, and everything was slow as hell, there was not enough oxygen in these cramped spaces and the smells were terrible! But in the end, I'm thankful to each one of our crew that we did it in this intimate way. I think we managed to capture something special. There is real life in those images.

You've mentioned your personal connection to Olli Mäki. In what ways do you also personally identify with the main characters in this film? Can you speak in particular about your connection with Laura, and how it feels to identify with the interior life a female character?

It's impossible to direct something you don't understand. I don't need to identify with my characters, but I do need to understand how they feel. Characters are born on the common ground of understanding between the director and actors. In this case I placed more my personal stuff into Laura's character, but I wasn't thinking about her gender, I don't really think it matters in this case. Because the film is not about being a woman, it's about being a human. Being male or female is just one of the possible roles that we could adopt, but in this film I try to look beyond those roles. I'm interested in that hidden ground that lies behind our public persona. At the climax of the film these characters are free from these adult roles, they are like kids again, free.

In general I think Compartment no. 6 reminds me a lot of the filmmaking process, as did the story of Olli Mäki. Like our characters, filmmakers are also restless and always on the move, coming from somewhere and heading somewhere and probably, never actually being able to arrive. But when the day is done, there will be a short fleeting moment to watch the ocean and breathe, to lean on someone's shoulder and to fall asleep. And when you wake up, everybody is gone. It was nice, but now it's over, it's time to move on.

In what way do you feel the petroglyphs, and the concept of these ancient representations, also contribute to the essence of the film?

Petroglyphs are enduring marks from the past. Laura thinks that by seeing them she could make contact with something permanent. In a life that is nothing but a series of vanishing moments, she thinks this could make her feel good. But petroglyphs are just cold stones, you can't really feel any connection through them. All we have is those fleeting moments, everything that matters is temporary. If we chase something 'eternal', we might lose what we have now.

On the other hand petroglyphs also represent a fear of death. We don't want just to vanish forever, we want to be remembered. People make crazy statues and carvings to leave a mark on the world as proof that they existed. But what Laura and Ljoha experience during this journey, will also leave deep mark in both of them. Compartment No. 6 is my petroglyph. Hopefully staying around long after I'm gone. Perhaps only to say, we were there, we shot those scenes. We were alive and had lots of fun.





### JUHO KUOSMANEN

Juho Kuosmanen (b. 1979) is Helsinki based filmmaker. He graduated from ELO Helsinki Film School of Aalto University in 2014. His first two films have won a prize in Cannes Film Festival. The Painting Sellers (2010) won the 1st prize in Cannes Cinéfondation and The Happiest Day in the Life of Olli Mäki (2016) won The Prix Un Certain Regard. Besides making award-winning films, he has directed avant-garde opera and theater. He also makes silent short films with live music and foleys. He is the co-founder and artistic director of a small film festival in his birth town Kokkola.

#### **SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY**

021 Compartment No6

In Competiton - Cannes 2021

2016 The Happiest Day in the Life of Olli Mäki

x Un Certain Regard Cannes 2016

European Discovery - Prix Fipresci, European Film Awards 201

Gold Hugo – New director's competition, Chicago IFF 2016

Golden Eye, Zurich Film Festival 2016

Golden Camera, International Cinematographers' Film Festival Manaki Brothers 2016

8 Finnish Film Academy Awards incl. Best Film and Best Director in 20°

Finnish submission to the Oscars 201

2010 The Painting Sellers - (midlength fiction)

1st Prize Cannes Cinéfondation 2010

1st Prize Tampere International Short Film Festival 1st Prize Indie Lisboa

Nominated for 5 Finnish Film Academy Awar

2008 Citizens (short)

Winner of Silver Pardino- Leopards of Tomorrow, Locarno IFF

2008 Prix Arte in Premiers Plans d'Angers 20

2008 The Road Markers (short)

3rd Prize Cannes Cinefondation 200

### SEIDI HAARLA

Seidi Haarla (b.1984) was born in Kirkkonummi and lives now in Turku. She loves frosty and dark winter landscapes and swimming in ice cold lakes. She started acting and performing on stage in Helsinki Student Theater in 2004 and continued working in different free artist groups while studying acting in the Russian State Theater Academy in St Petersburg in 2005 and 2006. She studied acting also in Art University of Helsinki and graduated in 2015.

Since graduating Seidi has been working in both cinema and theater. She had one of the leading roles in the omnibus film Force of Habit (2019), which was nominated for the Best Film in the Finnish Film Academy Awards. She also starred in Love & Order, which won the best TV-series award in Finland in 2018. She has the leading role in Compartment No 6 by Juho Kuosmanen (Director of The Happiest Day in the Life of Olli Mäki). Seidi has also co-written and acted the leading role in critically acclaimed theater plays such as The Trauma Body (2014) and New Childhood (2020).



## YURIY BORISOV

Yuriy Borisov was born on the 8th of December in 1992. His motherland is Reutov, Moscow district. Since 2010 he has started his career in cinema. His first leading role was in a TV show called "Everyone has his own war" in 2011.

In 2013 he graduated from the Mikhail Shchepkin Higher Theatre School and became a laureate of the Golden Leaf Award for the Best Actor in the play "Zoykina's Apartment".

In 2020 the film "Kalashnikov" was released, in which Yury has the major role of Mikhail Kalashnikov. For this role he was awarded the Golden Eagle Award as the Best Actor.

| 2022    | To the Lake 2 dir. Dmitry Tyurin,                                  |
|---------|--|
| 2022    | Petrovy v grippe dir. Kirill Serebrennikov                         |
| 2021    | Mama, ya doma dir. Vladimir Bitkov                                 |
| 2021    | Compartment No 6 dir. Juho Kuosmanen,                              |
| 2021    | Gerda dir. Natalya Kudryashova,                                    |
| 2021    | Captain Volkonogov Escaped dir. Aleksey Chupov, Natasha Merkulova, |
| 2020-21 | Mir! Druzhba! Zhvachka!" dir. Ilya Aksyonov, Anton Fyodorov        |
| 2020    | Silver Skates dir. Michael Lockshin,                               |
|         | Nomination for Nika Award for Best Supporting Actor                |
| 2020    | Kto-nibud videl moyu devchonku?" dir Angelina Nikonova             |
| 2020    | Kalashnikov" dir. Konstantin Buslov,                               |
|         | Golden Eagle Award for Best Leading Role                           |
| 2020    | Invasion" dir. Fedor Bondarchuk                                    |
| 2019    | Union of Salvation dir. Andrey Kravchuk                            |
| 2019    | Port dir. Aleksandra Strelvanava                                   |





# J-P PASSI - CINEMATOGRAPHER

J-P Passi has been working as a cinematographer since his graduation in 2000. In addition to shooting films, he has worked as a screenwriter and director in both feature and documentary film productions. Films directed, written, and/or shot by Passi have been screened in film festivals on all the continents, and awarded for example in Cannes, Locarno, Visions Du Reel, South by Southwest and Prix Europe.

In 2016 the film "The Happiest Day in the Life of Olli Mäki", shot by Passi, won the main prize both in Cannes Film Festival / Un Certain Regard and in Manaki Brothers International Cinematographers' Film Festival.

In 2018 Passi worked as a 2nd Unit DoP in HBO/SKY miniseries "Chernobyl

#### Selected filmography as Director of Photography, Writer and/or Director

- 2019 Korporacija 90' Fie by Mater Nahtigal, Lignit Films (dop)
- 2019 Chernobyl 5 part series by Craig Minzin & Johan Renck, FIBO/SICY (2nd unit don)
- 2018 The Human Part 107 Fic by Julia Lehtola
- 2017 Punk Voyage 98 Beclay L. Karkkarien & J-P Passt, Modka Film (docied win certain)
- 2017 The Moonshiners . 6.5
- 2016 The Happiest Day in the Life of Olli Mäki 2000 50, nino forestrener, 2000
  - 16 Purity and Danger as Deceyelies Talversach, Aamu (dop)
- 2015 The Winter Heart
- 2014 Once I Dreamt of Life 15 Deeby Joka Karkainen a Since in alance Menka File (doc-
- 2013 Driver 075 is by Jarkko T Laine and Proceedings too all so will apply the
- 2013 Pony Freak
- 2012 The Punk-Syndrome As Existing Rational As Passed Statement (\$10, 65-9, 65-9)
- 2011 All Hallow's Week 32 Fig by June Hallow's Hallow's Week
- 2010 The Painting Sellers 6 Fig. by Jepakatsmanen, Aarth, Ser door
- 2009 The Living Room of the Nation
- 2008 Tomorrow Wes Yesterday 2 Doc by Julys Kerkisher (Applys Film repos)
- 2008 The Citizens 28 Fig by Juho Kuosmaner Asmir (dob)

# LIVIA ULMAN - SCREENWRITER

2022 Erik Stoneheart

co-written with Andris Feldmanis, directed by Ilmar Raag, Amrion Production

2022 January

o-written with Andris Feldmanis and Viesturs Kairišs, directed by Viesturs Kairišs, Mistrus Media

2021 Compartment No. 6

Co-written with Andris Feldmanis and Juho Kuosmanen (inspired by the book by Rosa Liksom).

directed by Juho Kuosmanen, Aamu Film Compan

Cannes Film Festival Official Selection 202

2021 Dark Paradise

co-written with Andris Feldmanis and Triin Ruumet. directed by Triin Ruumet. Three Brothers

2016 Pretenders

co-written with Andris Feldmanis, directed by Vallo Toomla, Amrion Productior

The film premiered at the San Sebastian International Film Festival official selection "New Directors Programme".

The film won the award for the best script at Estonian Filmi and Television Awards.

The remake rights were aguired by BAC films

2015 Spiral - TV crime series

co-written with Andris Feldmanis and Mihkel Ulman for Viasat TV3 Estonia

2014 The Pink Cardigan - Short film

co-written with Andris Feldmanis directed by Moonika Silmets, Amrion Production

#### Playground - Limited TV series

co-created and co-written with Andris Feldmanis, Amrion Production

#### Kändy - Feature film

co-written with Andris Feldmanis direct

#### Masters of the Sea - Feature film

Co-written with Andris Feldmanis, directed by Ilmar Raag, Amrion Production

#### **Jascha - Limited TV series**

co-written with Andris Feldmanis. Ruut

#### **Estonia - Limited TV series**

additional writing with Andris Feldmanis, series creator/showrunner Miikko Oikkonen, Fisher King

# ANDRIS FELDMANIS - SCREENWRITER

2022 Erik Stoneheart

co-written with Livia Ulman, directed by Ilmar Raag, Amrion Production

2022 January

co-written with Livia Ulman and Viesturs Kairišs, directed by Viesturs Kairišs, Mistrus Media

2021 Compartment No. 6

Co-written with Livia Ulman and Juho Kuosmanen (inspired by the book by Rosa Liksom),

directed by Juho Kuosmanen, Aamu Film Company

Cannes Film Festival Official Selection 202

2021 Dark Paradise

co-written with Livia Ulman and Triin Ruumet, directed by Triin Ruumet, Three Brothers

2016 Last Thousand Years - Novel

published by Varrak, winner of the Betti Alver Prize for best Estonian debut novel of 2016

2016 Pretenders

co-written with Livia Ulman, directed by Vallo Toomla, Amrion Production

The film premiered at the San Sebastian International Film Festival official selection "New Directors Programme"

The film won the award for the best script at Estonian Filmi and Television Awards.

The remake rights were aguired by BAC film

2015 Spiral - TV crime series

co-written with Livia Ulman and Mihkel Ulman for Viasat TV3 Estonia

2014 The Pink Cardigan - Short film

co-written with Livia Ulman. directed by Moonika Siimets. Amrion Production

**Playground - Limited TV series** 

co-created and co-written with Livia Ulman. Amrion Production

Kändy - Feature film

co-written with Livia Ulman, directed by Veiko Õunpuu, Homeless Bob

Masters of the Sea - Feature film

Co-written with Livia Ulman, directed by Ilmar Raag, Amrion Production

**Jascha - Limited TV series** 

co-written with Livia I Ilman Ruut

**Estonia - Limited TV series** 

additional writing with Livia Ulman, series creator/showrunner Miikko Oikkonen, Fisher King



### PRODUCER - JUSSI RANTAMÄKI

Jussi Rantamäki (1980) was born in Kokkola, Finland. He started working as a producer in Aamu Filmcompany Ltd in 2008. His first two productions premiered at the Berlinale and the Cannes Film Festival. He became the sole owner of Aamu Film company on 2013 and the first feature he produced The Happiest Day in the Life of Olli Mäki won the prix un Certain Regard in Cannes 2016 and was sold to over 30 countries.

Jussi has participated EAVE and was the Finnish producer on the Move in Cannes in 2013. He was chosen the producer of the year by fellow Finnish producers and also received the State Art Prize in 2016. He became a member of ACE producer's networks in 2017.

He works closely with four devoted directors in long term relationships that start from making short films and develop into international fiction features. Since the content of a film defines its form, all our productions are hand crafted for the content in question.

2021 COMPARTMENT NO6 106'

In Competiton - Cannes 202

2021 ANY DAY NOW, 83'

dir. Hamy Ramezan

Premiere in Berlinale Generation

2020 FUCKING WITH NOBODY 95'

Premiere in Venice International Film Festiv

LADY TIME, 62'

2010

director Flina Talvensaari

Premeire in International Documentary Festival Amsterdar

2018 TIGER, 10', dir Mikko Myllylahti

Premiere in Cannes Critics' Week

THICK LASHES OF LAURI MÄNTYVAARA. 95'

dir Hannaleena Hauri

Promiero in Torino IEI

2016 THE HAPPIEST DAY INT THE LIFE OF OLLI MÄKI, 94'

dir Juho Kupemanan

Driver Cortain Depart Conne

THE PAINTING SELLERS, 60', dir. Juho Kuosmanen

1st prize Cannes Cinefondation

### CAST

Seidi Haarla

**Yuriy Borisov** 

**Dinara Drukarova** 

Julia Aug

Lidia Kostina

**Tomi Alatalo** 

**Viktor Chuprov** 

**Denis Pyanov** 

**Polina Aug** 

Laura

Ljoha

Irina

**Train Conductor (Natalia Nemova)** 

Ljoha's foster mom

Finnish boy with the guitar, (Saska)

**Train waitress** 

Man near the phonebooth

**Hotel clerk** 

### **CREW**

DIRECTOR
SCRIPT
PRODUCER
CO-PRODUCERS

Juho Kuosmanen
Andris Feldmanis, Livia Ulman, Juho Kuosmanen
Jussi Rantamäki & Emilia Haukka / Aamu Film Company
Jamila Wenske, Melanie Blocksdorf / Achtung Panda!
Riina Sildos / Amrion Productions
Natalia Drozd-Makan, Sergey Selyanov / CTB Film Company

CINEMATOGRAPHY
SOUND
EDITING
SET DESIGN
COSTUME DESIGN
MAKE UP DESIGN
STILL PHOTOGRAPHER
RUSSIAN DIALOGUES
LINE PRODUCERS
FINANCIERS

J-P Passi
Pietu Korhonen
Jussi Rautaniemi
Kari Kankaanpää
Jaanus Vahtra
Liina Pihel
Sami Kuokkanen
Lyuba Mulmenko
Sergey Kasatov, Paria Eskandari
Finnish Film Foundation, Yle, Eurimages, Arte SR,
Estonian Film Institut, MedienboardBerlin-Brandenburg,
Nordisk Film and TV Fond, Russian Ministry of Culture,
Creative Europe, Cultural Endowment of Estonia

Inspired by the novel 'Compartment No 6' - by Rosa Liksom

