

## DIRECTORS NOTE AND VISUAL CONCEPT

PIONEER is a portrait of a Norwegian deep-sea diver in the early 1980's, set within the thriller genre. I'm drawn to stories told through the protagonist's point of view. In "Pioneer" I looked to create a character that is searching for a truth, which threatens his ability to comprehend reality. Thus the distinction between paranoia and conspiracy is at times blurred. True to the genre, the film has a protagonist and a number of potential antagonists.

In terms of genre, we aimed to reinterpret the American 70's thriller. Growing up in the 70's, I was heavily influenced by films such as "The Conversation", "Chinatown" and "All The President's Men." These films inspired not only my aesthetic approach to filmmaking, but also my interest in genre films. I believe genre films can be used successfully to explore character dilemmas for a wider audience. I wanted to reinvigorate the approach I used in my first film INSOMNIA, by directing a character driven thriller.

To me, much of filmmaking is about giving an audience the physical experience of going somewhere different. In "Pioneer" we wanted to convey the physical and emotional impression of what it's like to work at the bottom of The North Sea. Inspired by research, we aimed to contrast the claustrophobia of the diving bell and helmet diving with the enormity of the clear, dark sea. I took great inspiration from the way sci-fi movies deal with infinity and scale. We also aimed to make the sea blacker than the traditional notion of blue sea.

As "Pioneer" is inspired by real events, the film also has an historic aspect. I grew up in a country that had discovered enormous oil and gas resources that we didn't know how to utilize. Experiencing the change in our national mentality through the period of blooming wealth served above all else as my inspiration to direct "Pioneer". To me, it's ultimately a story about the ways sudden wealth changes you.