



The Silence (Das Letzte Schweigen)

Country: Germany

Year: 2010

Director: Baran bo Odar

Writer: Baran bo Odar (adapted from the novel by Jan Costin Wagner)

Cinematography: Nikolaus Summerer

Cast: Ulrich Thomsen, Wotan Wilke Mohring, Katrin Sass,
Sebastian Blomberg, Burghart Klaussner

www.chelmsford-filmclub.co.uk

This film, the debut from 33 year old Swiss film-maker Baran bo Odar, shares many connections with the current wave of Nordic crime dramas, such as *The Killing* and *Wallander*, and although set in an unidentified southern German region this should not be a surprise given that the source novel was set in Finland.

Burghart Klaussner, who starred in Haneke's *The White Ribbon*, plays a detective about to retire after over 40 years service. On the day of his retirement a young girl goes missing. Her bike is found at the exact spot where the bike of a girl who went missing exactly 23 years before was found. The body of that girl was later discovered raped and murdered. Klaussner's detective worked on that case, which was never solved, and has been haunted ever since.

The film focuses on the police investigation yet it is as much about the impact on the girl's family, the officers investigating and on the family, perpetrator and witness of the unsolved crime from 23 years earlier, as it is about solving the crime in the present.

Klaussner is part of a terrific ensemble cast also featuring Ulrich Thomsen, from *Festen*, and Katrin Sass, the mother from *Goodbye Lenin*, to name but two.

The striking cinematography, which uses the physical landscape to portray the personal emotions of the characters, will remind some of this season's *Once Upon a Time in Anatolia*, whilst the shots of cornfields may cause others to recall an altogether different film, albeit one of the best crime films of the last few years, *Memories of Murder* by South Korean director Bong Joon-ho.

Peter Bradshaw writing in the Guardian said that he found the film's atmosphere oppressive describing it as "*weirdly chilling in the high German summer of southern Germany*". He also stated that whilst a cliché he was on the edge of his seat "*until the last*". Praise indeed.

Daden Hunt

For your interest:

Silence by Jan Costin Wagner – the award winning book upon which the screenplay was based. Set in the Finnish city of Turku this is the second in a series of novels featuring Detective Kimmo Joentaa.

The Killing series 1 – the original Scandinavian TV series. Who killed Nanna Birk Larsen? Over 20 hours the series tells the gripping story of the police investigation and so much more.

Headhunters – for a different take on Scandinavian cinema's attempts to adapt bestselling crime novels catch this action packed version of Jo Nesbo's novel of the same name.

FORTHCOMING FILMS - Ave on 4 February and We Need to Talk About Kevin on 21 February

DON'T FORGET – the Spring social / discussion evening is 7 February at Moulsham Mill (8pm)

AND FINALLY – after In Darkness on 9 April there will be a Q&A with Henry Margulies, the son of two of the survivors depicted in the film. More details on the website soon.

PLEASE NOTE IN DARKNESS WILL START AT 7.30PM