



# EFA Young Audience Award 2019

**Educational handout for the moderator**  
**including an introduction for valuation**

**The three nominated films (*screening order*):**

**LOS BANDO**

## YAA 2019

For the first time, the nominations were chosen in a two-step procedure:

- 1.) An **international committee** consisting of EFA Board Member Vanessa Henneman (Netherlands) and experts Fabia Bettini (Alice nella Città/Italy), Keld Mathiesen (UCN - University College of Northern Denmark), Rajko Petrović (Five Stars Film Distribution/Serbia) and Lina Užkuraiytė (International Vilnius Film Festival for Children and Youth/Lithuania) pre-selected six films.
- 2.) A jury of **13-to-14-year-old former YAA participants** Jesse (London/UK), Konstantin (Chemnitz/Germany), Maria (Lisbon/Portugal), Friederike (Luxembourg) and Milica (Podgorica/Montenegro) then watched these six films and chose the three nominations.

On 5 May, the three nominated films will be screened simultaneously to audiences of 12-14-year-olds in the following 35 countries across Europe and beyond:

AUSTRALIA: Brisbane	LATVIA: Riga
AUSTRIA: St. Pölten & Vienna	LITHUANIA: Kaunas & Vilnius
BELGIUM: Brussels	LUXEMBOURG: Luxembourg
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA: Sarajevo	MALTA: Valletta
BULGARIA: Sofia	MONTENEGRO: Nikšić & Podgorica
CROATIA: Zagreb	NORTH MACEDONIA: Skopje
CZECH REPUBLIC: Prague	POLAND: Gdynia, Poznań, Warsaw & Wrocław
DENMARK: Aalborg, Aarhus, Copenhagen & Stege	PORTUGAL: Lisbon
ESTONIA: Tallinn	ROMANIA: Cluj-Napoca
FINLAND: Espoo	SERBIA: Gornji Milanovac
FRANCE: Bourg Saint Maurice – Les Arcs	SLOVAKIA: Bratislava
GERMANY: Berlin, Chemnitz & Erfurt	SLOVENIA: Izola
HUNGARY: Budapest	SPAIN: A Coruña, Barcelona, Madrid, Seville & Valencia
ICELAND: Reykjavik	SWEDEN: Malmö
IRELAND: Dublin & Galway	SWITZERLAND: Bellinzona & Zurich
ITALY: Florence, Rome & Turin	TURKEY: Istanbul
KOSOVO: Prizren	UK: Lewes, London & Sheffield

The EFA Young Audience Award is organised and presented by the European Film Academy and EFA Productions with the support of Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung (MDM) and the Creative Europe – Media Sub-Programme of the European Union. The national YAA events are organised with the support of the respective national partners. Media partner is FRED FM Film Radio.

## **Please note:**

The following handout for the three films selected for the EFA Young Audience Award focuses on the essentials and does not claim to cover all (noteworthy) aspects of a film. In addition to thematic aspects for assessing the film, cinematic aspects are equally important. However important and significant a topic may be, the film has to also have succeeded in finding the appropriate form and the appropriate choice of cinematic means or (sub)genre.

First, the basic information of a film is conveyed on an overview page, whereby all films are given equal weight. It also briefly refers to possible triggers that could result from personal (traumatic) experiences or from cultural and religious backgrounds. Next, you'll find the most important thematic aspects as well as information on the cinematic rendition.

The tips and notes for the introduction of the film are always kept short and refer to useful preliminary information about the film and to the inquiry of relevant prior knowledge. After all, the young people should all have an equal chance to see a film without prejudice and any pedagogical influence and to form their own (first) opinions. These can of course be put into perspective and differentiated during the subsequent discussion.

The discussion points are also to be understood as mere suggestions. They do not have to be „processed“ in sequential order. Since every event is, above all, influenced and shaped by its participants, this circumstance must be given sufficient consideration. In other words: It is what particularly moves the young people and what they themselves bring up which should determine the discussion about the film.

The standardised guideline for the evaluation of a film (jury booklet for participants) is not a requirement for well-founded judgement. But it is an option, no more and no less.

As different as this year's three films, pre-selected by a young jury, may be in form and content, they also have a whole lot of similarities, which in the end give an important indication of what is of particular interest to young people right now and what kind of stories they would like to see in cinema beyond the international mainstream. All three films are great coming-of-age stories in which young people rebel against the rules and expectations of adults, seek and find their own way, and, in doing so, surpass themselves. Artistic and especially musical possibilities of expression are not always the focus of these stories, but in all three films, they play a role that goes far beyond chance. It is always the young people, who, without particular help from adults, are able to solve their own problems and face the challenges of their environments and to grow up with courage, imagination and creativity.



## **LOS BANDO**

Norway/Sweden, 2018, 94 min.

**Directed by:** Christian Lo

**Written by:** Arild Tryggestad

**Produced by:** Nicholas Sando, Trine Aadalen Lo

**Director of photography:** Bjørn Ståle Bratberg

**Editor:** Arild Tryggestad

**Sound Design:** Gisle Tveito

**Original Score:** Eirik Myhr

**Main Cast:** Tage Johansen Hogness (Grim), Jakob Dyrud (Aksel), Tiril Marie Høistad Berger (Thilda), Jonas Hoff Oftebro (Martin), Nils Ole Oftebro (Aslak), Frank Kjosås (Roger), Emma Heimark (Maja) a. o.

**Recommended** from 9 years on

**Awards (selection):** Cinekid 2018: Cinekid Lion audience Award; Giffoni Film Festival 2018: Comix Award; BUFF International Film Festival 2018: Best Nordic Young Actor Tage Johansen Hogness; Kristiansand International Children's Film Festival 2018: Children's Jury Award for Best film; Zlín Film Festival 2018: Main Prize of the Children's Jury for Best Feature Film for Children

**Genre:** road movie, coming of age-film, music film, adventure film

### **Summary**

Crazy road movie about a young band from Norway, composed by two 15-year-old friends, a nine-year-old revolting girl and a 17-year-old boy with unrevealed talent as a musician who set out on a long journey across the country to attend the National Championship of Rock in Tromsø, a race against time, the police, their parents and their inability to talk about their own wishes and failings.

### **About production / filmmaker**

Children's film director Christian Lo was born in 1977 in Lillehammer, Norway, and studied film directing at the Surrey Institute of Art & Design in England. In 2001, he completed his studies with his short film 'Punctured'. His feature film debut 'Rafiki' and his second feature film 'Tough Guys' were screened at international festivals and received several awards. 'LOS BANDO' is his third feature and is especially directed at a young audience.

### **Subjects**

Friendship, music, family, lies and truth, career choices, cohesion

### **Triggers**

Possibly for young people who feel marginalised and bullied, are not understood by their parents and have problems communicating with others.

**Website**

<http://www.filmbin.no/>

## Essential topics

### Follow your dream!



The call not to lose sight of one's own dreams under any circumstances is always well-intentioned, whether in real life or in film. All the greater are the feelings of disappointment or even failure if things don't work out the way one imagined they would. Already the exposition of the film makes it clear that this motto is in desperate need of differentiation – and this contributes a lot to the credibility of the characters. Grim, for example, may have become a drummer following an early encounter with his idol "The Hammer", but he still doesn't believe in a great future for his band LOS BANDO. He hopes to reunite his estranged parents with a public performance and a music piece. His friend Aksel is a good guitarist, but a miserable singer, and he doesn't even know it. Aksel, on the other hand, wants to take part in the Norwegian rock music competition in Tromsø, mainly to impress his schoolmate Linda, who, so far, has never shown the slightest interest in him. Thilda apparently has no dreams at all, or at least only one dream: to visit the long-abandoned village of Pyramiden, once home to 1,000 souls, where there is nobody around to ignore her or even bully her. She wants to escape her loneliness by travelling to Tromsø and knows how to use her great talent as a cellist effectively. Martin has buried his own dreams of a music career because he only follows his father's dreams and obeys him although he doesn't want to become a mechanic or a rally driver. Martin's brother Roger, on the other hand, at the expense of his younger brother and with no regards to family obligations, has been ruthlessly pursuing his own dreams for years, devoting himself to the religiously motivated task of converting other people to the Christian faith and thus clearly assuming a position of power.

### Lies or the truth?



Before the four young people, who don't only differ in their age groups, can really come together and everybody involved can learn their lesson, they have to experience the difference between lying and telling the truth for themselves. No one is spared, especially since it is not so easy to recognise the difference and to set one's own illusions, prejudices and personal advantages aside to face the truth. Are self-deception or at least the occasional white lie important and even advantageous to maintain social peace and not to offend friends or family members? As entertaining and wacky as this film may be, these are existential questions that affect everybody. Secretly, all of the film's main characters have something to hide. Grim isn't able to have an open discussion with his best friend, Aksel needs self-deception to maintain his self-esteem, Martin avoids conflict with his father and conceals the fact that he doesn't have a driving licence yet, and Thilda forges the signatures of her busy parents to be able to take part in the trip at all.

But she is also the first who urges Grim to finally tell his friend the truth. By the same token, he is the first to whom she reveals her own weaknesses. With her body language, she clearly expresses

that "The Hammer", completely disillusioned by the music industry, may be right in his criticism, but has no right to offend Grim and the others in this way. Aksel only learns through painful experience at the karaoke competition, but finds new confidence through Martin when he tells him about his own failed dreams. He later reminds him that his classmate Emma is seriously interested in him and takes him for who he really is. In the end, Martin finally confronts his father, even if this initially means serious trouble for the band at the competition.

### From I to We

The first encounter of Aksel and Grim with the nine-year-old Thilda at a fjord is filmed in a long shot. Carelessly, Thilda and the two 15-year-OLD BOYS pass each other on the shore path and do not take the slightest notice of each other. 17-year-old Martin, on the other hand, considers Grim and Aksel's offer to drive them 1,600 kilometres from southern Norway to Tromsø in the far north to be far below his dignity. For the two boys, it is just as unthinkable at first that a nine-year-old of all people should become a member of their band. From the four youngsters' initial union borne of necessity, however, a wonderful friendship and equal partnership develops during the journey, and despite the great difference in age, especially during this difficult time of growing up, real solidarity develops.



Thilda, from a dramaturgical perspective, becomes a catalyst for the plot. She provides the most turning points and surprises, not least because she is a minor runaway and is wanted by the police nationwide. In the beginning, she is still an extreme outsider – in the end, she is no longer alone, even if she still fears: "I was wondering if everything will go back to the way it was." The film puts special visual emphasis on her fate, because it is her trauma, her fear of loneliness, into which she no longer wants to fall back. During the scene which shows Thilda alone on stage in front of the empty auditorium, this fear flares up for the last time. It proves to be unfounded in the credits with an open and unagitated happy ending, a strong emotional moment that makes the outcome of the rock contest a mere afterthought. Obviously unaccompanied by their parents after the competition, the band drives together to the completely abandoned mining settlement Pyramiden on Spitsbergen, between Norway and Greenland in the middle of the Barents Sea. But for real friends, this is not a biggie!

## **Film literacy**

### Road movie

In a road movie, the protagonists embark on a journey whose destination is only vaguely defined and whose outcome is uncertain, because in this genre, the journey is the destination. On this journey, which does not necessarily have to be completed by car, but also by foot, there are numerous encounters with other people, in which the characters gain new experiences, become more mature and often also grow up a little. Road movies and coming-of-age films are therefore often linked together.



LOS BANDO immerses itself fully in this journey of four young people through Norway and Sweden, as well as the obstacles that prevent them from even going down this path in the first place. The rock competition, on the other hand, becomes a mere afterthought, with their competitors playing virtually no role at all. Even this musical event is basically just another step on the way to becoming a real band, which then finds its provisional, only briefly sketched end on Spitsbergen.

The "learning objectives" of the band on this journey are to accept each other fully and to stand up for each other, not only to see their own advantage, but also to make a short trip to Sweden if necessary, in order to get a bride to her wedding in time – and of course in the realisation of accepting reality while still not losing sight of their own dreams. As in real life, there are always moments of delay, which in the end lead to a wild chase.

### Script and timing

The screenplay and the director have found the right timing to create tension through unexpected moments in the movie and to guarantee the credibility of the individual characters. By staying with them throughout the movie, their decisions are relatable and coherent, no matter how quirkily the external plot develops. For example, the assertion of "The Hammer" remains that the current music industry is no longer about talent, but only about electronic post-production. His remark that today you don't even have to sing to be successful is refuted by Martin at the karaoke bar and helps Aksel to change his mind and accept Martin as the new singer of the band.

Of course, adults are also important in the film, especially Martin's father. But the film doesn't follow their story and their problems, which are usually shown in films about teenage runaways through cross-cutting. Thilda's parents, for example, don't even appear in the first place, although they are in great distress and have their daughter searched for all over the country. Some other side plots involving adults aren't part of the picture and are left to the viewer's imagination. And yet, such scenes strongly contribute to a better understanding of and sympathy for the young people themselves. One scene in the karaoke bar is particularly well done. Thilda pours a glass of beer over a tattooed biker guy, saying: "Don't bully my friend!" Of course, despite her taking Aksel's side, this is not the right way to behave, and the end of the scene implies that the bikers want to take revenge and pursue them. Instead, Thilda calmly drinks an alcohol-free cocktail in the next scene, which the biker bought her after he apologised. Even adults make mistakes and can learn new things.





## **SUGGESTED QUESTIONS:**

### **Before screening:**

- What is a road movie?
- Can and should you tell your best friend the truth or is it better to lie? Capture the initial mood.

### **Basic talking points (after screening):**

- What is the essence of this film? The rock competition? Friendship? An exciting travel adventure? Something completely different?
- How believable are the characters of the film, also considering their very different age groups?
- In social reality, some things in the film wouldn't work out, like the incompetent police investigation. Does that play a role in evaluating the film?
- At first glance, the film tells the story of two friends, Grim and Aksel. But what is the function of Martin and Thilda?
- How are the adults portrayed, and why don't they even appear in the case of Thilda's parents? Is that a plus or a minus in the film?
- Is it sometimes important to lie, or is it better to tell the truth? What is the film's attitude?
- What do the four main characters learn on their journey? Are these personal experiences or are they of universal importance?
- The story is told in the form of a road movie. Is this the right setting and if so, why?
- How did the ending of the film work? Should it have focused more on the outcome of the rock competition? Are there any reasons why it didn't?

*Published by:*  
**EUROPEAN FILM AWARDS**  
**EFA PRODUCTIONS gGmbH**  
Kurfürstendamm 225  
10719 Berlin, Germany  
[www.europeanfilmawards.eu](http://www.europeanfilmawards.eu)  
Editor: Jürgen Biesinger

*Photo rights:*  
The Film Kitchen (FIGHT GIRL)  
Filmbin (LOS BANDO)  
Film4/Momac Films (OLD BOYS)

Compilation: Holger Twele, Germany  
<http://www.holgertwele.de>

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