



Karlovy Vary
International Film Festival
Crystal Globe Competition

THE VISITOR

A film by Vytautas Katkus



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2025 | Color | 115'
Lithuania, Norway, Sweden
16 mm | 1,66:1 | 5.1

INTERNATIONAL SALES



Paris, France
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www.totem-films.com

INTERNATIONAL PRESS

NOISE Film & TV
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PRODUCTION

M-Films
Marija Razgutė
& Brigita Beniušytė
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CO - PRODUCTION

Staer Film
Elisa Fernanda Pirir

Garagefilm International
Anna-Maria Kantarius

LOGLINE

30-year-old Danielius returns to his hometown to sell his parents' flat, but the visit lasts longer than expected. With nowhere to rush, he tries to reconnect with the people and the town that no longer feels like his.



SYNOPSIS

30-year-old Danielius has been living in Norway for over a decade. He has everything he needs – a job, a family, and friends. But when his father passes away, he is forced to return to his hometown in Lithuania to sell his childhood flat. Arriving at the end of summer, the small resort town feels like a temporary retreat. Yet he quickly realizes that everything has changed. As Danielius reconnects with familiar places, old friends, and lingering memories, he is confronted by a quiet sense of loneliness. Instead of resisting, he allows himself to explore it. Between farewells and fleeting moments, Danielius embraces the present – immersing himself in the town one last time before finally letting go.



INTERVIEW DIRECTOR VYTAUTAS KATKUS

by Carmen Gray

The Visitor is almost like a memory map, as Danielus revisits his hometown in Lithuania to sell his father's apartment, and returns to spots where he once hung out. Why are you so interested in this notion of place?

From my first shorts, like *Community Gardens*, I really wanted to tell the story not of a specific person, but the community where they live or used to live. It's very hard to disconnect a person from the place that shaped them. For example, I grew up in an area full of apartment blocks and concrete but also surrounded by forest. That forest wasn't wild, it was part of the city. To get to the larger neighborhoods, you had to walk through it. For me, that walk through the woods symbolized an escape into a bigger world. Even now, forests evoke the same feelings in me. I believe everyone has their own personal relationship with the spaces where they've spent a lot of time. These places become deeply personal, even if they are public. What fascinates me is that every public space holds countless private memories and emotions. **Places give away emotions and atmosphere about character; they are like their inner feelings.** One day, I'd love to make a film about someone without ever showing them, but only the places they once inhabited. The film would be a kind of puzzle, piecing together who they are through the spaces they left behind.

“
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The sense of being in between two places that comes with migration is present a lot in your work. Is this experience common to your generation of Lithuanians?

Yes, but it doesn't always have to be about migration in the classical sense. It can come from going from a small city to Vilnius to study, for example. It still raises the same question: where is your home? Is it a physical place, a collection of memories, or a feeling? Personally I have tried to understand this every time I've changed homes. I left the place where I was born and I used to live with my parents, and it still exists in my life, but I'm not there, so what is that place for me? A lot of people I know have experienced this strange in-between feeling. Sometimes, you need to return for a while just to understand that it's no longer your place. Danielius, before the apartment was sold, could come back whenever he wanted, but didn't want to somehow. And now there's the deeper question of how to say goodbye? And what exactly to say goodbye to? The space, the memories or the version of yourself that once lived there?

You explore how distance can complicate relationships between generations...

In this particular film I really wanted to capture the feeling of losing your father and without having the chance to say a proper goodbye because you were in a different place. One year has passed and on the surface everything seems fine, but when you return to the place where you used to spend time together, the memories and feelings resurface, and with them, the emotions you thought had settled. **It becomes a question of whether you need to fully feel and release those emotions, or whether you try to find a place for them again and continue in a different form.**

I find myself looking at parent-child relationships, especially ones that were distant or undefined, through a lens usually reserved for other close connections. Not because the bond was close, but because the absence leaves questions. Danielius is trying to understand whether the relationships in his life are



truly meaningful, or if he's maintaining them out of habit, a sense of duty, or because it's what's expected. **What does it mean to be solitary and could that, in itself, be a kind of clarity?**

Nothing too dramatic happens in *The Visitor*, but it's filled with the poetry of the everyday, with a mesmerising feel and rhythm. Can you tell us about this approach?

When Marija Kavtaradze and I started writing the script together, we talked about the universe where everything unfold – a very small summer resort town with just a hundred people or so, where everyone knows each other. During the summer season thousands of visitors arrive, and the city transforms, a lot of things are happening and there's very good weather, but at the end of August it turns into a bit of a ghost town. Still, there is a school, and supermarkets, but the emotion shifts and it feels like something is missing, even though the ten quieter months are the town's real face. Danielius used to live in that town, but now that he lives in Norway the season is kind of over for him too, and going back he has something like the feeling of a hangover after a very nice party. In a space where there aren't many distractions or changes, I wanted to focus on emotions and to look at spaces not just pragmatically. **The camera frames the locations almost like in a painting, where you can see the action, but also take your time to look around and understand the surroundings.** Maybe even focus on something that, in that moment, feels more interesting or unfamiliar to you.

You don't necessarily have to follow the characters all the time to understand the story. I want to give the viewer the opportunity to observe the things the character is surrounded by, not just watch the person who is watching, but to also see what they are watching, or what might be watching them.

You have a strong commitment to shooting analogue – why this preference?

For me it's important to be technically limited, because otherwise, as both director and cinematographer, I would be

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more chaotic, and unsure what the right path is. Boundaries help me stay focused and make clearer creative choices. The limitation of film stock somehow provides a lot of freedom to find something new. After that, you have nowhere to go, so you have to trust yourself and your colleagues, and be very specific about what you really want to do. It's a bit of a labyrinth. But it's important for me to have the timeless feeling that film gives, and as real an atmosphere as possible, as opposed to digital, where a lot is created in post-production. There's also a kind of magic and unpredictability in film: you never quite know how it will turn out: whether the roll was loaded properly, whether it will be developed a little too long or too short. Then there are all the tiny dust particles or specks we don't see until the film is developed. Some things simply can't be fully controlled, and those small human imperfections add a certain magic or a distortion of reality, in a way. But for me, those imperfections actually strengthen the sense of reality.

You co-wrote *The Visitor* with Marija Kavtaradze, the director of *Slow*, who you've collaborated with often, and Laurynas Bareisa, who directed *Drowning Dry*, was the editor. And you were the cinematographer on Saule Blauvaite's recent festival hit *Toxic* - Saule also appears in *The Visitor*. Is there a strong collaborative spirit in Lithuanian cinema right now?

Yeah, it's very true. Laurynas, Marija and I studied together in the same year and Saule joined film school two years later, so we all met there. Also Marija and I even met when we were about fifteen, and went to a kind of cinema club together. There are also many more people with whom our paths crossed during our studies, and we continue to work together, but first and foremost, we're very good friends, and only secondly, we work in the same industry. That really helps us understand each other. In general, the film community in Lithuania is quite small and everyone knows each other, and they really want to support one another. If Lithuanian cinema continues to be recognized in festivals, then it will be easier for everyone to make movies.



DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Vytautas Katkus (1991) is an up-and-coming writer, director and cinematographer in Lithuania. He graduated from the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre, Cinematography studies in 2014 and worked as DOP with a strong visual and artistic vision for short films and documentaries. In 2019 he debuted as a film director with his first short film *Community Gardens* at the 58th Semaine de la Critique, while his second short film *Places* (2020) premiered in Venice, Orizzonti. Finally, his third short film *Cherries* (2022) was part of the official selection of Cannes Court Metrage. *The Visitor* is his debut feature film co-written with Marija Kavtaradze, which was selected for the Next Step program in 2022 - Best Project award, as well as Les Arcs Co-Production Village in 2022 - Arte Kino development award, and Torino Feature Lab - TFL production award.



DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

2019

COMMUNITY GARDENS

Short Film - Cannes Critic's Week

2020

PLACES

Short Film - Venice Orizzonti

2022

CHERRIES

Short Film - Cannes Official Short Film Competition

2025

THE VISITOR

Feature film - Debut

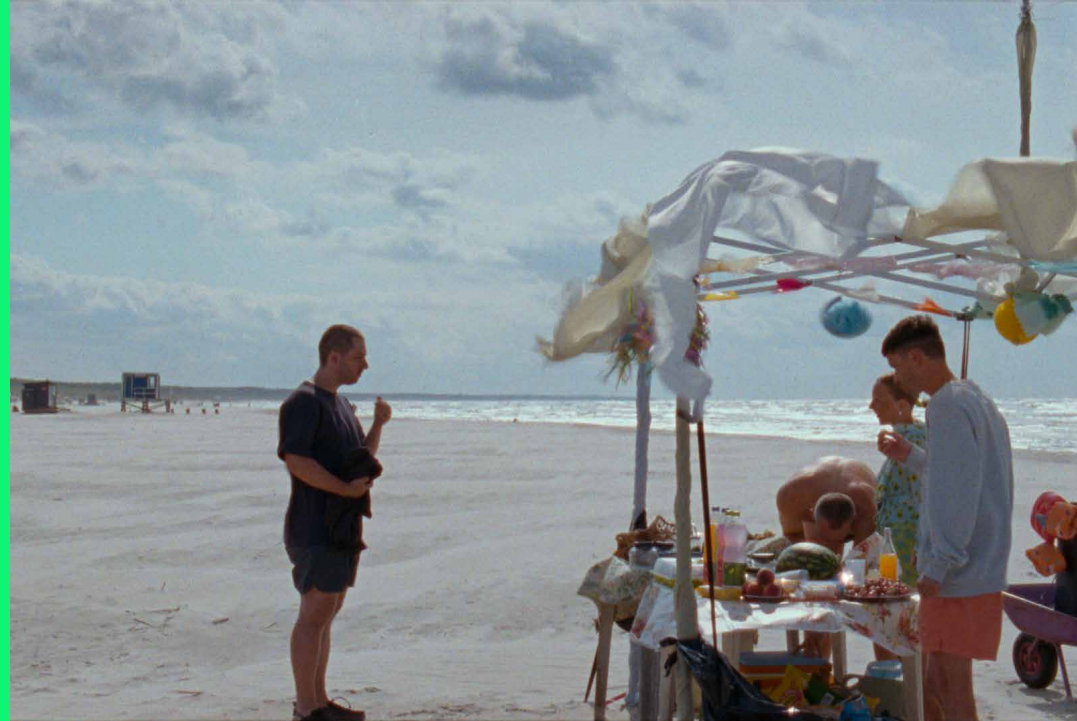
PRODUCER'S STATEMENT

At M-Films, we believe that cinema has the power to reflect our times and the human condition. That's why we're producing *The Visitor*, the debut feature by Vytautas Katkus. Vytautas has an exceptional talent for revealing the subtle, often absurd poetry of human existence - something we witnessed in his award-winning short films. His ability to craft characters who feel distant yet deeply familiar makes us certain this story of loneliness will resonate with audiences everywhere.

We've brought together an incredible team for this journey, partnering with Staer (Norway), Garagefilm (Sweden), and Arctic Film Norway Invest. The film has already received remarkable recognition: Best Project at Semaine de la Critique's NEXT STEP, the ARTE International Award at Les Arcs Co-Production Village, and the Production Award at Torino Feature Lab. These milestones confirm our belief in the film's potential.

Supported by the Lithuanian Film Centre, Eurimages, Swedish Film Institute, Creative Europe MEDIA, and Lithuanian National Television and Radio, we've brought Vytautas' singular vision to life. *THE VISITOR* isn't just a film - it's a subtle, timely, and deeply felt exploration of the spaces between people, and we're excited to introduce it to the world.

Marija Razgutė & Brigita Beniušytė



PRODUCER'S BIOGRAPHY

M-FILMS is a Lithuanian film production company established by producer Marija Razgutė in 2008. At the moment M-FILMS is one of the most active companies in the country focusing on international co-productions aimed for cinemas and TV. The award-winning company's editorial line consists of clearly bold and daring stories told by the most talented new generation of filmmakers such as Marija Kavtaradze, Karolis Kaupinis, Andrius Blaževičius and Vytautas Katkus. Their latest short film *Cherries* premiered in the Official Short Film Competition at Cannes FF 2022, while their latest minority co-production *Out Of Sync* premiered at Venice and Toronto IFF. The recent success of M-Films is highlighted by Marija Kavtaradze and her film *Slow*, who won Best Directing award in Sundance FF 2023.

MAIN CAST

Danielius

Darius Šilėnas

Vismantė's Dad

Arvydas Dapšys

Vismantė

Vismantė Ruzgaitė

CREW

Screenplay: Vytautas Katkus, Marija Kavtaradze

Direction of photography: Vytautas Katkus

Editor: Laurynas Bareiša

Set designer: Ieva Rojūtė, Lisanne Fransen

Sound editing: Julius Grigelionis

Costume Designer: Morta Jonynaitė

Choreography: Greta Grinevičiūtė

Make up / Hair Design: Jurgita Globytė

Camera operator: Vytautas Katkus

Institutions supporting the film: Lithuanian Film Center, Council of Europe - Eurimages, Film Fond Nord, Swedish Film Institute, Creative Europe MEDIA, LRT (Lithuanian National Broadcaster)

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Duration: 115 min

Countries of production: Lithuania, Norway, Sweden
Color

Aspect Ratio: 1,66:1

Shooting Format: 16mm

Sound System: 5.1

Fps: 24

TOTEM

TOTEM is a Paris-based international sales and production company launched in 2019. We seek out talents that bring new perspectives. Films lead to emotions and emotions lead to reflection. We want films to travel and people to travel in film.

TOTEM ATELIER develops and produces early stage projects with a strong international potential.

TOTEM FILMS sells Totem Atelier productions worldwide and acquires handpicked feature films and documentaries for international distribution.

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

TOTEM FILMS selected filmography includes among many others KIKA by Alexe Poukine (Cannes Critics Week, 2025) MEASURES FOR A FUNERAL by Sofia Bohdanowicz (Toronto Centrepiece program 2024), SUDAN, REMEMBER US by Hind Meddeb (Venice - Giornate degli Autori 2024), THE VILLAGE NEXT TO PARADISE by Mo Harawe (Cannes Un Certain Regard 2024), MY FAVOURITE CAKE by Maryam Moghaddam & Behtash Sanaeeha (Berlinale Competition 2024), CROSSING by Levan Akin (Berlinale Panorama 2024), BLACKBIRD BLACKBIRD BLACKBERRY by Elene Naveriani (Cannes Director's Fortnight 2023), THE HYPNOSIS by Ernst de Geer (Karlov Vary 2023), SLOW by Marija Kavtaradze (Sundance 2023), Juho Kuosmanen's COMPARTMENT N°6 (Cannes 2021 Competition - Grand Prix) WE by Alice Diop (Berlinale Documentary Award 2021) and GAGARINE by Fanny Liatard & Jérémy Trouilh (Cannes 2020).

TOTEM ATELIER filmography includes SHORT SUMMER by Nastia Korkia (2025), THE HYPNOSIS by Ernst de Geer (Karlov Vary 2023, where it won 3 awards), DEAD GIRLS DANCING by Anna Roller (Tribeca 2023), MARCEL! by Jasmine Trinca (Cannes Official Selection 2022).



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