



Nordisk Film history

1905

Ole Olsen opens Biografteatret - one of the first movie theatres in Denmark – at Vimmelskaftet 47, Copenhagen.

1906

Under the name of 'Ole Olsen's Film Industry' or 'Ole Olsen's Film Factory', Ole Olsen begins to produce moving picture films. The first film, "Duer og Maager" (Pigeons And Sea Gulls) is a two minute reportage, but dramatic films are made too – often starring the multi-talented draftsman Robert Storm Petersen. 'Nordisk Films Kompagni' is officially founded on November 6th. By the end of the year, the company has established offices at Vimmelskaftet, studios at a garden allotment in Valby, a copying lab in Frihavnen, an affiliate in Germany, an agent in Sweden – and a polar bear atop a globe as the company's trademark.

1907

Affiliates are established in Vienna and London. "Løvejagten" (Lion Hunting) sells 256 copies and is very successful. However, as he refuses to obey Minister of Justice Alberti's order to halt the shooting of "Løvejagten" in the wake of an animal cruelty charge, Ole Olsen loses his cinema licence for 'Biografteatret'.

1908

Studio 1 in Valby is opened. The New York affiliate, 'Great Northern Film Company', is established.

1910

Studio 2 in Valby is opened. The Århus company 'Fotorama' introduces multi-reel films with "Den Hvide Slavehandel" (The White Slavery Trade). Ole Olsen adapts the idea by copying the Fotorama-film nearly shot by shot (and adding 100 metres). In 1911, he commits Nordisk Films Kompagni – as the first company in the world – to producing multi-reel films of approx. 45 minutes in length.

1911

Nordisk Film becomes a public company, and Ole Olsen acquires the title of managing director (1911-1922). The actor Valdemar Psilander appears in his first Nordisk Film feature, "Ved Fængslets Port" (Temptations Of A Great City). By the end of 1916, he has made more than eighty Nordisk Film features and is considered to be one of the greatest (and best paid) film stars of his time. Yet by the end of 1916, Psilander is demanding a salary of DKK 250,000 (€ 34,000), which forces Nordisk Film into decline. Other major Nordisk Film stars are Olaf Fønss, Clara Wieth Pontoppidan and the Norwegian Gunnar Tolnæs. Asta Nielsen also makes two of her four Danish films for Nordisk Film; "Balletdanserinden" (The Ballet Dancer"), 1911, and "Mod Lyset" (Towards The Light), 1919.

1912

Studio 3 in Valby is opened. The stock holders receive a 60% dividend.

1913

Studio 4 is opened. Carl Th. Dreyer is employed as a screenwriter and script consultant. In 1918, he directs his first film "Præsidenten" (The President), which premieres in Sweden in

1919 and in Denmark in 1920. His ambitious film, "Blade Af Satans Bog" (Leaves From Satan's Book) premieres in 1921.

1914

The zenith of silent film production at Nordisk Films Kompagni. 143 fiction and 46 non-fiction features are produced, and more than 7000 copies are sold.

1915

Studio 5 in Valby is opened.

1916

The New York affiliate is shut down.

1917

World War I badly affects film distribution. The Russian market closes its borders due to the 1917 Revolution. Ole Olsen relinquishes his German interests, now including sixty cinemas, a production company and various assets with a cumulative share capital of 30 million marks. Production is on the wane, and Nordisk Film loses millions. Talented people leave the company, including Lau Lauritzen, who directed more than 200 Nordisk Film farces and created the biggest success of the twenties, "Fyrtaarnet and Bivognen", at Palladium.

1922

A.W. Sandberg, who has been a successful director at Nordisk Film since 1914, becomes head of the production department. Throughout the twenties, he directs a number of huge and expensive costume dramas, including the famous Dickens' adaptations, "David Copperfield" and "Little Dorrit".

1923

H. Bloch-Jespersen becomes managing director of Nordisk Films Kompagni (1924-26).

1926

Nordisk Films Kompagni is controlled by the board.

1928

Nordisk Films Kompagni production rate hits rock bottom, and the year sees only one fiction film, "Jokeren" (The Joker), directed by the German Georg Jacoby and starring several foreign actors. However, it does not avert the crisis and the company goes into liquidation.

1929

Carl Bauder, a wealthy stockbroker, who since 1926 has held the majority of shares in Nordisk Films Kompagni and the movie theatre 'Palads Teatret', reorganizes the company under the name of 'Nordisk Films Kompagni af 1929'. From 1929 to 1935 the company is called 'Nordisk Tonefilm'. Carl Bauder never becomes managing director, but he controls the company as a member of the board. As the proprietor of Petersen & Poulsen's sound film patents he sensationally wins a lawsuit in 1934 that obligates the great American studios like Paramount, Fox and MGM to pay Nordisk Film for the right to use "noiseless" sound production in Scandinavia.

1931

The first Danish "talkie", "Præsten I Vejlbj" (The Vicar Of Vejlbj), George Schnéevoigt.

1936

Holger Brøndum becomes managing director of Nordisk Films Kompagni (1936-64).

1938

The great Danish film maker Benjamin Christensen makes four features for Nordisk Film; "Skilsmisens Børn", 1939, "Barnet", 1940, "Gaa med mig Hjem", 1941 and "Damen med de lyse Handsker", 1942.

1944

Several entertainment establishments are lost to counter-sabotage during the German occupation of Denmark: on February 7th, the Valby Studios are blown up. On March 31st, the movie theatre 'Kino-Palæet' is destroyed.

1946

Erik Balling and Ove Sevel are employed as assistant directors (Balling later becomes director, screenwriter, producer and finally managing director in 1957). The rebuilt studio 4 is reopened.

1951

Ove Sevel becomes head of the new 'Nordisk Film Junior' division – producing documentary films, commercials, children's films and Danish versions of pre-existing material.

1953

"Adam Og Eva" (Adam And Eve), Erik Balling's directorial debut.

1956

Nordisk Film releases the first colour feature film in Denmark on May 7th. "Kispus", directed by Erik Balling. Feature production in the North, including "Qivitoq", Greenland, 1956, Erik Balling. Nordisk Film celebrates its fiftieth anniversary.

1957

Erik Balling's "Qivitoq" is nominated for an Oscar. Erik Balling becomes managing director of Nordisk Films Kompagni A/S (1957-1989).

1963

"Sommer i Tyrol", directed by Erik Balling, filmed in Austria. Nordisk Film focuses on cultural features.

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1965

Ian Fleming's 007 stories inspire Nordisk Film to produce two agent comedies, "Slå Først Frede (Strike First, Freddy), directed by Erik Balling (1965), and "Slap Af Frede" (Relax, Freddy), directed by Erik Balling (1966).

1967

"S/S Martha", directed by Erik Balling, filmed in the Greek Islands. "Martha" is today a cult film amongst sailors. The feature is part of the examination requirements at Svendborg Søfartsskole, Restaurant Børsen; Svendborg is fitted out as the ship "Martha" and special Martha-communities exist in Sweden and Denmark.

1968

"Olsen Banden" (The Olsen Gang), directed by Erik Balling.

1970

"Huset På Christianshavn", (Friends And Neighbours), an 84 part TV series directed by Erik Balling (1970-1977). The first fiction produced specifically for TV. While other film production

companies shut down, Nordisk Film profits greatly on the TV series and avoids cutting down staff.

1971

"Olsen Banden I Jylland" (The Olsen Gang In Jylland), directed by Erik Balling. In the period 1971-1981 an "Olsen Banden" is filmed every summer. The Olsen Gang becomes one of Denmark's greatest film hits.

1972

Studio 3 is rebuilt. The biggest studio in Valby.

1978

"Matador" (Monopoly), a 24 part TV series directed by Erik Balling, (1978-1982) and the greatest TV success in Denmark to date. "Honing Måne", directed by Bille August, is shown in competition at Moscow International Film Festival, and awarded three Danish Bodil statuettes.

1981

"Jeppe på Bjerget" (Jeppe On The Hill), Kaspar Rostrup, shown in Moscow, is awarded three Danish Bodil statuettes. "Kundskabens Træ" (The Tree Of Knowledge), directed by Nils Malmros, wins Film-Lense in Lübeck, one Bodil statuette for Best Cinematography, the Gjest Baardsen-Prize, Norway, and is shown at the Cannes International Film Festival.

1982

Jens Jordan becomes new managing director of Nordisk Film (1982-1995). Continues and finishes the renovation and alteration of Palads Teatret into more auditoriums (started by Ove Sevel).

1983

"Zappa", directed by Bille August, is shown in Cannes, Moscow and Giffoni, it's third in competition in Norway, wins a special Bodil as well as the Critic's Prize in Scandinavia. "Forræderne" (The Traitors), directed by Ole Roos, is shown in Moscow and wins two Danish Roberts and one Bodil statuette. "Skønheden og Udyret" (Beauty And The Beast), directed by Nils Malmros, wins four Danish Roberts and two Bodil statuettes.

1984

Hans Morten Rubin becomes managing director of Nordisk Film, Valby (1984-1992). Under his leadership, Denmark's first private local TV station, "Weekend-TV", is established. Weekend-TV is owned by Nordisk Film, 'Gutenberghus', 'Aller', 'Politiken', 'Børsen' and the 'Berlingske Officin'. With sports and children's programmes, Weekend-TV broadcasts from studio 3, Valby. The channel is free. With a new canteen and TV department, Nordisk Film, Valby, expands. "Midt Om Natten" (In The Middle Of The Night), directed by Erik Balling, starring the Danish folksinger, Kim Larsen, is awarded one Bodil and one Robert statuette. "Fremtidens Børn" (Children Of The Future), directed by Ove Nyholm, wins Best Cinematography, Barcelona, Gold Medal winner at the Sofia Festival of Red Cross. "The Element Of Crime" (Forbrydelsens Element), directed by Lars von Trier, wins the Grand Prix du technique, Cannes, the Silver Hugo, Chicago, the Joseph von Sternberg, Mannheim, the Melhor Realizador, Oporto, the Distribution Prize, Belgium, and one Bodil and seven Danish Robert statuettes. "Tro, håb og Kærlighed" (Twist And Shout), directed by Bille August, wins the Special Jury Prize, Laon, is shown in competition and wins the Best Leading Actor, in Moscow, wins the First Prize, in Lille, is shown in Cannes, and wins four Robert statuettes and The Golden Spur in Denmark.

1985

Weekend-TV transmits the live entertainment show "Så' der fredag" every Friday.

1986

The private TV-station shuts down at Easter. The investors' coffers are empty. "Mord I Mørket" (Murder In The Dark), directed by Sune Lund-Sørensen, starring the Danish folk singer Michael Falch, wins Best Cinematography at Cattolica Mystfestival and one Danish Bodil statuette. "Flamberede Hjerter" (Grilled Hearts), directed by Helle Ryslinge, wins Best Director & Best Actress at Digne Women's Film Festival, receives a Special Mention, Rouen, and three Danish Bodils & seven Robert statuettes as well as the European Distribution Prize.

1987

Nordisk Film establishes a think-tank, which results in the establishing of 'Nordisk Film Broadcast'. "Babettes Gæstebud" (Babette's Feast), directed by Gabriel Axel, is awarded many prestigious international film prizes in Brussels, Digne, Rotterdam, Rouen, Great Britain, Milano and China, as well as an Academy Award for Best Foreign Film (1988), the first ever Danish Oscar. "Pelle Erobreren" (Pelle the Conqueror), directed Bille August, wins the Academy Award for Best Foreign Film (1989), Palme d'or, Cannes, two Guldbaggar, Göteborg, one Golden Globe Award, four Bodil and eight Robert statuettes.

1988

October 1st sees the launch of TV2, a new national TV channel. Nordisk Film Broadcast supplies TV2 with plenty of shows, including "Eleva2eren" (1988-1996) and Lykkehjulet" (Wheel of Fortune) (1988-2000). "Ved Vejen", (Katinka), directed by Max von Sydow, is shown in Cannes and wins Best Leading Actress & Special Prize Catalonia, in Barcelona, as well as one Bodil, one Robert and two Guldbaggar in Scandinavia.

1989

"Dansen med Regitze" (Waltzing Regitze), directed by Kaspar Rostrup, wins the Grand Prix in La Baule, Best Actor, Brügge, Best Film, Rouen, Most Artistic Film, Montreal, four Roberts, five Bodils, and is nominated for an Oscar. "Tarzan Mama Mia" (Me And Mama-Mia), directed by Erik Clausen, wins Best Children's Film, Utrecht, Special Mention, Berlin, Prix de la poste, Laon, two Silver Elephants, Trivandrum, Grown-ups Choice Award, New England, Le Cinemalia d'argen at the Festival Cinemalia. "Miraklet I Valby" (Miracle In Valby), directed by Åke Sandgren, wins the Grand Prix, Best Youth Movie, Tokyo, three Guldbaggar, Best Film of the year, Sweden, four Roberts, and the Blue Elephant in Germany.

1990

The exterior of 'Palads Teatret' is painted in Poul Gernes' candy colours. Nordisk Film Broadcast produces talk shows, speedway, football and documentaries, including "Fak2eren". "Fak2eren" is very successful, and is awarded Denmark's most celebrated prize, the TV Oscar, as well as the prestigious Cavling prize. "Fuglekriegen I Kanøfleskoven" (War Of The Birds), directed by Jannik Hastrup, wins Best Film in Cannes.

1991

"Europa", directed by Lars von Trier, is awarded many prestigious prizes, including the Prix de la Commission & Special Prize in Cannes. "Store Badedag" (The Great Day On The Beach), directed by Stellan Ollsson, wins Best Film Director & Best Actress at the Paris Film Festival, the Grand Prix du Jury, in Rouen, and the OCIC's Prize, in San Sebastian. "Møv og Funder" (Hideaway), directed by Niels Gråbøl, wins the CIFREJ-Prize and the UNICEF-Prize in Berlin.

1992

Nordisk Film merges with Egmont – the former Gutenberghus. Peter Herforth becomes managing director of Nordisk Film, Valby (1992-1995). "Sofie", directed by Liv Ullmann, wins the Grand Prix Spécial and Prix Air Canada, in Montreal, Golden Plaque Award, in Chicago, Best Film, in Marta del Plata, Special Jury Prize, Palm Springs, Prix du Jury Oecumén and Prix du Publique, in Montreal, Best Actor, Rouen, and Most Artistic Film, in Zimbabwe. "Kærlighedens Smerte" (The Pain Of Love), directed by Nils Malmros, wins five Bodils and seven Robert statuettes.

1993

"Sort Høst" (Black Harvest), directed by Anders Refn, wins five Robert and two Bodil statuettes. "Jungledyret Hugo" (Jungle Jack), directed by Stefan Fjeldmark & Flemming Quist Møller, wins one Robert statuette, and the First Prize and Guri Award, at the Montevideo Divercine.

1994

"Min Fynske Barndom" (Carl - My Childhood Symphony), directed by Erik Clausen, wins two Robert statuettes, the Prix de la Ville, Laon, Best Director Award, Shanghai, Best Supporting Actress, Riga, and is selected for competition at the LA Annual Award. "Carlo & Esther", directed by Helle Ryslinge, wins the Visionary Award, Chicago, and Best Feature Film, Mostra.

1995

Crisis in Nordisk Film, Valby. Peter Herforth and other directors leave the company.

1996

Nordisk Film is split into Egmont Distribution and Exploitation (Egmont Entertainment) and Film & TV Production. Ole Timm becomes managing director of Egmont Entertainment (1996-2000). Søren E. Jakobsen becomes managing director of Nordisk Film (1996-2002).

"Lærerinden" (All Things Fair), directed by Bo Widerberg, wins three Guldbaggar, in Göteborg, the Jury's Silver Bear and Der Blaue Engel, in Berlin, and the Best Actor Award, Rouen.

"Tøsepiger" (Watch Me Fly), directed by Vibeke Gad, wins Best Film, Chicago, a Special Mention, Poznan, the Silver Elephant Special, Hyderabad, and the Silver Slipper, Zlin. Nordisk Film produces "Morgen-TV", a brand new Danish TV concept as well as game shows, sport programmes and the documentary "Tre til tiden" for TV3. "Hamsun", directed by Max von Sydow, wins four Guldbaggar, Göteborg, the Jury's First prize, Rouen, Best Actor, Sweden, Silver Dolphin, Troia, Best actor, actress and film, Durban, and Special Grand Prix, Montreal. "En loppe kan også gå" (Fleas Bark Too – Don't They?), directed by Stellan Ollsson, wins the Golden Slipper, Zlin, and the Adult Jury Award, Chicago. "Bryggeren" (The Brewer), the biggest and most costly TV mini series ever filmed in Scandianvia.

1997

"Let's get Lost", directed by Jonas Elmer, wins three Roberts and two Bodil statuettes, as well as a Special Mention, Mannheim. "Barbara", directed by Niels Malmros, wins one Bodil and five Robert statuettes, as well as Special Mentions, Mannheim, Special Award, Arts Council of Denmark. "Barbara", directed by Nils Malmros, wins five Roberts, one Bodil, the Audience Award, Rouen, and the Silver Dolphin, Troia.

1998

TV Drama produces Christmas Calendars for DR and TV2. "Lysets hjerte" (Heart of Light), directed by Jacob Grønlykke, wins the NDR-Förderpreis, Lübeck, and the Special Award, Arts of Council of Denmark, and is selected for the Sundance Film Festival 1999, World Cinema Section, Utah.

2000

A post-production sound studio and a post-production facility are established in Valby. "Expedition Sirius 2000", a five part TV series directed by Stig Andersen. H.R.H. Crown Prince Frederik participates in the expedition. "Tsatsiki", directed by Ella Lemhagen, wins the Crystal Bear award for "Best Feature" at Kinderfilmfest, Berlinale 2000. Kenneth Plummer becomes managing director of Egmont Entertainment (2000-2002).

2002

Nordisk Film and Egmont Entertainment merge. Kenneth Plummer becomes new managing director of Nordisk Film A/S (2002-2005). The talk show "Go' Aften Danmark" (Good Evening

Denmark) is transmitted every day from Københavns Hovedbanegård (Copenhagen Central Station). "I am Dina", directed by Ole Bornedal, premieres in Norway, and becomes a great international success and prize winner in many categories. "At kende Sandheden" (Facing The Truth), directed by Nils Malmros, wins three Robert statuettes.

2003

"A Royal Family", an international six part TV series directed by Marcus Mandal and Anna Lerche, wins several prizes and is sold to TV broadcasting companies throughout the world. At the Cannes Film Festival Director's Cut feature film "Reconstruction" (directed by Christoffer Boe) receives the Caméra d'Or prize. Another Director's Cut production, "Lykkevej" (directed by Morten Arnfred), is created by Nordisk Film.

Swedish co-production "Ondskan" is seen by more than 1 million and is nominated for an Oscar Academy Award. In Norway the family feature film "Olsenbanden jr går under vann" is seen by 362,000 Norwegians.

On 1 May Kim Magnusson from M & M Productions, takes up the position as General Manager of Nordisk Film's Nordic film and TV drama production companies.

Nordisk Film reaches the 1 million unit milestone in PlayStation2 consoles sold to consumers in the Nordic countries.

IO Interactive, co-owned by Nordisk Film (sold to Eidos plc in March 2004), launches the game "Hitman 2" and sales reaches almost 3 million games.

Nordisk Film takes over the stock majority in Pinkfloor A/S, which develops the game universe for teenage girls "Powerbabes".

2004

The animated feature film "Terkel in Trouble", produced by co-owned A.film, is seen by 390.000 Danes. And Norwegian "Olsenbanden jr på rocker'n" is the film seen by most Norwegians this year – more than 400.000 cinema tickets were sold.

Nordisk Film top distribution films this year are the two "Kill Bill"-films, directed by Tarantino and "Spiderman 2".

Together with Danish TV2, Nordisk Film enters the world of broadband TV with the launch of TV2 Sputnik. Nordisk Film runs the online video store Sputnik Film.

Within TV drama the series "Forsvar" was produced for Danish TV2 and "Skattejakten" for Norwegian NRK.

Nordisk Film opens a new cinema - BioCity Aalborg – and introduces digital film projection in three cinemas.

The new reality series "FC Zulu" conquers the TV screens and the popular format is sold to several countries.

In Norway another reality program about farmer dating, "Jakten på kjærligheten", is the most-seen series in the history of TV Norge.

Nordisk Film Interactive sells 1 million pieces of games software.

2005

Kenneth Plummer resigns from his position as Managing Director to become Director General in Danish public service channel, DR.

Nordisk Film's Danish feature film "Accused" was selected for the The Berlin Film Festival and won the prestigious "Prix Fassbinder" during the European Film Awards. Norwegian "Finding Friends" won the Audience Award during the Amsterdam Film Festival and the Amanda Award for best children and youth film in Haugesund.

During 2005 we acquired the distribution rights for 104 international titles including "Goya's Ghosts", Luc Besson's "Angel A" and "The Alchemist". Nordisk Film was also leading in the distribution of local films, acquiring the rights for 55 Norwegian, Swedish, Danish and Finnish films.

It was also the year when Nordisk Film bought 20 % of Finnish Matila Röhr Productions thereby expanding the collaboration with the biggest production company in Finland.

The documentary "Karen Blixen – Out of this world" won seven awards around the world, whilst "Young Andersen" won an Emmy for best mini series.

The Nordisk Film TV concept FC Zulu was produced in local version in Holland, Norway and Sweden. The Norwegian team "Heia Tufta" was an overwhelming success with an average of more than 800,000 viewers. 2005 was also the year when "Bug's Bunny's Sunday Club" was produced for the last time after 11 years in Nordisk Film.

The cinemas renamed one of their Copenhagen cinemas from Palladium to Metropol, and Nordisk Film started building 16th cinema in the Copenhagen area, Frederiksberg.

In September Sony's new handheld PlaySonyPortable was launched by Nordisk Film and 125,000 Nordic consumers chose to invest in the new entertainment phenomenon.

With a focus on "Social gaming" a new type of games including "Buzz", "Sing Star" and "Eye Toy" came out to entertain several gamers at the same time thereby addressing a broader audience than usual.

Nordisk Film is also a player in the field of new media as the supplier of films for the Online Video Shop Sputnik Film in collaboration with TV 2.

2006

November 6th 2006 is Nordisk Film's 100th birthday. We celebrate the anniversary with a wide range of activities.

An anniversary exhibition is on show throughout the year. At the world's oldest film studio – studio 2 in Valby – costumes and props dating from the era of the silent movie up till the present day are showcased.

The polar bear extends its hunting ground by including music in the business. In February Michael Ritto takes up the position as CEO at Nordisk Film. Previous to this Ritto was CEO at MBO - the Music Business Organization, in which Nordisk Film invests.

"The Flies on the Wall", directed by Åke Sandgrenn, wins a Bodil and a Robert. "Accused", directed by Jacob Thuesen, wins two Robert-statuettes. All awards are given for outstanding performances by actors.

Nordisk Film enters into agreements with production companies Copenhagen-Bombay and Substanz. Copenhagen-Bombay creates stories for children and youngsters. Substanz develops brands, ideas and content for a variety of media, and is the company behind the concept "The Danes Own History", which has been successfully released on DVD.

Through MBO, Nordisk Film forms a partnership with Swedish record company Roxy Recordings.

For the first time, the Ove Sprogøe Award is handed out. First recipient is actor Niels Ellegaard. The award is established by Morten Grunwald and Nordisk Film on the basis of a donation of the fees from the Ove Sprogøe biography "The Volcano from Funen" and of the revenue from the memorial screenings following Ove Sprogøes passing in September 2004 – a total of DKK 150,000 which will be given away in portions of DKK 30,000 over five years.

2007

Nordisk Films strategy to strengthen its Nordic market position is cemented further på the acquisition of a number of companies: Respirator, Produktionselskabet Angora, Co+Tv, Solar Films Inc. (FI), and Maipo Film & Tv-produksjon AS (NO), as well as making a number of local distribution deals.

The Film Distribution is reorganized. All distribution units are gathered in one, unique, flexible organization in the effort to embrace the new digital reality.

Nordisk Film TV establishes an international department – Nordisk Film TV World – and also starts production of “2900 Happiness”, the most ambitious Danish TV drama project to date.

Nordisk Film Interactive launches PlayStation 3 in all Nordic countries and the Baltics. The unprecedented sell-out of PlayStation 3 at its launch makes it the fastest selling entertainment console in history.

The Falkoner Cinema in Frederiksberg, Copenhagen opens in March, adding six screens and 754 seats to Nordisk Film Cinemas, which sells approximately half of all movie tickets in Denmark.

Nordisk Film is nominated for an Oscar for “Best Live Action Short” for the short film “Helmer and son”, which is Danish actor Søren Pilmark’s debut as a director. The Nordisk Film production “Triple Dare”, directed by Super 16-graduate Christina Rosendahl, wins a Robert Award.