



71st Internationale
Filmfestspiele
Berlin
Generation

FROM THE WILD SEA

A FILM BY ROBIN PETRÉ
PRODUCED BY HANSEN & PEDERSEN



FROM THE WILD SEA

Creative Documentary

Danish title : FRA DET VILDE HAV

Production Country : Denmark

Length : 78 minutes

Language : English

Film locations

Courtown, Ireland/Seal Rescue Ireland

Cornwall, UK/British Divers Marine Life Rescue

Hoek van Holland, the Netherlands

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Director : Robin Petré

Producer : Malene Flindt Pedersen

Cinematographer : María Grazia Goya,
Robin Petré

Editor : Charlotte Munch Bengtsen

Sound Design : Thomas Pape

Produced by Hansen & Pedersen

with the support of New Danish Screen

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Berlin International Film Festival 2021

Generation 14plus Competition

World Premiere

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Synopsis

As the peak of winter draws near, a vast European network of marine animal rescue volunteers are bracing themselves for the rough season. Night and day, all year round, they work tirelessly to rescue coastal wildlife from life-threatening elements: Oil. Plastic. Treacherous conditions. But the worst is ahead. Climate change fuels violent weather across the seas, and the annual winter storms are coming at them with an unprecedented roar. Simultaneously, the wild animals are struggling against their human surroundings with fangs and claws.

FROM THE WILD SEA is a poetic documentary film that zooms in on the complex collision between human and nature. We are taken on a disturbing and fascinating journey into the emerging Anthropocene Era, seen from both the human and animal perspective. As humans attempt to rescue marine creatures, each individual animal looks back at us with inquisitive eyes. Through an intimate visual experience that follows the animals through rehabilitation, we get to see and sense the world we humans have created: Right before our eyes, an estranged and most curious place.

FROM THE WILD SEA paints a sensorial, touching picture of our modern world while exploring how we are all connected in an immense, nuanced system stretching far beyond the human race.



Storyline

FROM THE WILD SEA showcases scenes and situations bound together by the ocean and escalating winter storms. Throughout the film, we oscillate between the perspective of human and animal.

The geographical focal point is the seas around the British Isles, notably Cornwall, where we meet Dan Jarvis, Welfare Development and Field Support Officer of the British Divers Marine Life Rescue. Dan has devoted his life to the preservation of marine mammals around the coastal area where he lives. This means he is constantly on call, ready to rush out onto the next rescue. We join Dan in his car, following him through the stunning but rough English winter as one Atlantic storm after another batters the coastline. Dan collaborates with James Barnett, a veterinarian who does research on the animals that don't make it. Through post-mortem examinations, James reveals the consequences of our industrial impact on marine mammals.

Across the sea from Cornwall, we find Ireland's only seal rescue facility and organization: A volunteer-based charity that works relentlessly to better the conditions for seals and other marine animals. The seals' hardships can be traced back to human impact in one way or another: From creatures caught in fishing nets to seals throwing up plastic. The intense fight for the animals' lives involves long shifts, sometimes stretching far into the blistering cold winter night. As portrayed in the film, these tremendous rescue and rehabilitation efforts stand side by side with a huge international rescue operation to save hundreds of white swans from a major oil spill in Holland.

The whole narrative culminates with the stranding of a 19-metre-long fin whale, the second largest living species on Earth. The hardworking rescuers find themselves belittled by the sheer dimensions of the natural world. At the same time, it becomes evident that the human impact on the environment has no regard for a creature's size; the tiniest and largest organisms have been made equal.



Director's statement

As someone who grew up in the Danish countryside, close to nature and surrounded by an abundance of animals, my concern for the state of our climate and how it is affecting wildlife is deeply innate. Many forms of pollution and a heating planet are now pressuring entire ecosystems — detailed and ancient webs of life that we, too, are part of in our own human form.

The sea is special in this regard, because it is largely hidden from us. We rarely see beneath the surface, but the threats that sea inhabitants face are tangible. The European Environment Agency summarizes that marine life is under pressure across all of Europe's seas*.

My new film, **FROM THE WILD SEA**, is rooted in the complexity of human-animal relations. This undeniable intersection also inspired my previous short film, **PULSE**, a film that brings the viewer to the hills of a Hungarian deer farm. While **PULSE** explores how we continuously keep domesticating the wild, **FROM THE WILD SEA** gives a close look at our coexistence with wildlife in these times of climate emergency.

I do believe our current climate-related challenges are partly founded in the ever-widening distance between modern people and the diminishing natural world we once so naturally belonged to. My intention as a filmmaker is to break down those barriers and eliminate the distance between my audience and the animals we meet on screen. To me, these animals are *someone* rather than *something*, and I aim to show them as such. That is, with the same respect and attention as everyone else appearing in the film.

During the making of **FROM THE WILD SEA**, I found that the deeper I dove into the subject, the more layered and complex it became. How do we, for instance, approach a near-future in which wildlife might depend on human intervention for sheer survival — because of human impact on their habitats? Seemingly, we are the problem and the solution at once. My intention with the film is to raise questions and spark a deeper reflection on the subject rather than give final answers. My aim is to leave room for the audience to think and feel for themselves, and to draw their own conclusions on a topic that desperately needs our attention.

* <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/soer-2020>



Director Robin Petré

Robin Petré (Mols, 1985) is an award-winning Danish film director with a special focus on our coexistence with nature and animals. Her films have screened at international film festivals around the world, and her creative documentary short film **PULSE** won the Silver Dove for an Outstanding Artistic Contribution at DOK Leipzig 2016, among other awards. Her feature length documentary debut, **FROM THE WILD SEA**, is premiering this year in the Generation 14plus competition at the Berlinale 2021.

Robin Petré holds an MA in Documentary Film Directing from Doc Nomads (2015), the European traveling film school spanning across Portugal, Hungary and Belgium. In 2020, she was selected for the Scandinavian talent program Nordic Film Lab, and she's an IDFAcademy alumni of 2019. In 2017 she participated in the GO SHORT: New Arrivals talent camp for emerging directors in Nijmegen, the Netherlands. She has studied and worked with film and media in more than ten countries across five continents. Previously, she earned her BA in Journalism at the highly esteemed Danish School of Media and Journalism in Aarhus, Denmark.

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The Production Company

Hansen & Pedersen has made it its trademark to produce documentary films and series aimed at a broad audience in both Denmark and internationally. We've made documentaries about everything from body-positivism, circus romance, biodynamic farming, prostitution in rural Denmark and scientists exploring the ice sheet of Greenland. What all our films have in common is telling stories that matter - stories that add new perspectives and nuances, and that inspire the viewers to think and reconsider. The company is based in Copenhagen, Denmark. It is owned by Anders Riis-Hansen and Malene Flindt Pedersen and has produced over 50 documentaries.

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Producer Malene Flindt Pedersen

Graduated from the National Film School of Denmark in 1995. In 1998 she co-founded Hansen & Pedersen Film & Television with her husband, director Anders Riis-Hansen. Malene has vast producing experience from more than 20 years in the business and has an elaborate network in the film industry all over the world, which she expands and preserves by attending forums, festivals, markets and workshops all across Europe and the US. She has been at The EAVE Producer's Workshop to teach as an expert on financing, and taught classes at The Danish Film School and European Film College. Her latest productions include: FAT FRONT, directors Louise Detelfsen and Louise Kjeldsen, HUMANITY ON TRIAL, director Jonas Bruun, REDISCOVERY, director Phie Ambo, GOOD THINGS AWAIT, director Phie Ambo, THE CIRCUS DYNASTY, director Anders Riis-Hansen.



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