

SPUTNIK OY



FESTIVAL DE CANNES

OFFICIAL SELECTION
COMPETITION

Lights in the Dusk

A film by
Aki Kaurismäki

Janne Hyytiäinen • Maria Järvenhelmi •
Maria Heiskanen • Ilkka Koivula

Cinematography **Timo Salminen** Sound **Jouko Lumma Tero Malmberg**

Editing **Aki Kaurismäki** Set design **Markku Pöytä**

Wardrobe **Ossi Harjupatana** Assistant director **Nadja Delcos**

Production manager **Ilkka Mertsola** Written, directed and produced by **Aki Kaurismäki**

Production **SPUTNIK OY** in association with **YLE/TV1**, **PANDORA FILM** (in co-production with **ZDF/Arte**), **PYRAMIDE PRODUCTIONS** (in co-production with **Arte France Cinema** and with the participation of **Canal+**), **BIM DISTRIBUZIONE** and **C MORE ENTERTAINMENT**.

Production supported by The Finnish Film Foundation.

THE MATCH FACTORY

Lights in the Dusk



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Written, directed and produced by
AKI KAURISMÄKI

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In association with
YLE TV-1

PANDORA FILM
In co-production with ZDF/ARTE

PYRAMIDE PRODUCTIONS
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35 mm / Colour / 1:1,85 / Dolby Digital / 80 min / O.V. Finnish
Original title: Laitakaupungin valot



DIRECTOR'S WORDS

"*Lights in the Dusk*" concludes the trilogy began by "*Drifting Clouds*" and "*The Man Without a Past*". Where the trilogy's first film was about unemployment and the second about homelessness, the theme of "*Lights in the Dusk*" is loneliness.

Like Chaplin's little tramp the protagonist, a man named Koistinen, searches the hard world for a small crack to crawl in through, but both his fellow beings and the faceless apparatus of the society see it their business to crush his modest hopes, one after another.

Criminal elements exploit his longing for love and his position as a night watchman in a robbery they pull off, leaving Koistinen to face the consequences. This is done with the help of the most callous woman in the history of cinema since Joseph L. Mankiewicz's "*All About Eve*" (1950). Thus Koistinen is deprived of his job, his freedom, and his dreams.

Luckily for our protagonist, the author of the film has a reputation of being a soft-hearted old man, so we can assume there is a spark of hope illuminating the final scene.

Aki Kaurismäki

"VOLVER"

(Gardel / LaPera)
CARLOS GARDEL

"VIA VITAE"

(T.Wesslin)
JOUSIKVARTETTI SPUTNIK
Wesslin Music Ltd
Sputnik Oy, 1997

"JÄÄTYNYT SADE"

(com. M. Haavisto & J. Telilä,
lyr. M. Haavisto, arr. Geronimo)
MARKO HAAVISTO & GERONIMO
& Johanna Kustannus 2003

"SENTIMENTAL MOVIE TRASH"

(Anssi Tikanmäki)
ANSSI JA EEMIL TIKANMÄKI
& Bardi 2005

"IN THE MEANWHILE"

(com. ja lyr. Tokela, arr. Melrose,
T. Viksten & M. Tuurala)
MELROSE
Johanna Kustannus
Sputnik Oy 2005

"TOSCA"

(G. Puccini)
JUSSI BJÖRLING

"SÄ ET KYYNELTÄ NÄÄ"

(com. ja lyr. Olavi Virta, arr. Jaakko Sato)
OLAVI VIRTÄ
Warner / Chappell Music Finland Oy
Warner Music Finland Oy

"LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST"

(G. Puccini)
JUSSI BJÖRLING

"RICH LITTLE BITCH"

(Tokela)
MELROSE
& Johanna Kustannus Oy 2004

"PIENI TULITIKKUTYTÖ"

(A. Jakoila)
ANTERO JAKOILA
& Love Kustannus 1997

"OGONEK"

(com. tuntematon,
lyr. M. Isakovski, arr. Heikki Valpola)
TOSHITAKE SHINOHARA
Sputnik Oy 1996

"SYYSPIHLAJAN ALLA"

(com. Arvo Koskimaa,
lyr. V. Virmajoki, arr. P. Vesa)
HENRY THEEL
Warner/ Chappell Music Finland Oy
Levytukku 1942

LE TEMPS DES CERISES

(com. A. Renard, lyr. J.B. Clement)
FRED GOUIN

"MANON LESCAUT"

(G.Puccini)
JUSSI BJÖRLING

"EL DIA QUE ME QUIERAS"

(Gardel / LaPera)
CARLOS GARDEL



AKI KAURISMÄKI

Writer, director, editor and producer

Born in Finland 4.4.1957, but...

Films as director:

- 1981 THE SAIMAA GESTURE
(co-dir. with Mika Kaurismäki)
- 1983 CRIME AND PUNISHMENT
- 1985 CALAMARI UNION
- 1986 SHADOWS IN PARADISE
ROCKY VI (short)
- 1987 HAMLET GOES BUSINESS
THRU THE WIRE (short)
- 1988 ARIEL
- 1989 LENINGRAD COWBOYS GO AMERICA
DIRTY HANDS (TV) film
- 1990 THE MATCH FACTORY GIRL
I HIRED A CONTRACT KILLER
- 1991 THOSE WERE THE DAYS (short)
- 1992 LA VIE DE BOHEME
THESE BOOTS (short)
- 1993 TOTAL BALALAIKA SHOW - HELSINKI CONCERT (documentary)
- 1994 TAKE CARE OF YOUR SCARE, TATJANA
LENINGRAD COWBOYS MEET MOSES
- 1996 DRIFTING CLOUDS
- 1998 JUHA
- 2002 THE MAN WITHOUT A PAST
DOGS HAVE NO HELL (short)
- 2004 BICO (short)
- 2006 LIGHTS IN THE DUSK

Lights in the Dusk

THE FOUR SEASONS OF LONELINESS

Lights In The Dusk addresses loneliness, a theme often discussed. The viewer has, however, perhaps in almost every instance been spared the main issue itself. This image of loneliness has no back doors, sentimentality or small idealizing touches with which one loses – perhaps everything. The romantic lighting and fairytale quality Kaurismäki often uses in a magical fashion are missing from *Lights In The Dusk*. The opening city scene is the finest and most complex sketch by the great depicter of cities, presenting inside each other the celebrated glossy image of the official Finland, and the merciless street level – the Ruoholahti area in Helsinki as a labyrinth of consciousnesses and architecture.

Finland, too, prospers, better than ever. Koistinen, the security guard (Janne Koistinen), is also in direct touch with success. He guards large fortunes. The place where he works and the place where his humble home is are both within an area that is a metaphor of success. From the shadows, however, tormented citizens emerge. An everyday sadism oozes out everywhere, as if a willingness transmuted into the being of its practitioners. The violence reflects the psychological malaise – of everyone. Koistinen, too, gets beaten up several times, the beatings occurring like the lunar cycles.

Lights In The Dusk concludes a series of three films described as "The Loser Trilogy". The two preceding films *Drifting Clouds* and *The Man Without A Past* were also screened in the Cannes Film Festival Competition Series. *The Man Without A Past* was a story about life that had to be rebuilt. *Lights In The Dusk* is also a tale of a shadowy man, or perhaps rather a story where the world has turned shadowy for a man upholding old-fashioned virtues and humanity. In their place stand betrayal and deceit, together with the absurd state of insolent division of income, sharp as a theorem: property is, concealed or openly, theft.

There is no single image that some other director might put his signature on, nor is there no stretch of dialogue someone else could have written. The sound track, too, is exceptional, containing in one magnificent touch the voices of the two true tango kings: the Argentinian Carol Gardel, whom everyone knows, and the Finnish Olavi Virta, known only to a few foreigners but who should be known by everyone. And in the midst of this, a strange man – a new and dreamy apparition in Kaurismäki's world. As those who commit great crimes want to act unobstructed, they find Koistinen a magnificent surrogate victim, in the words of a crime boss, "faithful as a dog, a romantic fool". Koistinen's professional image demands that he will not tell tales. Thus he will not even talk about the girl who betrayed him. He is a moral agent in a way that is incompatible with the state of the society. The society apparently does not have any chance to understand, let alone to protect people like him.

The whole cruel equation is etched on the character of Koistinen: through an extremely closed state of mind opens a wide social cross-section. This is the paradox of the work, and its especial beauty. The main character is literally alone up to the final frames of the film. There everything changes, from the change springs the incredible power of the images. One of cinema's most unconditional descriptions of loneliness concludes with the observation that man is not alone after all. Two is the smallest unit, perhaps the only unit, as in the endings of the films of Nicholas Ray. Aki Kaurismäki has realized his most incorruptible, confident work.

PETER VON BAGH



Maria Järvenhelmi
MIRJA

Janne Hyytiäinen
KOISTINEN



Maria Järvenhelmi
MIRJA

Janne Hyytiäinen
KOISTINEN

Ilkka Koivula
LINDSTRÖM



Maria Järvenhelmi
MIRJA

Janne Hyytiäinen
KOISTINEN