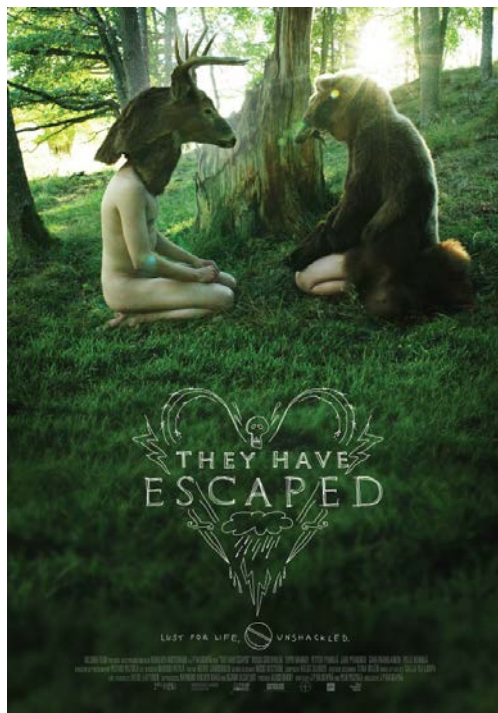


HELSINKI
FILMI

Presents

THEY HAVE ESCAPED



World Premiere

Venice Film Festival, Venice Days Section

Press screening at Venice:

August 26, 14:00

Public screening at Venice:

August 28, 16:30



Available for interviews in Venice:

J-P Valkeapää (director, writer)

Teppo Manner (main actor)

Pilvi Peltola (writer)

Pietari Peltola (DOP)

Markku Pätilä (Set Designer)

Helge Slikker (Composer)



For interviews, additional information and online screener, please contact:
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SYNOPSIS

In a twist on boy-meets-girl, the gritty and dreamy drama “They Have Escaped” is set at a juvenile detention center, where the boy, a stuttering introvert, has come to serve his mandatory civil service, and the girl, an attractive extrovert, is in custody. With boundless energy, she’s the kind of girl that trouble always finds. He’s quiet and reserved, but his attraction to her indomitable spirit makes them realize that they share a fire and a disregard for rules, laws and convention. Their environment can’t restrain them, so they steal a car and go on the run – beginning a journey of drugs, sex and endless escapes.

“They Have Escaped” is a poetically told and beautifully shot film about fragile love, childhood dreams and the violent reality.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Raisa and Joni are outsiders. Outcasts and misfits, they disturb the peace and have no understanding of boundaries. They have responsibilities but no rights; they're dreamers whose futures have been foretold.

The style of the film is expressionism, with a narrative style that changes according to the experiences of Raisa and Joni. They are children, and as they embark on the road to adulthood the film undergoes a change in style from a naivistic portrayal of young people to a dream-like, poetic narrative. The film is both an askew coming-of-age story and a fairytale-like reflection of today's Finland. Dreams, memories, hallucinations and reality move side by side, collide and finally melt into one another in the narrative.

Casting was a challenge. Since the main characters were 17 and 19, the actors would most likely be amateurs. We held an open casting call asking people to submit written applications with photos. We received over 400 applications, and chose 100 young people for auditions. Roosa Söderholm, who plays Raisa, had acted in a youth theater group. Teppo, who plays Joni, is a plumber; he had acted once before in "The Painting Sellers", a wonderful Cannes Cinefondation prize-winning film by Juho Kuosmanen. It was obvious that Roosa and Teppo had innate talent for acting, but it was the fearlessness with which they threw themselves into their roles was the key.

I wanted to make a film that would be as rough, capricious, surprising and determined as its main characters, who are people who haven't been ground in the mill of life yet. Instead, they still reach for the light. "They Have Escaped" is not a realistic film; it's an optimistic one.



BIOGRAPHY, J-P VALKEAPÄÄ, DIRECTOR, WRITER

J-P Valkeapää was born in 1977 in Porvoo, Finland. He attracted international attention as an illustrator and a cartoonist when he was a teenager. He studied film direction at the Department of Film and Television of the University of Art and Design, Helsinki, and as a student, made two award-winning short films, "Eyes closed without hands" (2000) and "The Fall" (2003).

In 2005 Valkeapää was selected to the Cannes Film Festival's Residence du Festival program to develop the script for "The Visitor", his directorial debut. "The Visitor" premiered in Venice Days at the Venice Film Festival in 2009. It was also awarded for best cinematography at the Gothenburg International Film Festival.

Valkeapää has also directed multiple commercial films and worked as an editor and a storyboard artist.

FILMOGRAPHY, J-P VALKEAPÄÄ

Feature

2008 "The Visitor" director & screenwriter

Selected for Cannes International Film Festival's Residence du Festival

Selected for Cinemart Rotterdam 2006.

Premiered at the Venice International Film Festivals (Venice Days) 2008 Won the Nordic Film Award, and Best Cinematography Award at the Gothenburg International Film Festival 2009.

Won the Finnish Art Critic's Society Award 2009 for director/screenwriter.

Won Best Cinematography and Best Editing Award (nominated for 6 awards, including Best Directing) at the Finnish Film Awards 2010.

Short films

2000 "Eyes Closed Without Hands" director, screenwriter

Won the Best School Programme at Bologna International Festival of Film Schools 2000.

2003 "The Fall" director, screenwriter, editor

Premiered at the Locarno International Film Festival 2003 (Leopards of Tomorrow).

Won the 2nd Prize at NYU Tisch School of the Arts New York International Student Film Festival 2003.

PRODUCER'S STATEMENT

"They Have Escaped" is an unusual film, totally free from speculation and pretense. It is a very simple and beautiful, even classical, story, told in an unusual way. I'm very proud of the opportunity to be a part of this film, and I'm very confident about screening it in Venice Film Festival. This is genuine auteur cinema, arthouse at its best, and still a lovable, beautiful story that speaks to anyone who has once been young.

BIOGRAPHY, ALEKSI BARDY, PRODUCER

Aleksi Bardy studied filmmaking at the University of Art and Design Helsinki. He has written seven successful fiction feature films, including box office hits "Restless" and "The Tough Ones" and the internationally acclaimed "Forbidden Fruit" (2009) and "Heart Of A Lion" (2013).

Bardy co-founded Helsinki-filmi Ltd. in 2002 and has produced fourteen feature films and co-produced various international projects, including films such as "Bekas" by Karzan Kader (Sweden), "Parked" by Darragh Byrne (Ireland), "Visitor" (Estonia), "Mr. Governor" by Måns Månsson (Sweden) and "Disco And Atomic War" by Jaak Kilmi (Estonia).

Bardy is a member of the European Film Academy EFA and Ateliers du Cinema Européen (ACE).

ABOUT HELSINKI FILMI

Helsinki-filmi is an active and innovative production company. Dedication to the development and constant search of extraordinary stories defines the core of the company. The emphasis is on contemporary stories based on original ideas.

Helsinki-filmi has produced 15 feature films and numerous TV productions since it was founded in 2002. It has participated in several European co-productions with Sweden, Ireland, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Russia and the UK. Helsinki-filmi is known for several domestic box office hits and for films distributed widely in the entire world.

MAIN CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Roosa Söderholm (RAISA), 20, has just enrolled at the Theatre Academy in Helsinki. She has previously acted on the stage, and had a minor role in Maria Ruotsala's "Apeiron" (2013) before being cast as the lead in "They Have Escaped".

Teppo Manner (JONI) is a 22-year-old plumber and actor. He has previously been seen in Juho Kuosmanen's award-winning "The Painting Sellers", which topped the Cinéfondation Awards in Cannes, among other awards.

CREDITS

Title: They Have Escaped

Original Title: He ovat paenneet

Director: J-P Valkeapää

Written by: J-P Valkeapää, Pilvi Peltola

Producer: Aleksis Bardy

Production Company: Helsinki-filmi Oy

Co-Production Company: Revolver Amsterdam

Co-producers: Raymond van der Kaaij and Dijana Olcay-Hot

Cast: Teppo Manner
Roosa Söderholm
Petteri Pennilä
Pelle Heikkilä

DOP: Pietari Peltola

Set Designer: Markku Pätilä

Editor: Mervi Junkkonen

Sound Designer: Micke Nyström

Composer: Helge Slikker

Costume designer: Tiina Wilén

Make up Artist: Salla Yli-Luopa

Line Producer: Heidi Laitinen

Genre: Drama, Thriller

Running time: 100 min

Country: Finland

Language: Finnish

Subtitled versions: English, Swedish

Format: HD, DCP

Production Year: 2014

Release Year: 2014

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