

made in copenhagen
presents
THE MOUNTAINS
A Documentary by Christian Einshøj



Photo credit: Christian Einshøj

Denmark / 2023 / 89 min. / Color
Danish, Norwegian and English with English subtitles

Festival Press Kit

Shared International Premieres
2023 HotDocs, International Competition (April 27 – May 7)
2023 Visions du Réel, Grand Angle (April 21 – April 30)

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/796621473>

PITCH

Armed with 30 years of home-video, 75.000 family photos and three tightly fit superhero costumes, the director Christian, ventures into landscapes of long-lost time, in an attempt to confront a 25-year old tragedy, and the hidden wounds left in its wake.

SYNOPSIS

To decades after the tragic death of his brother, the director Christians Einshøj's family is falling apart. But when his overworked CEO dad is unexpectedly let off and decides to sell the family home, Christian goes back home in a final desperate attempt to assemble the family and recover what is lost. Armed with 30 years of home-video, 75.000 family photos and three tightly fit superhero costumes, he ventures into landscapes of long-lost time, in an attempt to confront a 25-year old tragedy, and the hidden wounds left in its wake. It's a story of fathers and sons, of vast collections of stamps and amateur videography, of long-distance business-class flights and all the other ways in which we flee, instead of talking about that which hurts – and of the redemption that can follow when the silence is eventually breached.

CAST BIOS

Members of the family is Søren (1957), Eva (1958), Christian (1985), Frederik (1986) and Alexander (1994). Christian was born in Skovlunde, Denmark, before the family moved to Norway in 1989 because of his dad's work.

The first symptoms of Kristoffer's disease were diagnosed during Fall 1991 and he died two years later in august 1993. The disease, Histiocytose, hits an estimate of 6-8 children in Denmark every year and is very rare. In the beginning, the stay in Norway was meant to be a period of one year but it turned into two years. Because of the treatment of Kristoffer's disease at the hospital in Norway, it became a much longer stay for an indefinite time. When Kristoffer died we had lived in Norway for almost four years, and it wasn't an obvious decision whether we should stay or go back to Denmark. It was arranged that Kristoffer was buried in Norway, but that we - for a period of one year after the funeral - had the opportunity to dig him up if my parents decided to change their mind and go back to Denmark. During that year, my mom got pregnant with Alexander, and they made the decision to stay in Norway. Even though Alexander never lived in Denmark, we always spoke Danish to each other, but he never learnt to master it. Christian moved back to Denmark in 2005 while the rest of the family stayed in Norway. They still live there today.

Søren graduated from CBS in Copenhagen and have been in manager positions for international companies since the 80's – mostly for companies dealing with maritime telecommunications. He has been unemployed ever since he was terminated back in 2017.

Eva is educated as a pedagogue and work in a local kindergarten.

Frederik works with real estate investments in the Norwegian Oil Fund where he has been employed for the last seven years. He is engaged and is going to get married next year.

Alexander is studying and works part-time at an insurance company. After the breakdown in North Norway, he has been seeing a psychiatrist for a period of time.

PRINCIPAL FILMMAKERS & CAST

Director	Christian Einshøj
Producer	Mathilde Hvid Lippmann
Executive Producer	Helle Faber
Editor	Christian Einshøj
Writer	Christian Einshøj
Cinematography	Christian Einshøj
Sound	Sune Kaarsberg
Composer	Toke Brorson Odin

Principal Cast:

Søren Einshøj
Frederik Einshøj
Alexander Einshøj
Christian Einshøj
Eva Einshøj

KEY FILMMAKER BIOS

Director / Editor / Writer / Cinematographer Christian Einshøj is a self-taught director and film editor born in Denmark in 1985 but raised in a Norwegian suburb. His editing credits include Bodil award winning *Q's Barbershop* (2019). In 2018 his short doc *Haunted* was awarded Best International Short at HotDocs and went on to play at festivals around the world. *The Mountains* is his first feature.

Filmography

Haunted (2018), 30 min. Awarded best international short documentary at HotDocs in 2018. Nominated best short documentary at the Danish Film Academy. Selected festivals.

How I live, as you wanted to know, 15' (2014)

Producer Mathilde Hvid Lippmann (b. 1976) comes from a background as a production designer in theatre plays and fiction films but fell in love with the documentary genre and changed her field of work. She has been associated with Made in Copenhagen as a producer since 2013. She often works with new talents and has won the Danish Film Academy award for best short documentary twice - both by debuting directors. She has a BA in Film and Media Studies from the University of Copenhagen.

Her selected filmography includes:

An Eternity of You and Me (2022), Sanne This, 75 min. Awarded Best Film Lost Weekend (Virginia), Best Director NIFF (NY), First time sessions film maker (UK), Best feature documentary (Prague Film Awards) Selected Festivals: CPH:DOX (NEXT WAVE), EBS (South Korea), Lost Weekend (Virginia), Nordic International Film Festival (New York), RIDM (Canada), Tempo (Sweden), Women+Film (Denver), Prague Film Awards, Zagreb Dox (Croatia)

Mr. Graversen (2022), Michael Graversen, 80 min. Awarded Politiken's Special Mention at CPH:DOX, Nominated best documentary at the Danish Film Academy. Festival Selections: Tessaloniki, DocPoint, Budapest, Vera Film Festival.

Dark Blossom (2021), Dir. Frigge Fri, 80 min. awarded Politiken:DOX at CPH:DOX, nominated best documentary at the Danish Film Academy. Festival Selections: Hot Docs (Night Vision), Nordisk Panorama (New Nordic Voice competition), Neue Heimat Film (Austria), Milano Film Festival, Bergen IFF, Don't fear the weird (DK), Diametralfilm (Austria), Millenium Docs Against Gravity (PL), Beldocs (Serbia)

Follow You Home (2021), Dir. Kathrine Ravn Kruse, 75 min. Nominated for the NORDIC:DOX competition at CPH:DOX. Selected for DOC München and nominated for the SOS Kinderdörfer weltweit Award.

DOEL (2018) Dir. Frederik Sølberg, 67 min. Winner - Best International Documentary - Doku Baku (Azerbaijan). Selected festival selections: CPH:DOX (NEXT:WAVE), Sheffield Doc/Fest (New Talent), Int. Debut Doc. FF Rudnik (Russia), Doku Fest (Kosovo), Black Canvas (Mexico), DMZ international FF (South-Korea), IndieCork (Ireland), Dok Leipzig (Germany), Doc Alliance, London International Documentary Festival (UK), Visions du Reel.

You are still somebody's someone (2017), Dir. Esther Wellejus, 25 min. Winner – Best short documentary at the Danish Film Academy. Selected festival selections: CPH:DOX (NEXT:WAVE), Sheffield Doc/Fest (New Talent), Open City Doc. FF. (UK), Astra Film Festival (Romania).

Executive producer Helle Faber founded the Danish production company Made in Copenhagen in 2010. She has produced a large number of acclaimed documentary films for the international market, including **Theater of Violence**, **Skál**, **The Stranger**, **Motleys' Law**, **Warriors from the North**, **Putin's Kiss**, **Dark Side of Chocolate** and **Enemies of Happiness**. As a producer, Faber's projects have won awards at prestigious worldwide festivals, including IDFA, Sundance FF, Hot Docs, Berlin FF, DOC NYC and many others.

Sound designer Sune Kaarsberg graduated from the National Film School of Denmark in 2013. He has been working as a sound designer for the last 10 years – with a special passion for documentaries in the quirky arthouse genre. He is the guitar player in an experimental dark rock band and lives in an old, crooked house on the countryside

Composer Toke Brorson Odin

Toke Odin is a composer with great interest in building instruments and working with electronic instruments, vocals and percussion. He has composed the score for H. Palmarsen's *Winter Brothers*, Agniia Galdanova's *Queendom*, Jianjie Lin's *Blood and Water*, Stella Scott's *Bulldozer* and Christian Einshøj's *Haunted*.

Director's Statement

Christian Einshøj, Director / writer / Editor / Cinematographer

To me, film and family have virtually always been intertwined. When I was seven years old my brother became seriously ill, and when we were told he only had very little time left to live, my dad bought a video camera, in an attempt to hold on to that which would soon be lost.

But even though my brother died, half a year after, the video recordings never stopped. Instead, I myself got a camera too, and for the 25 years that followed, it was always around, not just as a tool for documenting our family's life, but as a mode of interaction. When I left home, I started combing through my dad's old archive. Despite the camera's omnipresence, no one had ever seen the footage, which through the years had accumulated into hundreds of hours of home video and more than 75.000 photos.

I'd started working as a film editor and was fascinated by personal documentary films like Jonathan Caouette's *Tarnation* and Ross McElwee's *Sherman's March*, and I began considering the possibility of telling my own family's story with my dad's old footage.

Initially I was simply attracted to the idea of assembling events from my family's life into a well-told story – but over the span of the 15 years' work on the film would take – I realized that my real interest lay in the task of creating a completely new narrative, one more in line with what I'd actually experienced than that which my family had been telling itself.

As I was growing up, I didn't recognize the death of my brother as an especially touchy subject. My parents spoke openly of the progression of the disease and eventually his death, and I was left with an impression of complete openness. But what was never spoken of, was how his death had affected each one of us personally. We were lacking a language for our individual experiences. In turn, this created an unfortunate dynamic inward in the family, where we were bound to a false narrative of everything being as it always had been. I think this created a distance, and made us seek away from each other, because we couldn't recognize ourselves in the story told by our collective silence.

An important turning point in my work with the film was my brother Fred's sudden openness, in the wake of his divorce, where he started relating his childhood behaviour of emotional suppression, exemplified by his story of not crying at the funeral because you "weren't supposed to". This inhibition struck me as equal parts mysterious and familiar.

I'm a child of the 1990's, where Arnold Schwarzenegger, Sylvester Stallone and Jean Claude van Damme took up a significant part of the popular consciousness with their hard-boiled bids on a masculin ideal. Their characters – following the lead of John Wayne and Clint Eastwood's mute cowboys from the 60's and 70's – promoted wordlessness and emotional suppression as strengths. Today, these former action heroes are widely considered ridiculous fossils of a foregone era, but their spirit lives on in other, more frightening forms, not least in the dictatorial strongmen of the world's oppressive regimes.

We need more images and better stories of mental health and masculinity, which can confirm the idea that *actual* strength is to dare being vulnerable and having the courage to talk about the difficult stuff. I hope that the audience will be able to see themselves in the story of my family and recognize my brothers' courage to dare putting their feelings into words.

PRODUCTION INFORMATION

ABOUT MADE IN COPENHAGEN

Danish production company Made in Copenhagen produces compelling stories from the real world for Danish and international audiences. They work with an acclaimed mix of experienced directors and new talent and have a solid foundation within an expanding network of Danish and international funds, broadcasters, co-producers and distributors. It was founded in 2010 by producer Helle Faber, who is also the CEO of the company. Previous productions include award-winning films such as "Mr. Graversen" (2022), "Dark Blossom" (2021), "Skål" (2021), "Long, Live, Love" (2020), "Q's Barbershop" (2019), "A Married Couple" (2019), The Stranger (2017), "Me and Dad – No Expectations of Applause." (2015), "Warriors From The North" (2014), and "Motley's Law" (2015).

More info: <http://www.madeincopenhagen.dk/en>

THE FILM IS FUNDED BY

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FILM INFORMATION

Country:	Denmark
Language:	Danish, Norwegian with English Subtitles
World Premiere:	CPH:DOX 2023
International Premiere:	Shared international premier HotDocs 2023 and Visions du Reel 2023
Filming Locations:	Denmark – Copenhagen Norway – Oslo and the arctic Spain – Costa del Sol
Running Time:	87 minutes
Productions Company:	Made In Copenhagen
Film Format / Camera:	SONY FS7, DV, Hi8

Website:

<https://www.madeincopenhagen.dk/en/mountains>