

68<sup>th</sup> Internationale  
Filmfestspiele  
Berlin  
Generation






























CIRCE FILMS PRESENTS

# COBAIN

A FILM BY  
NANOUK LEOPOLD

BAS KEIZER • NAOMI VELISSARIOU • WIM OPBROUCK • DANA MARINECI • COSMINA STRATAN

BETA CINEMA PRESENTS A CIRCE FILMS PRODUCTION IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH A PRIVATE VIEW • GORIN FILM • VPRO TELEVISION • THE FILM KITCHEN  
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY FRANK VAN DEN ECKEN<sup>TM</sup> EDITOR KATHARINA WARTENA PRODUCTION DESIGNER ELSJE DE BRILMUSIC BY ANDREAS HILDEBRANDT COSTUME DESIGNER HARRY DE WIT  
CAST PAUL LEONIE LUTTIK • JANSZJOS GOSCHALK • ANNE CHRIS DE VEEER • LINDSEY BLOM • MANOUK BLOM • PRODUCED BY BEN BOUWMEESTER  
CO-PRODUCED BY DRES PHILYO • JEAN-CLAUDE VAN RIJCKEGHEM • HERBERT SCHWERING • CHRISTINE KRAUK • JOOST DE WOLF • INEKE KANTERS • JAN VAN DER ZANDEN  
PRODUCED BY STIENETTE BOSKLOPPER • LISETTE KELDER • STIENETTE BOSKLOPPER DIRECTED BY NANOUK LEOPOLD

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## LOGLINE

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Cobain loves his mother Mia unconditionally, although she was never able to take care of him. When Mia gets pregnant again, Cobain faces a momentous dilemma.

## SYNOPSIS

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Cobain comes from a broken home, but he is not a broken soul yet. He cares deeply for the person who gave him that funny name: his mother Mia. Living on the streets, Mia just can't get a grip on her life, even now that she is heavily pregnant with another child. When Cobain demands that Mia get help for herself and the baby, the two separate after a bitter argument. He finds shelter with Mia's ex Wickmayer, a man who pimps out young, foreign women. Supporting them in their daily lives and flirting with them as he is growing into a young man, Cobain feels he finally found something resembling a home. When Mia attempts to contact her son again, Wickmayer sends her away. But Cobain - seeing she's in an even worse condition - takes responsibility and tries to help Mia to be a good mother for once.

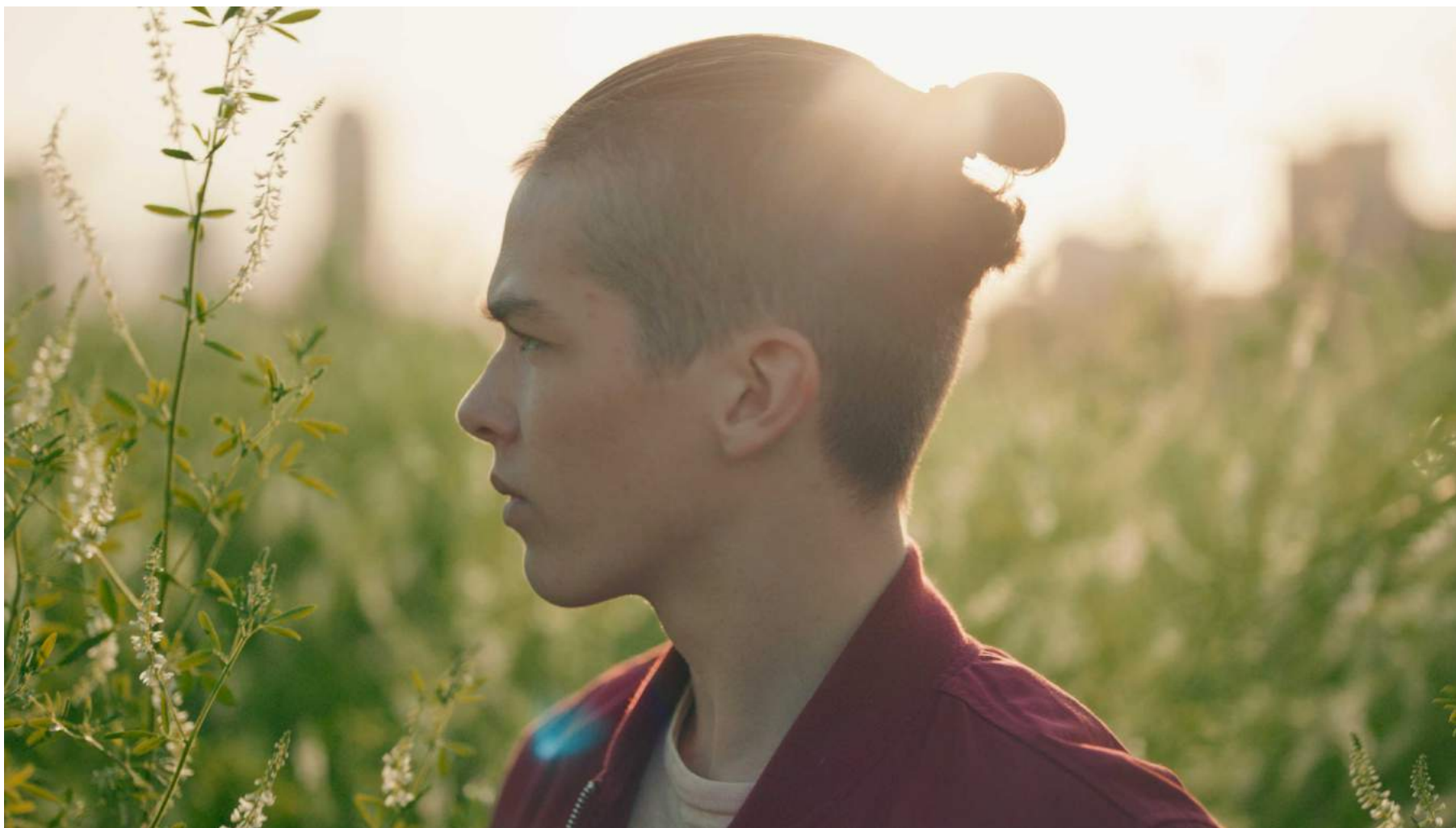
**World premiere: Berlinale Generation 2018**

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Bas Keizer  
Credit: Frank van den Eeden

# GENERAL INFO

Title	Cobain
Genre	Drama
Language	Dutch, English
Subtitles	English
Year of production	2017
Duration	94 minutes
Shooting format	Alexa ProRes 4444 3,2k
Format	DCP (24 FPS)
Ratio	1:2,39
Audio	5.1 surround
Director	Nanouk Leopold
Producer	CIRCE FILMS Stienette Bosklopper & Lisette Kelder
World sales	Beta Cinema
Benelux distribution	Cinemien
German distribution	W-film
World premiere	Berlinale Generation 2018
Dutch release	April 2018

A PRIVATE VIEW (BE)  
Dries Phlypo & Jean-Claude Van Rijckeghem

Co-producers

COIN FILM (DE)  
Herbert Schwering & Christine Kiauk

VPRO TELEVISION (NL)  
Joost de Wolf

THE FILM KITCHEN (NL)  
Ineke Kanters & Jan van der Zanden

COBAIN is a co-production of CIRCE FILMS, A PRIVATE VIEW, COIN FILM, VPRO TELEVISION and THE FILM KITCHEN. The film is supported by the NETHERLANDS FILM FUND, the NETHERLANDS FILM PRODUCTION INCENTIVE, EURIMAGES, the CO-PRODUCTION FUND FOR DOMESTIC BROADCASTING (CoBO), the FLEMISH AUDIOVISUAL FUND (VAF), FILM- UND MEDIENSTIFTUNG NRW, CASA KAFKA PICTURES, CASA KAFKA PICTURES MOVIE TAX SHELTER empowered by BELFIUS, CREATIVE EUROPE MEDIA PROGRAMME, WESTDEUTSCHER RUNDfunk COLOGNE (WDR) and ABRAHAM TUSCHINSKI FUND.



# CAST & CREW

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## CAST

Cobain	Bas Keizer
Mia	Naomi Velissariou
Wickmayer	Wim Opbrouck
Adele	Dana Marineci
Jadwiga	Cosmina Stratan
Pieterneel	Maria Kraakman
Nora	Maartje van de Wetering
Patrick	Thomas Ryckewaert
Klaas	Ward Weemhoff
Marja	Tamar van den Dop
Sieger	Oscar van Woensel
Abel	Jurre Otto
David	Tonko Bossen
Dokter	Belinda van der Stoep
Reginald	Adison dos Reis
Serge	Cyriel Guds

## CREW

Director	Nanouk Leopold
Writer	Stienette Bosklopper
D.O.P	Frank van den Eeden
Production design	Elsje de Bruijn
Editor	Katharina Wartena
Composer	Harry de Wit
Costume design	Manon Blom
Sound design	Andreas Hildebrandt
Casting	Leonie Luttik, Janusz Gosschalk, Anne Chris de Veer
Line producer	Ben Bouwmeester



f.l.t.r. Bas Keizer, Dana Marineci  
Credit: Frank van den Eeden

# CONTEXT

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The collaboration between Nanouk Leopold and Circe Films has existed for nearly 20 years. Highlights produced by this partnership include GUERNSEY, which was selected for the 2005 Cannes Film Festival and featured Maria Kraakman's first major film role, as well as BOVEN IS HET STIL, based on Gerbrand Bakker's beloved novel and starring Jeroen Willems, who passed away in late 2012. The film opened the Panorama Special program of the 2013 Berlinale.

Nanouk Leopold is widely praised for her strong actor directing and the visual impact of her work. All of her feature films were screened at top festivals such as Cannes, Berlin and Toronto. In 2016, she became a member of the KNAW's Society of Arts. In 2017, Leopold made her debut as a theatre director. She directed the stage adaptation of Ingmar Bergman's 'From the Life of the Marionettes' for Toneelgroep Amsterdam.

With COBAIN, the collaboration with Leopold's preferred producer Stienette Bosklopper turned a new leaf. Bosklopper needed to spread her wings and wrote the screenplay for COBAIN based on her own original idea. Both parties enjoyed the creative back-and-forth, and Bosklopper hasn't looked back. She is currently writing a ten-part international series with Sacha Polak and working on a new feature film.

Nearly 500 boys were scouted for the part of Cobain before the team finally selected Bas Keizer from Poortugaal (the Netherlands). Bas was literally plucked from a school yard and was really more interested in making films than he was in being in front of the camera. Now that COBAIN has finished shooting, he wants to continue his acting career and, among other projects, is set to play a part in VECHTMEISJE by Johan Timmers. The other protagonist in the film is Cobain's mother Mia, portrayed by Naomi Velissariou. Velissariou works as a theatre director and starred in OUT OF LOVE by Paloma Aguilera Valdebenito. In 2017, she stood out because of her stage play 'Sontag' and the fact that she was awarded the Charlotte Köhler Prijs, an award to encourage young talent.

Another key part goes to Wim Opbrouck, who plays Wickmayer, Mia's ex-boyfriend. Wim Opbrouck previously worked with Leopold in BOVEN IS HET STIL. Two great supporting parts go to Romanian Golden Palm winner Cosmina Stratan (BEYOND THE HILLS) and Dana Marineci (SCARRED HEARTS). In addition, the film features countless outstanding actors in other supporting parts: Maria Kraakman, Thomas Ryckewaert, Tamar van den Dop, Oscar van Woensel and Ward Weemhof.

COBAIN was largely shot in Rotterdam, Leopold's birthplace. The crew for COBAIN included familiar faces such as production designer Elsje de Bruijn, D.O.P. Frank van den Eeden, editor Katharina Wartena, costume designer Manon Blom and composer Harry de Wit. Lisette Kelder and Stienette Bosklopper jointly acted as producer on this film.

COBAIN will have its world premiere at the upcoming Berlinale, in the Generation section. Nanouk Leopold is somewhat of a festival regular: her last four films screened there in various parts of the program. It will be released in the Netherlands by Cinemien in April 2018.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

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I will always prefer stories about outcasts, imperfect humans who must struggle to make something of their lives, stories in which the meaning of life is held in the details.

The unconditional love Cobain feels for Mia prevents him from getting his own life in order. He feels responsible for his unstable, pregnant mother and wants to rescue her. He is only able to choose life once he realizes that Mia cannot be saved. I think this is a very powerful dramatic concept. During the film, Cobain develops from a child into a man. He learns to take care of himself and make up his own mind, with all the consequences this entails.

Life through the eyes of a fifteen-year-old boy. He lives in exceptional circumstances, but is not always aware of this. Cobain's mental journey is also a literal journey through the worlds he - temporarily - inhabits; the worlds in which he must make sense of himself. As the landscape changes, so does Cobain. He gets to know himself and the world in a new way.

Cobain has had a false start in life. His addicted, pregnant mother is unable to take care of him. Their roles are reversed: she is the child, he the adult. To prevent history from repeating itself, he must save himself by saving his unborn brother.

Cobain does not view his life as particularly hard or troubled; he takes things as they come. I am not so much concerned with the circumstances that can ruin a man, but rather with the life force that will not be slowed or tamed. It is the light that wriggles through the tiniest hole in the curtains, projecting an array of images onto the wall. In that moment, when you see it, there is happiness.

*Nanouk Leopold*



f.l.t.r. Bas Keizer, Sofia Dossantos, Dana Marineci, Cosmina Stratan, Wim Opbrouck  
Credit: Jaap Vrenegoor

# WRITER'S STATEMENT

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Although I have been putting my heart and soul into producing films over 20 years and will continue to do so, I have felt a growing need to tell stories of my own. It is a great honor that my first screenplay has been brought to life by Nanouk Leopold. Our many years of collaborating have shaped me and she is a strong director with a consistent style. Although I had no well-defined idea of what the film would end up looking like, it meets all my expectations: the film has a great energy, is truthful, and often stunning to behold.

The first image I had of Cobain was that of a boy who worked as a sort of whore's helper. Fetching them cigarettes, dropping them off at a gig and keeping the money safe. I imagined the unbearable pain of constantly being surrounded by women if you have no mother of your own. I soon decided that the protagonist should be called Cobain: a name thrust upon him just as thoughtlessly as the accident of his birth. His own and his mother's history should be felt through Cobain's name.

Most good stories are remembered through their protagonists. Bas Keiser *is* an unforgettable Cobain: restrained yet willful, streetwise yet distinguished, fragile yet powerful. It is simply fantastic that we managed to find him among 500 boys; with his earnest and dedicated approach to the work on his first film he has delivered on his promise. Naomi Velissariou is a gorgeous Mia: rock & roll, witty, and never pathetic.

Cobain's story is about resilience and the capacity for autonomy. Cobain faces his challenges head-on and decides to take matters into his own hands. But his actions trigger a chain of events that will ultimately lead to tragedy. Cobain will never be the same after the time he spends in the countryside with his mother. He experiences a life-changing moment: he will never forget that, in that instant, his life changed direction.

*Stienette Bosklopper*



f.l.t.r. Bas Keizer, Naomi Velissariou  
Credit: Frank van den Eeden

# BIOGRAPHY DIRECTOR

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## NANOUK LEOPOLD

Nanouk Leopold (Rotterdam, 1968) graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Rotterdam in 1992 and from the Dutch Film and Television Academy in 1998. Her graduation film WEEKEND won the Tuschinski Award for best student film. Her first feature ÎLES FLOTTANTES was selected for the IFFR Tiger Competition in 2001. GUERNSEY was selected for the Quinzaine des Réalisateurs at Cannes in 2005. WOLFSBERGEN premiered at the Forum of the Berlinale 2007 and was selected for the Toronto International Film Festival in the same year. BROWNIAN MOVEMENT premiered in Toronto in 2010 and had its European premiere at the Forum in Berlin in 2011. In 2013 IT'S ALL SO QUIET was the opening film of the Berlinale Panorama Special. Nanouk became a member of the Society of the Arts of the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences in 2016. In 2017 Leopold directed her first play, *From the Life of the Marionettes*, for the prestigious Amsterdam theatre group TGA. COBAIN is her sixth feature film.



# FILMOGRAPHY DIRECTOR

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## 2017 COBAIN

Feature, Circe Films, 94 min. DCP.

Co-production with A Private View (BE), Coin Film (DE), VPRO Television (NL) and The Film Kitchen (NL).

BNL distribution: Cinemien, DE distribution: W-Film, world sales: Beta Cinema.

**Generation IFF Berlin 2018**

## 2013 IT'S ALL SO QUIET (BOVEN IS HET STIL)

Feature, Circe Films, 100 min. DCP.

Co-production with N279 Entertainment (NL), Coin Film (DE), VPRO Television (NL).

BNL distributie: Cinéart, world sales: Films Distribution.

**Opening film Panorama Special Berlinale 2013**

**Best Feature Film Torino GLTB Film Festival 2013, Bildrausch-ring Award Basel IFF 2013, Outstanding International Dramatic Feature Film Award LA Outfest 2013, Silver Hugo Award Chicago IFF 2013**

## 2010 BROWNIAN MOVEMENT

Feature, Circe Films, 97 min. 35mm.

Co-production with Coin Film (DE), Serendipity Films (BE), VPRO Television (NL)

BNL distribution: Cinéart, DE distribution: Filmlichter, world sales: Films Distribution.

**Visions program Toronto IFF 2010, Forum IFF Berlin 2011**

**6 nominations and Golden Calf Best Screenplay and Golden Calf Best Director Netherlands Film Festival, International Film Guide Award New Horizons Film Festival 2011, Best Actress Festival des Deutschen Films 2011**

**2007 WOLFSBERGEN**

Feature, Circe Films, 93 min. 35mm.

Co-production with Cosmokino (BE), VPRO Television (NL)

BNL distribution: A-Film, world sales: Films Distribution.

**Forum IFF Berlin 2007, Toronto IFF 2007**

**Special Mention Caligari Caligari Film Award, 6 nominations and Golden Calf Best Camera and Golden Calf Best Male Supporting Act Netherlands Film Festival 2007, Audience Award Festival du Cinéma Nordique, Rouen 2008, Jury Award Teplice IFF**

**2005 GUERNSEY**

Feature, Circe Films, 92 min. 35mm.

Co-production with Cosmokino (BE), VPRO Television (NL)

NL distribution: A-Film, BE distribution: Cinélibre, FR distribution: ASC Distribution.

**Quinzaine des Réalisateurs Cannes 2005**

**Golden Calf Best Director and Best Actress Netherlands Film Festival 2005, Dutch Film Critics Award 2005, Best Film Alba Regia Festival**

**2002 LA GRANDE GUERRE**

TV-adaptation of a theatre play by Hotel Modern, AGAT Film/Arte, 50 min.

**2000 ÎLES FLOTTANTES**

Feature, Circe Films, 85 min. 35mm.

Co-production with Motel Films (NL), VPRO Television (NL)

NL distribution: A-Film.

**IFF Rotterdam - Tiger Award Competition 2001**

**Utrecht Prize City of Utrecht 2001, J. Jordaan Award from Art Foundation of Amsterdam**

**1999** MAX LUPA

TV film, VPRO television, 45 min. 16mm.

**1998** WEEKEND

Graduation film, 27 min. 16mm.

Tuschinski Award for Best Student Film Netherlands Film Festival, Kodak Award Munich Film Festival



Director Nanouk Leopold (center), 1st AD Wouter Severijn (2<sup>nd</sup> of right)  
Credit: Victor Arnolds

# BIOGRAPHY PRODUCERS

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## STIENETTE BOSKLOPPER – CIRCE FILMS

After producing children's TV in her early years, owner and managing director Stienette Bosklopper of Circe Films became a seasoned producer of arthouse films. Stienette has collaborated on all Nanouk Leopold's films, whose COBAIN is selected for this year's Berlinale Generation and whose IT'S ALL SO QUIET was Opening Film of Panorama Special in 2013. She also contributed to many (debut) features including HEMEL by Sacha Polak, DE JUEVES A DOMINGO by Dominga Sotomayor, THE HAPPIEST GIRL IN THE WORLD by Radu Jude and most recently worked on sophomore WALDSTILLE by Martijn Maria Smits and TIME SHARE by Sebastián Hofmann. Stienette has written a standard work on creative producership and works as a scriptwriter too. COBAIN is her first feature film script and she is currently co-writing the TV series AVRUPA by Sacha Polak.

## LISETTE KELDER – CIRCE FILMS

Lisette Kelder joined Circe Films as a producer in 2015. She has worked as a (line) producer for many (inter)national documentaries, TV shows, art installations (such as Aernout Mik and Gabriel Lester) and features films, such as GROENLAND (2015), BETWEEN 10 AND 12 (2014), ONDER HET HART (2014), A LONG STORY (2013), IT'S ALL SO QUIET (2013), DAGEN VAN GRAS (2011), NINA SATANA (2011), LOFT (2010), BROWNIAN MOVEMENT (2010), FISH TANK (2009), NIGHTWATCHING (2007) and recently COBAIN.

# BIOGRAPHY CO-PRODUCERS

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## A PRIVATE VIEW

Dries Phlypo of A Private View has worked as a producer on more than 30 features, many of which were co-productions with the Netherlands. COBAIN is his first collaboration with Circe Films. Dries has produced shorts TANGHI ARGHENTINI (2006) and NA WEWE (2010) that were nominated for an Oscar. With writer Jean-Claude Van Rijckeghem, Dries has produced feature films such as the TV series AMIGOS, ZAGROS (2017), IFF Locarno selected VINCENT (2016), MARRY ME (2015), EFA discovery award winner OXYGEN (2011) and Cannes Critics' week winner MOSCOW, BELGIUM (2008).

## COIN FILM

Coin Film has been developing and producing feature films and high-end documentaries for cinema and television since 1993. All of its films are characterized by the filmmaker's individualist approach and artistic profile with the main goal being the combination of artistic films with ambitious entertainment. The focus of the current project development lies on the comedy genre. Coin Film is also continually working together with new talents. Of the more than 40 films produced to date, many have been international co-productions. Coin Film producers are Christine Kiauk and Herbert Schwering (board member of the NRW Film and TV Producers Association).

## THE FILM KITCHEN

The Film Kitchen is founded by producers Ineke Kanters and Jan van der Zanden (former producer of Waterland Film) and specializes in producing and co-producing feature films for the international market. They also produce short films and series for television for the national market. The production company cooperates closely with strong and experienced filmmakers as well as with young remarkable talents, nationally and internationally. Interesting content is the aim and it is combined with innovative cinematographic quality. The Film Kitchen develops and produces arthouse films as well as feature films for a mainstream audience. Amongst their productions are DISAPPEARANCE (2017) and FORBIDDEN LOVE (2017).



f.l.t.r. Bas Keizer, Naomi Velissariou  
Credit: Victor Arnolds

# BIOGRAPHY CAST

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## **BAS KEIZER (COBAIN)**

Bas Keizer (1998) lives near Rotterdam and was street casted in 2015 for the role of Cobain. He is currently studying audio-visual techniques at the Grafisch Lyceum Rotterdam. COBAIN is his acting debut. Besides creating his own video content, Bas is continuing his acting career with a role in VECHTMEISJE by Johan Timmers.



## **NAOMI VELISSARIOU (MIA)**

Naomi Velissariou (1984) got her Master's degree in Theatre, Film and Literary Theory in 2009 at the University of Antwerp and graduated in 2012 as an actress at the Drama Academy Maastricht. She starred in many plays since and directs her own theatre productions at Frascati Amsterdam. In 2016 she made her film debut with a leading role in OUT OF LOVE by Paloma Aguilera Valdebenito, which premiered at IFF Rotterdam. Naomi also starred in the Belgian drama series CHAUSSEE D'AMOUR (2016) and in 2017 she won the Charlotte Köhler Award.



## **WIM OPBROUCK (WICKMAYER)**

Wim Opbrouck (1969) is a Flemish actor and singer. As an actor he was connected to the Blauwe Maandag Compagnie, Toneelhuis and NTGent. From 2010 until 2015 he was artistic leader of NTGent. Wim became known by his appearance in TV shows and series, a documentary and several features, among which LOVE REVISITED (2017), CAFÉ DERBY (2016), VENTOUX (2015), IT'S ALL SO QUIET (2013) and CAN GO THROUGH SKIN (2009). In 2016 Wim won the Award for Best Actor at the IFF Aubagne for his role in CAFÉ DERBY.



## DANA MARINECI (ADELE)

Dana Marineci (1987) is a Romanian actress. She studied at the University of Theatrical Arts and Cinematography in Bucharest and graduated in 2012. Since then, she starred in various theatre plays and she is a guest actor at National Theatre of Bucharest. Besides theatre, she played in several feature films, like the much praised TONI ERDMANN (2016) and SCARRED HEARTS (2016), which was nominated for Best Film at the Locarno Film Festival.



## COSMINA STRATAN (JADWIGA)

Cosmina Stratan (1984) is a Romanian actress. She studied acting at the University of Theatrical Arts and Cinematography. After graduating, she played her first lead role in BEYOND THE HILLS (2012) by Palme d'Or winner Cristian Mungiu. Together with co-star Cristina Flutur she won the award for Best Actress at Cannes in 2012. Cosmina then acted in the popular Romanian TV series RĂMÂI CU MINE (2013) and several short and feature films, including SHELLEY (2016) and DUBLU (2016).



f.l.t.r. Naomi Velissariou, Bas Keizer  
Credit: Frank van den Eeden

# CONTACT DETAILS

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