

MY FIRST LOVE

(MIN FØRSTE KJÆRLIGHET)

Provisional EPK

• Synopsis

When 19-year-old Ella sets off for university, she is unexpectedly placed in an institution, further complicating her life with mobility struggles and making it impossible to live a normal student's life. At the same time, she falls in love for the first time.

My First Love is a raw and compelling story based on real events.

• Director's note

As a documentary filmmaker, I've tried to document discrimination, but we're often denied bringing cameras into institutions and dealing with bureaucrats. The only solution has been to make secret sound recordings, to try to capture the very moment when dehumanization, discrimination from authority takes place, but it's been almost impossible.

My First Love is the film I wish I had seen when I a kid. As a disabled woman of 38, I've never seen myself on the screen. Countless stories have been told about this theme, but never from this perspective. When disabled people occasionally get screen time, the often one-dimensional and stereotypical representation makes me feel a twist in my stomach. This is because the narrative is almost always told by others, not us, and is based on myths and internalized prejudices about us. The danger of this is that the narrative becomes the truth about us. It's not enough that the stories are told about us. The stories about us must be told by us.

So why not just tell a love story? Why this resistance, why the bureaucracy? Leaving out that part of the story would be a misrepresentation. Because when you are disabled, the oppression and barriers are such a significant part of life. That's the truth, and that's what we should tell.

• About Mari Storstein

Mari Storstein (b. 1986) graduated from The TV School at Lillehammer University College focusing on untold stories. Her award-winning works include student films and the documentary "Letter for Jens" (TV2, 2011), which won at the Norwegian Documentary Film Festival and was Gullruten-nominated. Her series "Siblings" (TV2, 2017) about families with disabled children won Gullruten. She's made shorts for Save the Children, winning multiple prizes.

My First Love is Mari's feature film debut.

Filmography:

2006: Jakten på Sylvia B (The Hunt for Sylvia B)- Short Documentary
2011: Brevet til Jens (The Letter to Jens)- Documentary
2012: Et lass av fett (A Load of Fat)- Documentary
2013: A Thousand Million Times a Hundred Thousand Thank You's- Short Documentary
2013: Barn som meg (Children Like Me)- Short Documentary
2015: Forestillinger om frihet (Ideas of Freedom)- Documentary

2016: De døvblinde (The Deafblind)- Documentary

2017: Søsken (Siblings) – Documentary tv-series

- **Production credits**

Director: Mari Storstein

Producer: Thomas Robsahm, Tøri Gjendal

Screenplay: Mari Storstein, Tomas Myklebost

Cinematography: Tomas Myklebost

Production Designer: Brynhild Dagslott

Editor: Anna Løvlund

Cast: Marie Flaatten, Niels Skåber, Jan Gunnar Røise, Silje Breivik, Silje Storstein, Håkon Johannes Kjølberg Hauge, Clara Penzo Fasting

Sound: Inger Elise Holm, Siri Schippers Skaar

Production Company: Nordisk Film Production

- **World Sales**

Sales agent: Trust Nordisk

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- **World Premiere**

Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival 2025