

## **Q&A: Kris De Meester (director)**

A story of 12 individuals in a hotel, one hot summer evening. FOUR ROSES is a provocative, black and white drama exploring themes of isolation, love, and being.

### **Q: What is your film about?**

Four Roses is about everything and nothing, the unbearable lightness of being and the eternal sense of every passing minute. As Henry David Thoreau once wrote, "As if you can kill time without injuring eternity," this film is about the fact that every passing moment affects your life's course. Some of the characters are in seek of love, others are just plain dead and living on auto-pilot. I see Four Roses as a tragic comedy. My goal for making Four Roses was to create a true distraction for people like me, the undistracted.

### **Q: What was the source of inspiration for your story?**

My girl and I love to sleep in hotels. Not just when we're abroad, but also in our own country. Staying in a hotel is almost like being in another world, even if it is for just one night. I live in a rather quiet part of the city, but I like hearing and seeing city life, so I go to a hotel. I mean, waking up with the sound of a police siren – It doesn't get better than that.

### **Q: Tell us a little bit about the casting process. How did you choose/meet your actors and actresses**

My day-to-day job is being a casting director, so I already knew most of my actors from earlier castings or shoots. I also love to take chances. that makes life interesting, right? There was just one character which I found difficult and for which I organized a casting: the part of Lubke, a.k.a. the extremely beautiful naked girl. Her play needed to be very subtle, as real as possible, which is extremely difficult when you combine that with scenes in which the character always is naked or having sex. Mieke Daneels was perfect for the part. Besides being a wonderful actress she also has a killer body. She was 28 at the time and mother to three lovely kids, but she never looked older than 18. Truth is that I fell in love instantly. I had found the most beautiful woman on earth: the girl I always dreamed about, but never thought I would find. I never approached her during the production in any way but professionally. Months later, after the first test screening, we met each other again during an interview about the film. We went to see Inland Empire that same evening and stayed luckily confused ever since. Two years later, we're still a couple. How's that for a story.

### **Q: Why did you decide to shoot in black and white?**

I love black and white. Because of the grey background of a hotel room, shooting in black and white was also the only way to give it all some color.

### **Q: There is a lot of nudity and open sexuality in the film. Were any of the actors or actresses hesitant? How did you as a director overcome this?**

All of them were open to the idea of nudity. I also never made a big deal of the nudity in the script. Although, I must confess that most actors didn't get to see the script up front. I gave them an idea of what we were going to shoot, but handed the lines and all details of the script on the set. It gave it all a certain forced reality. the thing I was looking for.

**Q: Your film was officially selected at the Atlanta Underground Film Festival. How did this make you feel?**

I couldn't believe it. It was the first festival I had entered and not only did I get selected, I even won an award: Best Foreign Feature Drama. (Smiles) It's unreal. I was scheduled to go to Atlanta, but I got cold feet. I was convinced that no-one would show up at the screening or that people would walk out in the middle. I wouldn't have been able to handle that. Looking back I'm sorry that I didn't go, because not only did I miss my own world premiere, it turned out that *Four Roses* was one of the public's favorites.

**Q: Tell me about your next project?**

I'm currently in post-production of my second feature. It's a project which Mieke and I have set up with the three kids, a real family project. We shot it in four days, this time in France. It's going to be a fairy tale about talking rabbits, invincible vampires, flying hippos and a woman getting over the suicide of her husband.