

SILENCE OF

HELENA HEÐINSDÓTTIR
HALLDÓRA GEIRHARÐSDÓTTIR
DAVID BREDIN
HAFSTEINN THOR

THE FISH



NYARK MEDIA and NORTH SHIP FILM present with support from ERASMUS + FILMWORKSHOP COPENHAGEN FILMFÖRDERUNG HAMBURG SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN FILMWORKSHOP KIEL a film by HILKE RÖNNFELDT "SILENCE OF THE FISH" HELENA HEÐINSDÓTTIR HALLDÓRA GEIRHARÐSDÓTTIR DAVID BREDIN HAFSTEINN THOR costume designer & make-up artist SÆUNN KJARTANSDÓTTIR production designer JEANETT BRAHE sound recording SKÚLI HELGI SIGURGÍSLASON sound design VILI LAITINEN & VILLE KATAJALA composer HERDÍS STEFÁNSDÓTTIR editor FANNI LIV ENGELBRECHT gaffer PIET HASSELBY NIELSEN assistant camera GUSTAV MEILING MADSEN director of photography NICHOLAS BLUFF assistant director MAGNÚS THORODDSEN ÍVARSSON produced by ANNA SÆUNN ÓLAFSDÓTTIR co-produced by HALLDÓRA MARKÚSDÓTTIR HILKE RÖNNFELDT JULIE MAI LAURSEN associate producer CAROLINA SALAS written and directed by HILKE RÖNNFELDT



NyArk Media North Ship Film Filmværkstedet København Erasmus + EUF Filmwerkstatt Kiel
Danske Filminstruktører Te & Kaffi MS Anna IceWear Salas Filmworks

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FILMWORKSHOP
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Filmförderung Hamburg
Schleswig-Holstein
FILMWERKSTATT KIEL



Erasmus+

PÖGN SILUNGSINS



A FILM BY **Hilke Rönnfeldt**

2019 – drama – Iceland/Denmark/Germany – 19:27 min –
colour – language: Icelandic w. English subtitles – image: DCP

A teenage daughter has to fight a battle against her mother's depression in the wilderness of the Icelandic Fjords.

SYNOPSIS

A remote trout farm in the Icelandic Fjords. Here lives teenager Saga with her mother Hildur. Summer has come to an end, the days become colder and darker and Saga observes her mother drifting deeper into her own darkness.

When in a stormy night an accident happens, Saga's only source of affectionate love vanishes. She begins to question the feelings that bind her to her mother.

Saga puts her mother under a final test. The outcome will decide, if there will be another summer for her at the farm.





Hilke Rönnfeldt, writer & director

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The Silence of the Fish is a personal story based on my experience growing up in a small village community in the countryside. The core of the film is the relationship between mother and a daughter and how the daughter has to deal with the aggravating depression of her mother and the inability of talking about it. It's about the dark side of love and the effects of silence in a close relationship.

Growing up is never easy, but for me it was interesting to see how to grow up, when you don't have a role model and are very much on your own. When you can't rely on the bonds to your family and live in a small community isolated in nature. This kind of environment can be beautiful, but also feel hostile, if your childhood world starts to change and you have to see the world through adult eyes. You

have to understand where your place is, because you need a starting point from where to set out and find a new place for yourself.

I wanted to create a story based on the characters of a daughter and a mother, that clash in the way how they express their emotions and problems with each other. The essential question is: Do you love me or do you love me not? I want to show, how difficult this question can be to us and how hard it is to communicate our feelings as we risk getting hurt.

I believe The Silence of the Fish is a story, that carries an important message for everyone. A story of love that reminds us that we can't read in between the lines, but have to dare to express and talk about what we feel. And it is also about giving up as love isn't always a right you can successfully fight for.

QUESTIONS TO THE FILM

1. Why is the film set in the countryside on a trout farm and how does it influence the dynamics of the story?

For me it was essential to the story, that we see how isolated the characters are, how limited the exchange with others is. For me life in cities always promises and has a possibility of distraction and can also dissolve the intensiveness which I can find in the countryside. I think it often creates relationships, that become more intense and important on the backdrop at living so close with nature.

Furthermore, it was important to me to show what a strong impact mental illness such as depression has in a relationship, where the characters are so dependent on the company of each other as there isn't really another choice, if you don't want to end up alone.

As I grew up in the countryside, close to the sea, this environment inspires my storytelling a lot as well as the relationships and characters I feel familiar with.

2. How do Saga and Hildur reflect the roles in a mother-daughter relationship, where the parent suffers from mental illness?

For Saga it is really hard to understand the illness of her mother as she adapted to it over the years before becoming old enough to understand and reflect, that not everything is alright. I wanted to explore the question and see the impact of growing up with a parent that suffers from depression. In Sagas case it's hard to draw a line as a view from the outside on her and Hildur's relationship is missing.

For me it is also interesting, how you could react as a teenager when you still have to find your place in the adult world and at the same time have already been forced to be an adult and take responsibility, which we can see in the way Saga takes care of the farm.

“ I wanted to explore the question and see the impact of growing up with a parent, that suffers from depression. ”

3. How did you try to make the invisible visible in Silence of the Fish?

For us it was important that we follow Saga's point of view through the film and the difficulty to understand, what is the problem or if there is a problem. It is hard to grab a mental illness like depression and understand the dynamics, therefore we never wanted to give obvious answers to Hildur's behaviour. We worked very intensively on the audio design and as well with the soundtrack by our fantastic composer Herdís Stefánsdóttir to create the subtle layer of what is going on inside the characters.



actress Halldóra Geirharðsdóttir as Hildur
nominated for the European film award 2018 as best actress for her role in *Woman at War*



actress Helena Heðinsdóttir as Saga,
starring in Berlinale Generation Short *Winter Morning* and feature film *Dreams by the Sea*

PRODUCER'S STATEMENT



Anna Sæunn Ólafsdóttir, producer

Silence of the Fish is a dramatic and frankly a tragic story that is set in the tremendously beautiful but harsh Icelandic landscape. The reality of Saga, the film's protagonist is a story that many young people and teenagers around the world sometimes face; to doubt love— and how and where to find it. Love and family is a topic travelling over borders, understood by people of all backgrounds and thus makes Silence of the Fish a universal appealing film. Isolation is also a large topic of the film, though set in Iceland in literally isolated circumstances, the feeling of isolation and loneliness, wherever you live, is something so many people and especially young people connect with.

Our team has done a great job in portraying those elements through poetic visuals and stunning performances and the dreamy music takes them up to another level. Silence of the Fish is a modern short film with a big-hearted story, that weaves together impactful cinematic experiences with everyday life and NyArk Media and North Ship Film are proud to now share it with the world.





BIOGRAPHY

Hilke Rönnefeldt, born in Northern Germany with Icelandic-Danish roots, is a writer/director whose work revolves around life in small communities, loneliness, intimacy and the sea.

She is a Screen Talent Europe (2016) and a film fund Hamburg/Schleswig-Holstein writer's lab (2019) alumna.

She graduated from screenwriting academy Alma Löv in Sweden in 2019.

Recently, she joined independent film collective Super16 in Copenhagen.

Essential for her filmmaking: To be real and aim for the heart. She has a strong faith in the poetic capability of the image.

CAST & CREW

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY Hilke Rönnfeldt
PRODUCED BY Anna Sæunn Ólafsdóttir
CO-PRODUCERS Halldóra Markúsdóttir, Hilke Rönnfeldt, Julie Mai Laursen

SAGA: Helena Heðinsdóttir
HILDUR: Halldóra Geirharðsdóttir
OLE: David Bredin
INGI: Hafsteinn Thor

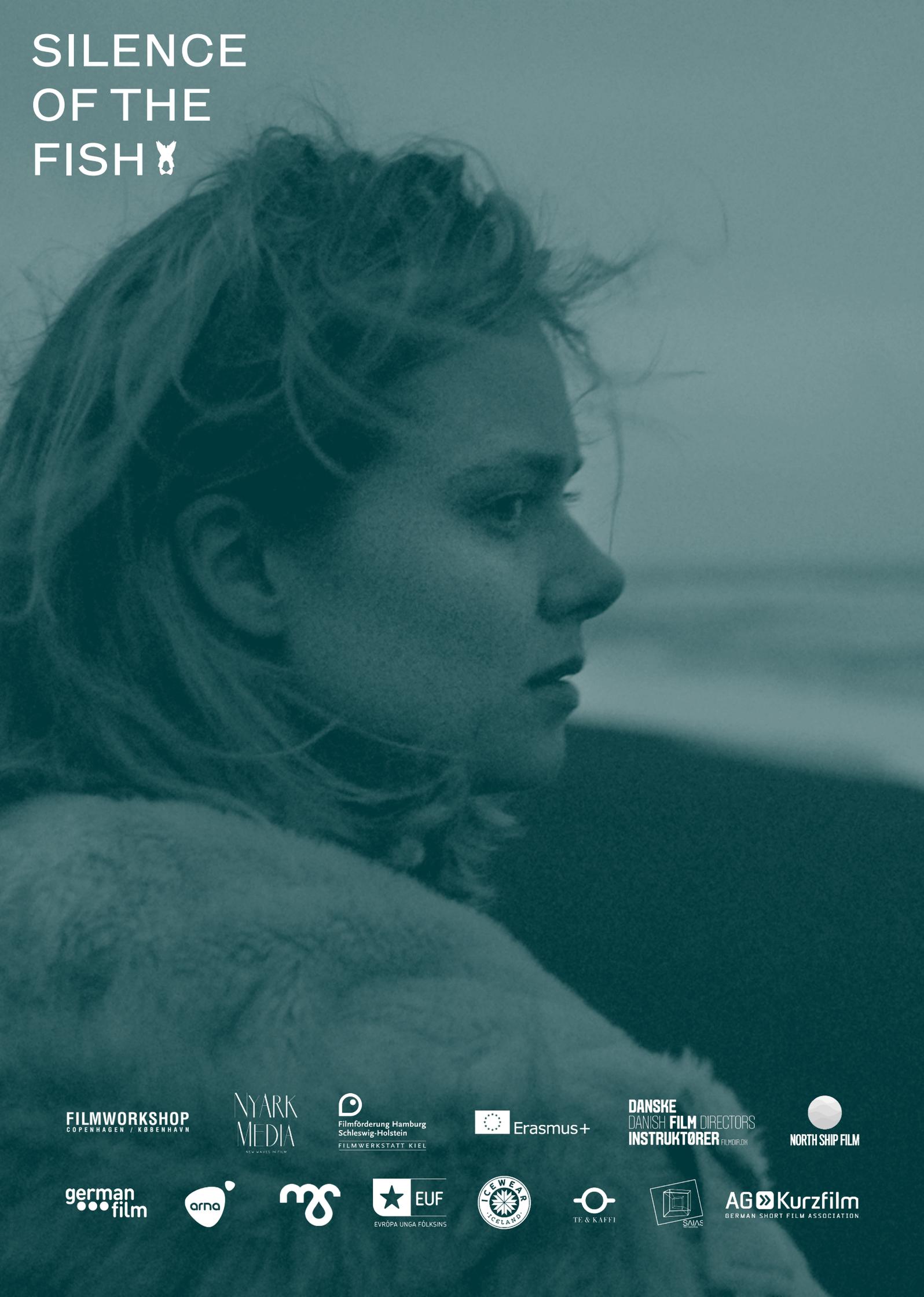
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: Magnús Thoroddsen Ívarsson
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Nicholas Bluff
1ST ASSISTANT CAMERA: Gustav Meiling Madsen
GAFFER: Piet Hasselby Nielsen
DIT: Jan Borchers
SOUND RECORDING: Skúli Helgi Sigurgíslason
COSTUME DESIGNER: Sæunn Kjartansdóttir
PRODUCTION DESIGNER: Jeanett Brahe
PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS: Anna Niklasson, Jan Borchers, Magnús Jensen Ásbjörnsson
SCRIPT CONSULTANTS: Guðmundur Arnar Guðmundsson, Martin Strange-Hansen, Jan Eichberg
TRANSLATION: Bryndís Ingvarsdóttir
CATERING: Tine Valentin Olsen, Anna Niklasson
STILL PHOTOGRAPHER: Tine Valentin Olsen
DRIVER: Jónas Erlendsson
PRE- PRODUCTION COORDINATOR / ASSOCIATE PRODUCER: Carolina Salas

ANIMAL MANAGER: Árni Gunnarsson
EDITOR: Fanni Liv Engelbrecht
SOUND DESIGN: Vili Laitinen, Ville Katajala
COMPOSER: Herdís Stefánsdóttir
POSTER DESIGN: Tea Palmelund

Ég elska þig (Þótt þú sért úr steini)
SONG: Gunnar Þórðarson
TEXT: Ólafur Haukur Símonarson
PERFORMER: Pálmi Gunnarsson
DISTRIBUTION: Alda Music

SUPPORTED BY
Erasmus +
Filmværkstedet København:
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Danske Filminstruktører

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