

MOMENTO FILM presents



# ALL OF OUR HEARTBEATS ARE CONNECTED THROUGH EXPLODING STARS

a film by  
**JENNIFER RAINSFORD**

MOMENTO FILM IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH WE HAVE A PLAN AND FILM I SKÅNE IN ASSOCIATION WITH CHICKEN & EGG PICTURES AND POINT DU JOUR - LES FILMS DU BALIBARI PRESENT ALL OF OUR HEARTBEATS ARE CONNECTED THROUGH EXPLODING STARS DIRECTOR JENNIFER RAINSFORD WITH YASU SATOKO SACHIKO YUKIKO MAHIE  
PRODUCERS DAVID HERDIES MICHAEL KRUTKIEWSKI MIRIAM BELHORN NARRATED BY JENNIFER RAINSFORD CINEMATOGRAPHER KAROLINA PAJAK ISA MIKLER WITTEK SZULCZYŃSKI EDITORS CAMILLE COTTE AMALIE WESTERLIN TIELLESEN COMPOSER TEHO TEARDO SOUND DESIGNER TED KRUTKIEWSKI RE-RECORDING MIXER ROBERT HEFTER COLORIST MICHAEL CAVANAGH  
WITH SUPPORT FROM THE SWEDISH FILM INSTITUTE THE SWEDISH ARTS GRANTS COMMITTEE FILM STOCKHOLM KULTURBYGGAN THE HELGE AXSSON JOHNSONS FOUNDATION SWEDEN JAPAN FOUNDATION THE SCANDINAVIA-JAPAN SASAKAWA FOUNDATION WOMEN MAKE MOVIES PRODUCTION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

DEVELOPED WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE CREATIVE EUROPE PROGRAMME - MEDIA OF THE EUROPEAN UNION WORLD SALES TASKOVSKI FILMS



film i skåne



# ALL OF OUR HEARTBEATS ARE CONNECTED THROUGH EXPLODING STARS

A film by Jennifer Rainsford

## Press notes

**\*\*world premiere\*\***

Visions du Réel 2022  
International Feature Film Competition

Other festivals in selection:

Hot Docs, Canada  
Pesaro Film Festival, Italy  
Documental Ambulante, Mexico  
MDOC - Melgaço International Documentary Film Festival  
Camden international Film Festival, US  
Another Way Festival, Spain  
Buffalo IFF, Canada  
European Film Festival Palić, Serbia  
DMZ International Documentary Film Festival, South Korea

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MOMENTO FILM, Mirjam Gelhorn, [mirjam@momentofilm.se](mailto:mirjam@momentofilm.se)

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## LOGLINE

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With the 2011 Japanese tsunami as a backdrop, Jenifer Rainsford's debut feature is an epic odyssey on how humans and nature rebuild and heal after the catastrophe.

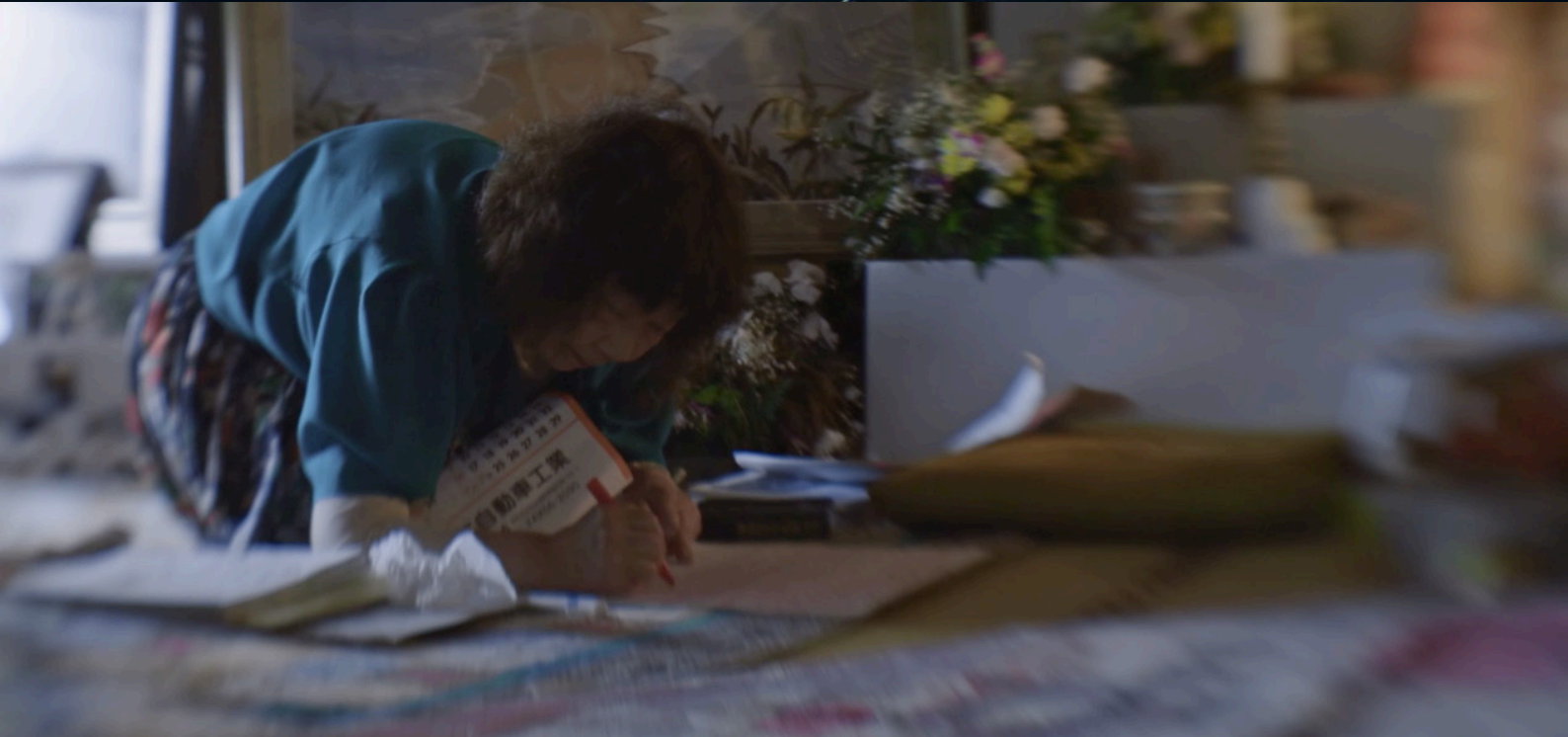
## SYNOPSIS

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On March 11, 2011 the largest earthquake in modern history hit Japan and then, thirty minutes later, dark tsunami waves roared in over the coast of North-Eastern Japan dragging cars, homes and lives out into the sea.

In the film we meet Yasu who has done over 100 dives in search of his lost wife. Satoko keeps writing letters to her husband that was taken by the wave. Satoko is a young woman who struggles with overcoming her trauma from the disaster. On the other side of the ocean, in the Hawaiian island of Kaho'olawe, a group of volunteers are gathering to clean the beach from Japanese tsunami debris floating in from the Ocean. They are all sharing the stories of the afterlife.

Jennifer Rainsford's debut feature takes the viewer to an epic journey, from the life on Earth as seen from outer space, to the smallest microcosmic perspectives, to find out how humans, animals and nature heal after a trauma. Told in the form of a film essay, backed up with scientific research and the staggering score of Teho Teardo, *All of Our Heartbeats are Connected Through Exploding Stars* tells a tale of interconnectedness of all living organisms on planet Earth.



*As I was searching in disasters bigger than my own,  
I found stories of love: of people holding on to acts  
of kindness and compassion in order  
to survive their own traumas.*

*I found comfort in these stories, and I want to pass  
that on to an audience that is living, loving and  
grieving in a world that is a lot more uncertain now  
and when I first started the film.*

*Jennifer Rainsford, director & scriptwriter*

## INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR JENNIFER RAINSFORD

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*by Petar Mitric*

### **How did you get connected with the Earthquake and Tsunami that hit the North Eastern coast of Japan in 2011?**

On the day of the tsunami I was in France and heard about it through the news like everyone else, being shocked by those devastating and powerful images of how nature took over, dark waves engulfing the cities and dragging everything out to sea. But at the time I was not thinking about making a film about it. It was only about three years later that I saw that scientific simulation of how the debris would move across the Pacific Ocean with the currents to land on the shores of Hawaii. I was wondering: What kind of stories are there now? I have always been interested in those "shadow stories", or stories that you have to "back into" after many years.

### **How did you choose the characters in the film. They all seem to have this strong feeling of being defeated by nature.**

The first trip me and one of the cinematographers, Iga Mikler, did was to Hawaii to look for trash beaches. I met with people that were cleaning up the beaches. The year after I went to Japan on my own looking for same kinds of debris stories. I just traveled by myself with the camera, determined not to look for specific characters or stories but to start searching for places where stories could come to me. Back then, in 2014, Ishinomaki was still a very damaged place from the tsunami. The railroad tracks weren't repaired, there was not an easy way to get there unless you took a bus and changed several times.

I walked around by myself and in the middle of the area where the tsunami had struck there was a diving school. I asked if they could teach me to dive because I planned to film underwater in Tsunami debris, so I took diving lessons and a diving certificate from them. At the same diving course was this man, who is Yasu in the film. I got to know his story little by little that he had searched for his wife everywhere on land and when he couldn't find her he learnt to dive to look for her remains in the ocean. I was very moved by this.

There were so many tragic stories and I think in documentaries it is easy to live on somebody else's sufferings. This wasn't the kind of story I wanted to tell. I felt like I would be taking something from the people that I can't give back. So from there I kept working with coincidence and that rule. Satoko, the young woman works with the theater group and makes the theater plays. We worked together in the hybrid form, so we wrote most of her stories together. The old woman, Sachiko, has written letters to her husband and published three books with them.

**The underwater shots in the film are quite outstanding, as well as the microscopic views of the living organisms that surround us. Did you have any experience in this field?**

I actually filmed very little of the underwater material by myself. Even though I wanted to film the tsunami debris I quickly understood it wouldn't be possible, because it is very dangerous and I didn't have enough diving and filming underwater experience. In the end the divers I have met filmed all that themselves during their searches, with some instructions from me. They also gave me all the material they had filmed over the years, where they would just attach a Go pro camera to their head for documentation. For the dancing plankton, I got help from French researchers to film through a microscope. It felt very special because I grew up peering through a microscope in my mother's lab, she's a microbiologist, and when we were in their lab I felt like I had done it before. I had that same feeling of watching into a completely different universe with myriads of living organisms looking back at me.

The long part where we are sinking through the Ocean, I got from the research ship Nautilus that explores the deepest parts of the Pacific Ocean. Scientists and ocean experts from all over the world, through a live stream on YouTube trying to figure out what it is they see. There are those long sessions of the camera just sinking and sinking for kilometers towards the abyss of the Ocean through dead plankton, hundreds of hours of material moving over the sea floor where sometimes there appears those wondrous deep sea creatures that seem to be part of other worlds like the oarfish, the pelican eel, deep sea octopus.

**Your film is taking the viewer from the deepest debris of the Oceans, over the ground, up to the sky. How did you come up with the idea of the title itself?**

For a long time the title of the film was Stories From the Debris, and at some point, towards the end of the editing I felt that it wasn't telling what the film was actually about. Stories from the Debris explained the process, rather than what the film is about. There is a mid-part of the film where I am telling what cosmologist Carl Sagan called "The greatest story ever told", the story of the creation of life since the big bang: how life on Earth was created and how all of our breaths and heartbeats have been connected since then. For me the film had become about that, the universality of those stories, the connection we share by living on the same planet, regardless of nationalities and geopolitics.

**The scientific perspective plays an important role in the film, adding value to the poetic expression. Who were your advisors in scientific research?**

The first people I contacted were Jan Hafner and Nikolai Maximenko who are Oceanographers at the University of Hawaii, in Honolulu. It was their model of how the

tsunami debris would move across the Pacific that started my search for stories from the debris. They told me where to find the great Pacific garbage patch and connected me with the Hawaiian organization KIRC, that works with restoring one of the smallest Hawaiian islands Kaho'olawe from ocean debris and bombs. They gave me access to this place where nobody was allowed to film before, while they were doing a beach cleanup. Nobody lives on this island because it used to be the test bombing sight during the Cold War. In ancient Hawaiian culture it used to be the place to learn how to navigate to Tahiti with the stars, so it is a very charged place.

In Japan I met with Atsushi Seikguchi who is a neuroscientist researching post traumatic stress disorder, PTSD. His research proves that the hippocampus had shrunk in people suffering from post traumatic stress disorder. At the time there was a stigma around trauma in Japan and he wanted to find proof that it was an actual physical change and not just the condition of the spirit, or the soul.

The part about the regeneration came through the French co-producer who introduced me to Michalis Averof, a professor in Evolutionary biology at the Institut de Génomique Fonctionnelle de Lyon (IGFL). His research is about regeneration in biology, specifically how the leg on a tiny shrimp, *Parhyale Hawaiensis*, rebuilds when it is cut off. That force of nature that can make a leg grow back. I was looking at his fascinating electron microscope images and animations of how the cells in the leg find their way into building a new leg. I was in awe wondering; how do these cells know that they should grow back? And in a way it is the same in how we humans know how to heal. For those things I feel the same sense of wonder as of how life can exist - a miracle!

**Even though the set up of the film is connected to the grief and trauma, your film is offering a bright gaze on the future.**

Yes, I hope so. All characters suffered unfathomable losses, but after some time they found a way to move and live with them.

The film tells stories from several disasters; the tsunami and the ocean pollution, and as I was filming on the trash beach I realised that dystopian stories from the '70s have become true because we didn't change from them. I felt scared about the future; we are in deep trouble and this fear was paralysing. Then I met with organisations and people that had taken action to do something. For example the underwater footage of the Ghost nets, we got from a woman named Mary Crowley who basically made it her life mission to clean up the Ocean from debris. And the people cleaning photographs that were damaged by the tsunami and the beach cleaners, they are doing a very small part and they are doing it very locally. But they exist, there are so many people that wants to do good and they want this world to be better. It's important to tell those stories too.

## ABOUT THE FILMMAKER

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### Jennifer Rainsford

*Director*

Jennifer Rainsford, is a visual artist and director based in Stockholm. Her short films and installations have been shown at festivals such as Oberhausen, Berlinale, Rotterdam and CPH:DOX. Her last film LAKE ON FIRE was selected for the main short film competition at Göteborg Film Festival 2020. ALL OF OUR HEARTBEATS ARE CONNECTED THROUGH EXPLODING STARS is her first feature length documentary.



### Filmography in selection

2022, ALL OF OUR HEARTBEATS ARE CONNECTED THROUGH EXPLODING STARS, 77 min

2020, LAKE ON FIRE, 14.30 min

2018, BIRDS IN SPACE, 29 min

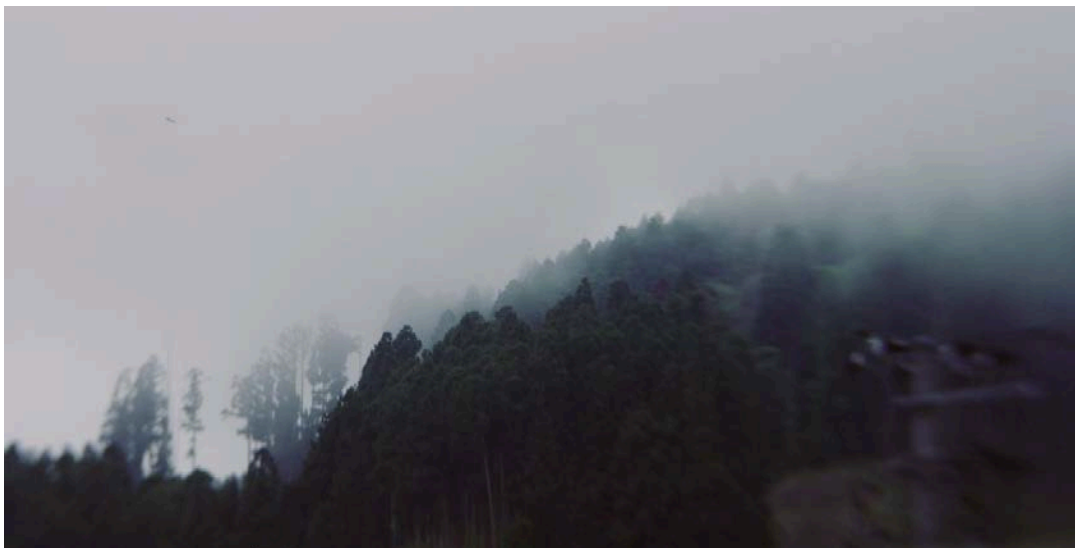
2017, WHEN I DIE THE WORLD ENDS, 14.30 min

2012, MVUA FARASI (RAIN HORSE) 23 min. Co-direction as Crystal Beacon, with Rut Karin Zettergren and Lena Bergendahl.

2011, APPLIED THEORIES OF EXPANDING MINDS 29 min. Co-direction as Crystal Beacon, with Rut Karin Zettergren and Lena Bergendahl. Special Mention at Oberhausen International Film Festival.

2010, OUR GLOBAL BEHAVIOUR IS PSYCHOPATHIC 14 min. Co-direction with Viriani Hallberg. Screened at Berlinale, Oberhausen International Film Festival.

2009, FOR THE LIBERATION OF MEN 5 min, part of Dirty Diaries. Screened at CPH:DOX, Visions du Reel.



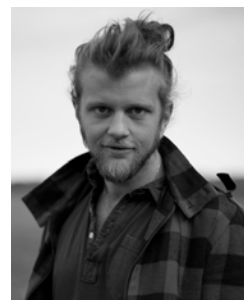
## ABOUT THE PRODUCERS AND PRODUCTION COMPANY

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### **Michael Krotkiewski**

*Producer*

Michael Krotkiewski born in 1980 in Sweden, is a director, tutor, producer and co-owner of Memento Film. As a producer Michael has produced and coproduced several fiction and documentary films and some of his latest releases include; AMPARO by Simon Mesa Soto (won the Rising Star Award at Semaine de la Critique in Cannes 2021, YUNG LEAN: IN MY HEAD by Henrik Burman (competed at Tribeca FF 2020, theatrical release in over 113 cinemas worldwide, sold to VICE), TRANSNISTRA by Anna Eborn (won the Big Screen Competition at Rotterdam IFF, the Dragon Award for best Nordic Documentary at Gothenburg IFF and The Swedish Guldbagge Award for Best Documentary in 2019). Michael has a diploma from Stockholm Academy Of Dramatic Arts, EURODOC and EAVE.



### **Selected filmography**

2021, AMPARO, by Simon Mesa Soto 95', drama

2021, BELLUM - THE DAEMON OF WAR, by David Herdies & Georg Götmark 97', documentary

2020, TINY TIM: KING FOR A DAY by Johan Von Sydow, 78', documentary

2020, YUNG LEAN: IN MY HEAD, by Henrik Burman, 96', documentary

2019, TRANSNISTRA, by Anna Eborn, 96', documentary

2018, HAMADA, by Eloy Dominguez Serén, 89', documentary

### **Mirjam Gelhorn**

*Producer*

Mirjam Gelhorn is a producer based in Stockholm. Mirjam Gelhorn has been assistant producer on several titles of which can be mentioned the feature docs TRANSNISTRA by Anna Eborn (Winner Big Screen Competition, Rotterdam IFF, Dragon Award for best Nordic Doc, Gothenburg IFF, 2019), the short film MADRE by Simón Mesa Soto (Official Short Film Competition, Cannes 2016), OUAGA GIRLS by Theresa Traore Dahlberg (IDFA & 60+ festivals). She currently develops a slate of five films both fiction and documentary. She has a Bachelor degree in journalism from Södertörns University, and is an alumnus from the post grad course Art & Architecture: Aspectivity at the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm, and part of EURODOC 2022.



### **Filmography**

2022, ALL OF OUR HEARTBEATS ARE CONNECTED THROUGH EXPLODING STARS, by Jennifer Rainsford 77', documentary

## **David Herdies**

### *Producer*



David Herdies is a Swedish producer and the founder of Momento Film. Herdies has positioned himself on the international market with high-profile documentaries, feature films and shorts premiered and awarded at the most important film festivals. His latest releases include the documentaries *Yung Lean: In My Head* by Henrik Burman (Tribeca FF 2020), *Transnistria* by Anna Eborn (Guldbagge Best Documentary, Big Screen Award IFFR) *Hamada* by Eloy Domínguez Serén (IDFA 2018 +11 awards) and the feature film *Amparo* which won the Rising Star Award at Semaine de la Critique in Cannes (2021). Herdies is a member of the EAVE, ACE and Eurodoc networks, and was Producer on the Move in Cannes 2018.

### **Selected filmography**

2022, *ALL OF OUR HEARTBEATS ARE CONNECTED THROUGH EXPLODING STARS*, by Jennifer Rainsford 77', documentary

2021, *AMPARO*, by Simon Mesa Soto, 95' drama

2020, *TINY TIM: KING FOR A DAY*, by Johan von Sydow, 78', documentary

2019, *TRANSNISTRIA*, by Anna Eborn, 96', documentary

2016, *MADRE*, by Simon Mesa Soto, 14', fiction

## **Momento Film**

### *Production company*

Momento Film is a production company based in Stockholm, Sweden, founded by David Herdies in 2011. Momento strives to be a harbor for both established and new talent who wants to challenge the borders of filmmaking.

Momento has positioned itself on the European market with high-profile documentaries and short films premiered and awarded at the most important film festivals. Their latest documentary releases include: *AMPARO* by Simón Mesa Soto (Rising Star Award at Semaine de la Critique in Cannes 2021), *YUNG LEAN: IN MY HEAD* by Henrik Burman (Tribeca FF 2020), *TRANSNISTRIA* by Anna Eborn (Guldbagge Best Documentary, Big Screen Award at Rotterdam IFFR), *HAMADA* by Eloy Domínguez Serén (IDFA 2018 +11 awards)). Currently, they are working on a slate of both fiction and documentary projects including the drama *MADAME LUNA* written by Maurizio Braucci (*GOMORRA*) and directed by Daniel Espinosa (*SAFE HOUSE*, *MORBIUS*), the drama *THE SWEDISH TORPEDO* by Frida Kempff as well as the feature documentaries *LEAVING JESUS* by Ellen Fiske.

The producers are part of the international producer's networks EAVE, ACE and Eurodoc, and in 2018 producer David Herdies was Producer on the Move in Cannes.

## CREDITS

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ALL OF OUR HEARTBEATS ARE CONNECTED THROUGH EXPLODING STARS  
Sweden | 2022 | 77' 07' | Languages English, Japanese | Subtitles English

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Director and scriptwriter | Jennifer Rainsford  |
| Producer                  | David Herdies & Michael Krotkiewski, Mirjam Gelhorn   |
| Director of Photography   | Karolina Pajak, Iga Mikler, Wojtek Sulezycki  |
| Editor                    | Camille Cotte, Amalie Westerlin Tjellesen   |
| Original Score Composer   | Teho Teardo   |
| Sound Designer            | Ted Krotkiewski   |
| Re-recording Mixer        | Robert Hefter   |
| Colorist                  | Michael Cavanagh  |
| VFX                       | Nils Fridén   |
| In co-production with     | Film i Skåne, WHAP  |
| In association with       | Chicken and Egg Pictures, Point Du Jour - Les Films Du Balibari   |
| With Support From         | Swedish Film Institute, The Swedish Arts Grants Committee, Film Stockholm, Kulturbryggan, Helge Ax:son Johson Foundation, Sweden Japan Foundation, The Scandinavia – Japan Sasakawa foundation, Women Make Movies Production Assistance Program Creative Europe Programme – Media of The European Union |
| Labs and pitches          | Berlinale Talents Doc Station 2016<br>Feature Expanded 2016<br>Pitching du Réel, Visions du Réel 2018<br>(Egg)celerator Lab, Chicken & Egg Pictures 2020<br>Sheffield MeetMarket 2020<br>CPH:FORUM 2021   |
| World Sales               | Taskovski Films Ltd<br><a href="http://www.taskovskifilms.com">www.taskovskifilms.com</a>   |

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