

**Thursday November 24th 2022**

# Woman at War

**Iceland/France/Ukraine 2018 101mins Cert 12**

Icelandic actor turned director Benedikt Erlingsson (*Of Horses and Men*, 2013) is the guiding spirit behind this enjoyable environment activism film. Though shot in a lighthearted manner, it nevertheless has great emotional and political depth. The offbeat screenplay by Erlingsson and Olafur Egliason translates across all national borders.

Fifty year old Halla (Halldora Geirharosdottir) lives in a small industrial town in Iceland where she leads a double life, overtly as a respectable choir conductor and covertly as a passionate environmental activist trying to save the planet's ecology. She is known to others in her movement only by her alias 'Woman of the Mountain'. The industrial enemy is the local aluminium factory who has contracted a Chinese energy conglomerate to help it expand its smelting operation – without taking any steps to protect the environment.

Fearing destruction of the surrounding landscape and faced with a government response that is both uncaring and mealy-mouthed, Halla decides on a singular act of sabotage to stop the new operation. Catching the imagination of the country at large, she becomes a national heroine, although the police continue to pursue her as a serious threat to national security. At the same time, she is in the process of adopting a little Ukrainian girl and, with introspection, wonders if her ardent radicalism is a substitute for not being a mother.

*Woman at War* navigates its quirky narrative with a blend of comedy, dramatics and an odd strain of band music, featuring Davo por Jonsson's unique tuba playing and some pleasant Ukrainian folk songs. Through a number of vignettes set in Iceland's beautiful landscapes, this timely story unfolds - but never loses its dramatic heft despite its whimsical underlying comedy.

Garlanded with 22 award nominations and 29 festival and national awards, the film's most prestigious prize was the SACD Screenwriting Award for Benedikt Erlingsson and Olafur Egliason at the 2018 Cannes Film Festival.

Acknowledgments: Dennis Schwartz, [dennisschwartzreviews.com](http://dennisschwartzreviews.com)

"It's the kind of film that delivers a [much] needed political message about the environment and does it in a way that's most informative as well as entertaining"  
Dennis Schwartz

"[The film] speaks to the modern scourge of fake news and [...] harmful political propaganda"  
Nikki Baughan, *Sight&Sound*

## Leading Players

Halldora Geirharosdottir	Halla/Asa
Johann Siguroarson	Sveinbjorn
Juan C Roman Estrada	Juan Camillo
Jorundur Ragnarsson	Baldvin
Porhildurr Ingunn	Sirry

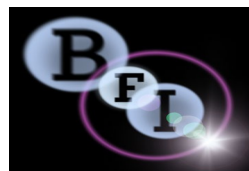
## Production Credits

Director	Benedikt Erlingsson
Producers	Benedikt Erlingsson, Marianne Slot+10 others
Screenplay	Benedikt Erlingsson, Olafur Egliason
Cinematography	Bergsteinn Bjorgulfsson DP
Original Music	Davo por Jonsson

## Coming soon

December 29th

**LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP** (UK/Ireland/France, 2016, 90mins, Cert PG) Whit Stillman's acerbic, sparkling adaptation of Jane Austen's 1815 novella *Lady Susan* takes great pleasure in its heroine's self-centred duplicity. "[...] highly entertaining, with Austen's text fitting Stillman's style like a Regency era glove" Thirza Wakefield, *Sight&Sound*



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