



PRESS KIT



sauna

x
mathias broe

NORDISK FILM PRODUCTION A/S PRæsENTERER SAUNA MED MAGNUS JUHL ANDERSEN, NINA RASK, DILAN AMIN & KLAUS TANGE
BASERET PÅ ROMANEN AF MADIS AVANDA LUDAHN FOTOGRAF NICHOLAI LOK, DFF-PRODUCTION DESIGNER SIGNE KRAB NYMANN KOSTUMER BENEDICTE MORRE KLIPPER LINDA MAN SOUND DESIGNER MIA TERRY
REDIGERET EMIL DAVIDSEN CASTING DJAMILA HANSEN LØSEPRODUCER ALBERTE LORENTZEN-RASK EXECUTIVE PRODUCER KATRINE VOGELSSANG MANUSKRIFT WILLIAM LIPPERT
I SAMARBEJDE MED MATHIAS BROE PRODUCER MADIS AUGUST HERTZ-INTENDENT MATHIAS BROE PRODUCERET AF NORDISK FILM PRODUCTION A/S
MED STØTTE FRA NEW DANISH SCREEN VED KUNSTNERISK LEDER METTE DAMGAARD I SAMARBEJDE MED DR  

SYNOPSIS

Johan is an ordinary young man who keeps all doors open when it comes to both love and sex. He has landed a job as a receptionist at Adonis, Copenhagen's only gay sauna, where he not only works but also shares experiences and encounters with the sauna's other guests. For Johan, the city is like a boundless paradise of opportunities with bars, parties, and one-night stands, but it is only when he meets the transgender William that he experiences love up close. The love between the two is put to a tough test, as is often the case when living in a society governed by rigid ideas about gender, love, and identity.



MATHIAS BROE

DIRECTOR / CO-WRITER

Mathias Broe (b. 1992) holds a BA in Film Studies from University of Copenhagen and graduated from the Danish film school Super16 in 2018. As just 16 years old he was titled as one of the biggest film talents in Denmark. His graduation film, *Amphi*, which explores themes of transformation and identity, garnered critical acclaim, winning a Danish Academy Award for Best Short Documentary in 2020 and was featured at *EnergaCAMERIMAGE*. *Sauna* is his feature debut, furthering his commitment to creating space for queer narratives and challenging societal norms through cinema.

Selected Filmography

2023 *The Script / Le Scénario* (short)

2018 *Amphi / Amfi* (short)

2016 *Out of the Blue / Ud af det blå* (short)

2014 *Young Man's Dance / Ung mands dans* (short)

2011 *To Dad / Til far* (short)

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

With *Sauna*, we set out to create a love story for the next generation. As a queer person, I've often struggled to find films that authentically reflect my own life and experiences with love. This project stems from a deeply personal place—the desire to craft something that feels genuine and relatable to me and to many others who long for representation that resonates.

Being part of the queer community, I've witnessed the complexities of how different groups within the LGBTQ+ spectrum navigate love and identity. One of our key ambitions with *Sauna* was to portray these nuanced dynamics—the unseen paradigms that shape our lives and relationships—in a way that only someone within the community can truly capture.

The film's protagonists, Johan and William, come from contrasting worlds. Johan is steeped in a cis-gay culture dominated by quick hook-ups and hypermasculine desires. William, a trans man, inhabits a different reality altogether. When their paths cross, Johan's world is upended. He projects his longing, confusion, and vulnerabilities onto William, creating an intense connection that is both deeply intimate and profoundly challenging. Their story explores a love that grows impossibly close yet remains out of reach—a tragic dynamic reminiscent of the most iconic love stories, but told through circumstances rarely, if ever, seen in cinema.

At its heart, *Sauna* is about more than just love; it's a reflection of the political and social questions that resonate within the queer experience. I hope this film not only touches audiences on an emotional level but also fosters greater awareness and understanding of the diverse realities within our community.

Creating *Sauna* has been a profoundly moving journey. The support from Denmark's queer community has been overwhelming, transforming this film into a true collective effort. It's been a testament to the power of storytelling to bring people together, and I'm incredibly excited to share this labor of love with the world.

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Mathias Broe

CAST

Magnus Juhl Andersen

Johan

Magnus Juhl Andersen (b. 1997) is a Danish actor who graduated from the Danish School of Performing Arts in Aarhus in 2020. He gained attention for his role as Leif in *Into the Darkness* (2020) and its sequel, *Out of the Darkness* (2022), both directed by Anders Refn. Magnus has also recently appeared in the Netflix series *Chosen* (2022) and the Danish drama series *Carmen Curlers* (2023).

Nina Rask

William

Nina Rask (b. 1998) is a Danish actor, script writer and comedian. Her work is characterized by a blend of humor, courage, and vulnerability, making her one of the most exciting new voices on the Danish film- and comedy scene today. She has appeared in high-profile productions such as Ole Bornedal's *Nightwatch: Demons Are Forever* (2023) and popular series including *Dark Horse* (2024) and *Carmen Curlers* (2022). She is a strong voice and activist in the Danish LGBT+-community.

Dilan Amin

Asif

Dilan Amin (b. 1993) is a Swedish actor who holds a BA in acting from Stockholm University of the Arts. Since graduating he has gained attention for his role in *Psychosis in Stockholm* (2020) and featured in the TV-series *Happy jävla Pride / Happy fucking Pride* (2024).

Klaus Tange

Michael

Klaus Tange (b. 1962) graduated from The Danish School of Performing Arts in 1985. Tange has since achieved a versatile career in theater, film, and television, making significant contributions to both experimental and mainstream productions. He has performed in numerous roles, including theater productions such as *Angels in America* (as Louis) and *Jesus Christ Superstar* (as Jesus). His film career includes prominent roles in *Flame & Citron* (2008), *A Royal Affair* (2012), and *The Forbidden Girl* (2013).

CREW

Mads-August Grarup Hertz

Producer

Mads-August Hertz (1992) graduated as a producer from The National Film School of Denmark in 2021. After that, he joined Nordisk Film Production as a producer, where he is producing his first feature films "HJEM" (Marijana Jankovic) and "SAUNA" (Mathias Broe). "SAUNA" will be his first feature film to premiere.

Nicolai Lok

Director of Photography

Sauna is Nicolai Lok's (b. 1989) fifth feature film. Based in Copenhagen, he graduated as a cinematographer from the National Film School of Denmark and has since built a diverse portfolio spanning TV series, documentaries, music videos, commercials, and feature films, collaborating with directors such as Dagur Kári. Nicolai has worked on projects deeply rooted in queer narratives and communities. He was the DoP on Mathias Broe's film *Amphi*, which won a Danish Film Academy Award and was screened at *EnergaCAMERIMAGE* in 2019.

William Lippert

Screenwriter

Sauna is William Lippert's (b. 1993) debut as a screenwriter. Since graduating from the Danish School of Performing Arts in 2020 his plays have been staged in theatres all over Denmark, often revolving around the politics of storytelling. He has won prizes for his work including Danish Playwright's Talent Award in 2022. Currently he is based in London studying a master's degree at Goldsmiths University.

Linda Man

Editor

Linda Man (b. 1982) is a Copenhagen-based film editor. Since graduating from the National Film School of Denmark in 2015, she has edited numerous acclaimed projects, both films and series. Linda Man has a keen ability to balance emotional depth with narrative momentum allowing her to create stories that resonate with its audience.

Mia Terry

Sound

After graduating from the National Film School of Denmark for sound design, Mia (b. 1993) has built a name for herself in the Copenhagen underground. Mixing her Seattle roots with her Danish heritage, Mia has developed an international style and network, which draws to combine European art house with American mainstream cinema. Since living in Denmark, Mia has been involved in countless projects from feature films, TV series, high fashion commercials and is currently working on her first music release as a solo artist.

Emil Davidsen

Composer

Emil Davidsen (b. 1988) is a Danish composer with a diverse musical career. Amongst others, he composed the score for the acclaimed short film *Amphi*, directed by Mathias Broe. Emil Davidsen has been a member of bands like *Indians* and *Goldie Chorus*. He holds a degree from the Rhythmic Music Conservatory, reflecting his deep expertise in contemporary music. Davidsen's sound is a mix between electronic and organic instruments.

Q&A WITH THE DIRECTOR

What is the inspiration for this story?

The love story between Johan and William feels deeply personal to all of us involved. For me, it mirrored my own life in unexpected ways: during the development of the film, my partner began transitioning. This profound experience brought me closer to the love story and to Johan and William as characters.

Johan works in a gay sauna. When he falls in love with William, a trans man, his perspective on life and love begins to shift. Their connection not only deepens but also introduces Johan to an empathetic and activist-driven community he's been yearning for his entire life. *Sauna* explores themes of longing for intimacy and rethinking conventional ideas of love, gender, and sexuality.

At its heart, *Sauna* is a captivating love story—but it's also a commentary on the vital role of community. We pitch the film as a "reversed *Romeo and Juliet*," where the focus shifts from forbidden love to the life-giving power of the chosen family. For many queer people, community isn't just important—it's essential. It's through our chosen families that we find belonging and gain a broader understanding of ourselves.

Based on the book by Danish author Mads Ananda Lodahl and adapted for the screen by William Lippert, *Sauna* draws from Lodahl's years of experience working in gay saunas in Copenhagen and Berlin. It offers a rich, intimate portrait of this steamy, enclosed world while highlighting the transformative connections that emerge within it.

Q&A WITH THE DIRECTOR

What has been the biggest challenge of getting the project together?

It was a significant challenge to find the perfect actor to portray William. We were committed to casting a trans person in the role, but the limited number of trans actors in Denmark highlighted the industry's lack of representation. This gap is precisely why it's crucial to tell stories like *Sauna*. As the first Danish film with a trans main character, *Sauna* aims to break new ground with its authentic and explicit storytelling.

After an extensive casting process, guided by caster Djamila Hansen, we were thrilled to cast Nina Rask—an actor and comedian who brings incredible charm and edge to the role. Nina's chemistry with Magnus Juhl Andersen shines through in their scenes together, adding depth and intimacy to the story. It was exciting to remind ourselves on set that we were making Danish film history, creating a space for authentic queer representation in cinema.

The transgender community is persecuted by some people and sections of society; does this real-world reality impact the film in any way?

As filmmakers, we have a responsibility to tell authentic stories that connect with audiences on a deeply human level, beyond labels or identities. We recognize the significant challenges faced by the trans community and are committed to contributing positively to that community through our work. At the outset of this creative journey, we were apprehensive about getting it wrong. But over time, we realized that the key was to trust the material and focus on creating real, complex characters—flawed, relatable, and deeply human.

As a director, my goal is to build bridges between people and foster empathy in our society. More than anything, I strive to create work that allows audiences to feel truly seen and transformed. I want viewers to leave the cinema with a renewed sense of self and a deeper understanding of others.

Films are lasting artistic legacies, what do you want yours to say?

Hopefully, *Sauna* will contribute to a still expanding rich and vital legacy of queer cinema by enabling us to tell our own stories and ensuring they are experienced on equal terms with other big love stories.

Why does this story need to be told now?

Cinema is one of the most powerful tools for driving change, and this is a story that should have been told long ago. Its urgency has only grown over time. As the queer community continues to face relentless political attacks from the right, it becomes even more crucial to share a story that is both deeply relatable and authentically queer. By highlighting the specific nuances of the queer experience, we aim to foster greater understanding and solidarity while celebrating love in all its forms.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Original title

Sauna

International title

Sauna

Original language

Danish

Countries of production

Denmark

Production companies

Nordisk Film Production A/S

With the support from

New Danish Screen by artistic director Mette Damgaard and DR

Duration

1h 45 minutes

Aspect ratio

1:1.55

Format

DCP

Sound

5.1

Year

2025

CONTACT INFORMATION

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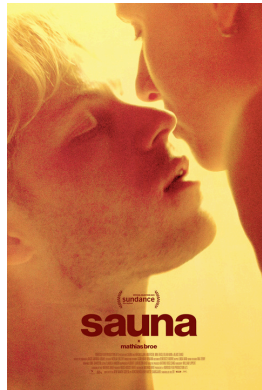
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