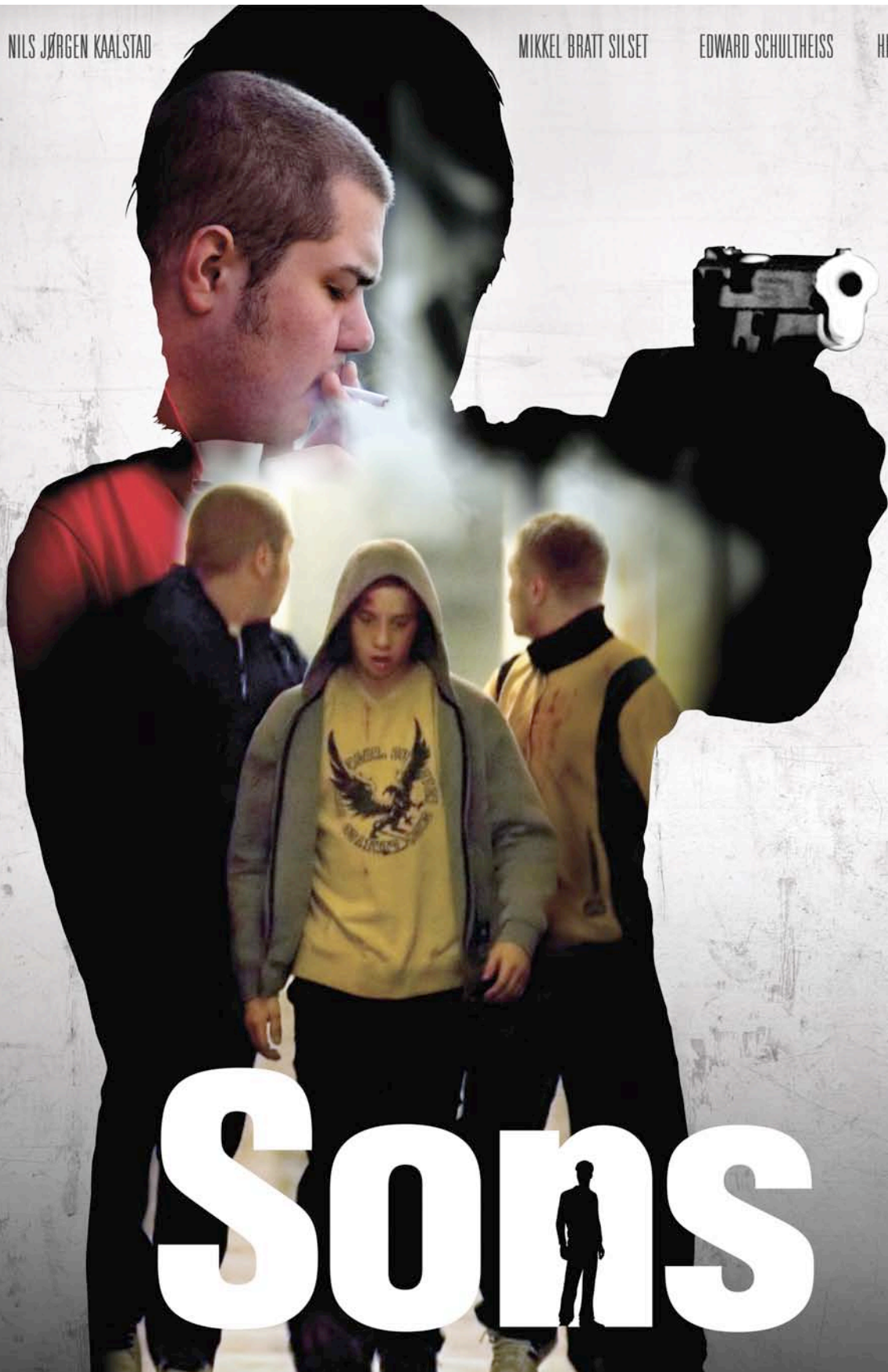


NILS JØRGEN KAALSTAD

MIKKEL BRATT SILSET

EDWARD SCHULTHEISS

HENRIK MESTAD



Sons

TORDENFILM PRESENTS **Sons** NILS JØRGEN KAALSTAD MIKKEL BRATT SILSET EDWARD SCHULTHEISS HENRIK MESTAD INGRID BRISØ BERDAL MARIKA ENSTAD CASTING ELLEN MICHELSEN COSTUME DESIGNER CAMILLA LINDBLOM
 MUSIC MARIUS CHRISTIANSEN & MAGNET SOUND DESIGNER CHRISTIAN SCHAANNING EDITOR SIMEN GENGENBACH PRODUCTION DESIGNER ASTRID MARIA SÆTREN CINEMATOGRAPHER JOHAN-FREDRIK BØDTKER
 EXECUTIVE PRODUCER JØRGEN STORM ROSENBERG SCREENWRITER THOMAS SEEBERG TØRJUSSEN PRODUCER ERIC VOGEL DIRECTOR AND CO WRITER ERIK RICHTER STRAND

PRODUCED BY TORDENFILM AS PART OF THE SUPPORT OF THE NORWEGIAN FILM INDUSTRY. FINANCED BY NORWEGIAN FILM BOARD, NORWEGIAN FILM & TV FUND ØYRØD AND NORSK FILMSTUDIO AS-VIDEALABOR, LARVIK, TVEITMØLLEREN BROSJE and by co-operation with CANAL+ and CANAL+ CHANNELS.

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WORLD SALES: BAVARIA FILM INTERNATIONAL - [HTTP://WWW.BAVARIA-FILM-INTERNATIONAL.DE](http://www.bavaria-film-international.de)
 FESTIVAL DISTRIBUTION: THE NORWEGIAN FILM INSTITUTE - [HTTP://WWW.NFI.NO/total114](http://www.nfi.no/total114)

Norsk Filmstudio

MARCA FILMWORKS

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PRODUCTION BRIEF

Original title: **"Sønner"**
English title: **"Sons"**
Spanish title: **"Hijos"**
German title: **"Söhne"**

Genre: Drama/Action
Country of origin/year: Norway, 2006
Production company: Tordenfilm AS, Oslo

Duration: 99 minutes/6 reels, 35mm
Aspect ratio: 1:1,85
Sound: Dolby SR-D / Dolby SR

Director and co-writer: **Erik Richter Strand**
Producer: **Eric Vogel**
Screenwriter: **Thomas Seeberg Torjussen**
Executive producer: **Jørgen Storm Rosenberg**
Cinematographer: **Johan-Fredrik Bødtker**
Production designer: **Astrid Maria Sætren**
Film editor: **Simen Gengenbach**
Sound designer: **Christian Schaanning**
Music by: **Marius Christiansen & Magnet**
Costume designer: **Camilla Lindblom**
Casting: **Ellen Michelsen**

Cast: **Nils Jørgen "Jøgge" Kaalstad** as "Lars"
Mikkel Bratt Silset as "Tim"
Edward Schultheiss as "Jørgen"
Henrik Mestad as "Hans"
Ingrid Bolsø Berdal as "Norunn"
Marika Enstad as "Anja"

Financiers: **The Norwegian Film Fund**
c/o commissioning editor Karin Julsrud
Sandrew Metronome Norge AS
c/o managing director Frida Ohrvik
The Nordic Film and TV Fund
c/o chief executive Svend Abrahamsen
Norsk Filmstudio AS
c/o general manager Knud Bjørne-Larsen

With the support of **Canal+** and **TV2 Norway**



CONTACT INFORMATION

World sales:

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**FOR ADDITIONAL MATERIALS AND UPDATED FESTIVAL LISTINGS:
<http://www.nfi.no/film/sons> - password for downloads: uffda**



THE STORY

Lars is twenty-five and works as an attendant at a swimming pool on the east side of Oslo. His heart is good, but his temper is easily and violently raised. This has caused problems for Lars his whole life. Together with his best friend Jørgen he shares a troubled past. Now Jørgen is on his way into adulthood with his girlfriend and their child, while Lars is living the bachelor life of soccer and beer.

One day Lars gets a nasty surprise at the swimming pool. He recognizes Hans, a middle-aged man who's rumored to fool around with the teenage boys of the suburb. Lars alerts Anja, head of the pool and Jørgen's girlfriend, that Hans is a threat and needs to be banned from the pool. Anja will not hear of any accusations without there being proof. Lars sets out on his own to gather evidence and recruits Tim, a boy who has been seeing Hans, to help him bring down the abuser. Soon the situation spins out of control, and rage takes over as Lars embarks on a crusade that endangers the very people he set out to protect.

"Sons" is a gritty and fast-paced drama from the wrong side of the tracks in Oslo, marking the feature debut of director Erik Richter Strand.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Sons, like those in our film, are found everywhere. In every country, every day. But you very rarely see them. Our film lends a voice to those explosive secrets that are normally kept hidden under a tight lid of aggression and denial.

In an attempt to provide nuances to an issue that is too often dealt with simplistically as clear-cut, right or wrong, I have tried to make a brutally honest and uncompromising movie. As a filmmaker, I feel that if something makes me feel uncomfortable just talking about it, I know that I am onto good subject matter. Sons deals with the grey areas of our morality, which I find are the most interesting to explore.

Behind the film stands a tight group of young filmmakers and friends, who have trained and worked together for several years. Sons also marks the screen debut for most of our leading actors. One goal has been to make audiences challenge their preconceived notions on adolescent sexuality. Another has been to entertain.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Erik Strand".

Erik Richter Strand, director.

THE ACTORS



Nils Jørgen Kaalstad as "Lars"

The main character "**Lars**" is played by the feature film first-timer **Nils Jørgen Kaalstad**. He started acting at six years old and in his teens had roles in various stage plays at the National Theatre in Oslo, in addition to having toured with "Riksteatret" and appeared in radio plays. In later years he has appeared in various short films, and will soon be seen in a major television series for the Norwegian Broadcasting Corp. Kaalstad is currently a student at the stage department at the Oslo College of Arts.

"**Tim**" is played by fifteen-year-old **Mikkel Bratt Silset**. He has previously appeared in the Norwegian television series "Johnny and Johanna" but makes his feature film debut as an actor with "Sons". Mikkel is also the guitarist and lead singer of the band "Tallik".



Mikkel Bratt Silset as "Tim"



Edward Schultheiss as "Jørgen"

Edward Schultheiss plays "**Jørgen**". His previous credits include feature films like "Buddy", "Utopia" and the mini-series "Ran". Schultheiss is also an experienced stand-up comedian, having toured extensively with "Riksteatret" across Norway.



Henrik Mestad as "Hans"

"**Hans**" is played by **Henrik Mestad**, an actor, stageplay director and multi-discipline talent known from a string of stage productions and roles in the features "United", "The Greatest Thing" and "The Seven Deadly Sins". Mestad is currently working at the Torshov Theatre in Oslo, and will appear in several upcoming Norwegian feature films in addition to "Sons".



Ingrid Bolsø Berdal as "Norunn"

The character "**Norunn**" is played by **Ingrid Bolsø Berdal**, an award-winning young actress who graduated from the stage department at the Oslo College of Arts in 2005. She is currently employed at The Norwegian Theatre in Oslo.

Marika Enstad plays "**Anja**". She has worked at several of the top Norwegian stages and theatre companies, including Theatre Ibsen, Trøndelag Theatre and Rogaland Theatre. Enstad has also appeared in several recent television series in Norway, and is currently working as a freelance actress.



Marika Enstad as "Anja"

THE FILMMAKERS



Director **Erik Richter Strand** (b. 1974) made his feature film debut with, and is also co-writer of *Sons*. He hails from the city of Bergen, and has a formal education as director from The Norwegian National Film School at Lillehammer. His shorts as well as commercials (for Moland Film Company) have been award-winners at many international festivals, among them Cinequest (San Jose) and Cannes Lions.

Producer **Eric Vogel** (b. 1975), from Trondheim, has a producing degree from The Norwegian National Film School at Lillehammer. *Sons* is his feature film debut. Vogel is currently working on his next feature projects and was selected as Norway's representative for the EFP Producer On The Move program, Cannes 2007.



Screenwriter **Thomas Seeberg Torjussen** (b. 1974) hails from Rælingen, and graduated from the screenwriting department of The Norwegian National Film School together with Richter Strand and Vogel. His graduation film "The Martin Administration" was nominated for a Student Oscar™ in 2003. His story "Sons" won the best pitch award at the gathering New Nordic Talents, sponsored by the Nordic Film- and Television Fund.

The production company **Tordenfilm AS** develops and produces fiction for the cinema and television. It was established in 2003 and is located in Oslo. The company brings together the major up-and-coming talents of Norwegian filmmaking.



The company's first feature film *Uno* (2004, dir: Aksel Hennie) was the second highest grossing feature in Norway in 2004. Mid 2006 saw the release of *The Bothersome Man* (dir: Jens Lien), which screened in the Cannes Critic's Week. "Sons" debuted in the Zabaltegi New Directors section at San Sebastian 2006.

LINKS

Further press materials (hi-res stills, audio clips, etc.)

<http://www.nfi.no/film/sons> - password for downloads: uffda

<http://tordenfilm.no/press>

Official homepage (Norwegian)

<http://www.sonner.no>

Internet Movie Database entry (English)

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0473707/>

Bavaria Film International page on "Sons" (English)

<http://www.bavaria-film-international.de/htmls/bfi/index.php?site=program&id=144>

Video interviews of cast and crew by Europanet Making Of (English)

<http://www.cineuropa.org/making.aspx?lang=en&documentID=1055>

Production company homepage (Norwegian/English)

<http://www.tordenfilm.no>



Director Erik Richter Strand and lead actor Nils Jørgen Kaalstad on location.

FESTIVALS

2006 Norwegian International Film Festival, Haugesund, closing film
2006 San Sebastian International Film Festival, Zabaltegi section
2006 Scanorama, Vilnius
2006 Mannheim-Heidelberg International Film Festival, competition
2006 Stockholm International Film Festival, competition
2006 Black Night Film Festival, Tallinn, EurAsia competition
2007 Palm Springs International Film Festival
2007 Scandinavian Film Festival Los Angeles
2007 Cleveland International Film Festival
2007 Hong Kong International Film Festival
2007 Guadalajara International Film Festival, Mexico
2007 NATfilm Festival, Denmark
2007 Istanbul International Film Festival, Turkey, Young Masters section
2007 Seattle International Film Festival, World Cinema, competition
2007 Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, Another View section
2007 Palic European Film Festival, Serbia, competition

AWARDS

2006 Mannheim-Heidelberg International Film Festival:

Rainer Werner Fassbinder Award

"For an honest, strong and emotional directing approach to such a delicate topic."

2006 Black Night Film Festival, Tallinn:

FICC Jury Award - Don Quijote Award

2007 Kosmorama Trondheim International Film Festival:

Best Supporting Actor – Henrik Mestad

2007 Seattle International Film Festival:

New Director Award: Grand Jury Prize



"Sons" in San Sebastian 2006. From left: screenwriter Thomas Seeberg Torjussen, producer Eric Vogel and director Erik Richter Strand. Photo by Stine Oppegaard, NFI



VARIETY REVIEW

The logo for VARIETY.com, with the word "VARIETY" in a large, green, stylized font and ".com" in a smaller, green, sans-serif font, all set against a light green background with a thin black border.

Sons

Sønner

(Norway)

Reviewed by Gunnar Rehlin

A hard-hitting and thoughtful drama about a young man's quest to expose a pedophile, "Sons" is an impressive first film by young Norwegian writer-director Erik Richter Strand that should garner arthouse sales on the back of festival play. Intense semi-thriller maintains interest without slipping into cliché, and has an ending both satisfying and unexpected.

Lars (Nils Jorgen Kaalstad) is a 25-year-old lifeguard at a public baths who gets to know a teenage boy, Tim (Mikkel Bratt Silset), after catching him peeking at nude girls in the shower. Later that day, Lars discovers a middle-aged man, Hans (Henrik Mestad), talking to Tim and his pals in the pool. Lars recognizes him as someone who was accused of pedophilia and, when he sees Tim entering Hans' car, he videotapes Tim pleasuring Hans in the front seat. After trying to run Lars over, Hans drives off. Tim begs Lars to give him the videotape, but Lars refuses.

Due to his obsession with Hans, Lars is fired from his job at the baths. He spends his time talking to his only relatively close friend, prostitute Norunn (Ingrid Bolso Berdal), and stalking Hans. After confronting him at home, Lars finds Hans' computer loaded with explicit pictures of him having sex with young boys -- one of whom is now a local TV presenter.

Lars gives the presenter the tape of Hans and Tim in the car, and begs him to use it on the air, but with Tim's face obscured. The story ends up aired in a different version, which starts a chain of events that rocks the world of many of the characters.

One of the film's best assets is that almost every person, including Hans, is portrayed in a human way -- flawed but with sympathetic characteristics. Pic never shies away from the wrong in what Hans is doing, but it also shows him as someone who believes he is doing something right. "These boys are like sons to me," he says, to which Lars replies, "A father never does what you do to them."

The multilayered characters and the unpredictability of the story go hand in hand with the thriller elements. Though Lars is an angry young man who's not above mugging Norunn's customers when they leave her apartment, he has a strict sense of morality when it comes to the wrongdoings against the boys. Part of this, it's gradually revealed, can be traced to his own background.

Performances by the mostly unknown cast are fine, as is the pic's technical package. Use of night settings by helmer Erik Richter Strand and d.p. Johan-Fredrik Bodtker is effective in ramping up the sense of menace.

FURTHER REVIEW EXCERPTS

”Outstanding...A nervy film that earns its genre shifts among dark comedy, drama and thriller”

Robert Abele, Los Angeles Times

“Despite the gravity of the theme, Sons carries a noticeable lightness without losing its capacity for accusation.”

San Sebastian Festival Daily review

”A nuanced, action-packed and solid drama that invokes both cheers and an uneasy afterthought”

6 out of 6, Side 2, entertainment portal/website, Norway

”The most spectacular directing debut Norway has ever seen”

6 out of 6, Film, nationwide print magazine, Norway

”Nils Jørgen Kaalstad is a major discovery!”

5 out of 6, Verdens Gang, Norway’s largest daily newspaper

”Exciting and full of surprises”

iByen.dk, major portal/website, Denmark

”Sons displays a high level of cinematic intelligence”

Dagens Næringsliv, national daily newspaper, Norway



The screenshot shows a section of the Dagbladet website titled 'FILMBASEN'. At the top, there is a 'Kast terning på filmen' (Roll the dice on the film) section with five red dice icons and the text '(Klikk på en terning!)'. Below this is a link 'Skriv din egen anmeldelse'. The main section is divided into two columns: 'Lesernes favoritter' (Readers' favorites) and 'Dagbladets favoritter' (Newspaper's favorites). The 'Lesernes favoritter' list includes: 1. [Sønner](#), 2. [Blade Runner](#), 3. [Pulp Fiction](#), 4. [It's Hard to be a Rock'n Roller](#), and 5. [Talladega Nights](#). The 'Dagbladets favoritter' list includes: 1. [Å vende tilbake](#), 2. [Capote](#), 3. [Havet innenfor](#), 4. [Match Point](#), and 5. [Good Night, And Good Luck](#). At the bottom of the lists, it says '(Basert på Dagbladets terningkast)'. On the right side, there is an advertisement for 'VO' and a 'VIDEO' section with a link to 'Norsk E'.

Screenshot from the website of Norwegian daily newspaper Dagbladet, showing "Sons" as the #1 readers' favorite (left column), september 2006.



www.tordenfilm.no