

WALENCIAK FILM & ADOMEIT FILM present

Can your roots tell you who you are?



BRIGHT FUTURE COMPETITION
INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL
ROTTERDAM
2018

NORDIC COMPETITION
NOMINEE
Göteborg Film Festival

THE RETURN

with support from NEW DANISH SCREEN by artist leader METTE DAMGAARD SØRENSEN, THE DANISH FILM INSTITUTE, SEOUL FILM COMMISSION, SEOUL METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT in cooperation with CINE EVERYWHERE a film by MALENE CHOI "THE RETURN" KAROLINE SOFIE LEE THOMAS HANNA
casting director SANG THYUNG, NON DDI HYUNG, composer PHILIP NICOLAUS FUNKEI, sound designer RENE DRIE FRIIS KRISTENSEN, KEVIN KEVIN, editor JULIUS VEBER DAMBERG, director of photography CATHERINE PATTINAMM GOLDMAN, executive producer PETER HJØRSHOLT, co-producers MARK ZEDERDORF
produced by JULIE FRIIS WALENCIAK, JULIE RIK BOMHOJ & KATJA ADOMEIT with the by SISEL DALSGAARD THOMSEN directed by MALENE CHOI



a film by Malene Choi
Denmark/ South Korea, 2018, 84 min

**World premiere @ International Film Festival Rotterdam 2018
Bright Future Competition**

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The Return

a film by Malene Choi



Still credit: Catherine PATTINAMA Coleman

Logline: Two Danish-Korean adoptees visit their Motherland for the first time and are confronted with their own identity struggles.

Synopsis: Two Danish-Korean adoptees return for the first time to the country they were once born in. Confronted with the spirit of their Motherland and the personal stories of the fellow adoptees they meet in the city of Seoul, Karoline and Thomas are hurled into an emotionally disorienting journey that forces both of them to question and face their own destiny and identity. Operating in a hybrid field THE RETURN is partially based on director Malene Choi's personal experience as well as stories shared by adoptees that Malene encountered in Seoul while shooting the film.

World Premiere: International Film Festival Rotterdam 28.01.2018

Festivals: International Film Festival Rotterdam (Bright Future Competition), Göteborg Film Festival (Main Competition)

Screenings IFFR: Sun 28 Jan, 11:15, Cinerama 2, P&I screening
Sun 28 Jan, 18:30, Pathé 6, world premiere
Mon 29 Jan, 10:00, Cinerama 6
Wed 31 Jan, 18:30, LantarenVenster 2
Fri 2 Feb, 17:00, Cinerama 2, P&I screening
Sat 3 Feb, 13:30, Pathé 3

The Return

a film by Malene Choi

Original title: The Return
Genre: Drama, hybrid
Country of production: Denmark
Year of production: 2018
Length: 84 min
Shooting format: ProRes 422HQ - HD 1920x1080
Screening format: IOP 2K DCP 1.78
Language(s): Danish, English, Korean
Subtitles: English
Color or b/w: Color
Production Company: Walenciak Film IVS, Adomeit Film
Producer: Julie Friis Walenciak, Julie Rix Bomholt, Katja Adomeit
Co-Production company(ies): Cine Everywhere
Co-Producer(s) Mark Siegmund
Technical Details: Sound Format: 5.1
Picture format: IOP 2K DCP 1.78
Frames pr. second: 24 fps
Subtitles: XML VF Cinecanvas



Still credit: Catherine Pattinama Coleman

Director's statement

In 2007 I attended a conference for adoptees in Seoul where I listened to Peter Selman, a British researcher specializing in adoption, talking about transnational adoption, and how he believed that this form of adoption almost resembles human trafficking. This shocked me and led me to my many travels to South Korea to meet other adoptees from all over the world.

During these many prolonged travels, I stayed at Koroot, a guest house for adoptees only, and both in the living room and around the dining table I experienced the intimate and confidential space that existed in the company of like minded people. It was a space where people could express their emotions and share their experiences about being double cultural and the missing pieces in their story and identity, which they now understood for the first time. The other residents were often on the edge of a breakdown, suffered from insomnia, confused and sorrowful, but we looked out for each other and just talking to each other had a healing and perspectival impact.

We, the adoptees live as the hidden minority in society and therefore I want to shed light on our existence and write us into history. Up until now, we have been silent, but as adults we now have a voice through which we can express how it feels to be part of a social experiment that transnational adoption is.

THE RETURN is not only about getting access to your own history, but also about a loss of love and family, because it is not just your mother and father you lack, but also your sisters, brothers, uncles, aunts and cousins.

When you travel back, the loss of your original family truly becomes clear when you can visually mirror yourself in the bodies of others and recognize their features and expressions; and this is when you can start to grieve.

My intention with this film is to portray how traveling back to the country you come from will be a journey that you never completely return from, since a part of you will stay there. Also, the questions you had prior to this travel might never be answered, but instead more questions emerge.

THE RETURN is a film about longing for something without knowing exactly what it is until you return to this country, which you somehow know everything about; the air, the sea, the mountains, the food, the sun and the colors.

THE RETURN is about being unsure who you are and where you belong.

Director Malene Choi

Director's Biography:

THE RETURN is Malene Choi's (b. 1973) feature debut. Her short films have been selected for e.g. Hot Docs, Göteborg Film Festival, Nordic Panorama and Venice International Short Film Festival. Malene Choi graduated from the National Film School of Denmark's documentary programme in 2005.



Director's Filmography:

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|------|-------------------------|--|
| 2018 | THE RETURN | Feature, 84 min., Walenciak Film, Adomeit Film, Cine Everywhere |
| 2015 | NATURE | Art film, 4 min.
<i>Selected at:</i> FOKUS Videoart Festival, Nikolaj Kunsthal, DK |
| 2014 | WOOD | Art film, 4 min.
<i>Awards:</i> Main prize at FOKUS Videoart Festival, Nikolaj Kunsthal, DK |
| 2012 | DYRET | Short fiction, 13 min., Zentropa Productions
<i>Awards:</i> 'Robert' (Danish Academy Award) for best short fiction, DK
<i>Honorary Mention at Nordic Panorama, FI</i>
<i>Selections:</i>
<i>Göteborg Film Festival, SE</i>
<i>Toronto Short Film Festival, CA</i>
<i>Sao Paulo Int. Short Film Festival, BR</i>
<i>Paris French Film Academy, César, FR</i>
<i>Sydney Flicker Short Film Festival - AU</i> |
| 2008 | VOICE OVER VOICE | Documentary, 25 min., Pause Film
<i>Prizes:</i> Best Cinematography at Festival de Cine Experimental, ES
<i>Selections:</i>
<i>Odense International Film Festival, DK</i>
<i>Nordisk Panorama, FI</i>
<i>Uppsala Film Festival, SE</i>
<i>Les Ecrans Documentaire, FR</i> |
| 2005 | INSHALLAH | Documentary, 27 min. The National Film School of Denmark
<i>Prizes:</i> Honorary mention for best international short doc at Toronto Hot Docs, CA
<i>Selections:</i>
<i>Tampere Int. Film Festival, FI</i>
<i>Human Rights Watch" Jacob Burns Film Center, NYC</i>
<i>Dothouse, UK</i>
<i>Rooftop Film Festival, NYC</i> |
| 2000 | ESSAY | Short Doc., 9 min.
<i>Selections:</i> Venice International Short Film Festival, IT |

Credits

Directed by: Malene Choi
Written by: Sissel Dalsgaard Thomsen
Director of Photography: Catherine Pattinama Coleman
Edited by: Julius Krebs Damsbo
Sound Designer: Anne Gry Friis Kristensen & Kevin Koch
Sound Mixer: Anne Gry Friis Kristensen, Kevin Koch, Thomas Jæger, Kristoffer Salting
Music: Philip Nicolai Flindt
Produced by: Julie Friis Walenciak, Julie Rix Bomholt, Katja Adomeit
Production Company: Walenciak Film, Adomeit Film, Cine Everywhere
Financial Support from: New Danish Screen and Seoul Film Commission

Cast:

Karoline	Karoline Sofie Lee
Thomas	Thomas Hwan
Thomas' mother	Seong In-Ja

Production companies:

Walenciak Film IVS
Represented by Julie Friis Walenciak & Julie Rix Bomholt
Wildersgade 32
1408 Copenhagen
Denmark

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Adomeit Film
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Co-production company:

Cine Everywhere
Represented by Mark Siegmund
#101, 87 Donggyo-Ro
17-GIL, Mapu-Gu, Seoul
South Korea