

# About the Boy who ate an Oakwood Chair

PRESS KIT - 2016



## STORY

This short film tells the melancholic and wondrous tale of Gerard, who is tremendously in love with the girl next door, but doesn't have the guts to tell her.

But one day, to impress her, he decides to do what no one has ever done before: he eats a chair. The chair he was always standing on, looking down from the attic to the street, where all the kids were playing.

And from that moment on, his life changes dramatically. He not only succeeds in winning the heart of his next door sweetheart, but unwillingly he turns his whole life - an the people around him - upside down. He even gets famous and makes it to Hollywood, as a horror movie icon: "theee wooodmann"!!!

But,... in the end, the big question remains: is this the life Gerard really wanted?

A funny, slightly surrealistic and universal telling about the human desire to achieve a goal, to belong, to love and to be loved back in return. And about how stupid and ill-considered decisions can have a huge impact on someones life.

## DIRECTOR - Pieter Goethals

Pieter studied “Film & Television Directing” at the LUCA - School of Arts in Brussels from 1992 till 1996. In 1997 Pieter specialized in directing at the Rockport Film and Television Workshops in Maine, USA, and spent several months in New York after that, hoping to kickstart his career. But that proved not so easy though.

In 1998 he started working as a director for KETNET, the first children’s broadcaster in Flanders, several renowned production companies (WARNER BROS, ENDEMOL, ZODIAK, ...) and all national broadcasters in Belgium. In 2001 he went on to direct several Flemish versions of international bestselling TV-shows like “The Apprentice”, “Trinny and Susannah”, “Queer Eye for the Straight Guy”, “A Place in the Sun”,... and so much more. He also directed two hugely popular drama shows for VRT and VTM, two of the biggest national broadcasters in Flanders.

In 2012 Pieter founded CREATIVE GENES, a production company for corporate and publicity films, but also drama productions. “About the Boy who ate an Oakwood Chair” is the first drama production, for a big part funded through crowdfunding from all over the world (Belgium, the Netherlands, UK, USA, Asia,...), the Belgian Tax Shelter system and several logistical partners.

Pieter hopes this short film will become the stepping stone to other and bigger adventures.

## DIRECTOR STATEMENT

*"From the first moment I read the children's book by Edward van de Vendel, only a few pages long, I wanted to turn this story into a film. It made me wonder about a possible back story: why would somebody even think about eating a chair? What could be the consequences? And that made it a story for grown ups, not only for kids. It's about falling in love, getting older, realizing your dreams (or not), finding peace and being able to forgive, especially oneself.*

*Although one would expect a psychological, low profile approach for this kind of story, as a director I chose for a dynamic and expressive style. In the true tradition of Hollywood cinema, with a very gentle nod to Alfred Hitchcock and Steven Spielberg. So we were gonna need a lot of period sets, costumes, cars and props from the forties and sixties, very believable special and make up effects, a few vans with camera equipment, dollies and cranes and a full classical orchestra for our score! Only that way the story would truly come to life, in my opinion. But that also meant it was going to become a very ambitious project, by Belgian short film standards. Or any!*

*Since we got no government funding, we embarked on a crowd funding trip a couple of years ago. It all started on IndieGoGo, but soon our campaign only got bigger and more elaborate. A lot of work went into convincing people from all over the world, by making avant la lettre "making of" video's, showing them what our plans were. In the end (after several years) we got contributions from Belgium, the Netherlands, France, UK, USA, Asia,... everybody wanted to see our project succeed!*

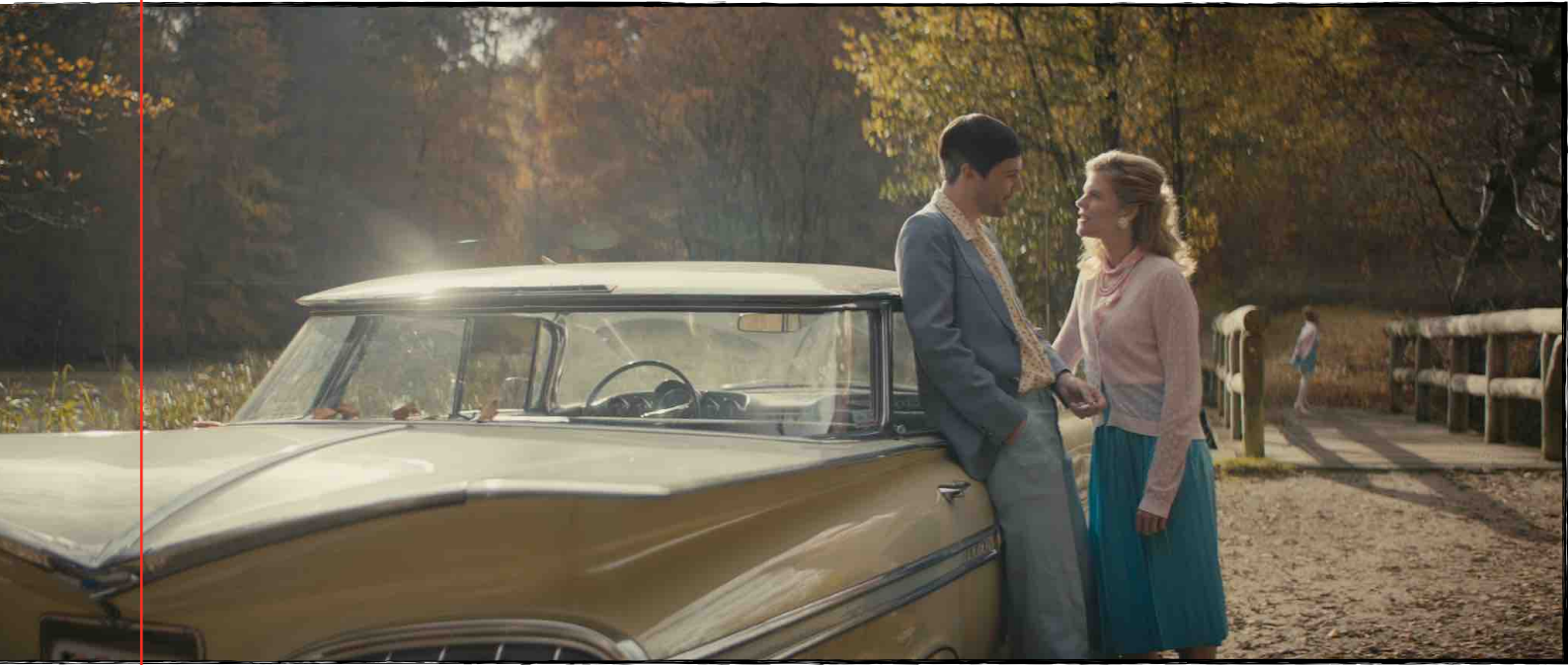
*With the help of the Belgian Tax Shelter system, several logistical partners and a lot of goodwill from cast and crew, this project finally got made. Everybody was paid for their job though, which also was one of my "ambitions" from the start. In retrospect we could have done it all very differently and a bit more low key even, but looking at the result, I don't regret it. This is the kind of cinema I wanna make!*

*Yes indeed, it was quite a journey, being the director and producer on this film, but well worth the effort. It convinced me I made the right choice a couple of years ago: keep believing in something till you finally get it done!"*



Pieter Goethals

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Goethals Pieter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



## CINEMATOGRAPHER - Bjorn Charpentier

Bjorn Charpentier attended the NARAFI film school in Brussels, where he began developing his skills as a Director of Photography.

After graduating, he won a “Best Cinematography” award at the BIFFF. This made him fall into the attention of renowned cinematographer and twice oscar winning: Jack Cardiff. He was invited to follow a short course cinematography and a 35 mm shooting class at the English NFTS where he was taught by Alec Mills.

Bjorn went on working as a camera assistant on many feature film projects. After five years of gaining experience, he decided to prove himself as a Director of Photography.

Since 2007 Bjorn is working as an independent cinematographer and from 2011 he is working as a international DP. Over the past few years, he shot many commercials, short fiction projects and music videos. Some of his projects were selected for national and international film festivals. In 2015 he won GRAND PRIX and GOLD LION at Cannes.

He became Member of SBC in 2016 and is now shooting “High Wire Act”, the next feature film by Brad Anderson (“The Machinist”, “Transsiberian”, “Stonehearst Asylum”,...) starring Rosamund Pike (“Gone Girl”) and Jon Hamm (“Mad Men”).

## COMPOSER - Hannes De Maeyer

Hannes De Maeyer studied at the KASK Conservatory Ghent in Belgium. In 2005 he won the competition of the Film Fest Gent as the youngest composer ever for this contest, being 18. His music was performed by the Brussels Philharmonic Orchestra for a live audience and broadcasted on television. Nowadays Hannes has his own studio in Ghent and works mainly as a composer for film, television and commercials. He also works quite often as an arranger, music programmer, director or copyist.

Feature films as a composer include “Heroes of the Sea” (2016), the award winning “Black” (2015) and “Image” (2014). Award winning short films include “Baghdad Messi” (2012) and “Land of the Heroes” (2011). Recent and highly successful television series in Flanders include “Professor T.” (2015) and “Voor wat Hoort Wat” (2015).

For “About the Boy who ate an Oakwood Chair”, Hannes worked closely together with director Pieter Goethals to achieve an “old school”, classical score. In April 2016 it was recorded in Budapest and performed by 50 musicians of the Budapest Art orchestra.

## EDITOR - Yves Bertrand

Yves graduated as a photographer but soon started working as a supervising editor at Man@Work in Antwerp, doing all sorts of work like trailers, commercials and drama productions. A few years ago he started up the Antwerp office for Visual Creations and specialized in feature film post-production.

Recent feature films as an assembly editor include “Emperor” (2015, directed by Lee Tamahori, starring Adrien Brody), as additional editor “The Lovers” (2013, directed by Roland Joffé, starring Josh Hartnett), “The Devil’s Double” and as first assistant editor “Third Person” (starring Liam Neeson and Adrien Brody), “Mean to Be” and “The Hessen Affair”.

Recent short films as an editor include “Hold back”, “Gone” and “About the Boy who ate an Oakwood Chair”.

# CONTACT

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