

PART OF THE  
**BORDERLINE**  
COLLECTION

# RADJI

A FILM BY GEORG GÖTMARK  
& JOHN ERLING UTSI

OFF WORLD PRESENTS

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In the northernmost part of Sweden and Norway, a conflict over land and borders seems to be eternally ongoing. Simon and Beatrice Marainen and their three kids are a part of an indigenous Sami semi-nomadic community of reindeer herders, that have traditionally always moved freely across northern Scandinavia, following the natural movement of their herds. But today, nationalism, bureaucracy and politics are a threat against their traditional way of life.

A FILM BY	GEORG GÖTMARK JOHN ERLING UTSI	GENRE	CREATIVE DOCUMENTARY
WRITTEN BY	GEORG GÖTMARK JOHN ERLING UTSI FREDERIK NICOLAI	DURATION	70 MINUTES 52 MINUTES
CAMERA	JÖRGEN LINDSKOG CARL JOHAN UTSI KARL EMIL RIKARDSSON GEORG GÖTMARK JOHN ERLING UTSI EIRIK NICOLAI HEIM MALDONADO LIZARAZU	FORMAT	DCP 5.1 SOUND 16:9
EDITED BY	THOMAS POOTERS	SPOKEN LANGUAGES	SAMI SWEDISH NORWEGIAN
ORIGINAL MUSIC BY	FRÉDÉRIC VERCHEVAL	SUBTITLES	ENGLISH, DUTCH SWEDISH, NORWEGIAN LITHUANIAN CROATIAN
SOUND EDIT & DESIGN	RUNE HANSEN		
SOUND MIX	JEAN-FRANÇOIS LEVILLAIN		
PRODUCERS	FREDERIK NICOLAI ERIC GOOSSENS	PRODUCTION COUNTRIES	BELGIUM NORWAY SWEDEN CROATIA LITHUANIA
CO-PRODUCERS	KARL-EMIL RIKARDSEN LJUBO ZDJELAREVIC LUKAS TRIMONIS		

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## **SYNOPSIS** (5302 characters)

Simon Marainen is a reindeer herder who lives with his wife Beatrice and 3 kids in Soppero in the northernmost part of Sweden. Soppero is a small village, mostly inhabited by the Saarivuoma, a group of Sami reindeer herders. Every spring their reindeer herd of about 10.000 animals, migrate from their winter pastures in Sweden across the border to their summer pastures near Álddesjávri in Norway. The animals have moved this way for hundreds of years, and before the national states of Sweden and Norway colonized these northern lands, this move was as natural as the flow of the seasons, but throughout the centuries the grazing lands of the reindeer have been increasingly limited by borders, fences and roads, constructed by the Swedes and Norwegians who arrived many centuries after the Sami. As a result, the Saarivuoma community have been forced to constantly fight for their rights against Norwegian and Swedish authorities and bureaucracy.

Simon's wife Beatrice was born and raised in Norway but moved across the border to live with Simon in Soppero. To Beatrice her Sami identity is much more important than her Norwegian citizenship. Every day of the week, Beatrice drives back across the Norwegian border, to work as a teacher. The fact that she was denied her language and culture as a child, has made her become an activist. She fights for the recognition of the Sami language and culture, both for her 'Norwegian' students and her own children in Sweden.

Right now, the Saarivuoma community is at an important turning point in their existence, a moment which will have a definite influence on their future: their herd was supposed to migrate back to their summer pastures in Sweden, but not this year: due to bad weather conditions about 2.500 animals are still stuck in Norway, around one fourth of the whole Saarivuoma herd.

At the same time, the Norwegian government wants to reduce the number of "Swedish" reindeer on the Norwegian side, so they have started fining Saarivuoma for the reindeer who are on the wrong side of the border. The animals are weak and underfed, so getting them back to Sweden is almost impossible. Many of their reindeer will not survive the winter. But still the Norwegian fines keep increasing every day because the reindeer are on the "wrong" side of the border. A border that nor the reindeer, nor the Sami recognize.



The Saarivuoma people are doing everything they can to save their animals and reduce the economic disaster. They drive their scooters up in the Norwegian mountains trying to get around in the harsh winter conditions with great risk of avalanches and blizzards, in attempts to locate and rescue the scattered animals.

Of course the Sami don't agree with the Norwegian point-of-view. Not being able to cross the border freely and legally like their ancestors have always has done, would be the end of their traditional way of living. So they are prepared to fight: Saarivuoma's chairman Per-Anders Nutti is a tireless activist for Sami rights, who has dedicated his whole life fighting against Norwegian and Swedish bureaucracy. Today he is dealing with three different Norwegian authorities at the same trying to make them understand that this an exceptional bad weather situation.

At the same time, the Saarivuoma people aim for a more sustainable solution so they are also in the middle of a court case against the Norwegian government, where they are fighting for their rights to freely use their pastures at the Norwegian side. But the court case symbolizes much more than only the use of land. It underlines their past of colonization and how Scandinavian authorities do still doesn't recognize their traditions and historical rights to these lands. So the court case is central to their seemingly endless struggle to consolidate their language and culture in a rapidly changing world. The question is will it be possible to protect this community against not only the bureaucracy and nationalism of Sweden and Norway, but against globalization, climate change and borders closing due to the pandemic?

With the passing of the years, the world changes and evolves, and so does the Sami. What can a minority group do to maintain their culture and identity in a world that is more connected and globalized than ever before? Through the lives of Simon, Beatrice and their family we get a picture how a Sami community is living in a present where the effects of former colonization are still noticeable, while struggling to maintain their identity in the future.



## ABOUT DIRECTOR GEORG GÖTMARK

Georg Götmarm has a degree in Film and Cultural studies at Stockholm University and Universidad Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona. He has also completed a post-graduate course at the Royal Academy of Arts in Stockholm.

Georg is currently working as a producer and director at the company Filmfront Media AB, that he has also co-founded. He has worked with documentaries & TV since 2001. During this period he has worked on a number of international documentary projects, such as *The Last Lacandones*, a film about Mayan Indians shot in Mexico, *Transit Tanger* which was about the dream that many Moroccans have of starting a new life in Europe and *Citizen Oketch* a film about a family living in the Kibera slum outside of Nairobi. During this period Georg has also produced a number of TV-series and reportages in many different countries for Swedish television, and a number of educational films for universities, organizations and companies, on many different topics.

The last five years Georg has worked on his first feature creative documentary called *UR. BELLUM - THE DAEMON OF WAR* (2021) about AI, robotics, and ethics. The film has been supported by the Swedish and Danish film institutes and the Scandinavian TV channels and had its world premiere at Visions du Réel 2021



## ABOUT AUTHOR/PRODUCER FREDERIK NICOLAI

Frederik Nicolai (Belgium, 1977) started his career by executive producing fiction series, feature and short films in Belgium and the Netherlands, such as the short films 'Haun' and 'Carlo' by Oscar nominated director Michael R. Roskam. Then he completely dedicated himself to author documentaries. Ever since Frederik produced and co-produced over 40 author successful documentary films & series and established a large international network of broadcasters, sales-agents, distributors, festivals,... Some successful films and series produced by Frederik are '4 Elements' (Jiska Rickels, opening film of IDFA 2006), *Red Star Line* (documentary series, 10+ worldwide broadcasters), *El Color Del Camaleon* (10+ awards, 40+ festival selections), *Archibelge* (one of the most viewed Belgian documentaries ever), and many more.

Besides producing, Frederik is also scriptwriter and lecturer and board member of Doc Nomads, a 2 years Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree (EMJMD) in Documentary Filmmaking delivered by a consortium of three prominent European universities across three countries: Portugal, Hungary and Belgium.



## ABOUT PRODUCER OFF WORLD

Off World is an independent production company based in Brussels, capital of Flanders, Belgium and Europe. Off World's main goal is to produce international author documentaries. Over the last few years, the company has built up a large portfolio and a solid reputation as delegate producer and co-producer of many creative and original documentaries.

Some recent films: **Four Seasons in a Day** a film by Annabel Verbeke, in coproduction with VRT-Canvas, Kinoteka (HR), Relation04 Media (NO), In\_Script (LT) // **The Wire** a film by Tiha Gudac in coproduction with VRT-Canvas, Kinoteka (HR) RTV Sloveija, Urh (SI), Relation04 Media (NO), In\_Script (LT) // **We Will Remember Them** a film by Annabel Verbeke in coproduction with VRT-Canvas (Closing film VdR 2018) // **El Color Del Camaleon**, a film by Andrès Lübbert in coproduction with Blume Producciones (Chile) // **Exitus**, a documentary series by Toon Loenders and Bob Thissen, in co-production with Submarine, NTR (NL) and VRT-Canvas // **How To Meet a Mermaid** a film by Coco Schrijber in coproduction with Zeppers Film, VPOR (NL), House of Reel, DR (DK), IDFA 2016 // **Archibelge**, a documentary series by Sofie Benoot, Olivier Magis, Frederik Nicolai and Gilles Coton, in co-production with Playtime Films RTBF and VRT-Canvas // **Red Star Line**, a documentary series by Daniël Cattier and Fabio Wuytack, in co-production with Eklektik, RTBF and VRT-Canvas // **Desert Haze**, a film by Sofie Benoot, in co-production with Zeppers Film (NL) // **Reinoud, My Sculptor**, a film by Blaise D'Haese, in coproduction with RTBF // **Rêve Kakudji**, a film by Ibbe Daniels and Koen Vidal, in co-production with VRT-Canvas (IDFA 2015) // **Little Heaven**, a film by Lieven Corthouts, in co-production with DGOS, Lichtpunt // **Kongo**, a film by Samuel Tilman, in coproduction with Eklektik (BE), RTBF, ARTE, VRT-CANVAS // For complete filmography, visit [www.offworld.be](http://www.offworld.be).





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 WITH THE SUPPORT FROM **FLANDERS AUDIOVISUAL FUND, NORWEGIAN FILM INSTITUTE, SWEDISH FILM INSTITUTE**  
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 WITH THE SUPPORT FROM **INTERNATIONAL SAMI FILM INSTITUTE, FILM FUND NORD, NORDNORKS FILMSENTER**  
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