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# Jan Bartels | Phoenix Journal

4-5 Minuten

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**By: Darida Rose**



*For Sale* is Jan Bartels fifth notable short film, starring Markus Fisher and Sonja Welter. The film is an action thriller with subtle notes of comedy. The film follows the unexpected turn of events when a gang robbery goes wrong meets a sibling dispute over the sale of their parents' property. The two worlds collide in what is a thrilling and comedic take on greed, love, and loyalty. Bartels' most notable film is *False Minds* (2018), becoming an award winner at Alternative Film Festival, Direct Short\ Documentary Film Festival, Semi Finalist at Los Angeles Crime\Horror Festival, Top Shorts Festival and Independent Talents International Film Festival.

*For Sale* is currently circulating in festivals and Jan Bartels was kind enough to chat with *Phoenix Journal* to take us through his journey in the making of the film.

**Darida Rose, Phoenix Journal (PJ): Mr. Bartels, thank you for chatting with us. Can you tell us a bit about how the film has been received? And what do you see in store for its future? Could a feature length along the same lines be in play for you?**

**Jan Bartels:** Well the main idea for the film was very spontaneous. Sonja Welter, the leading actress and co-producer of "For Sale" and "Beauty Queen", one of my previous shortfilms, owns an old house. As she knows that I'm always looking for amazing film locations, she invited me to take a look around. And when I walked through these cold empty rooms which have bars on most of every window, I felt claustrophobic like an inmate prison. So it immediately became clear that this place was a perfect location for my next thriller. Overnight I wrote the story and two weeks later we all found ourselves on set.

I didn't plan to make a feature length film.

**(PJ): As an independent filmmaker who oversees production, story development, and directing, how important is the preproduction process for you and why? Can you give some advice to young filmmakers who wish to take on such a triple threat role?**

**Jan Bartels:** When you start filmmaking the most important and underrated part of all is the preproduction process. When you work on set as an director, you quickly find out that you're always fighting against the clock. My advice to young filmmakers:

I recommend to plan every filming day carefully using a time table in writing form. Break it down to every single shot you need, draw a storyboard illustrating the camera angles, timing and action of the film so that you can work more efficiently on set. Sleep and eat well before you film on set. Good luck!

**(PJ): *For Sale* is surprisingly comedic without overtly trying to be. Can you tell us a bit in your process of infusing comedy in such a thrilling and dramatic plot?**

**Jan Bartels:** Very funny to hear that. Frankly, I've never planned to give the story a comedic feeling. In my films, the actors are free to let a certain dynamic of their own develop.

They all did a great job and I am very happy with the result.

**(PJ): The title comes with a package of nuances. Can you elaborate a bit why you chose this title with respect to themes of loyalty and greed?**

**Jan Bartels:** If you ask people if they are absolutely loyal to their family and friends nobody will deny it, right? And we all know that's not the truth. Because people are like that. In my film "For Sale" I will show at which point people will

change their minds about loyalty and morality.

**(PJ): What are some of the upcoming projects you have planned for the near future?** Jan Bartels: I'm just writing a new story. A wife seems to kill her rich husband. No surprise. But she did a mistake, he is not really dead and comes back. You never know what comes next. I will show you.

**(PJ): How has COVID-19 impacted such plans, and your cinematic career in general?** Jan Bartels: I 'm looking forward to the future. Like most independent filmmakers I'm always on the run to find solutions and remove all difficulties on that way. I will never stop filmmaking.

Many thanks and best wishes. Stay healthy.