



## Raising a School Shooter

A film by Frida & Lasse Barkfors



### Synopsis

As the disaster of yet another school shooting hits, some parents are faced with a brutal fact: their child was the one pulling the trigger.

Three parents share their stories. Jeff Williams is the father of Andy, who in 2001, then 15, shot and killed two classmates and wounded thirteen other students. Andy is serving 25- to life in prison. Clarence Elliot's son Nicholas shot and killed his teacher and wounded another teacher in 1988 and is serving life in prison. Sue Klebold's son Dylan was one of the two teenagers behind the Columbine High School Massacre in 1999, one of the deadliest school shootings in history. Dylan ended the shooting by committing suicide. Through the deeply personal and honest stories they share with us, the film explores themes like guilt, denial, failure and responsibility, harassment, sorrow, friendship and love.

### **A trilogy on guilt and shame**

*Raising a School Shooter* is the culmination of ten years of work and a trilogy where the audience in each film meet people who have all experienced the condemnation of their surroundings. The first film, the Sundance award-winning *Pervert Park*, premiered in 2014, and takes place in a trailer park in Florida where a group of people who have served sentences for sexual abuse of children live, as they are not allowed to live within 1000 feet of places frequented by children. The second part of the trilogy, *Death of a Child*, premiered in 2017. Here we meet parents who have forgotten their child in the back seat of a hot car, so that the child died of heat stroke.

### **Directors' note**

With *Raising a School Shooter* we finalize our trilogy about social stigma. After making the two first films, *Pervert Park* and *Death of a Child*, our view of the world around us changed; we became less judgmental. But despite this, when we started to make this film about parents of school shooters, we still had a preconception that there had to be something that separated them from us other parents. That we would find something that they had done wrong, something that in some way could explain why exactly their child ended up committing a school shooting. But once again reality proved to be far more complex than our presumptions.

As parents of two, we understand the condemnation and the anger that comes with these terrible crimes. People understandably want to explain the tragedy and point the guilt at someone – often the parents of the shooters. Our aim with this film is to listen to those normally not heard and ask them about their responsibility and their experience as parents of those who committed the shootings. By doing so, we hope to get closer to understanding what lies behind the school shootings and examine whether there is a gain in listening instead of repelling. And as provocative as it may sound; do we even have things to learn by listening to the parents we instinctively would rather write off as failed parents?

### **Bios & Company Profiles**

**Director Frida Barkfors** has a degree in Film Directing at the National Film School of Denmark (2005-2009). Her first feature documentary was *Pervert Park* in 2014, together with Lasse Barkfors. It won a Special Jury Prize for Impact at the Sundance Film Festival in 2015 and has been screened at over 30 festivals around the world. Her and Lasse Barkfors' second feature documentary *Death of a Child* premiered in competition at Göteborg Film Festival. Both films have been widely distributed.

**Director Lasse Barkfors** has a degree in Fine Arts from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts (2007-2012). His first feature length film was *Pervert Park*, that premiered in 2014, directed together with Frida Barkfors. He also directed *Death of a Child* with Frida, and he is the cinematographer and editor of both films. He has directed several short films, fiction and experimental.

**Producer Anne Köhneke**, co-founder of and producer at Final Cut for Real since 2009. Prior to that she worked as Commissioning Editor of documentaries at DR2 and Sales Executive at TV2 World. She holds an MA in film from the University of Copenhagen, is an EAVE graduate and a member of The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. She produced both of Frida & Lasse Barkfors' previous documentaries.

**FINAL CUT FOR REAL** main production company (DK)

A two-time Oscar®-Nominated production company based in Denmark dedicated to producing high-end, creative documentaries and fiction for the international market. Selected titles: are Flee, President, The Distant Barking of Dogs, What Walaa Wants, Death of a Child, Pervert Park, Les Sauteurs, The Look of Silence, The Act of Killing

**DE ANDRA** co-production company (SE)

As the two previous films in the trilogy, this is a collaboration with Frida and Lasse Barkfors' production company De Andra Film, based in the south of Sweden. As the name suggests (De Andra means "the others" in Swedish) the company aims to make films that describe the complexity in a world often presented as one-dimensional.

**LES FILMS GRAIN DE SABLE** co-production company (FR)

With nearly 40 years of activity Les Films Grain De Sable is one of the oldest independent film production companies in France. Committed to showing the different realities of the world we live in, FGDS have produced and distributed over 300 full-length and short films, mostly documentaries focused on geopolitical issues, as well as on artistic, historical and scientific subjects.

**VISIBLE FILM** co-production company (BE)

Founded in 2014 in Brussels and managed by Thierry Detaille, offering twenty years experience within the field, as well as a wide network of professionals around the world. VISIBLE FILM focus on pre-sales, bridge financing and tax shelter.

**FILM I SKÅNE** co-production organization (SE)

Film i Skåne is a regional film organisation with the task of promoting film-culture activities and contributing to growth in Skåne (region in south Sweden) through film production. Film i Skåne was formed in 1995, and since 2009 has been one of four subsidiaries in the Business Region Skåne Group. Film I Skåne invest and coproduce short films, documentaries, feature films and TV series, and also focus on talent development.

## FACTS & MAIN CREDITS

Duration 74' & 58'

Release: April 2021

Language: English

A Danish, Swedish, French, Belgian Co-production

Produced by Final Cut for Real - Producer Anne Köhncke

In co-production with:

De Andra - Co-Producer Frida Barkfors

Les Films Grain De Sable - Co-Producer Sallah-Edine Ben Jamaa

Film i Skåne - Commissioning Editor Lisa Nyed

Visible Film - Co-Producer Thierry Detalje

RTBF - Head of RTBF Co-Production Isabelle Christiaens

Cinematographer: Lasse Barkfors

Editors: Lasse Barkfors, Signe Rebekka Kaufmann

Composer: Julian Winding

Main Researcher: Mauricio Gonzalez-Aranda

Sound Designer: Clément Badin

Re-recording mixer: Jonathan Vanneste

Colourist: David Chantoiseau

Editing Consultants: Yael Bitton, Heidi Fleisher

Post Producer: Maria Kristensen

Colourgrading studio : Amopix

Sound editing facilities: Will production

Sound mixing facilities: Dame Blanche SA

Developed with the support of:

Creative Europe - MEDIA Programme of the European Union, DR, SVT, Danish Film Institute

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Danish Film Institute, Film Commissioner Cecilia Lidin

Swedish Film Institute, Film Commissioner Klara Nilsson Grunning

Creative Europe - MEDIA Programme of the European Union

Nordisk Film & TV Fond, Senior Advisor Documentary Karolina Lidin

CNC

Procirep - Société des producteurs & Angoa

Strasbourg Eurométropole

In association with:

ARTE France, Head of Society and Culture Dept. Fabrice Puchault & Commissioning Editor Anne Charbonnel

BBC, Commissioning Editor Mandy Chang

DR, Commissioning Editor Anders Bruus  
ERR, Head of ETV2 Viola Salu  
Movistar+, Unscripted Team: Cristina Merino, M<sup>a</sup> Pilar Canales, Iñigo Trojaola  
NRK, Commissioning Editor Fredrik Færden  
RTS Radio Télévision Suisse, Unité des Films Documentaires - Steven Artels  
& Gaspard Lamunière  
SVT, Commissioning Editor Charlotte Madsen  
VG TV, Head of Acquisitions Andreas Fay  
VPRO, Commissioning Editor Nathalie Windhorst  
VRT, Tom Bleyaert

International Sales: [DR Sales](#)

Trailer

<https://vimeo.com/540121469>

