


MOSTRA INTERNAZIONALE
D'ARTE CINEMATOGRAFICA
LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA 2025
Official Selection

Van de maker van SON OF SAUL

Orphan

Een film van László Nemes

cinéart

PERSMAP



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Een film van László Nemes

Drama - 2025 - Hongarije - 132 minuten

Bioscooprelease: 16-04-2026

Meer informatie: [cineart.nl/films/orphan](https://www.cineart.nl/films/orphan)

Download persmaterialen: [cineart.nl/pers/orphan](https://www.cineart.nl/pers/orphan)

Distributie

Cinéart Nederland
Herengracht 328-III
1016 CE Amsterdam

Contact

Film Incompany
Tel: +31 20 737 1356
pers@filminc.nl

Synopsis

ORPHAN is een rauwe coming-of-age film van de Hongaarse Oscarwinnaar László Nemes (SON OF SAUL, SUNSET). Opnieuw worden we deelgenoot van een schrijnend verhaal dat zich afspeelt te midden van de onrust van de twintigste eeuw in het hart van Europa.

De Joodse jongen Andor (Bójtörjén Barábas) groeit op in het Boedapest van 1957, in de schaduw van de Hongaarse revolutie, samen met zijn stoïcijnse moeder Klára (Andrea Waskovics). Hij is door haar grootgebracht met het ideaalbeeld van zijn vader Hirsch en al elf jaar wacht hij op een man die hij nauwelijks gekend heeft. Andors leven wordt op zijn kop gezet door de komst van Berend Mihály (Grégory Gadebois), een ruwe man van het platteland. Hij lijkt gelinkt te zijn aan het mysterieuze verleden van Klára tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog en beweert zijn vader te zijn.

ORPHAN ging in première op het Filmfestival van Venetië en was de Hongaarse inzending voor de Oscar. Met de film geeft László Nemes een vergeten stuk geschiedenis een gezicht. Op 35mm gefilmd door cinematograaf Mátyás Erdély ziet dat er oogverblindend uit. ORPHAN maakt duidelijk dat de oorlog nooit ver weg was in het Europa van de jaren vijftig. 'The evocation of a time and place is striking, every setup and framing choice precise and purposeful.' - The Hollywood Reporter





Director: László Nemes

PRODUCTION STORY

For László Nemes, *Orphan* is a profoundly personal film, based on his own father's childhood in 1950s Budapest: "This is the story of a twelve-year-old kid, Andor, in 1957, but it is also the story of what happened to my father. Through him, I carried this story in me, and it embodies something universal, mythological and almost archetypal of the boy becoming a man, learning about who he is, and coming to terms with his own darkness."

Nemes wrote the film with longtime collaborator, Clara Royer, who helped expand on the real story: "The development and writing of this film was a long process – from the first lines to a very solid script was about two years. Building on the real family story, we expanded on various elements, including the historical context of oppression, and various other characters that Andor meets on his journey."

Nemes shared the script with producer Mike Goodridge, who had been a fan of Nemes' work for a long time. As Mike recalls: "László shared the script for *Orphan* with me, which he was exploring alongside numerous other projects. I read it and felt it was so strong, powerful and personal that he must pursue it. So, I set about trying to rebuild the project because I think that László is one of our great filmmakers, and it was time for him to get behind the camera again."

Mike and László then approached producer Ildikó Kemény, who loved the script and the personal connection that László had to the story: “I fell in love with this family story which I could immediately relate to on so many different levels. The responsibility was huge, firstly to László and his family, but then also the expectations from the Hungarian and international film industry when working with an Oscar-winning director. The challenge was enormous, which was both exciting and daunting at the same time. The fact that we are all happy with the result has made it all worthwhile.”

As the story is told through the eyes of Andor –a twelve-year-old – the next biggest challenge was to source an actor of high enough calibre to carry this film on their shoulders. As László elaborates: “We had a very extensive open call because professional child actors are not so common in Hungary, so we had to go very broad in our outreach. It was a long process with thousands of children, which we reduced to a few hundred, and then to a few options. We brought a few in for screen tests to understand whether they would be right for the role, but it became clear that Bojtorján would be perfect.”

Ildikó confirms the extent of the casting call, even looking outside of Hungary to source suitable actors: “Working with our casting director, Eva Zabezsinszkij, and her team, more than a thousand boys auditioned in Budapest and some of the bigger Hungarian cities. We also looked at Hungarian-speaking parts of Romania, Slovenia and Ukraine. We were looking for someone who had the capability to make the storyline his own whilst remaining sensitive about the needs of the role. Bojtorján not only fulfilled all of these requirements but also resembled both László and his father.”

Given the story of the film is so personal, László initially felt trepidation over making this film: “I always had a deep apprehension of bringing this story to life because it had such a close, direct link to my own family. I felt the story had the echoes of the repressions and traumas of the European 20th century. It was very sensitive. But, since it had to do with both mine and my father’s origin stories, I also knew that it would reverberate in a very fundamental way. That energy gave me the necessary force to take it through the obstacles and hardships that this project had to encounter.”



As with all László's films, Orphan was shot on film, something that he is very passionate about: "I always shoot on film, I never shoot on digital. I think the reason why more and more people go back to film is that it gives you the depth, the richness, the texture and the discipline. It also gives the impression to the cast and crew that things are limited – it's not like you just switch the camera on in the morning and off in the evening. So, beyond the aesthetic values of film and the magical quality, there is also the idea of discipline and preparedness which create a fundamental, creative tension to the process.

László reunited with longtime director of photography Mátyás Erdély on this film, which he always finds a very exciting process: "We've definitely had a very fruitful collaboration and are very close in terms of artistic exploration. We are always trying to find new ways to open up our collaboration. We have a common perception of what cinema we like, but we also try and integrate new inspirations into our work, whether they are pictures, paintings, or other forms of art. We are always striving to use the right tools in order to service the story and what the character is going through at any given moment in the story."

Mike commends the work of both László and Mátyás on their dedication to telling this story: "Mátyás is a world class cinematographer. The setups he creates are really special. It often takes him and László several hours to set up a scene, but when you see what they're able to achieve, you're dazzled by it. The final results are just stunning. It really shows you that shooting on film makes a palpable difference."



WAR IS A HAUNTING FORCE – LÁSZLÓ NEMES

Orphan takes us inside the mind of a young, innocent boy as he grows up in this tumultuous time. For Ildikó, seeing these moments through this point-of-view was immensely special: “For me, this story is very important as it portrays a very interesting time in Hungarian history through a true family story whilst, sadly, also being universal in its depiction of young boy’s relationship with his father in a society damaged by war. For those watching the film, it will force them to reflect on how historical events can mess up family lives and how people have to come to terms, or not, with certain family situations created by history.”

The father-son relationship that the film showcases is a very important dynamic for László: “This film tells the story of a kid that has to deal with a father that is not the one he thought he had. In a way, he has to deal with how he accepts that this man is part of him. You have to reconcile the good and bad that are in conflict within yourself. In a world that is becoming more divisive, it is a very important question. The torments of history can make us into monsters, but the question is whether we can deal with it or just throw ourselves into the abyss.”

In addition to this, Mike also loves the mother-son relationship that runs through the film and how war has affected this: “I love the family dynamics within the film. Some of these families have been decimated or they have just about survived, which adds to this endless cycle of conflict and violence. With Klára, a woman with very little income who hasn’t been able to support her child for the first four years of his life, you meet someone who has to make some really tough decisions for both her and her child. There is real tragedy there.”

The effects of war and the Holocaust are shown through this one family, but the film also reflects the consequences for other families and survivors. As László states: “The film deals with the reality that was very harsh for hundreds of thousands of people, specifically in Eastern Europe, some of whom had survived and were waiting for family members to return. It was excruciating and extremely painful. Sometimes, you would be the only survivor in your family. There are a lot of stories like that. A fundamental layer of this movie is that of a boy waiting for his father to return and that will resonate with so many.”

These elements will strike a chord with many people today as these effects remain present in our society. As Mike states: “Look at today’s world and the tangled web that is woven by conflict, by war, by anti-Semitism, by prejudice. It leads to the devastation of lives for many generations to come. You feel the relevance with this film. It’s very powerful and moving. By looking at our past, we can always look at our present and future. It sometimes feels that we can’t escape these human atrocities.”

For László, the film is not just simply a retrospective of real events in history, but also reflective of the generational trauma that is passed down through many affected families: “There are adults themselves who were very traumatized by the war, and had a tendency to push their own traumas, and the impossibility of dealing with them, onto their children in ways that still resonate today. There is deep generational and social trauma around the Second World War that is still with us in many ways. The war is still a haunting force, and the film deals with these layers and the parts of ourselves that we accept and refuse.”

Due to this, László hopes that the film will be a symbol of hope, noting the importance of telling these stories and showing these people: “I think it’s a universal story because of the collective traumas that are underneath our civilisation. People are always interested in universal stories. They have to be told again and again, and if we fail to tell these fundamental stories, we’re not facing our own shadows. If we don’t face our own shadows and confront our past, we will end up in hell.”



ABOUT THE CREW

PERSMAP WRITER AND DIRECTOR

LÁSZLÓ NEMES

László Nemes' debut feature, *Son of Saul*, is one of the most awarded debut features ever, having won an Oscar for best foreign language film at the Academy Awards, a BAFTA for best film not in the English language, as well as the Grand Prix at the Cannes International Film Festival.

His sophomore film, *Sunset*, premiered at the 2018 Venice Film Festival where it also won the FIPRESCI prize. *Orphan* will be Laszlo's third feature film.

CO-WRITER

CLARA ROYER

Clara Royer has previously collaborated with László Nemes on *Son of Saul* and *Sunset* and is currently developing *Outer Dark* with him.

She is also developing *Amri* with Mira Nair, 1979 with Ayat Najafi, *Médée* and *En Feu* with Nafsika Guerry-Karamaounas and *Far North* with Sofia Alaoui.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

MÁTYÁS ERDÉLY

Mátyás Erdély and László Nemes are frequent collaborators. They previously worked together on *Sunset* and *Son of Saul*, which won multiple awards including an Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film, the Grand Jury Prize at Cannes and earned Mátyás a Golden Camera at the Manaki Brothers Cinematographers' Film Festival.

Other frequent collaborators include Sean Durkin, for whom he lensed A24's *The Iron Claw*, BBC Film and Element Films' *The Nest*, for which he was nominated for Best Cinematography at the BIFA Awards, as well mini-series *Southcliffe*. Other notable credits include *Foe* with director Garth Davis for Seesaw Films and *Anonymous Content*.

PRODUCER

MIKE GOODRIDGE

Mike Goodridge is an international producer whose London-based company Good Chaos was established in 2020. At Good Chaos, he produced two films shortlisted for the international film Oscar in 2024 – Baltasar Kormakur's *Touch* from Iceland and Sandhya Suri's *Santosh* from the UK. Goodridge also teamed with Sean Baker to produce Shih-Ching Tsou's *Left-Handed Girl* which had its world premiere at Cannes Critics Week in May.

New films to premiere in 2025 include Jalmari Helander's *Sisu 2* and Edward Berger's *Ballad of a Small Player*. Previous credits include Oscar nominee and Palme d'Or winner *Triangle of Sadness*, Oscar nominee *Quo Vadis, Aida?*, two Cannes competition entries *Tchaikovsky's Wife* and *Club Zero*, and *Sisu*.

COSTUME DESIGNER

ANDREA FLESC

Andrea built her early credits with international productions that were shot in Hungary such as *Gloomy Sunday*, *Mrs Radcliffe's Revolution*, *Betrayal*, *The Other Side of Sleep*, *Open Grave*, and *Zip & Zap*.

In her 37-year career, Andrea designed costumes for films alongside acclaimed filmmakers such as Peter Greenaway on *The Tulse Luper Suitcases* trilogy, producer Kees Kasander on *Crusade In Jeans*, Peter Strickland on *The Duke of Burgundy*, Brady Corbett on his feature debut *The Childhood of a Leader*, starring Bérénice Bejo, Robert Pattinson and Liam Cunningham; Ildikó Enyedi on *The Story of My Wife* featuring Léa Seydoux and Louis Garrel; Wash Westmoreland's *Colette* produced by Number 9 Films and starring Keira Knightly and Dominic West for which she received a BIFA nomination for in 2018; and John Madden-directed See-Saw Films' *Operation Mincemeat*.

Her credits in television include series such as Temple Street Productions' *X-Company* with directors David Frazee and John Strickland, for which she was nominated for Best Costume Design at the Canadian Screen Awards in 2016 and 2017; *Dangerous Liaisons* series for Playground, *Ent* and *Starz* directed by Olly Blackburn and Leonora Lonsdale; and most recently Steven Knight and Shawn Levy's series *All The Lights We Cannot See*.

Andrea is responsible for creating the iconic looks of the celebrated *Midsommar* for A24 and B-Reel Films starring Florence Pugh, Will Poulter, and Jack Raynor. Her most recent credit is an A24 star-studded production *Death of a Unicorn*. Andrea recently designed Amma Asante's *The Billion Dollar Spy* starring Vera Farmiga, Willa Fitzgerald, Russell Crowe, Rufus Sewell, Tony Goldwyn, and Justin Theroux.

ABOUT THE CAST

ANDOR

BOJTORJÁN BARABAS

At only 12 years of age, Bojtorján Barabas was discovered by casting director Eva Zabezsinszkij during a nationwide search to cast the principal character of Andor in Orphan. More than 4,000 boys were auditioned across Hungary, with Bojtorján winning the role. This will be his feature film debut.

KLÁRA

ANDREA WASKOVICS

Andrea graduated from the University of Theatre and Film Arts, Budapest in 2017 with a Master of Arts in Acting. She has performed at several theatres, independent theatrical productions, TV-shows and features. She currently has a contract with Budapest's Vig Theatre. Further credits include Miden Csillag (Stars Of Little Importance), Lepattano, Etorlni Frankot and Aranyelet.

BEREND

GRÉGORY GADEBOIS

A former student of the National Conservatory of Dramatic Art, in the classes of Catherine Hiegel and Dominique Valadié, Grégory Gadebois became a resident of the Comédie Française in 2006. He has performed around twenty plays there, including *Le Retour Au Désert* by Bernard- Marie Koltès, *Le Mariage De Figaro* by Beaumarchais, *Trois Hommes Dans Un Salon*, where he played Brassens under the direction of Anne Kessler, *Les Naufragés* by Guy Zilberstein, *Le Mariage Forcé* by Molière, *Ubu Roi* by Alfred Jarry, *Cyrano De Bergerac* by Edmond Rostand, *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams, *Poil De Carotte* by Jules Renard.

In 2011, he left the Comédie-Française and starred in Anne Kessler's production of *Les Fleurs Pour Algernon* (Molière's one-man show), then in *Cuisine Et Dépendances* and *Un Air De Famille*, both directed by Agnès Jaoui, at the Théâtre de la Porte Saint-Martin. He also appeared in *La Musica Deuxième* by Marguerite Duras, directed by Jacques Weber at the Théâtre du Petit Saint-Martin.

In cinema, he won the César for Most Promising Actor for *Angèle And Tony* by Alix Delaporte, and has appeared in, among others, *Les Âmes Grises* by Yves Angelo, *Le Chignon D'olga* and *Les Yeux Clairs* by Jérôme Bonnell, *Le Dernier Gang* by Ariel Zeitoun, *La Frontière De L'aube* by Philippe Garrel, *Musée Haut, Musée Bas* by Jean-Michel Ribes, *Serge Gainsbourg (A Heroic Life)* by Joann Sfar, *An Ordinary Execution* by Marc Dugain, *La Ligne Droite* by Régis Wargnier, *Goodbye Morocco* by Nadir Mokneche, *Pop Redemption* by Martin Legall, *My Soul Healed By You* by François Dupeyron, *Marvin, Or The Beautiful Education* by Anne Fontaine, *Raoul Taburin* by Pierre Godeau, *Poor Georges* by Claire Devers, *Over Jonas's Shoulder* by Jérôme Bonnell, *J'accuse* by Roman Polanski.

Grégory Gadebois continues to seduce all the directors of French cinema, and shot Fred Cavayé's ensemble film *Le Jeu*, which was a great success with the public. At the beginning of 2020, he appeared in *En Attendant Bojangles* by Régis Roinsard and also *Police*, by Anne Fontaine. He played François Hollande in *Présidents* in 2021. In 2022 and 2023 he appeared in numerous films, including *La Syndicaliste* by Jean-Paul Salomé, *Les Choses Simples* by Eric Besnard, and *Maria Rêve* by Lauriane Escaffre and Yvonnick Muller, *Paternel* by Ronan

Tronchet. In 2024, he reunited with Jean Dujardin for the series *Zorro*, where he plays Sergeant Garcia.



Crew

Director
Director Of Photography
Writers

Original Idea By
Producers

Producers

Co-Producers

Executive Producers

Executive Producers

Co-Producers

Sound Designer
Editor
Creative Consultant
Casting Director
Music
Production Designer
Costume
Lead Make-Up Artist
Lead Hair Stylist
Vfx Supervisor

László Nemes
Mátyás Erdély Asc, Hca
László Nemes
Clara Royer
András Jeles
Ildikó Kemény
Mike Goodridge
Alexander Rodnyansky
László Nemes
Ferenc Szále
Gregory Jankilevitsch
Alexander Bazarov
Juliette Schrameck
Thanassis Karathanos
Martin Hampel
Yoav Rosenberg
Michael Kupisk
Klaudia Smieja-Rostworowska
Gábor Sipos
Gábor Rajna
Judit Stalter
Jd Zacharias
Ori Eisen
Alice Labadie
Jean Labadie
Holger Stern (Zdf/Arte)
Olivier Père (Arte France Cinéma)
Rémi Burah (Arte France Cinéma)
Claudia Tronnier (Arte Geie)
Péter Kornai
Eleonóra Peták
Ilona Antal
Tamás Zányi
Péter Politzer Hse
Balázs Krasznahorkai
Éva Zabezsinszkij
Evgueni & Sacha Galperine
Márton Ágh
Andrea Flesch
Odile Fourquin Amc
Halász Judit
Glen Mcguigan

Cast

Andor
Klára
Berend Mihály
Sári
Tamás
Elza
Boltvezető
Géza Perlmann
Andor - 1949
Sári's Grandfather
Janitress
Police Officer
Géza's Girlfriend
Sári's Father
State Defense Of Security
Frank
Showman
Headmistress Of The Orphanage

Bojtorján Barabás
Andrea Waskovics
Grégory Gadebois
Elíz Szabó
Soma Sándor
Hermina Fátyol
Konrád Quintus
Marcin Czarnik
Tibor Martin Loppert
Gábor Iványi
Zsuzsa Száger
Attila Epres
Kata Milla Kovács
Szabolcs Ruzsina
Sándor Zsótér
István Bálint Szabó
Zoltán Koppány
Judit Schell

