

Arild Tryggestad and Tiril Marie Høistad Berger about LOS BANDO

“If needed, I can scream very loud”

A lot has happened since LOS BANDO got exclusive attention in the September edition of the ECFA Journal. After a triumphant march that lasted an entire summer and autumn, now the film was nominated for the prestigious EFA Award. On the occasion of the JEF Festival, a remarkable LOS BANDO delegation was welcomed in Antwerp. Arild Tryggestad is screenwriter and editor, but most attention went to actress Tiril Marie Høistad Berger. In the role of little cellist Thilda, she was one of last year's most intriguing film characters. Together they talk about their love for road movies, cellos and good rock music.

When the audience comes out of the screening they might feel the urge to do two things: steal a car to start cruising the country, or buy a guitar and start playing.

Which option would you recommend?

Arild Tryggestad: I'd probably suggest you to 'play guitar' and see if that works out. If not, you can still steal a car.

These options were already included in the film's original dilemma: making a band movie or a road movie.

Tryggestad: Me and Christian had an 'idea meeting' about making another fresh, nice young audience film. Christian as a young guy played in a band that also participated in this band contest "Norwegian championship of rock" and I always loved road movies. Mixing both together, we ended up with a band on a trip to the far North.

Norway's wild, breathtaking landscapes seem like a perfect location for a road movie.

Tryggestad: It's a long, narrow country with a lot of different landscapes. For some places it takes days to drive there. Pure road movie material! We drove from South to North - like the scripts says - filming the scenes with the actors. Starting from the Lillehammer woodlands, we passed the coast, the mountains, and then finally onto the snow in Tromsø. Then director Christian Lo and DoP Bjørn Bratberg drove all the way back, filming the



exterior shots during a three day trip. They made a 'road movie in reverse' from which we used the footage.

How would you define LOS BANDO as a road movie?

Tryggestad: People travelling from one place to another and it is not about the journey as such, but there has to be some personal development of the characters as well. They have their struggles that need to be solved 'on the way'. The challenge is: their problems are situated in their daily life at home, but still have to be sorted while being on the road.

Any classic road movies that in-

spired you for LOS BANDO?

Tryggestad: I do have some favourites. LITTLE MISS SUNSHINE profoundly inspired us in terms of structure. Just like LOS BANDO, this is a true ensemble movie. THELMA & LOUISE is simply fantastic. And I would consider SIDEWAYS a road movie as well, even if these two friends keep on driving in circles through California without ever reaching their final destination.

Tiril, you'll be remembered as 'the girl with the cello'.

Tiril Marie Høistad Berger: It's a cool instrument. I had an instructor teaching me how to hold the bow correctly and I had to practice eight times per



week. I learned to play some songs. But for the film I only had to make the right movements, they hired a professional to play the songs. It's my hand holding the cello, but the sound is hers.

How important is music to you?

Berger: Super important! I sing every single hour of every single day, and I love it.

Tryggestad: Rock music was a big inspiration for the movie. We have some cool Scandinavian bands on the soundtrack, even a couple of my personal favourites, and I was so happy they all agreed.

Other music had to be written especially for the film. Quite some pressure for the composer?

Tryggestad: Eirik Myhr wrote the score and the songs for the band, he made arrangements for the cover songs, and then had to make sure everything came together, sounding like one entity.

But the best musical scene comes from you, Tiril! Where did that roaring, grunting scream come from?

Berger: That's me. I have a very deep and strong voice. If needed, I can scream very loud.



Tiril Marie Hoistad Berger (LOS BANDO)

You created a perfect profile for every musician in the film. And I was so happy that just for once, the drummer wasn't an idiot.

Tryggestad: Thilda's character, I already had in mind for a short film: a little girl with a strong power, playing an instrument that is too big for her. For her age, Thilda's cello is totally oversized, which creates a funny visual effect. And we wanted an introverted character only coming to life behind his drum kit, kicking out all his frustration. That was Grim. Aksel is liv-

ing his own lies, driven by his irrationally great expectations. During the journey he should learn to grow up.

What is the specific role of this cynical character called 'The Hammer'?

Tryggestad: Meeting your idols is seldom a good idea, especially not if they're only a vague shadow of who they once used to be. The Hammer is the one who has experienced the music industry and the success the others are dreaming of, but ended up on the wrong side of it.

Thilda is a rather extreme character: dark and mysterious. What is going on in that pretty little head of yours?

Berger: Thilda's head is full of thoughts. She doesn't feel happy at home, because her parents are never there. They don't have a close relationship, which makes her unhappy. Thilda is a strong girl, she knows what she wants, but what she wants most is a family.

For the story friendship and music are equally important.

Tryggestad: Every character has issues that are too big to deal with by themselves. Only by supporting each other, they are able to face their own

problems.

Arild, you were also the editor of the film. How was it to cut your own story?

Tryggestad: Terrifying. The editor is supposed to be a 'neutral outsider', but I was far from neutral. It made me very nervous. I had to cut out several parts I really liked, that's what editing is all about. The most important thing was to maintain the feeling of being on the road.

Spoiler alert! Los Bando doesn't win the music contest in the end.

Tryggestad: Showing that "you can win by not being the winner" was an important element. Their real victory is about playing on that big stage and becoming friends.

Berger: Grim is a winner because he brought his parents together. Aksel is a winner because he gets 'a girl'. Martin is a winner when he convinces his father. And Thilda is a winner now that she has found friends. All of them are winners!

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Gert Hermans