

TRIBECA FILM IN PARTNERSHIP WITH AMERICAN EXPRESS PRESENTS

CaricevanHouten RutgerHauer LiamCunningham



Black Butterflies



AVAILABLE NATIONWIDE ON DEMAND
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TRIBECA FILM IN PARTNERSHIP WITH AMERICAN EXPRESS PRESENTS A BAVARIA FILM INTERNATIONAL WITH IDTV FILM AND COOL BEANS PRESENTATION 'BLACK BUTTERFLIES' A PRODUCTION BY COMET FILM AND SPIER FILMS IN ASSOCIATION WITH RIBA FILM INTERNATIONAL STARRING CARICE VAN HOUTEN LIAM CUNNINGHAM GRAHAM CLARKE NICHOLAS PAULING CANDICE D'ARCY AND RUTGER HAUER CASTING CHRISTA SCHAMBERGER ANA FEYDER JEREMY ZIMMERMANN COSTUME DESIGNER RAE DONNELLY MUSIC PHILIP MILLER FILM EDITOR SANDER VOS PRODUCTION DESIGNER DARRYL HAMMER DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY GIULIO BICCARI EXECUTIVE PRODUCER ARNOLD HESLENFELD WRITTEN BY GREG LATTER PRODUCED BY FRANS VAN GESTEL RICHARD CLAUS MICHAEL AURET ARRY VOORSMIT DIRECTED BY PAULA VAN DER OEST WITH FINANCIAL SUPPORT BY THE NETHERLANDS FILM FUND COBO FUND AND DTF IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH THE NTR





Short Synopsis

Poetry, politics, madness and desire collide in the story of the woman hailed as South Africa's Sylvia Plath. In 1960s Cape Town, as apartheid steals the expressive rights of blacks and whites alike, young Ingrid Jonker (Carice van Houten, "Game of Thrones," *Black Book*) finds her freedom scrawling verse while frittering through a series of stormy affairs. Amid escalating quarrels with her lovers and her rigid father, a parliament censorship minister (Rutger Hauer), the poet witnesses an unconscionable event that will alter the course of both her artistic and personal lives.

Long Synopsis

Poetry, politics, madness, and desire collide in the true story of the woman hailed as South Africa's Sylvia Plath. In 1960s Cape Town, as apartheid steals the expressive rights of blacks and whites alike, young Ingrid Jonker (Carice van Houten, "Game of Thrones," *Black Book*) finds her freedom scrawling verse while frittering through a series of stormy affairs. Amid escalating quarrels with her lovers and her rigid father, a parliament censorship minister (Rutger Hauer), the poet witnesses an unconscionable event that will alter the course of both her artistic and personal lives.

Ravishing cinematography and a classical approach to dramatic storytelling augment van Houten's magnetic central performance as a woman governed by equal parts genius and mercurial gloom. Her inner turmoil mirrored her country's upheaval, but in this achingly heartfelt period drama the people always have center stage, not the politics.



The Making of the Film

“The death of poets sends a dark tone ringing out over the world. Of all the children of man they are the strangest, the most beloved, disturbing and beyond reach. To all times the holy ones. They are not buried with their bodies, but remain to shake and confuse us, to awaken the living, their language universal; and among these Ingrid Jonker.”

A Crown of Wild Olive, Jack Cope, 1966

The Inspiration

When Nelson Mandela read Ingrid Jonker’s poem “The Child Who Was Shot Dead by Soldiers in Nyanga” during his first address in the new South African parliament on May 24, 1994, he called her, “...an Afrikaner woman who transcended a particular experience and became a South African, an African and a citizen of the world,” adding, “She was both a poet and a South African. She was both an Afrikaner and an African. She was both an artist and a human being. In the midst of despair, she celebrated hope. Confronted by death, she asserted the beauty of life.”

Dutch producer Arry Voorsmit first came across Ingrid Jonker while working for public television in the Netherlands. After he saw the footage of Mandela reciting her poem, he says, “We then saw a documentary on Dutch television and came to realise how special, how important, idiosyncratic, individual and unique she was.”

Simone Jonker, Ingrid’s daughter, now 53, says, “Since Mandela made that speech in parliament I think more people became aware of her. There are people who have her poems tattooed on their backs, people who say that her poems mean more than the verses in the Bible and even those who say she speaks to them from the grave.”



Crafting the Screenplay

It took eight years to bring *Black Butterflies* to the screen, and the first step was engaging a South African screenwriter to tell the story. After Jonker's death in 1965, the Master of the Court awarded copyrights and control of her literary estate to Jack Cope. He established the Ingrid Jonker Trust and remained a trustee until his death in 1991, when his own papers and journals joined those of Jonker's at the National English Literary Museum in Grahamstown.

Award-winning South African screenwriter Gregg Latter (*Goodbye Bafana, Forgiveness*), swept away by the boldness of Jonker's poetry, recalls going through the papers. "I went there and sat in a drab little room while someone with special gloves brought me Cope's diaries," Latter says. "Jack was the kind of guy who wrote a page a day. I sat there reading his innermost feelings about Ingrid—I couldn't have had a better insight into her even if she had told me about herself. Here was a man trying to fathom her out, giving me complete access to the incredibly complicated, wild spirit of Ingrid Jonker."

Latter says the honesty and detail even revealed such moments as when they first made love. "In the first year it was very romantic—he called her 'my sweet pea' then after a year he would refer to her as 'hell.' On some days as you turned the page there would just be one word written: 'awful.' He had had such a terrible time with her. She was a very difficult person to be with and yet he felt he couldn't be without her."

Latter found out about the principal characters in her life, many of whom had passed away, then he wrote up a chronology of events and what he calls "a bland biographical narrative" as he strived to get into the hearts and minds of the characters in the story of Jonker's life. "The more I investigated her I realised this was the story of a woman who was at odds with the male forces in her life. Primarily because of her father's big presence—he too was an author in his own right,



although she claimed he wrote 'books' and not 'novels.' He was a journeyman when it came to writing as opposed to an artist."

He relied on documentaries and books for additional research and obviously drew from her vivid poetry. "The sea and water is a constant metaphor, as are butterflies. I made the sea a recurring image—as though the sea was waiting for her."

But it was Cope's diaries that proved the most formidable asset as well as the memories of some, for example Michael Cope, Jack's son, who remembered Jonker's presence from his childhood, "Jack was divorced and the children would come and visit him and Ingrid at the Clifton Bungalow," says Latter. "Michael said whenever she came into a place which was environmentally ordered when she left, she left it in chaos. Chaos in every sense—physical, emotional and spiritual chaos."

When Oscar-nominated director Paula van der Oest came on board the title of the film was changed from *Smoke and Ochre* (*Rook en Oker* is the title of Jonker's award-winning 1963 collection of poetry) to *Black Butterflies*, and the film moved away from an apartheid-driven biopic into a feverish insight into the creative mind. Producer Voorsmit says, "The core of the story became this idea that as a human being you have to have a reason to live. There is a need for everybody to express themselves and apartheid is just the background in front of which our story unfolds."

Preparation on the screenplay continued with Latter travelling to the Netherlands to work with Van der Oest and the director journeying to Latter's home in the seaside town of Knysna to work



with him. “We worked in great detail and when Paula came to work with me I insisted we meet on the beach,” Latter says, “as the beach and the seafront were so important in Ingrid’s life.”

Latter and Van der Oest crafted the story around the contradictory inner life of Jonker, her chaotic, wild spirit, the powerful and at times destructive influences of men on her destiny and her unbridled challenges to the conservative norms of the time. “She had no shields or masks or defences,” says Latter. “That brutal honesty was either repellent to people or they thought it was really fresh. Men were surprised by it, but she was also very beautiful and looked great in a bikini. There was no shyness about her body and her feelings. You must remember it was the ‘60s and life for a poet could be one big bed in those pre-AIDS days. It was the start of a sexual revolution and for Afrikaners like Ingrid, this came as a moment of great physical and emotional liberation.”

And so the story would also concentrate on the emotions, the sexuality, jealousies, frustrations and deceptions of Jonker and all the men in her life, including her father, a Calvinist member of the National Party and chairman of the parliamentary select committee responsible for censorship laws on art, publications and entertainment who would become deeply embarrassed by his daughter’s public rebelliousness and eventually reject her.

Simone Jonker says, “I think to understand why she had such an influence on people’s lives, you have to read her poems. She speaks the language of the heart. She was an incredible figure who lived in difficult times, which left a scar on her life. Although I remember her as happy, I know she was sometimes distressed and confused, and I honestly believe she didn’t understand the extent of her own talent.”

The Casting

Award-winning Dutch actress Carice van Houten, who found worldwide recognition in Paul Verhoeven's *Black Book*, got involved in the project about four years ago and joined discussions with Van der Oest and Voorsmit about the project and screenplay. Latter says, "We were so fortunate to have Carice come on board. She's a fantastic choice. She's very comfortable with her body, and physically totally unafraid."

Executive producer Arnold Heslenfeld agrees. "When Carice is on screen it just lights up," he says. "We needed to cast Dutch stars to raise the finance but we would have cast Van Houten even if she was Australian. She was so right for the part."

In preparation for the role van Houten read Jonker's poetry as well as books about her in English and Afrikaans and researched the politics of the time. "I met a few people who knew her including her daughter, Simone," van Houten says, "who reminded me of the responsibility I have in capturing the amazing spirit of her mother."

Van Houten says Jonker's strong character was immediately attractive. "I think what was most interesting about the screenplay is both her fear of rejection and her free spirit. She was like a little diamond, very talented and yet all she wanted was the love of her father." Despite the attractions of playing such a passionate, contradictory individual the actress confesses to some frustration. "When I first read the script I felt very close to her, but when I started rehearsing the role many times she made me angry. I often fight with my roles—it helps me play them."

She embraced the role, as Rutger Hauer (who plays Abraham Jonker, the poet's abrasive father) attests. "She's a magnificent actress," Hauer says. "I like what she does. I'm like a mess when I work on a character until just before the camera rolls, but Carice is very well prepared; she thinks about everything for days."

Director Van der Oest agrees. "Characters have to be believable and interesting," she says. "Carice tries new things with every take and so she has a complete range of brilliant moments, and she's very analytical so all those moments are very, very detailed."

The actress is modest about her working methods. "To me," van Houten says, "that's not the most difficult thing. To transform. I don't really see it happen. I don't have the feeling I am transforming, really. I don't believe you can get into somebody's character but more that somebody comes in you. You just use yourself. In everything I play, I feel like it is me. I just say different things on different times and look different."





Next to be cast was Irish actor Liam Cunningham, who was hailed as a major discovery after his feature debut in Ken Loach's Palme d'Or-winning film *The Wind That Shakes the Barley*. Cunningham says he got a call from a casting director about the film and then did some research on Jonker. "I didn't know anything about Ingrid so I Googled her and discovered this incredibly interesting, tragic and remarkable woman," Cunningham says. Because Latter crafted a lot of the story from Jack Cope's diaries, Cunningham found himself at a thematic center of the film even though he insists it's Ingrid's story. "When people ask me what it's about I say it is a celebration of an incredibly difficult woman—gifted and talented though she was. The film is not a documentary, it is not chronological, and Carice has been wonderful. Not only has she got to deliver a woman who's had difficulties in her life but also the decisions she made later in her life are bizarre and the film examines how she came to those decisions. That's why the film has universal appeal—it deals with all-encompassing themes like love, hate, death, sex and of course marriage."

Legendary Dutch actor Rutger Hauer was immediately drawn to the project because of the power of Jonker's poetry. "It is so strong," Hauer says. "She just writes a few words and you just get it." The actor says the film is about someone who has a gift of brilliance—"a tortured muse"—but playing the central part of Ingrid's oppressive father proved a challenge for Hauer. "For my character there was one moment that was just too cruel for me. When he burns the poem in front of his daughter. To me it was like rape. There's some pleasure you can have with a part like this, but sometimes playing a character as conservative and cruel as Abraham can be like torture—the guy is so dry and Paula and I decided to play the subtext to make it subtler. Speech is just 10 percent of what we're giving you on-screen."



The Production

Moving away from a strict biopic and veering from a politically driven 'apartheid' narrative was central to Van der Oest's vision of a film that probes into the minds and emotions of this extraordinary woman. Acclaimed cinematographer Giulio Biccari (*U-Carmen e Khayelitsha*, *No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency*), who has shot many politically driven films, applauds her grasp of this fascinating life. "Paula is amazing," Biccari says. "She really had this genuine commitment to tell a real story. She wasn't bogged down by the history and political context. She wanted to tell a genuine story about an artist in an honest, emotionally connected way."

Together with Biccari and production designer Darryl Hammer, Van der Oest fashioned a film that concentrated on the people within the frame, "It's set in the '60s," says the director, "but we decided with the creative team that the film is period but not old-fashioned, so we approached it like a modern piece. We made the costumes a little faded so we could concentrate on the people and with Giulio our concentration was always first and foremost to consider the actors. As we try to get closer into Ingrid's mind so the other characters inform the style of the film."

Michael Auret of Spier Films, the South African producers, was initially approached by Voorsmit in early 2008 and immediately loved the project. "Following in the tradition of our Golden Bear winning *U-Carmen e Khayelitsha*, *Black Butterflies* is another film which celebrates the artistic heritage of South Africa with which Spier Films is proud to be associated," Auret says. The company also recently finished production on the film version of Athol Fugard's *Master Harold and the Boys*, another example of South African literary excellence brought to the big screen.

What sets *Black Butterflies* apart is that it's not a history, nor a biography, says Auret; instead it's a cinematic journey into the mind of the greatest poet of her generation, a film about a person who was driven as much by genius as by torment.



Ingrid Jonker: Her Spirit and Her Words

Ingrid Jonker (1933–1965) was one of South Africa’s most influential poets, writing in Afrikaans. In his first speech to the South African Parliament in 1994, Nelson Mandela read Ingrid Jonker’s poem “The Child Who Was Shot Dead by Soldiers in Nyanga.” Her considerable creative talent, her beauty and eternal longing for true love has drawn comparisons with Virginia Woolf and most notably the American poet Sylvia Plath.

Growing up as the child of South Africa’s Minister of Censorship didn’t stop her from becoming part of Cape Town’s bohemian set. Jonker published her first collection of poems at the age of 13, *Na die somer* (*After the Summer*) and her first official publication *Ontvlugting* (*Escape*) established her in the Cape Town literary scene, which fought the apartheid regime through their work and through collaborations with black African artists.

Her second collection *Rook en oker* (*Smoke and Ochre*) was received in 1964 with a prominent national book award, after which she traveled to Europe, where she hoped to find more personal and artistic freedom. Not being able to escape her personal demons, she returned to Cape Town, but never recovered from the electroshock therapy she received in Europe and from her inner turmoil.

In Jack Cope’s piece “A Crown of Wild Olive” from *In Memoriam: Ingrid Jonker* he says, “She was no self-conscious writer and was in a way dazed, bemused by the voice in her, and what sources, what anguish, what exaltation of spirit sang through her she seemed not to know with any assurance.”

Poet Uys Krige wrote a eulogy for Jonker’s funeral that was later published in the *Sunday Times*. In it he writes, “Ingrid had something of her own, peculiarly her own, her own distance, individuality and personality. And it is this individual tone, this personal voice that marks the true poet. The best poems of Ingrid you recognize almost at once. And they keep on singing in your mind or echoing in your consciousness. For Ingrid was a real lyrical poet—of a freshness, a pristineness and a purity and also of a gaiety, a humor, that were again particularly her own.”

As Jack Cope wrote of her, “It has been said for and against her that she was many things: that for all her luminous mind and awareness she was childlike and immature—she was childlike. That she was little educated, unintellectual—she was no intellectual. That she was careless of appearances, bohemian, rebellious—she was a rebel and more. That she deserted her faith, her people, her *volk*—she was no deserter but a discoverer. That knowing no distinction between life and poetry she betrayed both. Her life was an affirmation as well as a denial.”

The truthful, blinding immediacy of poetry and her embrace of that spirit makes Ingrid Jonker a febrile, infectious character to bring to the screen so that viewers can perhaps feel as Simone, Ingrid’s daughter, does today. “I feel uplifted that the world will get to know her work and what she stood for,” Simone says. “Her poems mean everything to me. She is the anchor of my life. I read her poems every day. The poems live and every day they give me hope and inspiration.”

The **Child** Who **Was** Shot **Dead** by **Soldiers** in **Nyanga**

The child is not dead
the child raises his fists against his mother
who screams Africa screams the smell
of freedom and heather
in the locations of the heart under siege

The child raises his fists against his father
in the march of the generations
who scream Africa scream the smell
of justice and blood
in the streets of his armed pride

The child is not dead
neither at Langa nor at Nyanga
nor at Orlando nor at Sharpeville
nor at the police station in Philippi
where he lies with a bullet in his head

The child is the shadow of the soldiers
on guard with guns saracens and batons
the child is present at all meetings and legislations
the child peeps through the windows of houses and into the hearts of mothers
the child who just wanted to play in the sun at Nyanga is everywhere
the child who became a man treks through all of Africa
the child who became a giant travels through the whole world
Without a pass

© Translation: 2007, Antjie Krog & André Brink

From: *Black Butterflies* (Publisher: Human & Rousseau, Cape Town, 2007)

The Cast

Carice van Houten as Ingrid Jonker

Having already established herself as a solid box office star in her native the Netherlands, Carice van Houten embarked on her international breakthrough role in Paul Verhoeven's *Black Book* in 2006. She followed in the footsteps of her *Black Butterflies* co-star Rutger Hauer to Los Angeles, where extended stays led to parts in large Hollywood productions such as the Bryan Singer film *Valkyrie*, in which she played the female lead opposite Tom Cruise. She will soon be seen in Juan Carlos Fresnadillo's *Intruders* alongside Clive Owen and Daniel Brühl. Van Houten also stars in the recently released *Black Death* opposite Sean Bean.

Select Filmography

2011	Intruders	2009	From Time to Time
2011	Black Butterflies	2008	Valkyrie
2010	Black Death	2008	Dorothy Mills
2010	Repo Man	2006	Black Book

Liam Cunningham as Jack Cope

Liam Cunningham was born in 1961 in Dublin, Ireland. At the age of 27, he quit his work as an electrician to start acting. His feature debut was with a small role in Mike Newell's Irish fantasy *Into the West*. Liam has been honored twice with the Irish Film and Television Award, for his performance in Steve McQueen's internationally acclaimed drama *Hunger* (which also brought him a nomination as Best Supporting Actor at both the British Independent Film Awards and London Critics Circle Film Awards) and for his role in Ken Loach's Palme d'Or-winning *The Wind That Shakes the Barley*. Liam can also be seen alongside Ryan Reynolds and Denzel Washington in *Safe House*, a CIA action thriller directed by Daniel Espinosa.

Select Filmography

2011	Safe House	2006	The Wind That Shakes the Barley
2011	Black Butterflies	1999	A Love Divided
2011	The Guard	1996	Jude
2010	Clash of the Titans	1994	War of the Buttons
2008	Hunger	1992	Into The West

A man and a woman are shown in a close embrace, kissing. The man is wearing glasses and a white shirt, and the woman is wearing a white dress. They are standing in front of a light blue vintage car. The background is slightly blurred, showing a building and another person in a hat.

Rutger Hauer as Abraham Jonker

His role in *Black Butterflies* as the strict Minister of Censorship follows hot on the heels of recent Sundance releases *Hobo With a Shotgun*, *The Mill & The Cross* and *The Rite*, also starring Sir Anthony Hopkins.

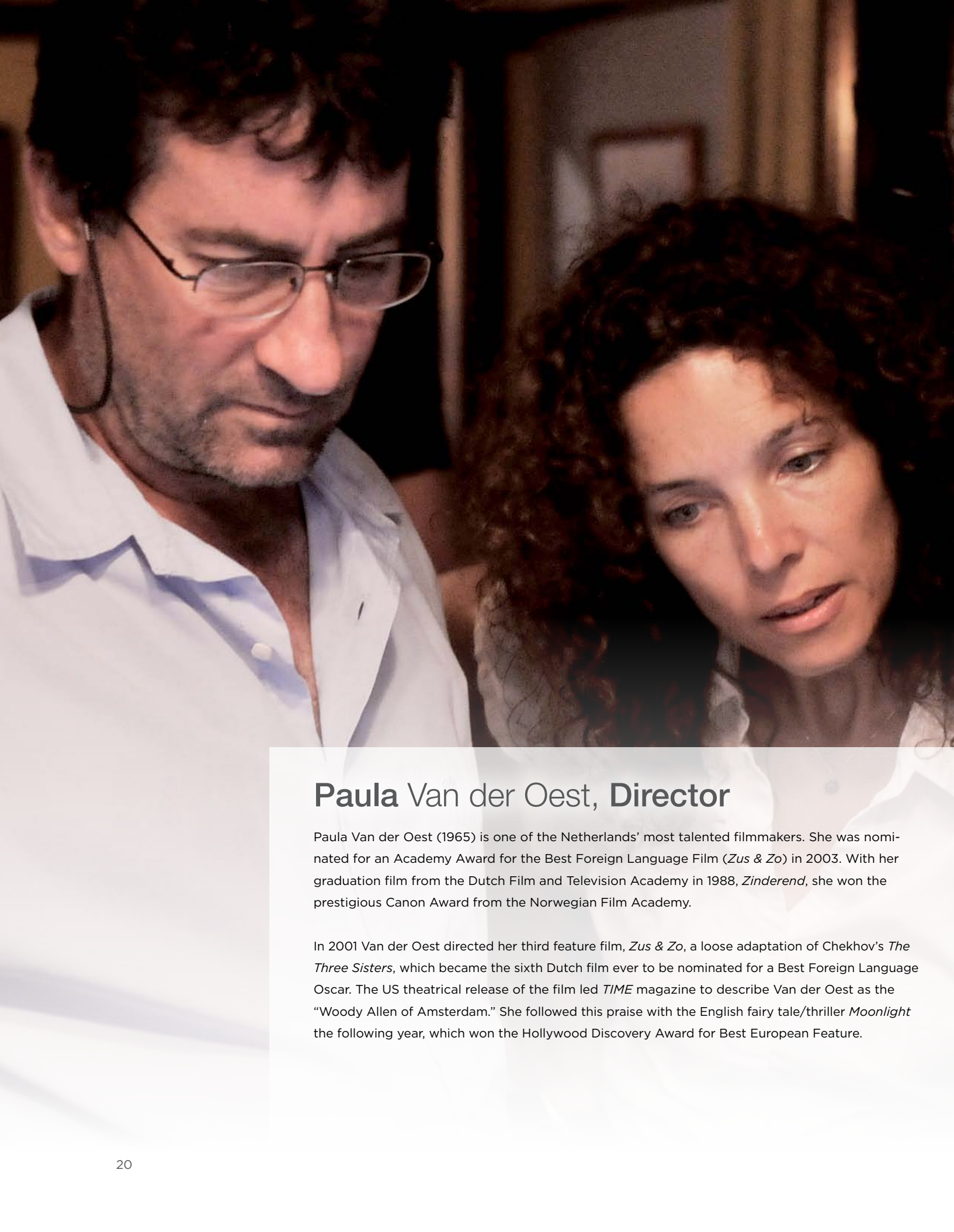
Rutger Hauer (1944) is one of the Netherlands' biggest actors, having successfully established his career in Los Angeles, a path no doubt to be followed soon by his *Black Butterflies* colleague Carice van Houten.

Hauer's film career started with director Paul Verhoeven, which led to international breakthrough roles in *Turkish Fruit* and *Soldier of Orange*. His first American role was *Nighthawks*, but his fame was firmly established by his role in Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*. Other international hits were *The Hitcher*, *Blind Fury* and *Batman Begins*. During four decades of acting he has been honored with numerous awards, among them the Golden Globe for his performance in *Sobibor* and the Golden Space Needle Award for Best Actor in *The Legend of the Holy Drinker*.

In 2007 he created the Rutger Hauer Filmfactory, an international training program for directors, producers, actors, DOPs and editors from all over the world.

Select Filmography

2011	The Heineken Kidnap	1986	The Hitcher
2011	Black Butterflies	1985	Ladyhawke
2011	The Mill and the Cross	1982	Blade Runner
2005	Batman Begins	1982	Inside the Third Reich
2005	Sin City	1981	Nighthawks
1994	Fatherland	1977	Soldier of Orange
1988	The Legend of Holy Drinker	1973	Turkish Delight
1987	Escape from Sobibor		



Paula Van der Oest, Director

Paula Van der Oest (1965) is one of the Netherlands' most talented filmmakers. She was nominated for an Academy Award for the Best Foreign Language Film (*Zus & Zo*) in 2003. With her graduation film from the Dutch Film and Television Academy in 1988, *Zinderend*, she won the prestigious Canon Award from the Norwegian Film Academy.

In 2001 Van der Oest directed her third feature film, *Zus & Zo*, a loose adaptation of Chekhov's *The Three Sisters*, which became the sixth Dutch film ever to be nominated for a Best Foreign Language Oscar. The US theatrical release of the film led *TIME* magazine to describe Van der Oest as the "Woody Allen of Amsterdam." She followed this praise with the English fairy tale/thriller *Moonlight* the following year, which won the Hollywood Discovery Award for Best European Feature.



Greg Latter, Screenplay

Award-winning scriptwriter Greg Latter graduated from Wits University in 1982 with a BA in directing, acting and writing. The following year, he starred in *City of Blood* (1983), starting an acting career that has spanned more than 20 years and more than 30 feature films.

In 1987, Latter received his first credit as a writer and two decades on, he is the most prolific and successful South African scriptwriter. With more than 16 feature films produced, he is best known for penning *Goodbye Bafana* (2007), the story of Nelson Mandela's racist guard that starred Joseph Fiennes and Diane Kruger and *Forgiveness* (2004), the award-winning South African film about truth and reconciliation. Latter directed his first feature, *End of the Road*, for MNET and wrote the stageplay *Death of a Colonialist*.



The Cast

Ingrid Jonker	Carice van Houten
Jack Cope	Liam Cunningham
Uys Krige	Graham Clarke
Eugene Maritz	Nicholas Pauling
Anna Jonker	Candice D'Arcy
Abraham Jonker	Rutger Hauer
Marjorie	Ceridwen Morris
Jan	Grant Swanby
Ettiene le Roux	Waldemar Schultz
Irma	Tarryn Page
Mike Loots	Louis Pretorius
Pieter Venter	Damon Berry
Maruis Schoon	Marthinus van den Berg
Maria	Florence Masebe
Lucille (Lulu)	Jennifer Steyn
Nkosi	Thamsanqua Mbongo

The Crew

Director	Paula Van der Oest
Screenplay	Greg Latter
DoP	Giulio Biccari
Music	Philip Miller
Editor	Sander Vos
Production Design	Darryl Hammer
Hair and Makeup	Raine Edwards
Costume Design	Rae Donnelly
Casting	Christa Schamberger Ana Feyder Jeremy Zimmerman
Producers	Frans van Gestel Richard Claus Michael Auret Arry Voorsmit
Production	IDTV Film and Cool Beans in co-production with Comet Film and Spier Films in association with Riba Film International supported by The Netherlands Film Fund, The Cobo Fund and NTR
Executive Producer	Arnold Heslenfeld
Co-Producer	Marina Blok

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