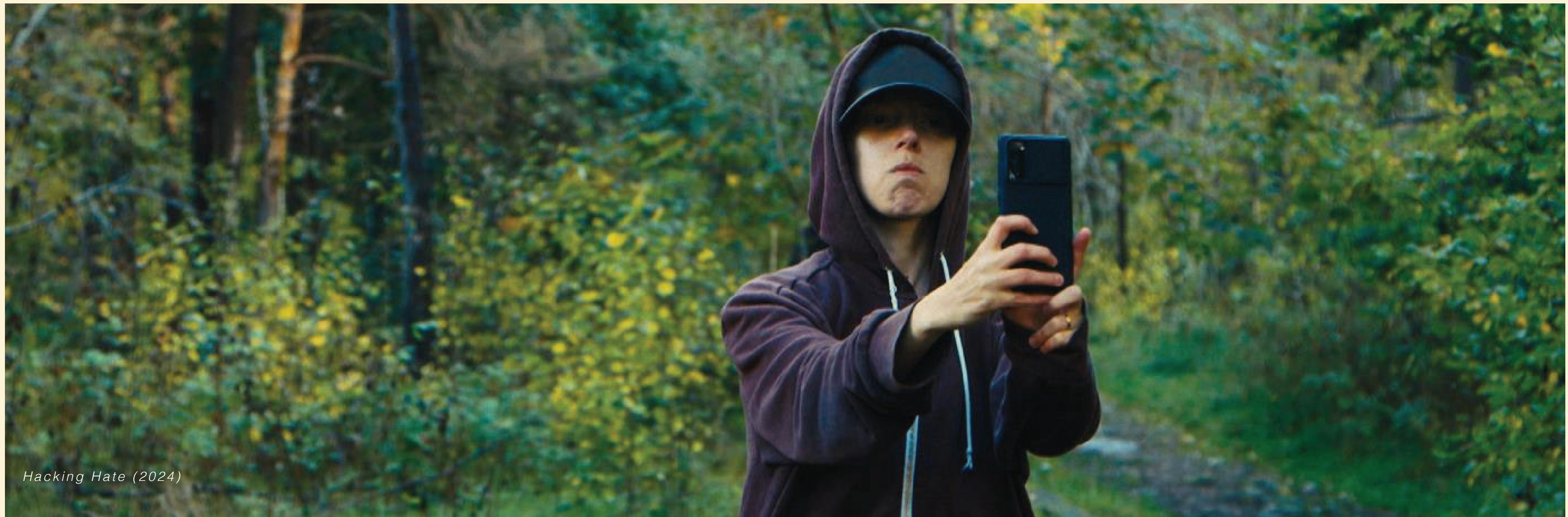


BEYOND FORMAT

DOCUMENTARY LAB AND FUND



Hacking Hate (2024)



Collective (2019)

To tackle urgent stories in new ways, we're pairing a dedicated fund with an expert-led lab and key regional partners—so we don't just make films, we move the industry.

INTRO

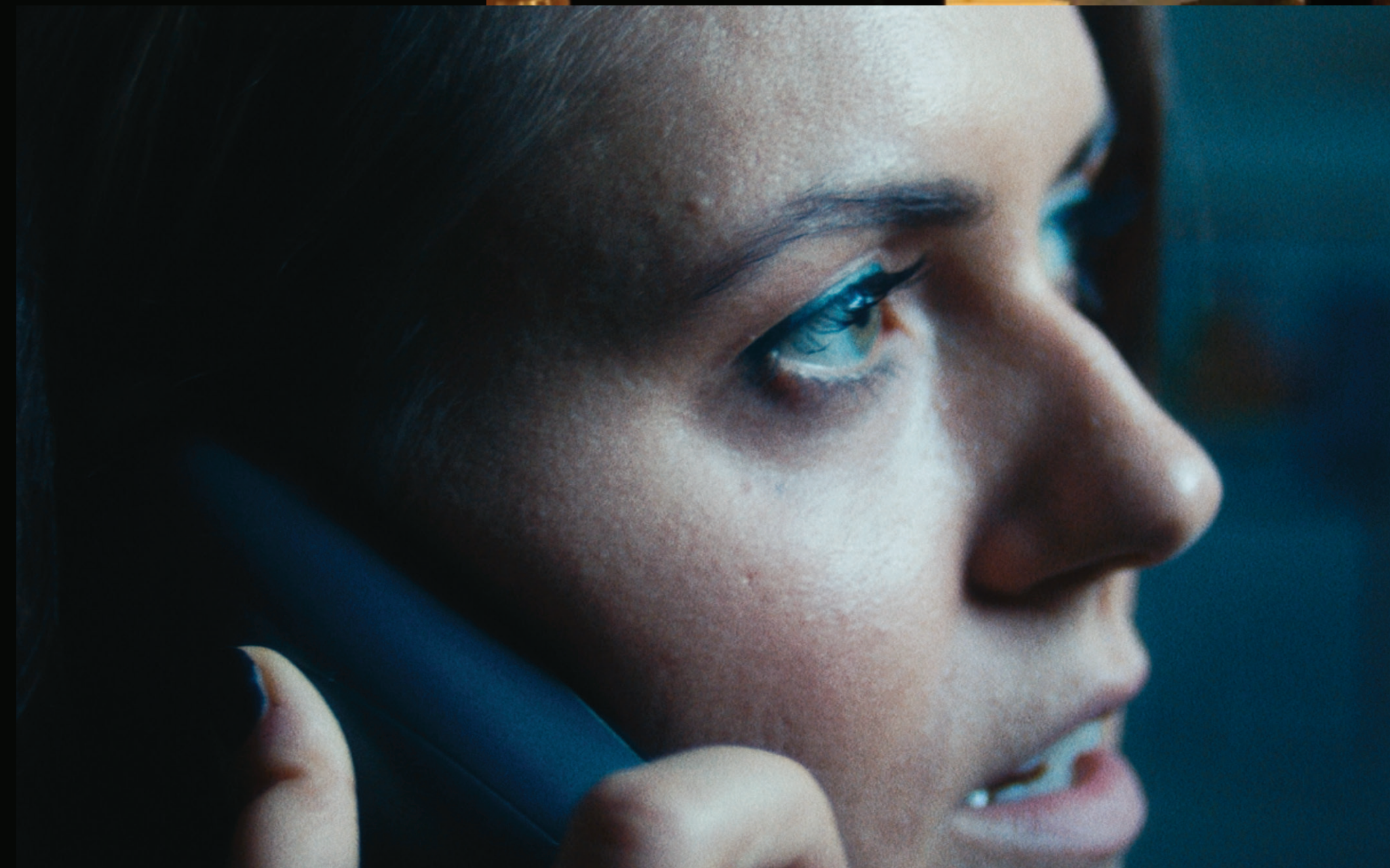
Beyond Format brings together partners across the Nordic–Baltic region to develop three new documentary projects from Estonia, Finland and Sweden. Combining creative storytelling with investigative methods, the projects address timely social and political questions with care and depth.

Working with national financiers and broadcasters, Beyond Format offers direct development funding to selected teams. The programme includes one online session and two in-person workshops hosted by Nordisk Panorama (Malmö) and the Black Nights Film Festival (Tallinn). Participants receive tailored guidance from a broad network of experts in distribution, financing, audience engagement and impact.

Journalistic documentary remains underdeveloped in the Baltic region. By fostering collaboration between Baltic and Nordic filmmakers, Beyond Format supports fresh approaches and helps important stories reach wider audiences—encouraging shared understanding over polarization.



Citizenfour (2014)



War on Women (2026)



War on Women (2026)

DEVELOPMENT GRANT FOR PROJECTS

We are looking for projects that address the most pressing issues of our time—rising geopolitical tensions, mental health, polarisation—without relying on traditional journalistic formats. We welcome fresh, inventive approaches that rethink how important stories are told and how they connect with audiences. We value projects that are not only relevant, but resonant: stories that cut through the noise and help bring communities together.

Working with national financiers and broadcasters—the Swedish Film Fund and SVT, the Finnish Film Foundation and YLE, and the Estonian Film Institute and ETV/ELISA—each selected project will receive a **€20,000 Development Grant** from its respective country, disbursed in instalments.

Beyond Format team in collaboration with national film funds and broadcasters will launch coordinated open call for filmmakers with projects in early development. Eligible projects must not have previously received development support from a film institute or a broadcaster. A joint commission will select the three projects with the strongest potential and the greatest need for the accompanying workshop programme.

Pair the grant with a sharp, expert-led workshop and it turns from support into momentum—delivering a commission-ready film with a clear path to audiences.

WORKSHOP

In addition to the development grant, the selected projects will participate in a tailor-made workshop programme consisting of three sessions, designed to strengthen their project packages and prepare them for the production phase.

FIRST SESSION: STORY & PRODUCTION APPROACH

This online session equips teams with practical tools to refine their ideas and build a solid production plan.

Expect in-depth story work with a dramaturg, consultations with award-winning producers on production strategy, guidance on collaborating with journalists and researchers—including a 1-to-1 editorial with a journalist—and feedback on the project package and trailer. Outcome: each team leaves with concrete next steps to advance the project.

SPRING 2026

SECOND SESSION: AUDIENCE DESIGN & IMPACT

Expect work on identifying target audiences, designing an impact plan, understanding broadcaster slots, and planning financing and distribution. Project teams may also present their projects to decision-makers as Observers at Nordisk Panorama. During the festival, two public panels will address renewing approaches in journalistic filmmaking and strengthening collaboration between journalists and filmmakers. Outcome: a defined audience engagement plan, impact strategy, and financing/distribution roadmap.

SEPTEMBER 2026

THIRD SESSION: FINAL PACKAGE & PRODUCTION READINESS

With updated materials and initial partners in place, this session concentrates on journalistic standards (rights, clearances, compliance), legal and ethical risk, managing sensitive data and participant safety, preparing for potential online backlash and reputational risks, and presenting projects to the industry. During the festival, we will also host three public panels for the wider audience and industry representatives. Outcome: a market-ready project package.

NOVEMBER 2026

Introduction to Genre

Long-format film offers a unique opportunity to delve deeply into complex subjects, allowing viewers to see issues from a broader perspective. It also harnesses the power of emotional storytelling, creating lasting impressions and connections that go beyond what a news article alone can achieve.

This is especially crucial in an era when feelings often outweigh facts, and audiences seek narratives that resonate on an emotional level. While the Anglo-Saxon tradition of journalistic documentaries has proven both accessible and compelling, we still need fresh, innovative approaches to meet these audience needs and help bridge the “common knowledge” gap in increasingly polarized societies.

This is what this initiative aims to target.

Eligible projects

We are looking for projects that address the most pressing issues of our time—rising geopolitical tensions, mental health, polarisation—without relying on traditional journalistic formats. We welcome fresh, inventive approaches that rethink how important stories are told and how they connect with audiences. We value projects that are not only relevant, but resonant: stories that cut through the noise and help bring communities together.

Workshop target group:

Documentary producer/directors (or groups), audiovisual journalists.



Hacking Hate (2024)

When facts fragment, long format connects the dots.



COLLABORATION WITH KEY PARTNERS

Festivals

Our festival partners—Nordisk Panorama and Tallinn Black Nights (to be confirmed)—host the in-person workshops, open doors to key industry connections, and boost project visibility. They also enable public panels and open discussions that surface current obstacles in handling sensitive content, while fostering cross-border knowledge sharing on how to navigate them. Crucially, the collaboration creates an in-person forum for sustained professional exchange between filmmakers and journalists—something that, to our knowledge, no other festival or market in Europe currently provides.

National funds and broadcasters

Each selected project will secure a national €20,000 Development Grant and development support from its country's public broadcaster (SVT, YLE, or ETV) as part of participation. In addition, projects will be fast-tracked for consideration by other funds and broadcasters in Sweden, Finland and Estonia to pursue co-production financing—conditional on meeting eligibility criteria (e.g., confirmed co-production partners, aligned editorial vision, and a feasible financing plan).

International collaboration with DocSociety

Doc Society is a pioneering bridge between journalism and documentary in Europe. Through initiatives such as the Democracy Lab and the Climate Story Unit, they foster rigorous, impact-driven practice. As a key stakeholder in Beyond Format, Doc Society will help secure world-class tutors and subject experts, offering teams a rare chance to learn first-hand from global leaders and to strengthen their editorial, safety and impact strategies.

THE TEAM

Beyond Format is led by a team built for this moment. Producer Maris Salumets (Gambit Film; work with VICE, BBC, ARTE) brings investigative depth and Nordic–Baltic reach; industry curator Tereza Šimíková (former head of CPH:FORUM; Chicken & Egg Pictures) connects projects to the right partners at the right time; and Swedish producer Elin Kamlert (Tribeca-winning Hacking Hate) turns ambitious ideas into commission-ready films.

“We came together because the films we want to make aren't being made elsewhere. We see a clear need for deeper understanding—and for bridging the gap between creative documentary and journalistic film. Beyond Format responds to what national support often misses when aiming for internationally oriented work: a combination of funding and craft-focused guidance. Our workshop is built around real production needs, giving teams the tools, mentorship and momentum to reach their goals faster and with greater impact.”

MARIS SALUMETS

Maris Salumets is an Estonian producer and founder of Gambit Film (2021), specialising in investigative documentaries that blend journalistic rigour with creative storytelling.

She has worked with VICE, the BBC and ARTE, bringing complex stories to wider audiences across the Nordic–Baltic region. Her credits include *War on Women*, co-produced with ARTE and supported by Chicken & Egg Pictures. Maris champions cross-border collaboration, strong editorial standards and clear audience strategy to deliver films with real-world impact.

TEREZA SIMIKOVA

Tereza Šimíková is a Czech filmmaker, producer, and industry curator. She led CPH:FORUM, CPH:DOX's main co-production and financing platform (2018–23), and serves as International Program Consultant at Chicken & Egg Pictures.

Previously, she was Head of Industry at East Doc Platform and Program Manager at dok.incubator; she mentors across labs such as EAVE, Documentary Campus, and Ex Oriente. She holds a documentary directing degree from FAMU in Prague.

ELIN KALMERT

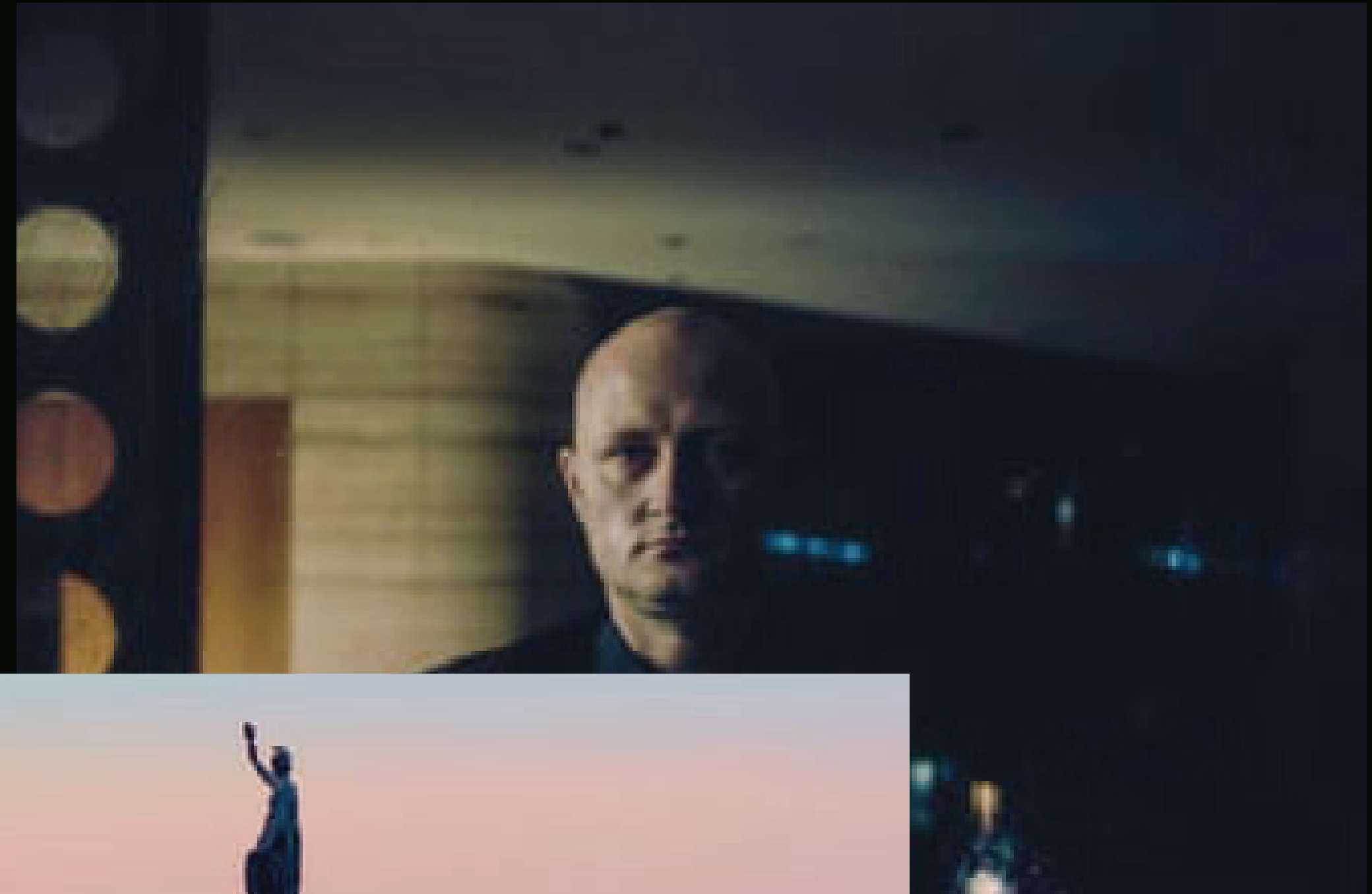
Elin Kamlert is a Swedish documentary producer behind the Tribeca 2024 Best Documentary Feature winner *Hacking Hate* (dir. Simon Klose), produced through Nonami with co-production partners including SVT and Film i Skåne and support from the Swedish Film Institute.

She works across Nonami and her own banner Kamlert Film, focusing on socially engaged, character-driven stories; recent credits include *For Somebody Else* and *Rosornas by*.

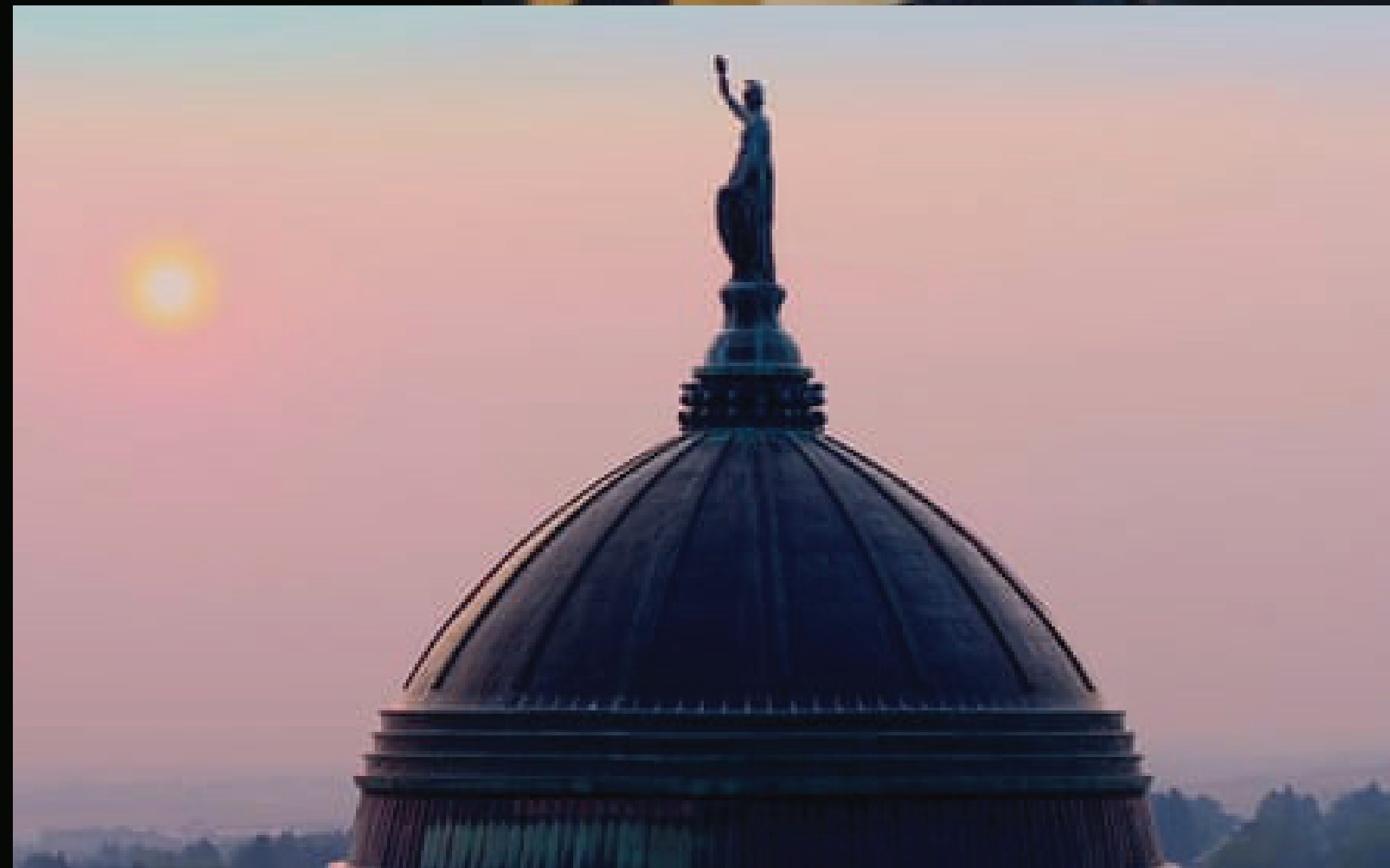
THANK YOU FOR READING!

CONTACT:

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*The Mole: Undercover
in North Korea (2020)*



Dark Money (2018)