

CTM Docs presents
in co-production with ThankEve productions and IKONdocs

FORGET ME NOT

VERGEET MIJ NIET

IT TAKES DEVOTION TO TEACH KIDS FACING DEPORTATION



A FILM BY JAN JAAP KUIPER

Director, Cinematography and Sound JAN JAAP KUIPER
Editors TIM WIJBENGA, JAN JAAP KUIPER Re-recording Mixer ALEX BOOY
Music HANS VISSER Colour Grading MICHEL RUMMENS
Commissioning Editors IKONdocs MARGJE DE KONING, BARBARA WIESSING
PR & Marketing PETRA VAN HORSSSEN, ANNE KERVERS Line Producer KATJA SOKOLOVA
Producers ROSAN BOERSMA, THOMAS DEN DRIJVER, SANDER VERDONK

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CTM DOCS, THANKEVE PRODUCTIONS AND IKONdocs

PRESENT

FORGET ME NOT

A FILM BY JAN JAAP KUIPER

2016 | 82 MINUTES | THE NETHERLANDS | DUTCH, ARABIC AND ENGLISH | ENGLISH SUBTITLES

**World première: March 19th, 2016 at Movies that Matter festival in
The Hague, The Netherlands**

International première: May 5th-15th-, 2016 at DokFest in Munich, Germany

More info at www.forgetmenot.nl

 www.facebook.com/vergeetmijnietfilm



SYNOPSIS

At first glance, “De Verrekijker” looks like a normal Dutch primary school. However, the boys and girls are children of rejected asylum seekers. School principal Toon and the teachers do all they can to give them the best possible education. Yet each morning they worry that one of their pupils may have been forced to leave the country. After a series of deportations it becomes increasingly difficult to provide the children with a safe haven. The situation escalates when a group of Syrian boys fleeing war arrive at the school.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

During my very first visit to “De Verrekijker”, I saw life at this school as a sort of parallel reality inside the Netherlands. Panic breaking out in the schoolyard after a police visit; new pupils walking into the classroom without previous notice; teachers having to deal with traumatized children on a daily basis. One would never expect to come across any of these situations in a Dutch public primary school.

In my film, I wanted to capture this exceptional reality. The film does not “tell” so much about the school, but rather provides an experience of what is happening there. Instead of cinematographic perfection, I focused on crucial moments and their emotional impact: a classmate not showing up at school; the impossibility of communication because of the language barrier; conversations between teachers in the meeting room.

As I wanted the Dutch audience to engage with the perspective of the film, I chose to tell this story from the point of view of the teachers and the school principle. I deliberately chose not to show the refugee children's backgrounds; instead, I focused on the result of decisions made by the government and the parents, which affected both the pupils and the teachers.

Every day at “De Verrekijker” brought new surprises. The biggest one was the arrival of the first group of Syrian refugees. They changed daily life at the school, as well as the story of the film: suddenly, two completely different groups of children were present – those who had just arrived and those who were about to leave. As a result, the film travelled away from the original story, but gained a unique insight into the range of issues related to working with those two groups of children. Hopefully this documentary will be able to achieve what the teachers can't: to change the situation the children find themselves in. In my opinion, the Netherlands should care more about talented and motivated children whose families come to seek asylum in our country.



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

De Verrekijker (“The Binoculars”) is a public primary school in Katwijk, the Netherlands, founded in 2008. In August 2011, the Asylum Seekers Centre in Katwijk was turned into a so-called “family location”, where only rejected asylum seekers with young children live. Children attending this school can be deported to their parents’ country of origin at any moment; many families leave “destination unknown”, to live illegally elsewhere.

The children have spent many years in the Netherlands, moving from one ASC to another; most of them speak good Dutch.

Shooting of this documentary began in late autumn of 2014 and coincided with the start of the Syrian refugee crisis. Right behind the school, a temporary ASC for 600 new dwellers was built. At the same time, a special detention centre, where families could be kept in custody awaiting forced deportation, opened in Zeist.

Times of chaos broke out at the school: after a relatively quiet period, one family after another was arrested and deported. For the teachers and the school principal, those early morning deportations always happened unexpectedly. They had a big impact on the children seeing their classmates leave without saying goodbye.

The arrival of the new group of refugees also came out of the blue. When the first people inhabited the still-under-construction compound next to the school, it was yet unclear how many children of school age are there among them. It turned out to be quite a large number. “De Verrekijker” has to put every possible effort into educating this new group of children. The children, most of them boys from incomplete families fled from





Syria, attend a special “Language class” where they learn Dutch from scratch.

The children and their parents live under constant stress, which puts an extra pressure on the teachers. They are doing their best to comply with the teaching standards for primary education in the Netherlands, but practical (language barrier), and psychological (fear, attachment problems) problems demand too much attention. Psychological assistance is, for financial reasons, not available at “De Verrekijker”. Its population grew from 150 to 220 pupils in one year and for the moment, the school has to do with the means it has.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

JAN JAAP KUIPER graduated from the Dutch Film and Television Academy (NFTA) in 2008. His graduation documentary “Pyotr - Letters from the Gulag” won the VPRO documentary prize and was nominated for the Tuschinski Award for the best graduation film. Jan Jaap Kuiper also received a Wild Card from the Dutch Film Fund. As a director/cinematographer, he makes documentaries, short films and video installations, often in collaboration with producer Katja Sokolova, within their company ThankEve Productions. He also runs his own postproduction company Amator. Before enrolling in the Film Academy, he studied Eastern European history at Groningen State University (graduated Cum Laude in 2001).



FILMOGRAPHY

- 2016** ***Forget Me Not*** (ThankEve, CTM Docs & IKON 2016, documentary, 82 minutes)
- 2014** ***Passing*** (ThankEve Productions, 2014, video-installation, 11 minutes)
Part of artist-in-residence program in Kolin Ryyanen, Finland
- 2013** ***Gorod bil nash*** (ThankEve Productions, 2013, video-installation, 30 minutes)
Part of “Dutch Protest Museum” exhibition in the frame of 5th Moscow biennial
- 2012** ***The Lock*** (ThankEve Productions 2012, experimental film, 15 minutes)
Theatrical distribution in the Netherlands
- 2011** ***Sinners’ Disease*** (ThankEve Productions & IKON 2011, documentary, 56 minutes)
Festivals: Movies that Matter, NFF (Utrecht), Docudays Kiev, ArtDokFest Moscow, This Human World (Vienna), Human Rights Film Festival Barcelona
TV: The Netherlands (IKON), Denmark (DR2), Belgium (VRT), Israel (SBS)
- 2010** ***Small Nations, Big Games*** (ThankEve Productions / Submarine / VPRO 2010, documentary series, 3x10 minutes)
Festivals: NFF (Utrecht), Mexican International Documentary Festival
- 2008** ***-Pyotr –Letters from the Gulag*** (NFTA 2008, documentary, 28 minutes)
Festivals: NFF (Utrecht, nominated for Tuschinski Award, winner Dutch Film Fund “Wildcard”), IDFA 2008 (student competition), Leids Filmfestival, Stone Film Festival (Romania), Off Cinema festival (Bologna, Italy), Go Short (Nijmegen), Next Reel (Singapore), DOK.nl (St. Petersburg, Russia), DAR film festival (award for best Television Documentary, Yekaterinburg, Russia), Flahertiana Film Festival (Perm, Russia)
TV: The Netherlands (HUMAN), Israel (SBS)
- 2007** ***Gone Bald*** (NFTA 2007, documentary, 15 minutes)
Festivals: Zagreb Film Festival, Vinkovci Film Festival
- 2002** ***Inside Outside*** (5 minutes, 2004), ***NEformat*** (28 minutes, 2002), ***Like Tarkovsky*** (50 minutes, 2001)



CTM DOCS

CTM Docs stems from the collaboration between CTM Pictures and Rosan Boersma. It combines over thirty years of experience with zeal and ambition. CTM Docs specializes in development, production and distribution of creative documentaries with (international) commercial potential.

Recent films are STRIKE A POSE by Ester Gould en Reijer Zwaan (Berlinale - Panorama 2016), HOLLYWOOD BANKER by Rozemyn Afman, LIFE, LOVE & HIV BY Nadia Moussaid and FORGET ME NOT by Jan Jaap Kuiper.

THANKEVE PRODUCTIONS

ThankEve Productions, collaboration between filmmaker Jan Jaap Kuiper and producer/curator Katja Sokolova, produces documentaries, short films and exhibitions on relevant social themes since 2001. In their films, they always try to provide a unique insight into the characters' life. Exchange between cultures, individual struggle against the system and the dominance of politics over personal lives are recurrent themes in their work.

Recent projects: FORGET ME NOT (82 min. documentary, co-production with CTM Docs/IKONdocs 2016); DUTCH PROTEST MUSEUM (exhibition Moscow Biennale 2013); THE LOCK (experimental short, 2012); SINNERS' DISEASE (50 min. documentary, co-production with IKON 2011).

More info: www.thankeve.nl

CREDITS

Director, cinematography and sound
JAN JAAP KUIPER

Editors
TIM WIJBENGA & JAN JAAP KUIPER

Re-recording mixer
ALEX BOOY

Music HANS VISSER

Colour grading MICHIEL RUMMENS

Commissioning editors IKONdocs
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PR and marketing
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Line producer
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