



A FILM BY FRELLE PETERSEN

PRESS KIT



WORLD PREMIERE AT THE BERLINALE

FRELLE PETERSEN, the acclaimed director known for his visionary and deeply naturalistic approach to storytelling, behind the critically acclaimed and the award-winning *UNCLE* and *FOREVER*, is set to captivate audiences once again with his latest feature film, *HOME SWEET HOME*.

HOME SWEET HOME, produced by the renowned powerhouse Zentropa, is world premiering in the prestigious Panorama section at the 75th Berlin International Film Festival — one of the most anticipated cinematic events of the year.

LINK FOR PR MATERIALS: <https://trustnordisk.com/movie/home-sweet-home>

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PITCH

As Sofie, a single mother, is starting in a new job as home care worker she needs to balance the demanding job among the local communities' citizens, and the everyday life with her daughter, Clara.

SYNOPSIS

The 32-year-old divorced Sofie is looking for a fresh start and begins working as a home care worker in a small community, where she lives with her 10-year-old daughter Clara.

Sofie quickly builds strong relationships with both the elderly citizens and her colleagues, finding the work rewarding and experiencing the satisfaction of making a difference.

However, she soon feels the pressure of the job, and when she receives an unjustified complaint from a relative of an elderly citizen, a challenging period starts where Sofie's ability to care for both the elderly citizens and her daughter is put to the test.

A TOUCHING PORTRAIT OF CARE

HOME SWEET HOME follows the story of 32-year-old Sofie, a divorced mother determined to start anew. She takes a job as a home care worker in a rural Southern Jutland community in Denmark, where she lives with her 10-year-old daughter, Clara.

Sofie quickly forms strong bonds with the elderly residents she cares for and her coworkers, finding fulfillment in making a difference. However, she soon becomes acutely aware of the immense pressures faced by home care workers. When Sofie is confronted with an unjustified complaint from a relative of one of the elderly residents, it triggers a series of challenges that put her commitment to both her work and her role as a mother to the ultimate test.

"I would like to explore how we as human beings react when we are pressured to be compassionate; through our jobs, as in the case with our main character Sofie, and towards our family – even when our emotional strength is at the lowest,"
says Frelle Petersen.

AUTHENTICITY AS AN ARTISTIC VISION

The screenplay is grounded in meticulous research with director Frelle Petersen spending time alongside home care workers and elderly citizens in their homes. This firsthand experience gave him invaluable insights of the demanding routines and the emotional complexities of providing caregiving to elderly.

"For me, research is crucial in creating an authentic story. The film is inspired by reality and the small and large human dilemmas that I encountered and experienced firsthand,"
"Sofie is one of life's everyday heroes, passionate about making a difference in her work. I became curious about how we as humans respond when constantly under pressure – both at work and in our personal lives. How we want to be there for the people we care about but are often challenged when our energy runs out."
Petersen says.

A SOUTHERN JUTLAND ENSEMBLE

The lead role of Sofie is played by Jette Søndergaard, who also starred in Petersen's previous films, *UNCLE* (2019) winner of Tokyo's Grand Prix and *FOREVER* (2022), which premiered in competition in San Sebastian. The cast also includes many new faces, most of whom were cast in and around the little Danish town Tønder, where the filming took place. Like the previous two features, the film is again deeply rooted in the lives of ordinary people living in Southern Jutland, Denmark.



Karen Tygesen (left) as Else and Jette Søndergaard (right) as Sofie.

Photo by Rolf Konow / Zentropa

CREDITS

HOME SWEET HOME is written and directed by Frelle Petersen and produced by Jonas Bagger for Zentropa Entertainments³ with support from the Danish Film Institute by commissioning editor Kalle Bjerkø, Den Vestdanske Filmpulje and Tønder Kommune in cooperation with TV 2 Denmark. Developed with support from the European Union.

Original title	HJEM KÆRE HJEM
International title	HOME SWEET HOME
Language	Danish
Local release	19.06.2025
Running time	112 min.
Production company	Zentropa Entertainments
Directed by	Frelle Petersen
Screenplay by	Frelle Petersen
Produced by	Jonas Bagger
Director of Photography	Jørgen Johansson, DFF
Production designer	Rie Lykke
Editor	Frelle Petersen
Sound designer	Hans Møller
Composer	Flemming Berg
Costume designer	Charlotte Moe
Main Cast	
<i>Sofie</i>	Jette Søndergaard
<i>Else</i>	Karen Tygesen
<i>Clara</i>	Mimi Bræmer Dueholm
<i>Katrine</i>	Hanne Knudsen
<i>Jarl</i>	Finn Nissen
<i>Zola</i>	Esther Muthoni Njogu
<i>Per</i>	Henry Sørensen
Domestic distribution by:	Nordisk Film Distribution
International sales handled by:	TrustNordisk



DIRECTOR FRELLE PETERSEN

Frelle Petersen is an acclaimed and award-winning Danish director which latest feature film FOREVER (2022) (RESTEN AF LIVET) had its international premiere in the main competition at the San Sebastián Film Festival and was awarded as Best Film by The Danish Critics' Association (Bodil).

Frelle's previous film UNCLE (2019) (ONKEL), won a Bodil Award for Best Screenplay and Grand Prix at the Tokyo IFF 2019 and was nominated for The Nordic Council Film Prize.

Selected Filmography – Writer and director

2025	HOME SWEET HOME
2022	FOREVER
2019	UNCLE
2016	WHERE HAVE ALL THE GOOD MEN GONE



LEAD ACTOR - JETTE SØNDERGAARD

Jette is a Bodil Award (*Danish Film Critics Association*) and Robert Award (*Danish Film Academy*) nominated Danish actress.

Jette is known for her long-time collaboration with film director Frelle Petersen as the main lead in Frelle Petersen's films UNCLE (2019), FOREVER (2022) and HOME SWEET HOME (2025).

Jette has also starred in tv-series as DR's CARMEN CURLERS (2023) and TV 2's AGENT (2023).

ABOUT SUPPORTING CAST MEMBERS

With a few exceptions the supporting cast consists of first-time actors casted in the local community of Southern Jutland, Denmark, making their acting debut in HOME SWEET HOME.

PRODUCER - JONAS BAGGER

Jonas has worked as a producer for Zentropa since 2009. Most recently, Jonas produced Frelle Petersen's Bodil-winning Southern Jutland feature film RESTEN AF LIVET (2022) and the TV 2 / Arté France primetime crime series DNA Season 2 (2022) starring Charlotte Rampling. Jonas has co-produced several films, including Lars von Trier's THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT (2018) starring Matt Dillon and Uma Thurman and THE KEEPER OF LOST CAUSES (2013).

Jonas' track record includes films world premiering at festivals around the globe including Cannes, Berlin and Sundance.

Jonas graduated as a producer from the film school SUPER16 and a post-graduate student from the National Film School of Denmark.

Jonas has won three Robert Awards over the years.

PRODUCTION COMPANY

Zentropa is a multiple Academy Awards (OSCAR) and Palme d'Or (CANNES) nominated and winning company and the home of European star directors such as Thomas Vinterberg, Lars von Trier, Anders Thomas Jensen and Nikolaj Arcel. Zentropa's filmography includes multiple films by Susanne Bier, Lone Scherfig and Pernille Fischer Christensen.

With a catalog of over 275 titles, Zentropa is today one of the most productive, notorious, and acclaimed production companies in Scandinavia and Europe. In addition to producing feature films, Zentropa has now also substantially engaged in the production of TV series.

The company that launched the DOGME95 movement boasts a portfolio that includes an extensive list of awards and honors, including: 2 Academy Awards (Oscar), 6 Academy Award nominations (Oscar), 1 Golden Globe, 5 Golden Globe nominations,

5 Palmes from the Cannes Film Festival, 3 Bears from the Berlin International Film Festival, 1 BAFTA, 1 César, and 22 European Film Awards.

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Q&A WITH WRITER & DIRECTOR FRELLE PETERSEN

By Wendy Mitchell

Why did the work of home care workers interest you?

I visited an elderly couple that I've known for about 20 years, they were in their early 90s, and the husband had developed dementia over the past few years. He couldn't recognize me or his own daughter and son in law. It was a spooky experience sitting in the living room, watching him almost be afraid of these 'strangers' who were sitting around him. But then he totally lit up and became very excited when his home care worker came in. He started joking with her, like how he did with us a few years ago.

I found that really interesting – this is a line of work, but also these people have a function in another human's life that you become like a family member. I decided to contact a care facility and asked if I could be trained as a home care worker. So they allowed me to do that. I drove around with a professional home care worker who's done that job for many years, who actually ended up playing a part in the film as a home care worker. I did that for a month and performed all the different tasks.

When you were preparing your breakthrough feature film *Uncle*, you worked on a farm for a few months. You're a director who likes to get inside these situations. Is that how you tap into some of the finer details of your films?

There are so many details, like a scene in *Home Sweet Home*, where there's an elderly lady taking a shower while getting help from our main character, Sofie, her new home care worker. The lady is scrubbing herself with gloves that you usually use for scrubbing potatoes and carrots. This was an experience I had on my first day as a home care worker, I came out and met this lovely lady and asked if it was okay that I was staying in the bathroom while she was taking a shower, or if I should leave. She was very fine if I stayed. She just wanted to know who I was and talk a lot about herself and asked a lot of questions of me while she was naked and taking a shower. This was just her everyday life. I had a lot of these experience and took a lot of these details for Sofie's journey.

What were your challenges of taking all these ideas and then shaping them into this story?

I think this film took me about eight months to write initially. In the first draft, there was more of the story between Sofie and Clara. I think I thought it would be so challenging having the elderly actors on set – some of these people are over 90 years old, so I think perhaps I was concentrating on the mother-daughter story for that reason. I sent this draft to our film consultant at the Danish Film Institute, and he was a little disappointed not to have more detail of the relationships Sofie has with the elderly, and I was feeling that too. I said to my producer Jonas [Bagger], I'm going to give it another try, and I took it in this different direction, rewriting for about three months. I went back to focus on that research I had done as a home care worker and I started to build up the elderly characters again.

You've said this is the third feature in your Jutland trilogy, after *Uncle* and *Forever*. Does it feel like a continuation?

Each film stands alone. They are called a trilogy because it's so rare that we make films from this part of Denmark and with this dialect. I might make more movies from Southern Jutland, because this is where I grew up and I like telling stories here.

Home Sweet Home was a different approach, I had a lot of elderly people playing some demanding parts, and I had to find them within the local community. Only Jette [Søndergaard] playing the lead character of Sofie is an experienced actor, she was in my other two features. Everyone else is from the local community and they had never acted before, so that was a great challenge but a lot of fun as well. The elderly citizens of the community were very happy to participate.

What's special about your collaboration with Jette Søndergaard, who has now starred in three of your features?

She's an absolutely amazing actress. She's so dedicated in everything she does. She also did some training with care workers and we had a home care worker assigned to the film. Every time we did a scene that involved the job of the home care worker, this consultant could help Jette as well, because she really wanted to do it the right way that a worker would do it.

Jette gives such life to the characters, but also to her co-stars, because she has a really great way of engaging them, and she's very good at being a part of these scenes all day. Even when the camera is not on her, she's there to help the other actors. Also, even when I was going through work fatigue in the editing process, Jette came in and helped with the editing of the film for two months.

When I start developing the story, I do a lot of talks with her, she gets to read the first draft and give notes on that. It's a really great collaboration with her.

Nearly every person will need care at some point in their life, but we don't see this situation on screen. Why did you want to show some of this reality, such as showing elderly bodies in this film?

I think it's important, because it's just a part of life, and it's going to be a part of everybody's life. You might get to experience it yourself. Or your parents or grandparents will need this kind of help. I learned when I was working as a care worker that you must have an open mind, especially about bodies. It became very natural, the citizens are very used to this – they are getting held every day, getting dressed, getting washed, and they have these care workers very close to them physically in these intimate moments.

We couldn't leave that out of the film because it's important for the elderly and also for the workers. It was a beautiful way to show the relationship and the trust between these two people.

This film has some mundane, domestic settings – but you frame and light some shots to look so beautiful. How do you work with your cinematographer on the visual language of the film?

I have a close collaboration with my cinematographer Jørgen Johansson, who also worked on *Forever*. He has this approach that he really listens to how I see things, and then he suggests how we will collaborate. He doesn't go in and say, 'I always do this, so we have to do it like this.' He creates a great collaboration, and we spend a lot of time together just talking about the film, about the story. Sometimes we watch films, but mostly it's a lot of talk about light. We walk around the locations and look at the light. We also send a lot of pictures to one another.

We never storyboard; we want to be open to the location.

We also have an amazing production designer, Rie Lykke. Sometimes I think you can overdress a film set, but she was dedicated to doing her own research. She went down to South Jutland, and she just walked around the streets, knocking on doors, asking people if she could come in and see their homes. That was a great approach -- it became very naturalistic. We did a lot on location, but she still had to dress the sets. I really enjoy these collaborations.

What was the experience of the actual shoot, do you like to do a lot of rehearsals beforehand?

We were shooting for seven weeks – a lot of features in Denmark shoot for more like five weeks but I like to have enough time to be able to explore the scenes. I have a great producer, Jonas Bagger at Zentropa, who agrees with me that these seven weeks are important. But I don't like to rehearse with the actors, that's something I learned on my film, *Uncle*. Of course, I do sessions with the actors before we shoot but we don't do scenes from the script.

How would you say this community of South Jutland has been supportive of your work?

Luckily, they are really happy with these films, because they do show a very precise portrait of how life is in this part of Denmark. With each film, there's been more and more people who wanted to help. When we made *Uncle*, there was no opportunity to get funding from this part of the country. But after *Uncle* became a success both internationally and in Danish cinemas, then they created a film fund in Jutland. We have a lot of people who are helping out, lending us materials, or letting us shoot in their houses, for *Home Sweet Home* we even got the local jigsaw puzzle club involved. It's so lovely to feel the community is excited about these films happening there.

Your films are moving without tipping over into sentimentality – how do you develop the emotions of the story without going too far?

That's a big part of the writing process. I gather all these moments that I experienced when doing my research, both on the farm when I did *Uncle*, but also on *Home Sweet Home*, when I was working as a home care worker, I put all these ideas up on my wall. Then I start to see these characters, and I start to create them, and I always try to keep it as simple as possible, also as realistic as possible, and just try to avoid cliches. I get inspired from the people I meet in real life. I think I have a pretty good intuition regarding authenticity: If it feels fake, it probably is.

Your films show life in rural areas and also daily mundane routines. Why are you drawn to those ordinary moments?

It's so relatable for me. I think if I had to do a science fiction film, I would have the same approach. I would still have all these everyday details. It becomes universal in some way.

What do you hope *Home Sweet Home* might inspire the audience to think about?

I always learn so much about my own film once it's being released. I love to meet the audience and hear what the film meant to them and what kind of personal story they want to tell me if the film has triggered something personal. So, I look forward to that.

With this film, I think a lot of people can relate to so many of the topics. It's not just a film about a home care worker, it's a film about all human beings who, at some point in their life, want to do good for other people, and they want to be a part of other people's lives. At some point they might hit a wall, and lose energy, can't even be there for themselves.

We are all very busy all the time, and we also want to be a good husband, a good wife, girlfriend, boyfriend, father, mother, son, daughter. But we just don't have the time, and we can have compassion fatigue. I think a lot of people can relate to this.

*****Please quote with references to Zentropa or journalist Wendy Mitchell*****