

**michelle yeoh**  
**sean bean**  
**michelle krusic**

**directed by**  
**asif kapadia**

# far north



**venezia 64.**  
Out of Competition

INGENIOUS FILM PARTNERS, FILM4 and DREAMWORKS present a production from THE GEMINI in co-production with LE BUREAU and PBS PICTURE COMPANY and FILMZIPP and NATING EDITORIAL in association with SOTICODIMA and COPINOVA. AN ASIF KAPADIA FILM. MICHELLE YEOH SEAN BEAN MICHELLE KRUSIC. FAR NORTH. DIRECTOR ASIF KAPADIA. PRODUCER RICHARD FAYRE. SCREENPLAY BY ASIF KAPADIA and TIM MILLER. Based on the story "The North" by SARAH HAWTHORN. MUSIC CARLIN MARANELLI. Director of Photography ROMAN DINIENSO. Editor EWA LIND. Costume & Production Design: BEN SCOTT. Make up & Hair Design: KRISTIN CHALMERS. Sound: ANDREW SHELLEY and STEPHEN GRIFFITHS. Casting: AMY KAMPHAM. Production Supervisor: JASON ROBERTS. Line Producer: GINA MARSH. Associate Producers: ENMA MURPHY. Co-producers: PETER DORGEI & VINCENT BADELLE. Executive producers: TESSA RUSSO CHRISTOPHER DIAL HEDDA MCH PAVANI DUNCAN HOOD PETER VOICHO.







INGENIOUS FILM PARTNERS FILM4 AND CELLULOID DREAMS PRESENT  
A PRODUCTION FROM THE BUREAU  
IN CO PRODUCTION WITH LE BUREAU AND PJB PICTURE COMPANY  
AND FILM CAMP AND NATIXIS COFINCE  
IN ASSOCIATION WITH SOFCINEMA AND COFINOVA

AN ASIF KAPADIA FILM  
**FAR NORTH**

MICHELLE YEOH  
SEAN BEAN  
MICHELLE KRUSIEC



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Out of Competition

France/UK - 2007 - 89 min - Colour - Dolby SRD - Scope

the directors label



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# SYNOPSIS

FAR NORTH is a dark and tragic epic thriller about the battle for survival. Revenge, jealousy and courage are played out against the harsh beauty of the desolate Arctic tundra. SAIVA, a woman living under a curse, and ANJA, her adopted daughter, live in a remote land far from civilization where she believes they will be safe.

Saiva is the sole survivor of an indigenous tribe of reindeer herders slaughtered by a troop of marauding soldiers. After the massacre, Saiva leads the men to their death on a glacier avenging Ivar, the only man she ever loved.

They struggle to survive, living off the scarce prey they can kill. One day a figure appears on the horizon and collapses. Despite her fears and doubts Saiva takes him in and nurses him back from the brink of death. Loki the fugitive, recovers and settles in with the two women as the snow arrives and the long winter nights close in. Saiva and Anja compete for his attention. As the passion between Loki and Anja deepens, they tell Saiva the heartbreaking news that they intend to leave her to start a new life together. She is devastated. As the sea begins to freeze over, Loki and Anja prepare for the long journey South to Loki's village. Saiva retreats into a tense silence. At the moment the lovers are about to leave, she acts with terrifying and horrific consequences.

## SHORT SYNOPSIS

A dark epic tale set in the harsh beauty of the Arctic where SAIVA and ANJA struggle to survive on the frozen wastes. They are forced further North to escape Soldiers taking over their homeland and settle on a desolate island. One day a figure, LOKI, appears on the ice and collapses, close to death. Despite her fears Saiva saves him. When Loki recovers, Saiva and Anja compete for his attention. A passionate relationship forms between Anja and Loki which leaves Saiva isolated. When the lovers plan to leave for a new life together, a desperate Saiva acts with terrifying and tragic consequences.



# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT - ASIF KAPIDA

My co writer Tim and I had discussed many projects to follow up THE WARRIOR, it took us a long time to find the right idea, but once I read the short story 'True North' by Sara Maitland, I felt a tingle of excitement I had not felt since Tim first mentioned the tale of the Samurai Boy being shown a severed head which eventually developed into THE WARRIOR. There was something exciting in the idea of filming this timeless tale in the Arctic in direct contrast to the hot Indian desert.

Tim and I love folk tales and classic fairy stories and this one had the same special feeling, although here the lead character's journey was complex and dark. Saiva's story did not end in redemption but in her carrying out a horrific deed fulfilling the curse the shaman pronounced when she was born.

I was interested in the ambiguity of the relationship in the short story between the two women, I was never sure if the older woman and younger woman were mother and child, sisters, cousins or even lovers. It was not clear. They survived together, they needed one another to stay alive, if one left the other would probably die. In the short story they didn't even have names, there was no need, they hardly spoke to one another. Suddenly everything changed when the man came into their lives. The women began to compete for his attention and grew apart.

It was important to me to work once again with the crew of THE WARRIOR, key members of the team that I have collaborated with since making my short films at film school. So once again Bertrand Faivre was Producing, Tim Miller and I co-wrote, Roman Osin was the DOP, Andy Shelley was the Sound Recordist and Sound designer, Ewa J. Lind edited and Dario Marianelli was the composer. I was working with my friends, my 'film family'.

I went into the project thinking this would be a simple, low budget film. We had the essential story, the beginning, middle and an amazing end. It featured only three people and one key location, the set consisted of a lone tent in the middle of nowhere. It could be shot anywhere. The story took place mainly within interiors. There was little dialogue. After spending so much time looking for projects, we had our story, it was all there, our first 'adaptation', I honestly thought it would be simple. What could go wrong?

I believed we could write it swiftly, cast it, finance it and shoot it without too much talking or 'development'. Tim and I could then get on with thinking about the next one, maybe something bigger and more complex ...

Little did I know the film would take us more than four years to make. We would be shooting out of one of the northernmost settlements in the world. We needed armed protection everywhere we went in case we came across a hungry polar bear, the unit lived on a Russian Ice Breaker, which travelled over night to each new location as we slept. At times the temperature dropped to Minus 40 degrees... This film would prove harder and more logistically complex than anything I have previously done. Now the film is complete, I'm back in London day dreaming about the awe inspiring Arctic, though the feeling is only just coming back to my frostbitten fingertips!



# PRODUCTION DIARY





# DEVELOPMENT

## **Finding the story - by Tim Miller - Co Writer**

After working together on THE WARRIOR, Asif and I searched for another tale for a second collaboration. We both are drawn to far away, timeless landscapes. I shut myself up in the Ethnographical Library of the British Museum to read folk tales from all over the world. But it came in a very different way. One evening I was waiting for Asif at the National Film Theatre to see Mizoguchi's UGETSU. I arrived early and went outside to look at the stall of second hand books on the embankment. Running my finger along the line of old paperbacks, I saw the name of someone I knew and bought a tattered copy of short stories by Sara Maitland. By chance I opened it at the shortest one in the book, only six pages long and read the opening sentence. "Far north, inside the ice circle, in the land of the long night, lived two women." I was hooked and within minutes had read to the end and hurried back to meet Asif. We had found our story.

## **The Original Idea - Far North short story – Asif Kapadia Winter 2002**

I read it, my jaw dropped, I loved the set up, the landscape, the dynamic simplicity and purity of the situation, I found each of the characters interesting, and I was totally shocked by the brutal ending. I knew we had something. We rushed out and picked up the rights, working on the story alone, until we had enough to show to Bertrand Faivre the Producer.

## **Meeting Sara Maitland – Asif Kapadia**

A few months later I met Sara Maitland for the first time in the Whitechapel Art Gallery. We had an interesting chat and she asked how I heard about the short story, she wondered if I had read about it and her on the internet. I didn't know what she meant. She then told me that another director had previously contacted her about this short story, Stanley Kubrick had read it and loved its simplicity of it, he had got in touch and had asked Sara to write ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: A.I. for him. Well I already loved the short story, I knew it was a brilliant idea with amazing potential for a film, but learning that Kubrick had liked it... maybe we had something special...

## **Writing the screenplay - Tim Miller**

The pile of drafts go back a long way and writing the screenplay was a slow process in sharp contrast to The Warrior, where an outline was hammered out in weeks and the first draft followed at once.

There were many open questions. What was the relationship between the women? How did they come to be there? Who was the man? What world were they living in, modern or timeless, mythic or factual? And above all what motivated the older woman to commit the terrible act at the end of the story? She was the principal character, the film had to be her story and how could an audience have any understanding or sympathy for someone who acts as she does?

Asif was attracted to the desolate beauty of the Arctic and from the start the landscape became a major character in its own right. We decided that the action was set in modern times but not necessarily contemporary, rifles and a wind up radio but not snow cats or modern communications. The loneliness was untouched, traditional ways of hunting and living continued.

After some research into the life styles of the Sámi and Inuit we began to plot out the story of the Woman, Saiva, from the early tragedy in her life, the massacre of her tribe of reindeer herders by invaders, her rescuing a baby girl and the revenge she took on the murderers. From the start she was a strong character and the first draft of the opening was exciting and moved at a quick pace. But then what?

The original version introduced the Shaman. I had seen the compelling figure of an Inuit shaman in the ethnographical museum at St Petersburg, the face hidden by hair hanging down from the cap, the cloak hung with bones and feathers, holding the traditional drum which sounded to prophesy disaster or war.



Soon we decided that in childhood Saiva had been cast out from her clan after the Shaman had prophesied that she would bring disaster to any one she loved. It was written, it was her fate.

Weeks were lost on working out an elaborate back-story for the Man but in the end he simply appears and we learn his story without having it as a major part of the action. I called him Loki, the name of the god of mischief who brings disaster to Valhalla. In the same way elaborate sequences about invading soldiers carrying out ethnic cleansing were reduced and simplified so we could stay with our three characters. The drama was between them.

The relationship between the two women also took much sorting out. Originally they are everything to each other, however even before the arrival of the Man, Anja is fretting about the lonely life they lead and questioning Saiva's fears. We concentrated on the changes between them and this led to the closure.

### **The research - Asif Kapadia** **January 03**

I like to know where a film will be shot so we can add real details into the script from the place and the people that I meet on location. This means the look and design of the film is worked out as we write. By chance I had been invited to the most northern film festival in the world, up in Tromsø, Norway for a screening of THE WARRIOR, I remember saying during the Q&A after the film that I loved the landscape so much I hoped to return to shoot a film there. The audience laughed, I was later told that all directors visiting the festival say that, never to be seen again.

The festival took place in January as Tromsø was just coming out of the winter dark period. I didn't see many films at the festival, I spent most of my time going to the museums, wandering around looking up at the sky searching for the northern lights, I went on a husky ride with a Sámi and was lucky enough to see the northern lights for the first time, they were amazing, a spiritual experience. My last day there happened to be the day the sun came up above the horizon for the first time in two months. I realised that I had found a possible location for Far North. We could shoot the arctic landscape while living in a modern city like Tromsø, with an airport close by, good hotels and transport links.

As I was wondering how to sell Norway, one of the most expensive countries in the world to my producer, my driver from the film festival mentioned another place I should consider, he told me of a mythical island, which he had never been to but dreamed of visiting. He told me I had to go to Svalbard to shoot my film. I visited the Tromsø Arctic Museum to research Svalbard and was blown away by the images, a land of icebergs, glaciers, polar bears, walrus. A place with three months of midnight sun in the summer and 3 months of winter darkness when the vast fjords froze. An awesome, epic landscape. Few people had been there, never mind tried to shoot a film there. This was where we would shoot FAR NORTH. I returned to London to sell the idea to the Bertrand Faivre and to work on the script with Tim. I could see the film coming together.

### **Reindeer** **March 04**

Our film required a herd of reindeer. All of the reindeer on Svalbard were wild; we would never be able to get close enough to shoot them. During a trip to the Tromsø Museum, one of the professors Ivar Bjorkland mentioned the Russian Indigenous herders called the 'Nenets' that he had spent many summers living with. The Nenets people to this day continue to live a simple, natural life with their reindeer, the herders themselves had a Mongolian look, and they still used simple, brilliantly made sledges to travel with their animals. Their clothes and tools are made entirely of reindeer skins or bones. These were the people I wanted our film to be based upon. Shooting on the mainland would bring access to reindeer, because of the trees and greenery, the flashback sequences contrasted nicely with the barren tundra of Svalbard. Also, by being a few hours further south, it bought us valuable daylight hours.









## **Final Technical Recce – with the Cameraman Roman Osin. September 05**

I flew to the arctic with the DOP Roman Osin, his focus Puller Doug Lavender, the Line Producer Mark Hubbard and our Svalbard contact Jason Roberts. We went to Svalbard to see the location at the same time of year we intended to shoot the film the following year, we had to check out the shooting conditions to see how realistic it was to make a film in these conditions. How would the crew work in the cold? How much shootable light would we have? We took a film camera and some stock, as we were going that far, we might as well come back with some images. Thank god we took the camera, the location looked amazing, we shot some fantastic footage. We saw the sea freezing in front of our eyes, light snow was falling and settled on the frozen sea which was undulating like oil on water. This awesome footage shot on this trip is used throughout the finished film, including the stunning opening title sequence.

# CASTING

## **Sundance Film Festival - Michelle Yeoh Winter 05 / 06**

I was put in touch with Michelle Yeoh by my NY based casting director Avy Kaufman. Michelle liked the script, she had seen THE WARRIOR, but was interested to meet, so I flew to Sundance to meet her. Michelle's flight was delayed so we ended up meeting at 2am. I tried to pitch the project to her. I screened her a cut of the footage that Roman and I had shot on the final recce in Svalbard, Dario has written some beautiful music for the film. Michelle liked the script and what she saw. We seemed to get along. She was onboard. We had Saiva cast and we made a huge step forward towards making the film.

## **Casting in London - Sean Bean**

I met many actors for Loki in London, NYC, LA and Oslo. In the end I came back to Sean who I had met quite early on in London. I felt he understood what I wanted to do and he seemed a tough character who would be able to deal with the conditions and would bring something special to the role of Loki

## **Casting in LA – Michelle Krusiec March 06**

I first saw Michelle Krusiec in LA, she came in for a reading in character, she wore simple clothes, had her hair tied back in a natural fashion, she wore no make up. I was really impressed by her. She was one of the most experienced actors that I met for the role, she really wanted to do the film. She pushed and did a huge amount of research. I wanted an experienced actor that I could rely on in the very harsh conditions. This was going to be a tough shoot and she had a tough role to pull off the journey of the character. From the innocent girl Anja to a woman prepared to fight to get the man that could lead her out from the wilderness. Also I always had in the back of my mind that the actress playing Anja had to look enough like Saiva to make the final transformation work.

## **Local Casting**

Per Egil Aske was cast in Oslo, I had remembered seeing him in a great Norwegian film called Junkmail, I loved his presence and look I was very pleased to have him on board. Ivar was played by Gary Pillai, someone I had known a long time, he had acted in one of my very first short films at the Royal College of Art. The two soldiers with the boat who capture Loki were made up of Tommy 'the hunter' Silkavuopio and Mark Van De Weg, the captain of the Farm, our supply ship during the shoot. Both live on Svalbard. Casting the family of herders was tough, I had to work with new young enthusiastic team of people who had never worked on a film before. Many real Sámi belonging to the family that owned the reindeer were used within the sequence to drive and control the reindeer.

# PRE-PRODUCTION

## August 06

Ben Scott the Costume and Production Designer and I spent a lot of time visiting museums to research the look of the costumes and set. We focused in on the Nenet people of Russia as the key reference for the design of the film, this covered the costumes, Saiva's tepee home, the sledges and the props. We wanted to limit the palate. Every item had to feel correct and believable. Every costume, button, needle, hand prop and sledge needed to be made by hand for us.

Our actors spent a lot of time with a local Sámi, learning how to drive Husky and reindeer sledges.

Spending time to earn the animal's trust. They trained to use their sharp knives to cut, skin, carve and eat with. They learnt how to hunt, throw lassos, generally getting a feel for the nomadic life. The Sámi became a key part of the production. Their animals are their livelihoods, and so lending them to a film crew needs trust. All the reindeer skins used in the film came from the local Sámi. As dried seal meat is the staple diet for Huskies on Svalbard, so we borrowed a dead seal from a husky owner on Svalbard for the sequence when Saiva skins one.

# THE SHOOT

## September 2006

We shot in Svalbard for 4 weeks, we worked 6-day weeks, living together on the Russian Ice Breaker the *Polaris*. Working day to day off of the ship was amazing. getting ready to go on set involved a good hour to get dressed, putting on the thermal layers, waterproof layers, layers of socks, boots, gloves, hats and life jackets. We shot the wide exterior shots on Svalbard, I wanted to try to capture the unique world of glaciers, icebergs, snow capped mountains and if we were lucky we would capture the onset of winter and the freezing over of the sea. The weather was not always kind to us. I had hoped for snow, I wanted the landscape to look white and icy, as it had done during the recces. Unfortunately when we started shooting the sun was shining, the sky was blue and there was no snow to be seen, Temple Mountain was brown, it looked more like monument valley than the arctic. Roman the DOP and I looked at one another, this wasn't how we wanted it to look at all.

Suddenly on Week 2 of the shoot we awoke to find the first snow of the winter had fallen. Everything was white. Our schedule went out of the window. As nothing we had planned to shoot would match the first 'sunny' week of shooting, so we had no option but to shoot the end of the film, far sooner than I would have liked. Working in the cold with the anamorphic camera and lenses was slow and I wasn't getting all the shots I wanted. Also, the actors were still 'finding' their characters. What this meant was that one of Sean Bean's first scenes during the production turned out to be his last shot in the film; a naked Loki running out of the tent in horror to his probable death. We had discussed the idea of Sean doing this scene naked, but now the time arrived. Sean knew it was right for the character and the scene, so without too much pressure he did it... twice!

## The Glaciers

We finished the Svalbard schedule with a week of shooting on the Tuna and Svea glaciers. Very cold and dangerous locations. We had carefully recced by helicopter and the sequence called for a lot of planning, it was vital to ensure the cast and crew's safety on this 'living' set. We had spent weeks finding a stunning blue glacier and crevasse where Saiva led the soldiers to their death during the flashback. The crevasse was rigged up with platforms so that one of the cameras could go inside the crevasses, we also needed to safely dangle the soldiers into the crevasse. Brian Hall a brilliant specialist in glacier action shooting did all the safety work with his team.

Unfortunately luck was not with us and it snowed non stop the night before we started shooting the sequence and the stunning blue glacier, turned white. It was quite disheartening to turn up on set on the







day and see it looking nothing like I imagined. The glacier gave us some of our coldest shooting days, not only did the freezing cold come up through the ice from beneath us, but the wind blowing over the ice made the temperature plummet to blow minus 30 degrees. Our equipment and batteries couldn't function, we lost nearly half a day as the crane brought over from London seized up.

Tiredness and the cold started to affect the weakened crew, we had a near miss on the glacier when one of our camera department passed out after he came out of the crevasse. Michelle Yeoh is tough and courageous, but even she fainted while the camera was rolling during a long tracking shot, luckily one of the crew noticed and rushed in to stop her falling. Being an amazing professional, Michelle insisted we finished shooting all of the vital close shots of her before she agreed to be taken away on a snow mobile, back to the ship to warm up.

But the determination to complete the film on this testing location somehow carried us through and looking back, even the crew who left the production said that it was one of the most remarkable experiences of their working lives, which they would not have missed for anything. As we drove to the airport in a coach to fly out of Svalbard, the DOP Roman and I shared a wry glance, the location looked absolutely perfect as we flew out of it.

### **Shooting on the Mainland. Film Camp, Mauken, Northern Norway October 2006**

It was very strange to return to the mainland, we flew into Tromso where the project had first come together at the film festival. The crew sat in silence as they looked out of the windows at the strangeness of seeing passing cars, traffic lights and people walking their dogs. We stayed in an old army base called FilmCamp. We shot here for three and a half weeks, this location gave us a contrast with Svalbard as the area was dense with pine trees and greenery. It was on the mainland that we shot the opening of the film and the flashback sequence with Young Saiva and Ivar.

The reindeer sequence was one of the most complex in the film, the location I chose for this sequence was a frozen marshy lake, with a range of snow capped mountains in the background. This location also happened to be within an army shooting range, while we were shooting the Norwegian Army could be heard firing in the distance. Everywhere on the ground there were spent cartridges. Tanks and armoured vehicles often passed us by. The reindeer were transported by truck to the location, spending a few weeks on the marsh to get accustomed to their new home. They are particularly nervous animals, so it was hard to get anywhere near them. A fence around 3km in length had to be built and hidden within the trees to keep the animals in. Finally a complex funnelling system was built to enable the reindeer to run out in front of the camera, creating the shot that opens the flashback sequence.

### **Shooting in the studio. Twickenham November 2006**

I had hoped to shoot the whole film on location, but financially, we had to shoot the interiors in London. Ben Scott built all the sets at Film Camp and they were transported to Twickenham Studios. We finished up with a very intense week of interiors in the studio. Returning to London, made it feel like the film was nearly over, but looking at the script, I realised we still had a third of the film to shoot and only ten days to do it. The remaining scenes included most of the key dramatic scenes and the entire climax. Fitting in the crew, cast, lights and camera into the cramped space of the tent was no fun, my body was falling apart, something nasty had got into my lungs on the final day of shooting on the mainland. I returned to London with bronchitis, I spent most of the time between shots laid out on my back in my room. Luckily Bertrand managed to pull a couple of days out of the bag and we managed to get it all done. Just about on time and on budget.





# POST PRODUCTION

January 2007

It was great to get back to London and the cutting room, most of the film fell into place very quickly. The last half hardly changed during the process. The editor Ewa tried a few things out with the flashback, which was one long sequence in the script, in the end she found a shape that worked by splitting the sequence in two. It was the opening that kept changing, we tried numerous things until we settled on opening it with the powerful scene of Saiva and her Husky.

## Screening the film for Michelle Yeoh and 'friends'

During the cutting process the film was screened many times. One of the most tense and unusual screenings happened in Paris when I first showed the film to Michelle Yeoh. That weekend Michelle's partner Jean Todt was being awarded the Légion d'honneur. My wife and I were lucky enough to be invited to the ceremony, taking place at the Prime Minister's Paris residence. The following day we would screen the unfinished film, with a locked picture, but no sound design or music for Michelle Yeoh.

After the ceremony I was introduced to Dominique de Villepin the French Prime Minister, he said he and his family were looking forward to seeing the film to following morning, I smiled and laughed, then realised he was not joking. I glanced at Michelle, she nodded, she and Jean had invited their friends including the artist Frank Stella, Michael Schumacher and the French Prime Minister. I started to sweat. The film was very much unfinished. The next nerve racking stage of the film had began, screening the film for an audience...

## The Look and Feel of Far North - Ben Scott (Production Designer)

The approach to designing this film was a collaboration with the Director, Asif. After extensive research into the nomadic tribes of the North, various aspects of different peoples were reduced down. It is not therefore an attempt at accurate reproduction but a distillation of many; part Russian Nenet with a dash of Saami with Inuit and Komy to taste. In these cultures, possessions, housing and clothes are all sourced or made in the same way from a limited number of resources. I felt that for this reason, this project more than most enabled a single design concept to run through both the sets and costumes. All of these together must be at one with the surrounding location and later in the story become more at odds with it. Whilst the weather by its very nature in this part of the world bleaches out virtually all colour and becomes a character in itself. Choosing a very specific and limited colour palette they are never very far from it. The end result is an emotional response that I hope compliments the story through every twist and turn.



## **Bertrand Faivre's (Producer) Far North Experience**

Riding on the success of "The Warrior's" BAFTA awards Asif and I agreed to collaborate on another film together. On first impressions the script appeared to be a "Great story, very easy. Three people and a tent. Let's do it." The first realization of the scope of the project was when Asif showed me the location of Svalbard on a map. From the shock of the geography it would seem that although the story remained unique, it now came with many other issues... we could not afford for anything to go wrong.

The number of problems that need to be solved quickly and creatively for this type of shoot is mind-blowing. Putting the problems of pre-production behind us, the crew arrived in the Arctic to face an entirely new set of problems: Loading and unloading the boat was a huge feat in itself with 40 tons of equipment we were heavily overloaded for what should have been a lightweight shoot. Bucking the normal style of any other film shoot and using helicopters, snowmobiles, sledges and boats as the only means of transport (when our locations allowed, Svalbard being mostly a land-vehicle free ecological sanctuary). Carrying around frozen portaloos. Building a base camp, only to knock it down with the wind force from the helicopter carrying a 120 KW generator. Transporting, mostly by hand, (courtesy of Svalbard, the 'vehicle-free' sanctuary) over 140 camera boxes in special cold weather bags, couriered from Canada to the location, because of our decision to shoot in Scope format for relevant low-lightness reasons. And that was only one department. The food arriving cold by skidoo and the subsequent near mutiny. Actors delivering their lines at minus 20 Celsius, looking as natural as possible despite the chill factor. Four logistic people with guns just to protect the crew from Polar bears. The earth being flat at 80° north meaning no internet and temperamental and outrageously expensive satellite phones, our only possible communication means with the exterior world being at 4US\$ a minute. One white reindeer flown in a net attached to a helicopter; the rest of the herd (250) moved by trucks to reach our location. One of our key locations revealed at the last minute as not really the frozen field it looked like, but just frozen marsh topping a lake behind which a few years ago had seen a tank and two Norwegian soldiers drowning (hopefully the marsh did not melt). Getting the dogs – and a newborn baby for one sequence - on zodiacs surrounded by icebergs and the odd crewmember that hadn't confessed to their dread of water until it was time to get on.

The list could go on and on. Some things you can only ever know by learning them first-hand; nearly everything in this shoot falls into that category. But now many months on, 'Far North' and all signs of frostbite are long gone. The frontier of film making in a real frontier land has been pushed to its limits. We did it!





# CAST & CREW







# THE CAST

## **MICHELLE YEOH (SAIVA)**

International audiences may best know Michelle Yeoh as the intense swordswoman in Ang Lee's gripping *CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON* or the charming secret agent in the James Bond hit *TOMORROW NEVER DIES*, but the Malaysian-born actress has been knocking audiences out in Asia for more than a decade.

After obtaining her degree in 1983, she was crowned Miss Malaysia and soon became Hong Kong's kung-fu queen known for performing her own stunts since her first action film *YES MADAM*. Michelle stepped into the film world since 1984, she has starred in 24 films and made her way up to become the world's top action queen. In her films, she has always challenged the traditional views of Asian women by creating very strong female roles. But Michelle isn't all about action.

Her performance in the period epic *CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON* earned her three nominations for best actress – at the Taipei Golden Horse Awards, the Hong Kong Film Awards and the BAFTA Awards in 2001. She was also named CineAsia's "Award of Excellence in Acting for Outstanding Performance as an Actor" in 1999 and the "International Star of the Year" at the 2001 ShoWest exhibitor's convention.

In 2002, Michelle added another feather to her cap by producing and starring in *THE TOUCH*, contemporary romantic action adventure. In the same year, she was honoured with "Montblanc Arts Patronage Award" in recognition of her achievement and commitment to nurture creative talents. Hence, she was named "Producer of the Year" by CineAsia and "The Outstanding Young Persons of the World" by Junior Chamber International. She also produced and starred in futuristic action adventure *SILVER HAWK* in 2003.

In 2004, she starred in sweeping romantic epic *MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA*, based on the internationally acclaimed novel, produced by Steven Spielberg and directed by Rob Marshall. In the following year, she starred in Danny Boyle's sci-fi thriller *SUNSHINE*. 2007 she appears with Vin Diesel in Mathieu Kassovitz's sci-fi action *BABYLON A.D.*





## **SEAN BEAN (LOKI)**

Over the course of a career including 40 films, acclaimed stage performances and one of the most successful television franchises in British television history (SHARPE), Sean Bean has become one of the most popular and consistently bankable British stars of his generation. The recent Lord Of The Rings trilogy gave him his biggest known role to date as Boromir. Starring on both THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING and THE TWO TOWERS.

Originally from Sheffield, Sean worked with his father as a welder before turning to acting and undergoing classical training. After graduating from the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts in London, he joined the Royal Shakespeare Company.

Sean's notable initial starring roles on screen included ones in Mike Figgis' STORMY MONDAY (with Tommy Lee Jones, Sting and Melanie Griffith); Jim Sheridan's THE FIELD (with Richard Harris, Brenda Fricker and John Hurt); and Phillip Noyce's PATRIOT GAMES (opposite Harrison Ford)

His next role made him one of the UK's best-known stars; he was cast as novelist Bernard Cornwell's enduring character Richard Sharpe, hero of the Napoleonic Wars, in the 1993 telefilm Sharpe's Rifles. He starred in the role 14 more times for the director Tom Clegg in subsequent telefilms, including the recently completed final project Sharpe's Challenge.

Sean's other feature films include Martin Campbell's GOLDENEYE (opposite Pierce Brosnan in his debut as James Bond) Bernard Rose's ANNA KARENINA; John Frankenheimer's RONIN; Terry Windsor's ESSEX BOYS; Gary Fleders DON'T SAY A WORD. Esme Lammer's family film TOM & THOMAS; Wolfgang Petersens TROY; Jon Turteltaub's NATIONAL TREASURE; THE ISLAND (directed by THE HITCHER producer Michael Bay); Robert Schweitzer's FLIGHTPLAN; Christopher Gan's SILENT HILL and Niki Caros' NORTH COUNTRY (opposite Charlize Theron and Frances McDormand).



## **MICHELLE KRUSIEC (ANJA)**

Michelle Krusiec, one of Asian America's most exciting emerging artists, first found national and international critical acclaim in her starring role opposite Joan Chen in the romantic comedy *SAVING FACE*, directed by Alice Wu. Her award-winning performance as an awkward, closeted lesbian garnered her a Best Actress nomination in the 2005 Golden Horse Ceremony, Asia's equivalent to the Academy Award. Her understated performance as the comic straight man was recognized by critics from *The Hollywood Reporter*, *Variety*, *Slate Magazine*, *Salon*, *NY Post*, *Washington Post* to *Asia's Harper's Bazaar*, *Liberty Times*, *China Times*, to Hong Kong's *The Standard* just to name a few.

Other favourite directors have included Bill Guttentag (*NANKING, LIVE!*), Andy Tenant (*SWEET HOME ALABAMA*), Wes Craven (*CURSED*), Bruce Paltrow and Mike Binder (HBO's *MIND OF THE MARRIED MAN*), and Oliver Stone (*NIXON*). Michelle has graced most of America's top hit shows, such as *'Grey's Anatomy'*, *'Weeds'*, *'Standoff'*, *'Cold Case'*, *'Without a Trace'*, *'Monk'*, *E.R.*, and in her very own teen sitcom *One World*. In *Travelers*, Michelle was host to this Discovery Channel series which led her to over 50 destinations around the world. Currently she can be seen in *Nanking*, and *LIVE!* both of which are competing at the 2007 Tribeca Film Festival. *NANKING* a documentary by Oscar winner Bill Guttentag depicting the tragedies of the Japanese invasion of Nanking during WWII is slated to be released nationally and internationally in fall 2007.

Michelle's ability to cross seamlessly between comedy and drama is most indicative in her original one woman show, *Made in Taiwan*. In 2002, Michelle was named by the *Hollywood Reporter* as one of the Top Ten Rising Stars in Hollywood when she premiered this darkly comedic solo show at the prestigious Aspen Comedy Festival. This autobiographical depiction of her Chinese mother obsessed with her husband's adultery continually plays to - word of mouth - sold out shows. This labor of love, which was developed under the artful eye of Larry Moss (*Syrenque Tree*), will be presented in June 2007 at the first ever Asian American Theater festival in New York City. In addition, Michelle is committed to her civic work in the Asian American community and speaks at colleges across the country. She has participated in celebrity/charity readings of Anthony Arnove and Edward Zinn's "*Voices of a People*" and Eve Ensler's "*Vagina Monologues*."



# THE CREW

## **ASIF KAPADIA (Writer-director)**

Born in Hackney, North London. Kapadia originally studied graphic design before his interest in filmmaking led to him studying at the Royal College of Art.

Kapadia's debut feature *THE WARRIOR* was nominated for three awards at the 2002 BAFTAs, collecting the Alexander Korda Award for Best British Film & the Carl Foreman Award for the Most Promising Newcomer. In the same season the film won the Evening Standard British Film Award for Most Promising Newcomer, the London Film Festival's Sutherland Trophy, Best Film at the Dinard Film Festival of British films. The film was nominated for four BIFAs [British Independent Film Awards], winning two, the Douglas Hickox Award for Best Debut and the Technical Achievement Award for Cinematography. Kapadia was also nominated for the Fassbinder European Discovery Award at the 2002 European Film Awards.

His second film *THE RETURN* for Rogue / Focus Features was shot on location in Austin, Texas and was his first studio movie. The film was released in the US in 2006.

Kapadia's short films were screened and awarded prizes around the world, his graduate short film *THE SHEEP THIEF* made during his time at the Royal College of Art won many prizes including the Second Prize in the Cinefondation Section in Cannes and the Grand Prix at the European Short Film Festival in Brest.

Tim Miller and Kapadia are interested in making a quartet of films covering the four points of the compass; *The Warrior* represented the East, *Far North* the North so next they will look for a project in the South and then in the West to complete the circle.





## **TIM MILLER (Writer)**

Co Writer with Asif Kapadia of THE WARRIOR, Tim has had a long career in different parts of the film industry starting in documentary and then working in production on feature films around the world from Japan in the East to Mexico in the West.

Tim is a Fellow of the Royal College of Art where he was Senior Tutor in Film Production when Asif Kapadia was on the post graduate M.A Course. Soon after Asif graduated they joined forces to work on THE WARRIOR and subsequently on several other projects.

## **ROMAN OSIN (Director of Photography)**

Roman followed his first class BA Hons in Film and Photography at the London College of Printing with a short career as a director of music videos. This led to him being commissioned by the Arts Council to direct three dance films. At the same time he ran exhibitions of his photographic work extensively in London, culminating in a show at the Photographers, Gallery. This, and his increasing striving for visual perfection led him to choose a career in Cinematography. He did his time at the National Film School in Beaconsfield, England and has been shooting documentaries, drama, music videos and commercials since graduating in 1995. His work includes Channel 4's NO TURN LEFT UNSTONED, a documentary about the Pretenders; HOW I BECAME AN INDIAN, which won the 1996 David Atshul award and the 96 Silver Hugo at the Chicago Film Festival and Spindrift which won the 1997 Panorama best Short at Berlin Film Festival.

Roman first partnered with Asif Kapadia on the director's short film THE SHEEP THIEF which won three awards as Best Film at the Poitier, Brestand and Tel Aviv Film Festivals. THE SHEEP THIEF was also runner up for the prestigious Cinefoundation Award at the Cannes Film Festival and distinguished itself with a Special Prize for Cinematography at the Cinema Texas Festival in 1997.

On the back of this success Roman and Asif worked together once more on THE WARRIOR which garnered two awards for Best Cinematography and some six awards for Best Film including two BAFTA awards for Best British Film and Best Newcomer.

Roman won Best Cinematography at the San Sebastian International Film Festival; was honoured with a British Independent Film Award; and was selected for Competition at the Camerimage International Film Festival of the Art of Cinematography.

Roman has since been Cinematographer on UNDER THE STARS, directed by Christos Georgiou which won three Best Film awards globally, and the soon to be released feature, Columbia Pictures BIG GIRLS DON'T CRY, directed by Maria Van Heland. He recently collaborated with the director as cinematographer THE RETURN a supernatural thriller starring Sarah Michelle Gellar.





## **BERTRAND FAIVRE (Producer)**

Bertrand started as Head of acquisitions at UGC France before joining Les Productions Lazennec (LA HAINE, SCENT OF GREEN PAPAYA, and CYCLO) in 1992 as producer until 2001.

He set up the independent UK production company THE BUREAU, in 2000 and in Paris LE PETIT BUREAU in 2001. LE PETIT BUREAU is handling a catalogue of French TV rights for 200 films.

In the past eight years Bertrand has produced over 10 feature films in the UK, France, India, Norway, Mexico and the US. They include co-producing Christian Carion's Oscar nominated MERRY CHRISTMAS, Lynne Ramsay's critically acclaimed and the Bafta winning directorial feature debut RATCATCHER and producing THE WARRIOR, directed by Asif Kapadia (Winner of two Baftas in 2002 - Most Outstanding British Film & Best Newcomer).

In 2002, Bertrand completed LES DIABLES (THE DEVILS), by Christophe Ruggia (KID FROM CHAABA) which won the Grand Prize in Cannes and was listed by TIME Magazine as one of the 10 best films of 2002.

In 2006 ISOLATION won a number of prizes in festival and has been sold in 28 territories.

In 2006 Fabienne Godet BURNT OUT Director was named 'Best Director' at The 9th Shanghai International Film Festival. Olivier Gourmet was awarded the prize for Best Actor for his lead role. In addition Burnt Out won Best Film in Miami Film Festival and grossed 150,000 admissions in France on a 45 print release.

This year, Asif Kapadia's FAR NORTH and Erick Zonca's JULIA (THE DREAMLIFE OF ANGELS helmer's first English language movie) are currently in post production for a delivery in the late summer.



## **TESSA ROSS - Controller of Film4 and Channel 4 Drama (Executive Producer)**

Tessa Ross was appointed Head of Film4 in December 2002. In November 2004, her role was expanded to include that of Channel 4's Head of Drama and she is now Controller, Film and Drama.

Under Tessa's stewardship Channel 4's film department has built an enviable reputation for developing and financing films like MOTORCYCLE DIARIES, TOUCHING THE VOID, THE ROAD TO GUANTANAMO, VENUS, recent Oscar winner THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND and THIS IS ENGLAND.

Film4's releases in 2007 include Shane Meadows' THIS IS ENGLAND (winner of Best Independent Film at the BIFA's), Julien Temple's JOE STRUMMER: THE FUTURE IS UNWRITTEN and David Mackenzie's HALLAM FOE, winner of a Silver Bear in Berlin. Currently in production are; Sarah Gavron's BRICK LANE, Anand Tucker's AND WHEN DID YOU LAST SEE YOUR FATHER?, Martin McDonagh's IN BRUGES, Lenny Abrahamson's GARAGE, Duane Hopkins' BETTER THINGS, Harmony Korine's MISTER LONELY, plus a new Mike Leigh film and Ken Loach's next project IT'S A FREE WORLD. Three further films in production this Spring are Michael Winterbottom's GENOVA, Sharon Maguire's INCENDIARY and Fabrice Du Welz's DONKEY PUNCH.

Previously Tessa was Head of Drama at Channel 4 from October 2000. During which period she successfully innovated the strategy that has cemented a drama reputation based on risk and innovation. Pieces commissioned during that time include Shameless, Teachers, Skins, Sex Traffic, Not Only But Always, Omagh, Bodily Harm, White Teeth, No Angels, The Navigators, Buried, Forty and Second Generation.

Other drama highlights commissioned by Ross include; Michael Winterbottom's THE ROAD TO GUANTANAMO, LONGFORD starring Jim Broadbent and Samantha Morton, BRADFORD RIOTS, THE MARK OF CAIN, SECRET LIFE and ALL IN THE GAME. Recent multi-award winning single and serial dramas include; Elizabeth I, The Queen's Sister, A Very Social Secretary, BAFTA award winning Sex Traffic, Paul Greengrass' Omagh, Hamburg Cell and Peter Kosminsky's The Government Inspector.

Tessa came to Channel 4 from the BBC's Independent Commissioning Group where she was Head of Drama, a position she took up in October 1993, building up an entirely new department with an annual output of 120 hours of film and television drama.

Drama she has commissioned and executive produced for the BBC includes: BILLY ELLIOTT, Clocking Off, Hearts and Bones, In a Land of Plenty, Cops, Talking Heads II, Liam, Playing the Field, Births Marriages and Deaths, Our Boy, The Gift, Stones Scissors Paper, Eskimo Day, Sex Chips and Rock and Roll.

Prior to joining the ICG she spent three years as Head of Development for British Screen, where she was responsible for commissioning and developing numerous screenplays and acted as executive producer of a series of short films funded with Channel 4. She has also worked as a script editor for BBC Scotland's television drama department and as a literary agent at Anthony Sheila Associates.

She has sat on the BFI production board, was an external examiner for the MA in Screenwriting at the Northern Film School and is now a governor of the National Film and Television School.





# Cast

Michelle Yeoh	SAIVA
Michelle Krusiec	ANJA
Sean Bean	LOKI
Per Egil Aske	ANDREI - Troop of soldiers
Jan Olav Dahl	BLONDY - Troop of soldiers
Espen Prestbakmø	BALDY - Troop of soldiers
Håkan Niva	SLIM - Troop of soldiers
Gary Pillai	IVAR
Bjarne Østerud	SHAMAN
Tommy Siikavuopio	SOLDIER 1 - Soldiers with Boat
Mark van de Weg	SOLDIER 2 - Soldiers with Boat
Sven Henriksen	IVAR'S FATHER - Herder family
Neeru Agarwal	IVAR'S MOTHER - Herder family

# Crew

DIRECTOR  
PRODUCER  
SCREENPLAY

BASED ON THE STORY TRUE NORTH BY  
MUSIC  
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY  
EDITOR  
COSTUME & PRODUCTION DESIGN  
MAKE UP & HAIR DESIGN  
SOUND

CASTING  
PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR  
LINE PRODUCER  
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER  
CO PRODUCERS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

ASIF KAPADIA  
BERTRAND FAIVRE  
ASIF KAPADIA  
TIM MILLER  
SARA MAITLAND  
DARIO MARIANELLI  
ROMAN OSIN BSC  
EWA J LIND  
BEN SCOTT  
KIRSTIN CHALMERS  
ANDY SHELLEY  
STEPHEN GRIFFITHS  
AVY KAUFMAN  
JASON ROBERTS  
GINA MARSH  
EMMA MURPHY  
PETTER BORGLI  
VINCENT GADELLE  
TESSA ROSS  
CHRISTOPHE VIDAL  
HENGAMEH PANAH  
DUNCAN REID  
PETER TOUCHE

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And FILMCAMP and NATIXIS COFICINE In association with SOFICINEMA and COFINOVA

An ASIF KAPADIA FILM MICHELLE YEOH SEAN BEAN MICHELLE KRUSIEC 'FAR NORTH'

DIRECTOR ASIF KAPADIA - PRODUCER BERTRAND FAIVRE SCREENPLAY - ASIF KAPADIA and TIM MILLER

Based on the story 'True North' by SARA MAITLAND - MUSIC DARIO MARIANELLI

Director of Photography - ROMAN OSIN BSC Editor - EWA LIND Costume & production design - BEN SCOTT Make up & Hair Design - KIRSTIN CHALMERS

Sound - ANDY SHELLEY and STEPHEN GRIFFITHS Casting - AVY KAUFMAN Production Supervisor - JASON ROBERTS Line Producer - GINA MARSH

Associate Producer - EMMA MURPHY Co producers - PETTER BORGLI & VINCENT GADELLE

Executive producers - TESSA ROSS CHRISTOPHE VIDAL HENGAMEH PANAH DUNCAN REID PETER TOUCHE

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