



UNANIMAL

A film by TIVA BJÖRK & SALLY JACOBSON

Narrated by ISABELLA ROSSELLINI

Script TIVA BJÖRK, SALLY JACOBSON & ZARA KJELLNER - Editing NEIL WIGARDT - Original score MAREK HUNHAP - Sound design YOHANN BERNARD - Mix ELORY HUMEZ - Colorist ALEXIS LAMBOTTE
 Graphic design WILLIAM JACOBSON - Poster photo RASMUS RICHTER - Research VICTORIA REZELMAN - Artistic advisor KALLE BOMAN & TANCRÈDE RIVIÈRE
 With support from THE SWEDISH FILM INSTITUTE/JUAN PABLO LIBOSSART & JANNIK SPLIDSSBOEL, GÖTEBORG STAD, THE SWEDISH ARTS GRANTS COMMITTEE, FILM STOCKHOLM/FILMBASEN,
 CENTRE DU CINEMA ET DE L'IMAGE ANIMÉE, PROVENCE-ALPES-CÔTE-D'AZUR REGION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CNC, PROCIREP ANGOA in co-production with LYON CAPITAL TV
 Co-producer VICTOR EDE, CINEPHAGE producers TOBIAS JANSON & MELISSA LINDGREN, STORY AB

Story



Dagsljus





Short synopsis

Guided by the voice of Isabella Rossellini, we embark on a self-reflecting journey into the complex relationship between us humans and other animals. With humor and depth, we uncover animals' astounding adaptations to our urban, modern lives, fostering deep contemplation about our shared presence in a world dominated by man.

Synopsis

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We move from the living conditions of inner city rats and pigeons to absurd spectacles by which we are surrounded under hypercapitalism: three goldfish being sold for the price of one, monkeys negotiating a deal on coca cola with the zookeepers and horses being transported across the globe on jumbo jets.

What can we learn about ourselves by looking at other animals? Or as our narrator Isabella Rossellini puts it: Man only dares to introduce himself to himself by the name in which he has clothed himself: human. What can we learn about ourselves by looking at the line that separates us from the rest of the living?

Trailer

<https://vimeo.com/1051076753?share=copy>

Production facts

UNANIMAL

Documentary
Duration: 74 min
World premier: CPH:DOX
(Next:Wave Competition)

Directed by
Tuva Björk & Sally Jacobson

narrator
Isabella Rossellini

written by
Zara Kjellner, Tuva Björk &
Sally Jacobson

Producer
Tobias Janson &
Melissa Lindgren

Co-Producer
Victor Ede, Cinephage

Director of photography
Tuva Björk & Sally Jacobson

Editor
Neil Wigardt

Original score
Marek Hunhap

Sound design
Yohann Bernard

Graphic Design
William Jacobson

Colorist
Alexis Lambotte

Produced in association with
YLE / Jenny Westergård

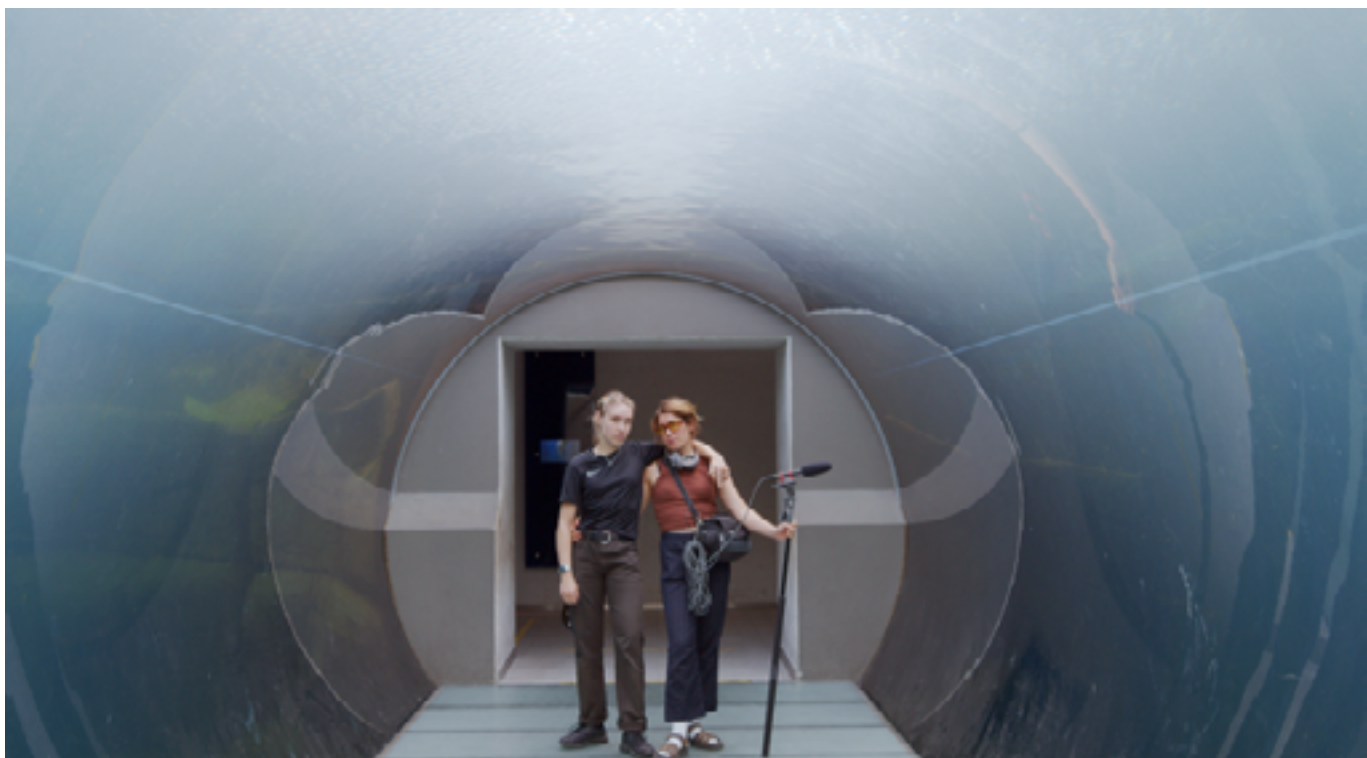
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CENTRE DU CINEMA ET DE
L'IMAGE ANIMEE
PROVENCE-ALPES-CÔTE-
D'AZUR REGION, IN PART-
NERSHIP WITH THE CNC
PROCIREP ANGOA

In co-production with
Cinephage
In partnership with Image
Fantôme Films

and in co-production with
LYON CAPITALE TV





Director's statement

As directors, we are interested in the relationship between physical reality and visual culture. How can images challenge the dominant chrononormative human-animal relationship? And how can we call for a different kind of shared social reality? Rather than presenting moral statements on relations between human and other animals, we want to allow the viewer to meditate on the subject on their own premises. We have decided to do this with the help of humor and philosophical reflection. In this way we wish to open a space for recognition and reach a wider audience.

When filming, we often turned around the camera to confuse the expected choreography of the observer and the subject, or took a step back for a wider image, so that we can see the structures which shape the meeting. What overflows from behind the presumptive frame that shows a more complex picture of reality? It is impossible to see from the perspective of the nonhuman, but we can position the camera inside the cages at the zoo, behind the display glass in the pet shop, and in front of the crowd at the racecourse in order to study the human observing the nonhuman.

The film is built on a conceptual structure which will allow us to tackle the topic from different

angles, inviting the viewer to dive into a deeper reading of the images through each new chapter. To stimulate this kind of active, reflective reading, we have together with famous Swedish writer Zara Kjellner and with input from the narrator Isabella Rossellini, added a series of philosophical, historical anecdotes between the chapters.

When it became clear that Isabella Rossellini would be narrating the film, we adapted the script to Isabella's tone of voice. Isabella has also been an important co-creator of the script. Isabella has a unique ability to make complex topics available for a broader audience and her humor and playfulness has influenced the writing. In direct and enchanting language, the narrator helps the audience engage with the ideas in the film in a deeper, more meaningful way.

With the climate crisis, we are now witnessing a tipping point, where the separation we have made for ourselves has become a limitation, alienating us from the ecosystem we are inseparable from and depended on. Instead of separating, it's time to explore and celebrate the connections between us and other animals, the possibilities for adaptation, learning and living together.

Director's biography

Sally Jacobson (director) - Sally is born in Stockholm, Sweden and has a BFA in Film from HDK-Valand Academy, University of Gothenburg. She has also attended The Nordic Documentary Film School Biskops-Arnö. Sally has been active at several production companies including Momento Film, SVT and Mexiko Media before directing her first feature length film at Story AB. Her short film P47 Thunderbolt (co-directed by Jasmijn Kooijman) won the main prize at the Focus Film Festival and was in competition at the November Festival in Trollhättan.

Tuva Björk (director) - Tuva is raised in Helsinki, Finland and has a MFA in artistic film directing as well as a BFA in Fine Arts from HDK-Valand Academy, University of Gothenburg. She has also attended The Nordic Documentary Film School Biskops-Arnö. Her works has been shown at the museum of Gothenburg City, Galleri Konstpidemin (Gothenburg) and Cinema Orion (Helsinki). Her previous work includes *Between Here and Now*, *ZAMAZAMA*, *We are a crowd of others*, *Ntoko* and *Fear Fokol*.

Story

Tobias Janson, producer

Tobias Janson, born in Gothenburg, Sweden, in 1973, is producer and CEO at Story, a leading Swedish documentary production company with offices in Stockholm and Gothenburg. Tobias is a visionary producer who has reshaped and defined Swedish documentary films with courage. His trust in the director's unique voice has contributed to a series of visionary and ground-breaking documentaries, including *Belleville Baby*, *At Night I Fly* and *The Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975*.

Melissa Lindgren, producer

Melissa Lindgren is a producer and curator based in Stockholm, Sweden. She graduated from the University of Gothenburg with an MFA in Curatorial Practice (film/video) and is the founder and co-director of Cinema Queer International Film Festival. In 2019 Melissa joined acclaimed production company Story as a producer, focusing on creative documentaries and arthouse fiction. In 2022 she was made partner of the company.

Story AB

was founded in 1998, producing creative documentary films for cinema, television and online distribution. The company is run by five award winning documentary filmmakers and two producers and office. Story also produces and represents additional talented filmmakers connected to the company.

Story has a high ambition in producing both personal and inventive films. Our main resources are groundbreaking stories and the talented directors we represent. Story is today one of the most important production companies focused on documentaries and art house films in Sweden and Scandinavia. Story specialises in feature-length documentaries with an international reach, but we also produce short documentaries, fiction films, animated documentaries and commercial work with a documentary base.

Our filmography includes (selection) *Israel Palestine on Swedish TV 1958 - 1989* (2024, Venice), *G - 21 scenes from Gottsunda* (2024, CPH:DOX), *How We Have Loved* (2024, opening film Tempo Documentary Festival), *The Society of the Spectacle* (2023, CPH:DOX), *Megaheartz* (2023, CPH:DOX), *Labor* (2023, CPH:DOX), *Hypermoon* (2023 CPH:DOX), *The Villages of Roses* (2023, Tessaloniki), *Blomster* (2023, Gothenburg FF), *Love You Bye* (2023, Gothenburg Film Festival, winner of the Angelo prize), *A House Made of Splinters* (2022, co-producer; Sundance director's award, Oscar nominated), *Always Amber* (2020, Berlinale) *Idomeni* (2020, Tessaloniki) *Lucky One* (2019, Eurimages Audentia Award at the Gothenburg Film Festival), *That Summer* (2018, Telluride, Berlinale Panorama, Gothenburg FF), *The Distant Barking of Dogs* (co-producer; 2017, First Appearance Award at IDFA, FIPRESCI Award in Thessaloniki + more), *Shapeshifters* (2017, Competition sections in Gothenburg FF and CPH:DOX), *Kiki* (2016, Sundance World Competition, Teddy Award at Berlinale, IDFA + more), *Fonko* (2015, Rotterdam and London IFF), *Concerning Violence* (2014, Sundance World Competition, Cinema Fairbindet Award Berlinale, Best documentary at the Swedish Film Awards), *Belleville Baby* (2013, Berlinale Panorama, Best Documentary at Swedish Film Awards), *After You* (2013, Best Nordic Documentary Award, CPH:DOX), *At Night I Fly*, (2011, Best Documentary at Swedish Film Awards), *The Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975* (2011, World Documentary Editing Award, Sundance + more).

Our projects have something important to say to the audience. They all deal with burning questions in our contemporary society. Our long-time drive has been to reach a new audience by combining a captivating and fervent theme with an innovative form.

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