

Education Events: Learning Resource

KAUWBOY

Dir Boudewijn Koole | Netherlands 2012 | 81min



Synopsis

Friends come in many different shapes! Ten-year-old Jojo just lives with his dad Ronald, who works nights, as his mum is away. Jojo has an ok time at school: he's pretty good at sports and Yenthe is a girl who'd be his friend, but out of school he spends a lot of time alone in his imagination. One day he rescues a baby jackdaw and brings it home, being careful not to let his dad see as he's often not in a good mood and bringing a pet home could be the final straw. Jojo's fun playing with the baby bird gives him a feeling of happiness and responsibility until the truth of his family situation is revealed and he must learn to deal with reality. An insightful portrait of a family struggling with the truth, in which nature and human nature intertwine sensitively to examine life and death.

The filmmakers

Director/Writer: Boudewijn Koole

Screenwriters: Boudewijn Koole, Jolein Laarman

Producer: Floor Onrust

Cinematographer: Daniel Bouquet

Editor: Gys Zevenbergen

Cast includes: Rick Lens, Loek Peters, Hüseyin Cahit Ölmez

About the filmmaker and the film

Director Boudewijn Koole has always had a passion for cinema, and he made his first short film at the age of 10 with a friend, using a borrowed video camera. He has worked as a director and producer on numerous films and documentaries for children's television in the Netherlands. *Kauwboy* is his first feature film, and won the first European Film Academy's Young Audience Award, and the Best First Feature prize at the Berlin Film Festival this year.

What the director has to say about his inspiration for the film:

'The original idea for Kauwboy grew out of one of my childhood memories. One spring when I was young, a crow came to my window and stayed for three months. I later read somewhere that these birds can become very attached to humans if they are separated from their parents at an early age. Because I also like to see the father-son relationship I put this together with a smart bird, with later turned out to be a jackdaw. Together with Jolein Laarman I wrote the story of Kauwboy. I hope you have as much fun watching the film Kauwboy as I did making it. Enjoy!'

Before the screening

- The film centres on a young boy who deals with loneliness by making an unlikely friend. Can you relate to, or have you ever been in this situation? Can you think of other films or stories you have seen or read in which a child forms a friendship with an animal?
- Watch the trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x2arjDF3hmo>. From the trailer, what do you think the film will be about? What will be, in your opinion, the main relationships in the film? Judging from the trailer, how would you describe the main characters?
- Watch this short video about the film's director: http://yaa.europeanfilmawards.eu/en_EN/ (Click on 'Interviews with the directors' and then select the second interview from the list on the right-hand side. English subtitles are available by clicking on the flag above the playback control area. Have children focus on part from 1 min 20' to 2 min 42').
 1. What does the video tell you about how the film was made?
 2. How does the director prepare for the shooting?
 3. What does he use on paper?
 4. How many people are involved in the production of the film?

After the screening

- Why is the film called *Kauwboy*? (Hint: Pay attention to the name of the bird)
- Were you surprised by how the film turned out? For the first half of the film, how is Jojo's behaviour towards his mother presented? What effect does this have? Now that you have seen the film, how would you describe the characters and their relationships?
- How were you affected by *Kauwboy*? How does the film create emotion? Think for instance about how the mother's pictures and music are used in the film?
- Write a review of the film including 1. A brief summary of the film 2. A description of the main characters and their relationship 3. Your favourite/least favourite scene 4. Your overall opinion of the film.

Other films with similar themes

Whale Rider (Dir Niki Caro, New Zealand/Germany 2002, 101min)

Pai, a young Maori girl, fights against the powers of tradition in order to fulfil her destiny.

Kes (Dir Ken Loach, UK 1969, 110min)

Billy, a lonely teen living in Yorkshire, finds happiness in his friendship with a young kestrel.

Fly Away Home (Dir Carrioll Ballard, USA 1996, 107min)

After her mother's death, Amy and her dad find hope as they save a flock of orphaned geese.