

EVERY FACE HAS A NAME

A Film by Magnus Gertten



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ON APRIL 28, 1945, LIFE BEGINS AGAIN

EVERY FACE HAS A NAME

On April 28 the life of hundreds of refugees took a life changing turn.

Now, 70 years later they are discovering that someone filmed them.

Synopsis

What is it like to be captured during war and mistaken for being a spy? How is it to live six years in hiding dressed like a girl, when you are a young boy? What happens when you have experienced such gruesome things, that you are trying to keep your own memory away? In *Every face has a name* Elsie, Bernard, Nerit and other survivors from 2nd World War tell their stories as they discover themselves in an archive reel shot on April 28, 1945. The day they were finally being liberated from the German camps. In the archive film they are anonymous faces in large crowds of refugees. But they all have a name. And they all have a story to tell. Stories about escape, survival and starting life again. Just like the many stories we hear about refugees in Europe today.



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Synopsis

In *Every face has a Name* 2nd world war survivors experience the magical moment when they each recognize themselves in the archive footage shot on the moment of liberation 70-years ago. Following the initial overwhelming experience of seeing themselves in the footage springs from the survivors, a description of the events unfolding on April 28 1945. From happiness and gratitude to confusion, fear and the complicated moment of freedom.

This is not just a film about an important historical moment. Every day endless refugee streams arrive in harbours all over the world. Our mission to put names to the anonymous faces coming from the war feels more relevant than ever.

The smiling little girl on the quay with a blanket in her hand is Fredzia Marmur in Toronto, Canada. She survived the ghetto in Lodz, Poland. The young woman who suddenly looks into the camera is Fela Gelbart, in Göteborg, Sweden. The little baby carried off the ship by her Polish mother is Ewa Kabacinska Jansson in Ystad, Sweden. The boy on the deck surrounded by all the waving women is Bernhard Kempler in Paris, France. The young woman in beautiful close-ups is the Italian-American Elsie Ragusin, who got caught in northern Italy during the war, unable to go home to New York. After being accused for being a spy, she was sent in a boxcar to Auschwitz. Today she lives in Orlando, Florida.



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Director

MAGNUS GERTTEN has since 1998 directed a large number of documentaries for international TV channels and film festivals. He runs the production company Auto Images in Malmö, Sweden, together with producer Lennart Ström.



Among Magnus Gertten's highlighted films are **The Way Back - True Blue 2** (Blådårar 2, 2002), nominated for Prix Europa, **Get busy** (Gå loss, 2004), nominated for a Swedish Guldbagge, **Rolling Like a Stone** (2005) winner of Best Music Documentary at Silverdocs, USA, etc, **Long Distance Love** (2008), winner of Best Documentary at Hamptons IFF, USA, etc, and **Harbour of Hope** (Hoppets hamn, 2011), awarded with a Honorary Mention at Krakow International Film Festival. His feature length music

documentary **Tusen bitar** (2014, co-directed by Stefan Berg) has become one of the most successful Swedish documentaries on cinemas during the last 20 years. In January 2015 his new documentary **Every Face has a Name** premiered at the Gothenburg International Film Festival, Sweden, where it was nominated for the Dragon Award, Best Nordic Documentary. The film was awarded the Angelos prize 2015 at the festival.

Magnus Gertten is also a producer and works with international co-productions such as the Prix Europa winner **The Punk Syndrome**, the Cannes winner **Armadillo** and the Norwegian **Bravehearts**.

Director's Note

Many documentaries start with taking on a big challenge. By trying to do the almost impossible. This is also the case with **EVERY FACE HAS A NAME**. I got fascinated and obsessed by a film reel showing war survivors arriving in the harbour of Malmö, Sweden, the 28th of April, 1945. I wanted to know: How many of the anonymous faces is it possible to identify 70 years later?

My team at Auto Images has been researching this historic footage since 2008. At this point we've identified and put names to approximately 60 out of the several hundreds of survivors from the German concentration camps that are visible in the archive footage. Several of them are surprisingly still alive. Nine of them ended up being main characters in **EVERY FACE HAS A NAME**.

This documentary has an obvious humanistic mission. The people in the archive footage are not just anonymous victims. They are real people with names like all of us. My film is – in an almost ceremonial way – giving back the names to many of the survivors who arrived to Malmö, Sweden, at April 28, 1945.

To me this is a film with a huge contemporary relevance. Every week on international news media, we see tendless streams of war refugees arriving in harbour and borders stations. For a long time, I had the idea of making a comparison between the 1945 situation and today's global war refugee situation. It was tough to find the right harbour, but finally I was lucky. The 1st of July, 2014, I was standing in a small Sicilian harbour with my team as a nearly 600 refugees arrived after a dramatic journey over the Mediterranean Sea. Being there had a great impact on me. If I in any way can change people's views on the refugee streams coming from horrific circumstances all over the world today, then I have reached a goal with my film.

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Every director has his or her trademarks. My style has always been very intimate. Bringing the audience close to the main characters through sensitive and emotionally strong interviews is a foundation in my work. In *EVERY FACE HAS A NAME* I want to combine the emotional power in the portraits of people with a concept based on a magical exploration of a 35 mm film reel from 1945. My ambition was to make the film reel one of the main characters in the doc. Sophisticated editing, high end technology, including a new 4k scan, has revealed new details and helped us create "new scenes" in the archive footage.

One important element in my artistic method is the team building. Making films is like playing in a rock band. Even if you're the singer and the songwriter in the band, you still depend on a solid bassplayer and a rhythmic drummer. To point out one key member in my band: Jesper Osmund, editor from Copenhagen, with whom I've done seven documentaries so far. His storytelling abilities on the highest international level is of great importance for the film.

Parts of the same archive material was used in my 2011 documentary *Harbour of Hope*, which gives the historic context to the almost 30 000 survivors from the German concentration camps who arrived to Sweden during 1945. In *EVERY FACE HAS A NAME* I want to tell a story about one specific day. This is a film about the complicated moment of freedom.

MAGNUS GERTTEN



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EVERY FACE HAS A NAME

Production Credits

Director Magnus Gertten.

Editor Jesper Osmund.

Composer Hans Appelqvist.

Cinematographer Adam Makarenko, Caroline Troedsson, a.o.

Sound design Audun Røstad & Jørgen Meyer.

Colorist & vfx supervisor Rune Felix Holm.

Producers Lennart Ström, Magnus Gertten.

An Auto Images Film in Co-Production with DHF/Dag Hoel, SVT/Lars Säfström,

Film i Skåne/Joakim Strand and IKON/Margje de Koning.

In co-operation with Nordvision.

With support from The Swedish Film Institute/Cecilia Lidin, Nordisk Film & TV Fond/Karolina Lidin, Midtnorsk Filmsenter and Konstnärsnämnden.

Developed with support from MEDIA Programme.

International Sales Rise And Shine Film Sales.

Cast: Piotr Górski, Phillip Jackson, Bernhard Kempler, Ryszard Lagemo, Anita Lobel, Fredzia Marmur, Svenn Martinsen, Judith Popinski, Elsie Ragusin and Nurit Stern.

Languages: English, Polish, Swedish, Norwegian

Running Time: 73 Minutes

DoP Archive footage from 1945: Gustaf Boge

VARIETY

Film Review: 'Every Face Has a Name'

Winner of the Church of Sweden prize at the Gothenburg fest, a new documentary about the Holocaust reveals little-known details of post-WWII history.

By Alissa Simon
February 26th, 2015



In the fascinating Swedish documentary “Every Face Has a Name,” helmer Magnus Gertten tracks down and interviews survivors from German concentration camps seen in a 35mm archival film reel showing their arrival at the harbor of Malmo, Sweden, on April 28, 1945. The group includes Jews from all over Europe, Norwegian prisoners of war, Polish mothers and children, members of the French resistance and British spies — and perhaps unique among them, a young Italian-American who was accused of being a spy while visiting her grandparents and deported to Auschwitz. Fests, Jewish-interest programmers and broadcasters will appreciate their valuable testimony.

Winner of the Church of Sweden's significant cash prize at the recent Gothenburg Film Festival, the pic is a sequel of sorts to helmer Gertten's 2012 "Harbor of Hope," which used the same black-and-white archival footage, shot by Gustaf Boge Claredio for Swedish National Television, as a starting point. "Harbor" was broadcast worldwide and traveled the fest circuit, thus enabling many more of the refugees pictured to be named.

Figuring prominently here is the shocking story of Elsie Ragusin, a now-93-year-old Roman Catholic who lives in Orlando, Fla. The only Italian-American to survive Auschwitz, she went with her father to visit relatives in their home country in 1939; the pair found themselves stuck there when Italy entered the war in 1941 and were soon arrested by Germans who accused them of espionage.

New York-based brother-sister duo Bernhard Kempler and Anita Lobel relate their remarkable survival tale with a surprising lack of sentiment. Bernhard was 9 years old when he came to Malmo, having remained alive during the war by dressing as a girl. He and older sister Anita were sent away from Krakow by their parents and spent the war years together, under false identities, constantly escaping and hiding. When they were finally reunited with their parents in Sweden in 1947, he recalls that he felt no emotion, only the feeling they he didn't want to be looked at.

In contrast, former Norwegian POW Svern Martinsen is obviously moved by the images of his 23-year-old self disembarking in Malmo after two-and-a-half years in captivity. He recalls the sense of cognitive dissonance he felt, not able to believe that this was freedom at last. More disturbingly, he recounts being at a camp outside Hamburg where the SS were performing experiments on Jewish children. The Norwegians hatched a plan with the Swedish Red Cross to rescue the kids, but before it could be carried out, the youngsters were murdered.

The interviewees also provide some important context for the images in the archival footage, and it's almost unbearably moving to watch as they identify mothers and friends. Fredzia Marmur describes the Red Cross parcels that the refugee women and girls are clutching. Somewhat chillingly in retrospect, the archival footage includes plentiful scenes inside open-air showers and sanitation tents where the women wash, dispose of their clothing and are examined by medical personnel. None of the interviewees mention the contrast with the "showers" awaiting arrivals at the extermination camps.

Throughout the film, editor Jesper Osmund cuts to a small harbor in Sicily where Gertten and his team filmed as nearly 600 refugees arrived after a dramatic journey over the Mediterranean Sea. The provision of names and homelands for these contemporary faces is poignant.

Tech package looks fine, with a new 4k scan of the archival footage revealing novel details.

<http://variety.com/2015/film/festivals/film-review-every-face-has-a-name-1201438316/>