

**Critically acclaimed Danish documentary THE HUMAN SHELTER, in the forefront of the global UN-Habitat 'Housing for All' campaign promoting the fundamental human right to a home during Urban October 2020.**



Photo: Adam Philp © Boris B. Bertram/Creative Alliance

What does our home mean to us? The topic is as relevant as ever. After most of us have been obliged to stay at home for the past many months as the global pandemic has swept around the world radically changing our everyday life, now is a good time to reflect on the universal idea of home.

But what about the 1,8 billion people – more than a fifth of the world's population – who are currently living under uncertain circumstances without adequate housing, and for whom it is impossible to carry out physical distancing and good hygiene practices during the COVID-19 pandemic?

**The Danish filmmaker Boris B. Bertram has teamed up with the UN-Habitat offering his IKEA-funded film, *The Human Shelter*, in a free online screening during the five-week 'Housing for All' campaign, to inspire us to reflect on what our home means to us and to raise awareness about the important message that adequate housing is a fundamental human right – and that housing is not just a roof.**

**During Urban October, from 5 October to 6 November, *The Human Shelter* will be available in 193 countries in the six official languages of the UN: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.**

"During my career, I've filmed people fleeing from war and natural disasters, people in motion and without homes. 'Shelter' is the first concept we have of a home. A place where we're supposed to feel safe. That's how the idea for making the film came up," says Boris B. Bertram.

Bertram started out documenting the exhibition *Insecurities: Tracing Displacement and Shelter* at The Museum of Modern Art in New York for his film *The Human Shelter*, curious to examine the question of how we create a home. This was to be the beginning of a longer expedition to four continents visiting the hot spots of a changing world challenged by climate change, migration and growing urbanization.

**THE HUMAN SHELTER online screening: <https://unhabitat.org/Housing4All>**

**More about THE HUMAN SHELTER at UN-Habitat <https://unhabitat.org/the-human-shelter'-an-explorative-documentary-to-illustrate-un-habitat-housing-for-all'-campaign>**

In September the film was part of the digitally curated program MoMA Magazine at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. On this occasion, director Boris B. Bertram and MoMA curator Sean Anderson, who is also participating in the film, made a recorded live Q/A which is available here:

<https://www.moma.org/magazine/articles/422>

***The Human Shelter* will be screened in Lagos, Nigeria, on October 10 in partnership with the IREP Documentary Film Festival and UN-Habitat, followed by a Q/A with members of the Makoko waterfront community portrayed in the film and the director Boris B. Bertram.**

***The Human Shelter*** (Denmark 2018, 58 min.)

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/275253763>

*The Human Shelter* is a poetic and cinematic examination of what defines a home, told through personal stories from different parts of the world, reflecting both on diversity and what we all have in common. The chapters of the film takes us on an expedition from the snowy white landscape of the northern Norway, home of the nomadic Sami people, to a refugee shelter in Iraq, from the waterfront community of the Nigerian megacity Lagos to an Icelandic family living near a melting glacier, life in tiny apartments in Tokyo and the vision of what a home on Mars might look and feel like.

***'The Human Shelter is the most beautiful documentary I have watched this year'.***

– Wendy Goodman, Editor, New York Magazine.

The Human Shelter was screened at *The United Nations Commission for Social Development* in New York in February 2020 and has priorly been selected for some of the most prestigious design and architecture film festivals around the world including Rotterdam AFFR, Copenhagen CAFx, Los Angeles ADFF, London Design Museum, Milano Design Film Festival, Design Indaba Cape Town, Tel Aviv, New York ADFF, Film and Architecture Prague and Bangkok Design and Architecture Festival.

The film was made with support from IKEA who gave the director full creative freedom over his film, produced by Creative Alliance, Nikolaj Vibe, Malene Blenkov and Boris B. Bertram in collaboration with Good Company Pictures.

UN-Habitat supports the efforts of national and local governments, civil society groups, and national human rights institutions in realising the human right to adequate housing. Target 11.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals aims at, by 2030, to ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and to upgrade slums. This is the focus of the UN-Habitat 'Housing for All: For a Better Urban Future' campaign during this year's Urban October.

More about Urban October 2020: <https://urbanoctober.unhabitat.org/>

**For more information, stills and interviews please contact Patricia Drati, Good Company Pictures, [patricia@goodcompanypictures.com](mailto:patricia@goodcompanypictures.com), +45 26 47 84 84**

## About the director:

**Boris Benjamin Bertram** is a filmmaker, producer and partner in the Copenhagen-based Good Company Pictures. Educated at the National Film School of Denmark as a documentary director in 2005, he also holds a graduate degree in social psychology and communication. He is the creator of award-winning, international documentaries, sold to more than 30 countries and has made a variety of documentaries for the National Danish Television. As a director he has a global outlook and a keen interest in international politics, conflict resolutions, humanitarianism and art.

His latest feature film, *THE WAR PHOTOGRAPHER* (2019), an intimate portrait of the renowned Danish photographer Jan Grarup, was the best-selling theatrically released documentary in Denmark in 2019. Bertram has recently collaborated with the artist Taryn Simon in creating a performance film from her impressive installation work *AN OCCUPATION OF LOSS* (2020).

Besides *THE HUMAN SHELTER* (2018), exploring the universal idea of home, his earlier work includes *DIPLOMACY* (2008) where he followed Kofi Annan as Secretary-General on the UN peacekeeping mission in the Darfur crisis, *TANKOGRAD* (2010), about a modern dance company in one of the most radioactively polluted cities in the world, Chelyabinsk in Russia, and the award-winning film *THE WAR CAMPAIGN* (2013) focusing on the media campaign which sold the illegal war against Iraq to the international community.

His films have won many prizes at esteemed ceremonies, such as The Moscow Film Festival, Camden International Film Festival, Chelyabinsk Film Festival, MCA Awards, TV-Gold award for best Danish documentary, and has been shown at special screenings at the UN headquarter, Stanford University and the Museum of Natural History in New York. Boris Bertram has been supported by The Danish Arts Council in 2011, 2015 and 2020.