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TORONTO INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL 2026



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Festival de San Sebastián
OFFICIAL SELECTION



GROWTH OF THE SOIL

ASTA KAMMA AUGUST / HERBERT NORDRUM

A FILM BY

HANS PETTER MOLAND

4 1/2 FICTION AS presents HERBERT NORDRUM, ASTA KAMMA AUGUST, GARD B. EIDSVOLD, ANDERS BAASMO and SJUR VATNE BREAN
in a film by HANS PETTER MOLAND "GROWTH OF THE SOIL" in co-production with SCANBOX ENTERTAINMENT PRODUCTIONS, OSLO FILMFOND, MEDIEFONDET ZEFYR
costume designer ANNE PEDERSEN production designer THOMAS ØVIJORDSBAKKEN ODLAND director of photography OSKAR DAHLISBAKKEN editor LINDA MAN
sound designer GISLE TVEITO composer KASPAR KAAE line producer ROY ANDERSON assistant producer PETER THEISEN AMLIE executive producers HÅVARD GJERSTAD,
HANS PETTER MOLAND, HÅKON ØVERÅS, GARD B. EIDSVOLD, KNUT OLA EVENSEN, THOR SIGURJONSSON, TORBEN THORUP JØRGENSEN, LONE KORSLUND and
PÅL MORTEN HVERVEN co-producers CHRIS SANGER and BIRGITTE SKOV based on the novel by KNUT HAMSUN screenplay by HANS PETTER MOLAND and GARD B. EIDSVOLD
producer HÅKON ØVERÅS directed by HANS PETTER MOLAND

4 1/2



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BETA CINEMA
presents a production of
4 ½

GROWTH OF THE SOIL

A FILM BY
HANS PETTER MOLAND

WITH
HERBERT NORDRUM AND ASTA KAMMA AUGUST

BASED ON THE NOBEL PRIZE WINNING NOVEL OF THE SAME NAME

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL CONTACT

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WORLD SALES

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Logline

In the mountains of Norway, Isak and Inger carve a home out of the land and each other — but as years pass and the world closes in, and time, hardship, and desire reshape them, one question remains: is love forever?

Synopsis

A stranger appears over the mountain, carrying little more than his determination. Isak is a man without a past, a lone wanderer searching for a place to settle and cultivate life from the earth. In a barren, untamed wilderness high above the tree line, he finds sun, water, and soil.

But the land is unyielding, and Isak's struggle seems hopeless as he faces the brutality of nature. But then he meets Inger, a woman wandering the mountains, alone with only a lamb by her side. Their meeting is not fate or romance—it is survival.

Together, they face the unforgiving elements and begin to build something neither could achieve alone. They transform the harsh landscape into Sellanraa, a farm that becomes a symbol of resilience. Over time, their partnership deepens into a profound love, forged by sacrifice and shared dreams.

Yet Inger carries a secret burden: she was born with a cleft lip, and the fear of passing it on haunts her. When her first two children are born strong and healthy, her relief is immeasurable. But when her third child is born with the same deformity, Inger succumbs to desperation and suffocates the child, committing an unspeakable act—one that will haunt her and threaten everything she and Isak have built.

Their isolated world is shattered when the law intervenes. Sheriff Geissler, a rare ally, tries to shield them, but when he is replaced by a stricter official, Inger's crime is uncovered. Pregnant again, she is sent to prison, leaving Isak and their two young sons to fend for themselves.

Seven years later, Inger returns, but she is no longer the same woman. Her cleft lip has been repaired by a doctor who took pity on her, and her time in the city has transformed her. She has learned to read and write, mastered the craft of sewing, and even given birth to a daughter while incarcerated.

Her newfound skills and independence bring prosperity to Sellanraa, but they also disrupt its fragile balance. Inger begins earning money and hungers for the freedom she tasted in the city. Her independence tests her bond with Isak, as she defies the life of toil and simplicity he has chosen to embrace. She betrays him by being unfaithful, but also by no longer submitting to the yoke of nature as he willingly does. The changes ripple through their family. Their eldest son, Elseus, is drawn to the promise of the modern world. Educated in the city, he eventually leaves for America to seek his fortune, abandoning the farm and the life his father has fought to preserve. Isak struggles to accept the loss—not just of his son, but of the world he once knew.

As their family fractures and the modern world encroaches on their simple life, Isak and Inger are left to confront their failures, their sacrifices, and the enduring love that binds them.

"I have not been as I should towards you. It hurts me so much," Inger says.
"I guess nobody is as they should be," Isak replies.

This is a story of survival, sacrifice, and love - an intimate epic about the timeless battle between man and nature, progress and tradition, and the price of freedom.

Herbert Nordrum plays ISAK

Herbert Nordrum gained international acclaim with his breakout role in Joachim Trier's two-time Academy Award nominee *The Worst Person in the World* (2021). He also played a leading role in Ernst de Geer's international festival hit *The Hypnosis* (2023) and in Janicke Askevold's Locarno premiere *Solomamma* (2025). Later this year, he is to be seen also in Focus Feature's *Sense and Sensibility*, and next to Taron Egerton and Jessica Henwick in the dark comedy *Everybody Wants to F*ck Me*.

In *Growth of the Soil*, he embodies a man often perceived as simple, yet reveals a deeply complex inner life, with remarkable physical and emotional commitment. Nordrum's portrayal captures both strength and vulnerability and expands Isak far beyond the image of a mere laborer into a profoundly human character.

Asta Kamma August plays INGER

Asta Kamma August is an award-winning Swedish actress and 2024 EFP Shooting Star. She is best known for her performances in Ernst de Geer's *The Hypnosis* (2023), Lars von Trier's *The Kingdom Exodus* (1994-2022) and Isabella Eklöf's San Sebastian FF premiere *Kalak* (2023).

Inger is a profoundly complex character, carrying a past we never fully see, yet Asta embodies it with such emotional precision that we instinctively understand the life she has lived. She brings nuance, contradiction and humanity to a woman capable of unforgivable acts and still makes us forgive her.

Producers' Statement

At its heart, *Growth of the Soil* is a story about love. Can two people remain bound to each other through hardship, betrayal, and change?

Inger and Isak begin their life together out of necessity. In the harsh landscape of the mountains in Norway, survival demands cooperation, and their bond grows from shared labor, dependence, and gratitude. But as the world slowly changes, the foundation of their relationship begins to shift, and changes them as well.

This film explores the cost of love over a lifetime, and the pain, forgiveness, and grace that can emerge when two people endure life together. Nature is an ever-present force in their lives: sometimes generous, often indifferent, and in return, Isak and Inger is always dependent on it.

Through the intimate lives of Inger and Isak, the film reflects on a question that still confronts us today: what does it truly mean to stay faithful? To each other, to nature, and to the lives we have built?

A short biography of director Hans Petter Moland

Throughout Hans Petter Moland's nearly 35 years as a director and screenwriter, he has collaborated with some of the most respected actors, both in Norway and internationally – Stellan Skarsgaard, Charlotte Rampling, Lena Headey, Liam Neeson, Nick Nolte, Laura Dern, Tim Roth, and many more.

Moland's break-out film *Zero Kelvin* (1995), starring Stellan Skarsgaard in the leading role as Randbaek won the Jury Price in San Sebastian. Skarsgaard was then nominated for the European Film Award for the Best Actor for their next collaboration, *Aberdeen* (2000). They have since worked together on *A Somewhat Gentle Man* (2010), *In Order of Disappearance* (2014), and *Out Stealing Horses* (2019).

Terrence Malick produced Moland's Berlinale Competition premiere *The Beautiful Country* (2004). Moland's films have been nominated to the Golden Bear four times, twice winning awards. Moland, his films, the actors, and collaborators have won numerous awards, both internationally and in Norway. Moland is a 3-time Amanda Award recipient, receiving an Amanda life-time Achievement Award in 2025.

Bio - Oskar Dahlsbakken (DoP)

Oskar Dahlsbakken is one of Norway's leading cinematographers of his generation. Since making his feature debut with *Returning Home* (2015), he has established a distinctive visual style across acclaimed feature films including *The Arctic Convoy* (2023), *Munch* (2023), *Gold Run* (2022), *Possession* (2022), *Nightmare* (2022), *An Affair* (2018), and *Cave* (2016). His cinematography on *Possession* earned him an Amanda Award nomination for Best Cinematography. On *Growth of the Soil*, Dahlsbakken brings his signature ability to capture both the grandeur of nature and the emotional intimacy of human stories.

Bio - Linda Man (Editing)

Linda Man is a Danish film editor known for her character-driven approach to storytelling. Her work includes the acclaimed series *Borgen*, *The Chestnut Man*, *Cry Wolf*, *Bullshit*, and the Sundance-premiering feature *Sauna* (2025). Recognized for her strong focus on character psychology and emotional rhythm, Man has established herself as one of Denmark's most distinctive editors. On *Growth of the Soil*, she shapes the film's intimate emotional journey while balancing the epic scale of Hamsun's classic novel.

Bio - Kaspar Kaae (Composer)

Kaspar Kaae is a Danish composer whose evocative scores have become a defining presence in contemporary Scandinavian cinema. A graduate of the Danish National Academy of Music, he has composed music for acclaimed productions including Hans Petter Moland's *In Order of Disappearance* and Amanda Award-winning *Out Stealing Horses*, as well as Cristian Mungiu's Palme d'Or-winning *Fjord* (2026). On *Growth of the Soil*, Kaae reunites with Moland to create a score that reflects both the vastness of the Norwegian landscape and the emotional intimacy at the heart of Hamsun's classic novel.

Bio - Thomas Øyjordsbakken Odland (Production Design)

Thomas Øyjordsbakken Odland is a Norwegian production designer whose work spans feature films, television, and international co-productions. Known for creating immersive, authentic worlds, his credits include *The Battle of Oslo*, *Quiet Life*, *Listen Up!*, *Opponent*, HBO's *Welcome to Utmark*, *Magnus* and *Occupied*. Blending meticulous historical research with a strong visual sensibility, Odland brings Hamsun's rural universe to life in *Growth of the Soil*, crafting the physical world of Sellanraa with remarkable attention to detail.

About 4 ½ Fiction

Established in 1998, 4 ½ Fiction has produced a series of quality features and has been an important part of film production in Norway and abroad for more than 25 years. They have produced films with directors like Joachim Trier – *Reprise*, Mona Fastvold – *The Sleepwalker*, Marius Holst – *King of Devil's Island*, Pål Sletaune – *The Monitor (Babycall)* and *Next Door*, Eva Sørhaug – *90 Minutes*, and Hans Petter Moland – *Out Stealing Horses*.

Credits

Original title: MARKENS GRØDE
English title: GROWTH OF THE SOIL
Genre: DRAMA
Length: 149 MINUTES

Director: HANS PETTER MOLAND
Producer: HÅKON ØVERÅS
Production Company: 4 1/2 FICTION AS
Lead Cast: HERBERT NORDRUM, ASTA KAMMA AUGUST, GARD B. EIDSVOLD, BJØRN
SUNDQUIST, SJUR VATNE BREAN, ANDERS BAASMO,

Screenplay: HANS PETTER MOLAND & GARD B. EIDSVOLD
Based on the Nobel Prize winning novel GROWTH OF THE SOIL by KNUT HAMSUN
Director of Photography: OSKAR DAHLSTAD
Editor: LINDA MAN
Production Designer: THOMAS ØYJORDSTAD
Composer: KASPAR KAAE
Costume Designer: ANNE PEDERSEN
Make Up Design: DIMITRA DRAKOPOULOU, MICHELLE JOHANSSON

Country of Origin: NORWAY
Produced by: 4 ½ Fiction (Norway) in co-production with Scanbox Entertainment
(Denmark)
Supported by: The Norwegian Film Institute, The Danish Film Institute, Zefyr Norway and
Oslo Film Fund
Shooting Location: LUSTER, NORWAY
Original/Shooting Language: NORWEGIAN & SWEDISH
World Sales: BETA CINEMA