



Best Feature Film
Generation

64

Internationale
Filmfestspiele
Berlin

violet

by Bas Devos, Belgium/Netherlands 2014, 82 min



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LOGLINE

15-year-old Jesse is the only one who witnessed the stabbing of his friend Jonas. Now he has to face his family and friends from the BMX riders crew and explain the unexplainable – how he feels about it.

SYNOPSIS

15-year-old Jesse is the only one who witnessed the stabbing of his friend Jonas. Now he has to face his family and friends from the BMX riders crew and explain the unexplainable – how he feels about it. The looks of his close ones and his inability to answer their questions gradually isolate Jesse and the growing grief prevents him from finding comfort.

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DIRECTOR – BAS DEVOS

Born on 11/04/1983 in Zoersel, Bas Devos wrote and directed four short films, *Taurus* (2005), *Pillar* (2006), *The Close* (2007) and *We Know* (2009) and one feature film, *Violet* (2014).

Through image and a sparse narrative, he tries to capture moments of beauty, compassion and consolation. *Violet* explores these themes and investigates the consequent loneliness of its young protagonist.

Besides his filmic work, Bas is involved in theater as a director and light designer.

He currently writes a new film, *Animal Language*.

FILMOGRAPHY

VIOLET (2014) – 80 min.

Winner: Berlinale Generation14Plus, Official Selection: Hong Kong FF, Crossing Europe Linz, Bucharest IFF

WE KNOW (2009) – 10 min.

Official Selection: Leuven, IndieLisboa, Portugal, Vendôme

THE CLOSE (2007) – 14 min.

PILLAR (2006) – 15 min.

TAURUS (2005) – 10 min.

Official Selection: Sao Paulo FF, Circuito Off Venice, Leuven, Aix en Provence

Official Selection: Sao Paulo, Gent, Leuven

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DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The way the formal aspects of film and films materiality can dictate the content has always intrigued me. The way light and dark, noise and silence and time and space alter the meaning of what is shown is vastly enigmatic and seemingly beyond comprehension.

Often I found myself moved not by what was shown but by how it reached me. I connected to certain films because, on a deeper level, I connected to the way the filmmaker saw the world. How the light wakes up a space or how the screen-space separates two people. How screentime feels like private-time or how complete silence makes me aware of my own presence, my own posture. These sensory experiences defined and refined how I perceive the medium. I love stories. I love telling them. Drawing them. But in film I felt much more attracted to something on the border of the narrative. I wanted to film windows. And lamps. And fires.

THE SURFACE OF THINGS. THE SURFACE OF PEOPLE

Violet departs from an act of violence. It initiates a very simple narrative: a process of grief and loneliness through the eyes of a teenager. Both in form and content the film tries to disarm the violence of its opening. The cruel, distant observation of a murder through a cctv monitor, in its silence and indifference, was a necessary start. It was for me a force, a presence that demanded opposition. Not relying on a defined psychological drive, but on the tools of film, I hoped to evoke something of the isolation and powerlessness of the main character. Through observing him and his surroundings, I believe something can be seen that is harder to articulate, but that has a stronger power than the underlying violence. A belief, maybe, that people connect not in what we understand but in what we do not.

Maybe here for me content and form truly converge, in not knowing why exactly things are the way they are.

Finally, I would like to stress the obvious. This film is not the work of one, but of many makers. Every member of the cast and crew helped me, not in 'realizing my vision', but in letting me see, hear and feel things in a different way, previously unimagined.

Bas Devos

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DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY – NICOLAS KARAKATSANIS

Nicolas Karakatsanis is a Belgian photographer and an internationally renowned DOP (Director of Photography).

Born in Antwerp in 1977, Nicolas Karakatsanis studied at Sint-Lukas Brussels ('film', 2001-2003). In 2003 he left for Berlin for a work placement in a post-production company.

That same year, at the request of friends of his who were also studying film, he started to work as DOP on their student short film projects. This marks the start of his career as a DOP for film and advertising.

At the same time Nicolas Karakatsanis used his talent as a photographer and a DOP for his own personal artistic projects. He worked a lot in the music world, making video clips or taking photos on set. On another level he also produced the album of the rock group, "Drums are for parades" (releasing an EP and a full album on his label, Skeleton Ears) and also helped produce the first album of the group, Hickey Underworld.

From 2004 onwards he worked with the painter Michael Borremans, creating artistic videos.

In 2005, together with his brother, Dimitri, he published the book, "Der Verfall", a graphic overview of the work of the Antwerp artist, Gerard Leysen. In 2006 he made his first feature film, *Small Gods*, which he co-produced with his brother, who also directed it. The film was selected for the Venice Film Festival.

He first exhibited his photos with Toon Aert, at the A.L.I.C.E. Gallery in 2007. From 2008 onwards he started publishing his photos on the blog, « The Skeleton Herald ». In 2010 he had his second exhibition at A.L.I.C.E.

In 2012, the Belgian film, *Bullhead (Rundskop)*, by director Michael Roskam, on which Nicolas Karakatsanis collaborated as DOP, was nominated as a contender for the Oscar for the best foreign film.



MINDSMEET

Minds Meet is a Brussels-based production company created by Tomas Leyers (producer) and Caroline Strubbe (director). Minds Meet is specializing in the creation of artistic European cinema and the direction and production of events and unique live shows. They seek for emotive development, story-writing and overall smart production. With the right people and the right mind-set, fit for the project, they support emerging and established talents and bring them together to create dynamic unique productions with singular voices. To let the creative minds meet.

WWW.MINDSMEET.BE

NEW EUROPE FILM SALES

New Europe Film Sales is a boutique world sales company based in Warsaw, Poland and working across the world. The company holds worldwide rights to a number of short and feature films and works with theatrical, TV, VOD and internet buyers.

Until the end of 2011, NEFS specialized in short film sales and worked with award-winning directors, such as Ruben Östlund, Tomek Baginski and Jonas Odell.

Since 2012, it opened up to feature films as well.

Out of the 10 feature films in the company's catalogue, 6 had their world or international premiere at the Berlinale, 2 at Rotterdam IFF, one in Karlovy Vary FF and Toronto FF.

Among the company's short films, there are 4 Oscar shortlisters or nominees, as well as winners of Berlinale, Locarno, Sundance, Oberhausen and Rotterdam.

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PRESS & FESTIVALS

World Premiere: Berlinale Generation 2014 – Winner – Grand Jury Prize

Asian Premiere: Hong Kong FF 2014

Official selections:

Bucharest IFF – competition, CPH PIX – competition

Cinerama, Brazil - competition

Crossing Europe, Linz - competition

PRESS

Beautifully shot images speak way louder than words in this Belgian drama about a teenager's mourning process.

If Gus Van Sant had grown up in Flanders (...) he might have directed something like Violet.

The final image, an 8-minute sequence shot, is a wonder to behold and ends the film on a perfect and perfectly poetic note.

The Hollywood Reporter

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CREW

DIRECTED BY BAS DEVOS

SCREENPLAY BAS DEVOS

CINEMATOGRAPHY NICOLAS KARAKATSANIS

SOUND JOOST ROSKAM

EDITING DIETER DIEPENDAELE

MUSIC DEAFHEAVEN

PRODUCTION DESIGN JEFF OTTE

COSTUME DESIGN BHO ROOSTERMANN

MAKE-UP KARINE UVIJN

CAST CÉSAR DE SUTTER, RAF WALSCHAERTS,
MIRA HELMER, BRENT MINNE

PRODUCERS TOMAS LEYERS

PRODUCTION COMPANY MINDS MEET

PRODUCTION CONTACT mindsmeet@mindsmeet.be

FILM INFO

TITLE VIOLET

GENRE DRAMA

LANGUAGE: DUTCH

COMPLETION JANUARY 2014

WORLD PREMIERE BERLINALE GENERATION 2014 –
GRAND PRIX OF THE JURY WINNER

DURATION 82 MIN

PICTURE COLOUR

SCREEN RATIO 1.33:1 // 4:3

SOUND SYSTEM DOLBY SR

AVAILABLE FORMATS DCP JPEG 2000, BLURAY

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