

78th CANNES FILM FESTIVAL – OFFICIAL SELECTION



FESTIVAL DE CANNES
SÉLECTION OFFICIELLE 2025
COMPÉTITION

PRESS NOTES

SENTIMENTAL VALUE

Directed by

Joachim TRIER

Starring Renate Reinsve, Stellan Skarsgård, Inga Ibsdotter Lilleaas, Elle Fanning

RT 2h15

PRODUCTION

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LOG LINE

Sentimental Value, is an intimate and moving exploration of family, memories, and the reconciliatory power of art.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Sisters Nora and Agnes reunite with their estranged father, the charismatic Gustav, a once renowned director who offers stage actress Nora a role in what he hopes will be his comeback film. When Nora turns it down, she soon discovers he's given her part to an eager

young Hollywood star. Suddenly, the two sisters must navigate their complicated relationship with their father and deal with an American star dropped right into the middle of their complex family dynamics.

LONG SYNOPSIS

Nora Borg (Renate Reinsve) is an established Oslo stage actress; her younger sister Agnes (Inga Ibsdotter Lilleaas) has chosen family life with her young son. Though markedly different, the two are close and deeply intertwined, having been raised by a single mother after their filmmaker father's departure years earlier.

When the once renowned Gustav (Stellan Skarsgård) attempts to cast Nora in his comeback film, old wounds bleed anew; "Nora rejects his offer, prompting the isolated patriarch to cast American star Rachel Kemp (Elle Fanning), who gradually comes to realize she has unwittingly become part of a deeply personal film drama. Agnes, meanwhile, delves deeper into the family history as Gustav and Nora attempt rapprochement; but the cracks at the base of the family home run deeper than any Borg can grasp, threatening to topple an already shaky foundation.

THE MAKING OF SENTIMENTAL VALUE - *a conversation with Joachim Trier, Renate Reinsve, Stellan Skarsgård, Inga Ibsdotter Lilleaas and Elle Fanning.*

From writer-director Joachim Trier (*The Worst Person in the World*; *Oslo, August 31*), comes a family drama about two close-knit sisters and the absent father who re-enters their lives, exploring the possibilities of forgiveness and reconciliation.

For *Sentimental Value*, Trier returns to his beloved Oslo, reuniting with frequent co-writer Eskil Vogt for their richest, most complex story to date, with much of the action playing out inside a family home — a house built of memory and that's as much a living, breathing character as the family residing in it. He remains true to his signature style, while continuing to evolve it — merging humanistic character drama with a sophisticated formal approach.

Building on the success of *The Worst Person in the World*, Trier reunites with Renate Reinsve to follow up the Academy Award-nominated sensation, this time exploring more

mature themes: residual family trauma, the artistic temperament, the complexity of the parent-child (and sibling) bond, and the perils of autobiography as creative atonement.

“Joachim has this gift — together with Eskil — for writing incredible scripts that pull everyone into their vision” says Reinsve, who won the Best Actress prize in Cannes for her breakout turn in *The Worst Person in the World*. “Every time I work with Joachim, I learn so much about my own life and relationships. When I’m lucky enough to play one of his characters, I find it has a powerful imprint on my own life.”

Following the worldwide success of *The Worst Person in the World*, Joachim Trier wanted to write another character for Renate Reinsve; sisterhood became an entry point into *Sentimental Value*.

“It’s fascinating in how siblings can be so different and unique within the family dynamic,” says Trier. “This movie started with the sisters, then grew into a story about parents and children, and families.”

THEMES

Himself now a parent, Trier pondered the philosophical question of what one generation transfers to the next. Trier’s family happened to have a generational home that was on the market while he and Vogt were writing, and they started thinking about the concept of home.

“I thought about what my parents and grandparents went through in life, but then I started thinking in the realm of a young person, a child’s reflection upon the house they lived in,” says Trier. “A home is a very subjective thing, and the house became another starting point to enter a more complex adult story of life and expectations.”

Though set once again in Oslo, Trier’s latest production is a deeper, richer and more sprawling affair than its predecessors in the Oslo Trilogy. “This one is driven by multiple characters, and that opened up new possibilities in our writing,” says Trier. “Jumping between characters, and back and forth in time, creates a more polyphonic experience — a bigger idea than subjectively following the journey of one character.”

THE FAMILY BORG

Sentimental Value opens on Nora Borg. In the film’s opening scene, the actress is undergoing stage fright — it seems she will do anything not to appear on stage, but once she does, she brings down the house.

In flashback, Nora and her younger sister Agnes's childhood home is revealed through a school essay written by 12-year-old Nora depicting the family home as a living creature, observing its human denizens across multiple generations. In the flashback, Nora is revealed as Agnes' protector and caregiver — a role that becomes reversed once the story shifts back to the present day.

Back in the present, Nora and Agnes host a memorial service for their mother Sissel, a divorced psychotherapist who died after a long illness. Both sisters are holding it together, but it's clear, in a reversal of roles, that Agnes has become Nora's protector and caregiver.

"Nora is a professional actor who uses her grief and anxiety to fuel her performances, but she's unable to communicate with other people like her sister Agnes can," says Reinsve, who plays Nora.

Her younger sister, meanwhile, has settled down with a family, raising a 9-year-old son with her husband. "Agnes is the diplomat of the family, who has been caring for her mother while she's dying and watching over Nora while she struggles with her life," says Inga Ibsdotter Lilleaas, a Norwegian actress Trier cast after a long search. "She's the glue that keeps everyone in the Borg family together, sometimes forgetting herself and her own needs in the process."

Through Nora and Agnes, Trier wanted to explore the difficulty of expressing oneself in close relationships. "It's a theme we've been working through in several of our films — finding the language we lack to convey ourselves and trying to feel seen in close relationships," says Trier. "I'm interested in a cinema of intimacy, getting close to the human face and looking at the human experience in an honest way. Through the chaos that Nora represents, and the silence Agnes represents, both worlds can convey something human in their own way."

Trier also wanted to explore how close siblings could become so different over time while coming from the same family. "Over the course of the movie we get a bigger understanding of their dynamic and how it changes," says Trier. "I thought it was a beautiful way to explore the paradoxes of responsibility and our roles within a family"

Gate-crashing the service after a long absence with his grandiose presence is the sisters' father, Gustav, who disrupts their sisterly bond — and his divorced wife's memorial.

Once Gustav reenters the lives of the Borg sisters, his artistic temperament drives the plot. He returns to the family fold bearing a screenplay — his autobiographical comeback — whose central role he offers to Nora. Still wounded from his abrupt departure years prior, his daughter turns down the role.

“Nora is angry with Gustav because he left the family, but she won’t let her grief come to the surface,” says Reinsve. “Going into the role, I saw the hurt she experienced as a child and the way she fights hard not to be like Gustav in her own life — but over the course of the movie, she comes to realize how alike they are. While Nora and Gustav reflect each other, they can’t communicate.”

Determined to make his magnum opus after Nora’s rejection, Gustav offers the role to an American actress he meets at the Deauville Film Festival during a retrospective of his work. A former child star who has found worldwide success in popular movies, Rachel Kemp yearns to work with world-class auteurs.

“She’s a movie star who’s been in big films and she’s famous around the world, but she’s become lost in her career; she’s striving for more in her art,” says Fanning. “From the outside it would seem everything is perfect for Rachel, and her career but she’s at a place where she wants to quit acting — until she meets Gustav Borg.”

Playing two creative souls trying to find meaning through each other’s work, Skarsgård and Fanning discovered they had great chemistry working together on such soul-baring material. “Stellan is this kind and exuberant intellectual figure who is also like a teddy bear,” says Fanning. “Our relationship was quite silly, and we got very close. He was like a father figure to me during filming.”

During her initial read of *Sentimental Value*, Fanning loved how specific Trier developed each character, including Rachel Kemp. She also wanted to work with Trier following the success of *The Worst Person in the World* and heard through the grapevine he was thinking of her for a role.

“I was moved by the character dynamics. The script read like a novel, and being an actor myself, I felt I understood Rachel Kemp very well.”

Taking a break from production on *Predator*, Fanning traveled to Oslo at Trier’s request to rehearse with Skarsgård over a long weekend. Even though Trier was already an admirer of her work, he was struck by Fanning’s intuitive grasp of the character. ‘Elle has this great levity to her, and she’s a joy to work with,’ says Trier. ‘She’s also been acting since she was a child, which resonated with the Rachel Kemp character.’”

A HOUSE IS NOT A HOME

Casting the family home in *Sentimental Value* became just as challenging and time-consuming as finding actors to play the human roles. As seen in the film’s early flashback,

the Borg home is a living thing, quietly observing the behavior of the humans who embody it across multiple generations.

“There’s a sense of inherited grief in this story and we used the house as a framework for examining time and forgiveness, and emotional inheritance,” says Trier, who is a third-generation filmmaker in his family. “I’m interested in emotions and experiences being passed down in a family, and how we often ask ourselves why we are so much like one parent and not like another. Gustav comes to examine what he’s transferred to his children beyond his intention or knowledge, which is a big theme in the movie. We wanted the family home to be a framework for the audience to reflect on this.”

Across multiple generations, the house in *Sentimental Value* comes to mirror the characters and their fractured relationships. “It’s a beautiful way of connecting past generations with the present because a house can function as a constant and a caregiver in your life — it’s a nurturing force,” says Lilleaas. “Maybe it’s just a house but it holds so much in your life that you weren’t present for, containing in its walls the vibe of everything that was and maybe everything that will be.

TRIER ON MUSIC

From a raucous party set to Le Tigre in *Reprise* to the poignancy of Art Garfunkel’s cover of “Waters of March” in *The Worst Person in the World*, music remains a crucial element of Trier’s filmmaking. For the soundtrack to *Sentimental Value*, Trier focused on underscoring the tenderness of family bonds. “The film opens with Terry Callier’s ‘Dancing Girl,’ which has a mixture of folk and soul that I find to be emotionally inspiring for this film, and ends with Labi Siffre’s ‘Cannock Chase,’ which somehow reminds me of the same musical style. I’m proud of the soundtrack for this film and deeply grateful for all the artists who contributed.”

TRIER ON THE VISUAL APPROACH

Reuniting with cinematographer Kasper Tuxen (*The Worst Person in the World*), Trier again highlights the distinct look of Oslo as a city, and its very specific light. “Our main location, the house, is a beautiful place with a lot of opportunities, but also its share of challenges. It has large windows in every direction, so to sustain the exterior lighting situations and keep the specificity of changing seasons was a big task. The film overall also has a huge range of visual situations as it contains a multitude of time periods, from the 30’s to the present day, all coupled with a modern visual sensitivity, films-within-films, and a rich selection of varied shooting locations. I’m very impressed by how Kasper managed to balance it all out visually.”

MAIN CREW

Director – Joachim Trier

Norwegian director and screenwriter Joachim Trier has received international acclaim for all his five feature films, including *The Worst Person in the World*, which earned Renate Reinsve the Best Actress award at the Festival de Cannes, as well as a BAFTA and two Academy Award nominations. *Sentimental Value* marks his sixth collaboration with co-writer Eskil Vogt.

Filmography

Sentimental Value (2025) – Cannes (Competition)

The Worst Person in the World (2021) – Cannes (Competition), Oscar-nominated

Thelma (2017) – Toronto, Sitges, Norwegian submission to the Oscars

Louder Than Bombs (2015) – Cannes (Competition)

Oslo, August 31st (2011) – Cannes (Un Certain Regard)

Reprise (2006) – Toronto, Karlovy Vary, multiple international awards

Writer – Eskil Vogt

Eskil Vogt is an Oscar-nominated screenwriter whose work with Trier spans all their features. His solo films as writer and director — *Blind* (Sundance and Berlinale) and *The Innocents* (Un Certain Regard) — have received major festival awards, including a European Film Award.

Producers – Maria Ekerhovd and Andrea Berentsen Ottmar

Maria Ekerhovd is the founder of Mer Film and has produced numerous acclaimed titles, including the recent Sundance hit *The Ugly Stepsister* and Eskil Vogt's *The Innocents*. She has received a European Film Award.

Andrea Berentsen Ottmar is the founder of Eye Eye Pictures and has produced features such as *Armand* (Cannes 2024) and *The Worst Person in the World*.

Cinematography – Kasper Tuxen

Danish cinematographer Kasper Tuxen previously shot Trier's *The Worst Person in the World* and, most recently, *The Apprentice* (Cannes 2024).

Production Design – Jørgen Stangebye Larsen

Norwegian designer Jørgen Stangebye Larsen reunites with Trier after *Oslo, August 31st*. He is an award-winning production designer whose currently pursuing a PhD in Production Design and world creation through On-set Virtual Production

Costume Design – Ellen Ystehede

Ellen Ystehede is a leading Norwegian costume designer whose past collaborations with Trier include *Thelma* and *The Worst Person in the World*.

Editor – Olivier Bugge Coutté

Danish editor Olivier Bugge Coutté has edited all of Trier's films. His work has earned him multiple awards and recent acclaim for *The Apprentice* by Ali Abbasi.

Sound Design – Gisle Tveito

Award-winning sound designer Gisle Tveito has worked on all of Trier's films. He won the European Film Award for Best Sound for *The Innocents*.

Casting – Yngvild Haga and Avy Kaufman

Yngvild Kolset Haga is a leading Norwegian casting director, known for *Thelma* and *The Worst Person in the World*.

Avy Kaufman is an iconic American casting director known for *Brokeback Mountain* and *The Sixth Sense*.

Original Score – Hania Rani

Polish composer Hania Rani is known for her minimalist, emotionally resonant compositions. *Sentimental Value* marks her first film collaboration with Joachim Trier.

MAIN CAST

Nora Borg – Renate Reinsve

Renate Reinsve is a Norwegian actress who gained international acclaim for her performance as Julie in *The Worst Person in the World* (2021), earning the Best Actress award at the Cannes Film Festival and a BAFTA nomination. She has since appeared in films such as *A Different Man* (2024) and *Armand* (2024).

Gustav Borg – Stellan Skarsgård

Stellan Skarsgård is a renowned Swedish actor with a career spanning over five decades. He is known for his long-standing collaboration with Lars von Trier, including *Breaking the Waves*, *Nymphomaniac*, and *Melancholia*, as well as for *Good Will Hunting*, *Chernobyl*, *Dune*, and *Mamma Mia!*. Skarsgård has received awards around the world, including a Golden Globe, a European Film Award, and the Silver Bear for Best Actor.

Agnes Borg Pettersen – Inga Ibsdotter Lilleaas

Inga Ibsdotter Lilleaas is a Norwegian actress known for her roles in *A Beautiful Life*, *The Last King*, and *Women in Oversized Men's Shirts*.

Rachel Kemp – Elle Fanning

Elle Fanning is an acclaimed American actress known for films including *A Complete Unknown*, *The Beguiled*, *The Neon Demon*, *Maleficent*, and the award-winning series *The Great*.

FULL CAST LIST :

Narrator – Bente Børsum

Nora Borg – Renate Reinsve

Gustav Borg – Stellan Skarsgård

Agnes Borg Pettersen – Inga Ibsdotter Lilleaas

Rachel Kemp – Elle Fanning

Jakob – Anders Danielsen Lie
Michael – Jesper Christensen
Ingrid Berger – Lena Endre
Sam – Cory Michael Smith
Nicky – Catherine Cohen
Even Pettersen – Andreas Stoltenberg Granerud
Erik – Øyvind Hesjedal Loven
Peter – Lars Väringer

Sissel Borg – Marianne Vassbotn Klasson
Karin Borg – Vilde Søyland
Karin Irgens – Sigrid Lorentzen Abelsnes
Edith Irgens (grown-up) – Mari Strand Ferstad
Edith Irgens (child) – Eiril Tormodsdatter Solberg
Lillian – Julia Küster
Nora Borg (pre-teen) – Olivia Thompson
Nora Borg (child) – Iben Policer Havnevik
Nora Borg (child) – Irma Trier
Nora Borg (baby) – Ibi Trier
Gustav Borg (young adult) – Knut Rørtveit
Gustav Borg (young adult) – Nicholas Bergh
Gustav Borg (teenager) – Aasmund Almdahl
Gustav Borg (child) – Emmet Øverland Crompton
Agnes Borg (pre-teen) – Ida Atlanta Kyllingmark Giertsen
Agnes Borg (child) – Julie Østhagen
Therese (mother of Even)– Ingunn Beate Øyen
Thea – Pia Borgli
Kamilla – Tuva Nielsen
William – Gard Løkke
Man at funeral – Per Miljeteig
Stage Manager (Theatre) – Amalie Ibsen Jensen
Sound Technician (Theatre) – Håkon Mathias Vassvik
Scene Technician (Theatre) – Yngvar Nielsen Skuland
Costume Technician (Theatre) – Torunn Meyer
Costume Technician (Theatre) – Kristine Utne Stiberg
Director (Theatre) – Hooman Sharifi
Olivia (Theatre director) – Stine Fevik
Actor (Theatre ensemble) – Seda Witt
Actor (Theatre ensemble) – Vetle Bergan
Actor (Theatre ensemble) – Olav Waastad
Actor (Theatre ensemble) – Deniz Kaya

Actor (Theatre ensemble) – Liv Bernhoft Osa
Actor (Theatre ensemble) – Håkon Ramstad
Actor (Theatre ensemble) – Øystein Røger
Actor (Theatre ensemble) – Torbjørn Davidsen
Actor (Theatre ensemble) – Per Bogstad Gulliksen
Christophe – Lazare Gousseau
Nathalie – Alix Poisson
Nathalie's Assistant – Camille Constantin da Silva
Rachel's Bodyguard – Rémi Alexandre
French Waiter – Vincent Le Prêtre
Anders – Jonas Jacobsen
Gustav's Assistant – Martha Kjørven
Dark Haired Boy ("Anna") – Mikkel Knutsen Bjaadal
Woman on Train ("Anna") – Ingrid Jørgensen Dragland
Stian – Bjørn Alexander
Sissel's Client – Ingrid Vollan
Archivist – Gunnar Strand
Archivist – Mone Mikkelsen
Waitress – Mona Huang
Nurse – Sacha Slengesol Balgobin
Lennart Borg – Haakon Norum Albech
Edvard Irgens – Erling Eggen
Signe Irgens – Kirsten Kvalø
Young Karin's Friend – Elin Vidovic
Young Karin's Friend – Live Frøysnes
Carpenter – Tord Moberg

SOUNDTRACK:

Terry Callier – Dancing Girl

Pastor T.L. Barrett & The Youth for Christ Choir – Nobody Knows

Pinchas Steinberg & Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra – Symphonie Fantastique Op 14, H. 48: V. Songe D'un Nuit de Sabbat – Larghetto – Allegro (Berlioz)

Alf Lund Godbolt – Ophelia

Septura – Préludes, Book 1, L. 117, NO. 6: Des Pas Sur La Neige (Debussy)

Otto Totland – Rift

Yusef Lateef – Love Theme from Spartacus

Bigbang – Little Wolf

Artie Shaw and his Orchestra – Rose Room

Klára Körmendi – Enfantillages Pittoresques: Berceuse, Lent (Satie)

Johnny Thunder – I'm Alive

Judie Tzuke – Shoot from the Heart

New Order – World

Roxy Music – Same Old Scene

Michael Nyman – Crematorium Conspiracy

Labi Siffre – Cannock Chase

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