

# A Hijacking

Cert 15 Denmark 2012 102 mins

## Crew

Director /	Tobias Lindholm
Screenplay	
Cinematography	Magnus Nordenhof Jønck
Film Editing	Adam Nielsen
Original music	Hildur Guðnadóttir

## Cast

Pilou Asbæk	Mikkel Hartmann
Søren Malling	Peter C. Ludvigsen
Dar Salim	Lars Vestergaard
Amalie Ihle Alstrup	Maria Hartmann
Ole Dupont	Skibsreder
Roland Møller	Jan Sørensen

## Synopsis

*Somewhere in the Indian Ocean, the recent past. The cargo ship MV Rozen is heading for harbour when it is hijacked by Somali pirates. Amongst the men on board are the ship's cook Mikkel and the engineer Jan, who along with the rest of the seamen are taken hostage in a cynical game of life and death.*

*With the demand for a ransom of millions of dollars a psychological drama unfolds between the CEO of the shipping company and the Somali pirates.*



- Writer/director Thomas Linderman's father was a seaman, and his idea for the film germinated after the hijacking of the several Danish-owned freighters in 2007/8; he wanted to explore how such events affect the people involved.
- The scenes shot in Copenhagen take place in the offices of the shipping company Clipper Group; one of their security specialists who was involved in resolving real-life hijackings plays a negotiator; and the ship used in the film, the MV Rozen, was itself hijacked in 2007.
- The third series on *Borgen* starts on BBC4 in January 2014!



## Reviews

Danish director Tobias Lindholm spins an exacting drama out of a crisis on this deft, verite-style account of Somali piracy in the Indian ocean. Full credit to *A Hijacking* for resisting the siren-call of Hollywood histrionics in favour of the nuts-and-bolts. The actual hijack passes almost unnoticed.

Instead, Lindholm homes in on its grinding, grisly aftermath, showing us the tense chess game of hostage negotiation and the shifting loyalties within the stricken cargo ship. The little details all ring true – right down to the spluttering fury of the pirate's spokesman, mortally offended at being regarded as anything other than an impartial translator. Don't shoot him, he's just the messenger.

Lindholm, it transpires, is a past master at this kind of stealthy, high-stakes theatre, having scripted *The Hunt*, alongside Thomas Vinterberg, and numerous episodes of the *Borgen* TV series. Fittingly, his film casts *Borgen* mainstays in the two main roles. Pilou Asbæk is the desperate ship's cook, sweating buckets down in the hold; Søren Maling the harassed CEO, manning the phone in his sterile Copenhagen boardroom. Both men, one suspects, are heading for the rocks.

*Xan Brooks, The Guardian, May 2013*

..."I can't have you showing any emotions," Connor warns Peter, precisely articulating the minimalist approach of writer/director Tobias Lindholm (co-writer of Thomas Vinterberg's *The Hunt* and television's *Borgen*). For the considerable tensions of *A Hijacking* derive not from melodrama, heroics or triumphalism, but rather from the very lack of these.

It is a taut, stripped down affair, shot largely in handheld as though a fly-on-the-wall documentary, while the sense of gripping authenticity is only enhanced by the casting of Porter (a real-life negotiator) and by the filming on a ship that had previously been subjected to actual high-seas piracy.

Lindholm is concerned less with violent action (which is kept almost entirely offscreen) than with the ruinous psychological impact that this has on all those affected, on board and at home. Everyone – even the pirates – may be working towards a homecoming, but any happy ending to this austere odyssey can only come heavily qualified.

*Anton Bitel, Film 4, May 2013*