

# Hard hitting *Torpedo*



**T**orpedo a tough Norwegian character-driven television mini-series, is a contender in the 2007 Emmy TV awards. Its crew were behind the critically-acclaimed feature *Hold My Heart*, Norway's 2002 Oscar® entry for Best Foreign Language Film.

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Shot by award-winning Norwegian Director of Photography Harald Paalgard, FNF (*Drabet/Manslaughter*), *Torpedo* is a dark, edgy and fast-paced thriller that chronicles four intense days in the life of an enforcer. Terje Jonassen (Jørgen Langhelle), a former commando, believes he is a good guy and does his job well. He still acts like a soldier and people are frightened of him, so they talk and deals are sewn up. Dedicated to his wife Sissel and young daughter Anja, Terje determines that his two worlds should never meet. But one day tragedy strikes and he finds Sissel dead – murdered with his own gun. Terje searches the Oslo underworld for his wife's killer, but discovers the criminal closer to home.

*Torpedo* was co-written by Director Trygve Allister Diesen (*The Dream Catcher*), Knut Kristiansen and Kjersti Ugelstad and has visual similarities to *24* and *The French Connection*. It is the third collaboration between Diesen and Paalgard.

"We wanted to shoot in a handheld documentary style with the camera following the actors, but most of all we had to have a film look," remarks Paalgard who developed a special camera rig to enable him to shoot quickly and at any angle on any set. *Torpedo* is the first Nordic television series to be shot on Super 16 KODAK VISION2 HD Colour Scan film 7299. "The greatest advantage was that I was able to play around with practicals and use far more than ever before," states Paalgard. "We pushed the stock to the limits, yet the negative captured so much detail in the dark areas and highlights. 7299 is excellent for mixing different colour temperatures and it has such a broad exposure latitude. Despite shooting for 48 days from early morning to late evening, I was able to match everything in the grading."

Paalgard's lighting package comprised six different sized Kino Flos and, for larger locations, 1200w and 4000w ARRI Suns with Chimeras, four 6kW ARRI Suns and sails and a 12kW ARRI Fresnel. He lit a "delicate" daylight hallway scene from outside with three Kino Flos and a 1200w HMI, and used practicals in an adjacent living room. A 100000w Stigebilen fire engine-mounted lamp was brought into action for daylight and night time interiors and exteriors, including the illumination of snow and houses when the main character looks out of a window. Paalgard shot each scene in the film at different angles and with different lenses for subsequent intercutting and utilised frequent split screen scenes to "good effect."

Shooting from early morning until late evening in the depth of a Norwegian winter meant Paalgard "lived on the edge" of continuity problems. "One day we filmed the main actor driving his car into a car park on the Norwegian/Swedish border. The car was left parked overnight and when we returned a heavy snowfall had changed the look of the location. In the film the actor hadn't slept for 48 hours so we managed to get him into the car without disturbing the snow and added a scene in which he falls asleep. The snow created a lot of problems but it's given the movie a great look and atmosphere."

"Shooting *Torpedo* was tough and demanding, but it was a good experience because we used film," says the DP who has shot more than 40 features in over 30 years. He acknowledges that making movies is "the greatest job on earth."

*Torpedo* is co-produced by Norsk Filmproduksjon AS and Tre Vänner Produktion AB in two 89 minute programmes and four 47 minute programmes which will be aired in Scandinavia in February. It was developed in co-operation with TV2 Norway and supported by the Norwegian Film Fund. ■