

SNOWMAN (2017)

- *The Snowman* is a 2017 British [crime thriller horror](#)
- Directed by [Tomas Alfredson](#)
- Written by [Hossein Amini](#) and [Peter Straughan](#)
- Based on the novel [of the same name](#) by [Jo Nesbø](#)
- Released by [Universal Pictures](#) on 13 October 2017 in the United Kingdom and 20 October 2017 in the United States
- 35 million dollar budget
- 1 hour 59 minutes
- Rated R for grisly images, violence, some language, sexuality and brief nudity

QUICK THOUGHTS:

- Demetri Panos
- Phil Svitek
- Marisa Serafini

DEVELOPMENT

- According to [Variety](#), the initial hope with the film was to create a series in the vein of the various [Alex Cross](#) film adaptations
- [Screen Rant](#) has suggested that the film was inspired by the success of [The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo](#)
- For a while [Martin Scorsese](#) was attached to direct, although he would later drop out in 2013
- The next year, [Tomas Alfredson](#) was hired to direct
- Prior to Alfredson, the studio considered both [Morten Tyldum](#) and [Baltasar Kormakur](#) as possible directors, although both declined

WRITING (Hossein Amini and Peter Straughan)

- Based on the seventh book in author Jo Nesbø's Harry Hole series, "The Snowman" is the story of a Norwegian serial killer who preys on women, leaving mysterious snowmen in their yard as a calling card
- Peter Straughan is a writer and director, known for [Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy](#) (2011), [The Men Who Stare at Goats](#) (2009) and [Frank](#) (2014)
- Hossein Amini was born in Iran, and when he was 11 years old, he and his family moved to England. Amini's first screenplay was for the 1994 TV movie *The Dying of the Light*, which was directed by Peter Kosminsky. The TV movie covered the murder of Sean Devereux, an aid worker who was murdered in Somalia in 1993 for criticizing arms sales. It was nominated "Best Single Drama" at the British Academy Television Awards. Amini also wrote an adapted screenplay of the 1895 novel *Jude the Obscure* by Thomas Hardy. Producer Andrew Eaton commissioned the screenplay in 1995, and it was filmed by Michael Winterbottom as *Jude*, released in 1996. Amini also wrote a screenplay for another TV movie, *Deep Secrets*, which aired in 1996. Amini wrote the adapted screenplay for *The Wings of the Dove*, which was based on the 1902 eponymous novel by Henry James. The film, directed by Iain Softley, was released in 1997 and received critical acclaim. Amini was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Writing - Adapted Screenplay. In September 2013, Amini delivered a screenwriting lecture as part of the BAFTA and BFI Screenwriters' Lecture Series.

STORY/TOPICS

- Opening Scene as a setup
- Whodunit story structure
- Political subplot
- Motive of killer
- Plot holes

CAST

- [Michael Fassbender](#) as [Detective Harry Hole](#)
- [Rebecca Ferguson](#) as Katrine Bratt
- [Charlotte Gainsbourg](#) as Rakel Fauke
- [Val Kilmer](#) as Gert Rafto
- [J. K. Simmons](#) as Arve Støp
- [Toby Jones](#) as Investigator Svenson
- [David Dencik](#) as Idar Vetlesen
- [Ronan Vibert](#) as DCI Gunnar Hagen
- [Chloë Sevigny](#) as Sylvia Ottersen/Ane Pedersen
- [James D'Arcy](#) as Filip Becker
- [Jamie Clayton](#) as Edda
- [Jakob Oftebro](#) as Magnus Skarre
- [Jonas Karlsson](#) as Mathias Lund-Helgesen
- Michael Yates as Oleg Fauke-Gosev
- [Alec Newman](#) as Mould Man
- [Jo Nesbø](#) (the writer of the novel on which this film is based) was supposed to have a small cameo, but his scenes were cut

SYMBOLISM/TRIVIA/EASTER EGGS

- The Schrøder Restaurant where Harry Hole is regular guest in Jo Nesbo's book actually exists in Oslo and part of the filming took place in there. Also, according to the book, Harry's home is at Sofies gate 5, which is a few minutes walk from Schrøder
- Apparently, Fassbender bought drinks for the whole crew after a long day of shooting. The next day, rigging electrician Karl Andre Bru walked up to the famous actor and said jokingly: "thanks for the hangover, man!". Rumor has it Fassbender cracked up and was unable to keep a straight face for the rest of the day
- Although mostly shot in Norway, great care was taken to remove any Norwegian language from the movie. No Norwegian is spoken and anything normally written in Norwegian is changed. This includes newspaper headlines and destinations on public transportation. Norwegian police cars normally have "politi" written on them (meaning "police") but this was simply removed

DIRECTING (Tomas Alfredson)

- Tomas Alfredson was born on April 1, 1965 in Lidingö, Stockholms län, Sweden. He is known for his work on [Let the Right One In](#) (2008), [Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy](#) (2011) and [The Snowman](#) (2017)

PRODUCTION/CINEMATOGRAPHY (Dion Beebe)

- Dion Beebe was born in 1968 in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia. He is known for his work on [Edge of Tomorrow](#) (2014), [Collateral](#) (2004) and [Chicago](#) (2002)
- [Principal photography](#) on the film commenced on 18 January 2016 in [Oslo](#), Norway
- A big scene depicting a party, which required over 300 extras, was shot in [Oslo City Hall](#) on 5 February
- Production moved to the area of [Rjukan](#) on 9 February, and to [Bergen](#) on 23 February
- Filming in Bergen included locations such as the mountain of [Ulriken](#), [Bryggen](#) and Skansen fire station
- Production moved back to Oslo for the remainder of filming in mid-March
 - This included scenes at [Restaurant Schrøder](#), where Harry Hole is a regular in the novel series.
 - Scenes were also shot in [Drammen](#) and on the [Atlantic Ocean Road](#). Filming ended on 1 April 2016
- Reshoots and additional filming took place in Norway during the spring of 2017

EDITING (Thelma Schoonmaker)

- Thelma Schoonmaker was born on January 3, 1940 in Algeria as Thelma Colbert Schoonmaker. She is an editor, known for [The Departed](#) (2006), [Goodfellas](#) (1990) and [The Wolf of Wall Street](#) (2013)
- Many scenes from trailer (explosion, bear trap, Snowman letters) are not shown in the final cut

SOUND/MUSIC (Marco Beltrami)

- Marco Beltrami was born on October 7, 1966 in New York City, New York, USA. He is known for his work on [Scream](#) (1996), [Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines](#) (2003) and [I, Robot](#) (2004)

PROMOTION

- Universal Pictures released a poster on 18 July 2017, and the first trailer for the film premiered the following day. An international trailer was released on 5 September
- *The Snowman* premiered at the [Haifa International Film Festival](#) on 7 October 2017
- Leading up to the release of the movie, the newspaper Verdens Gang released a series of mock articles in collaboration with Universal. This was meant to show how the newspaper would normally cover a case like the one depicted in the movie. Included were articles about the murder weapon, Harry Hole himself as well as grisly details from the antagonist's murder spree

BOX OFFICE

- As of 22 October 2017, *The Snowman* has grossed \$3.4 million in the United States and Canada
- \$19.3 million in other territories
- Worldwide total of \$22.7 million, against a production budget of \$35 million
- In the United States and Canada, *The Snowman* was released alongside [Boo 2! A Madea Halloween](#), [Geostorm](#), and [Only The Brave](#), and was expected to gross around \$10 million from 1,813 theaters in its opening weekend
 - However after making just \$1.3 million on its first day (including \$270,000 from Thursday night previews), weekend predictions were lowered to \$4 million. It went on to debut to just \$3.2 million, finishing 8th at the box office

RECEPTION

- *The Snowman* received negative reviews from critics, who decried the film's scattered and incomprehensible plot line and bemoaned the lack of direction for its main cast members
- RT rating of 8% based on 136 reviews
- The site's critical consensus reads, "A mystery that feels as mashed together and perishable as its title, *The Snowman* squanders its bestselling source material as well as a top-notch ensemble cast."
- On [Metacritic](#), which assigns a normalized rating to reviews, the film has a weighted average score of 23 out of 100, based on 37 critics, indicating "generally unfavorable reviews"
- [CinemaScore](#) gave the film an average grade of "D"
- Justin Chang of the [Los Angeles Times](#) gave the film a negative review, writing "There's probably a good movie or several buried in the frigid wilds of Nesbø's fiction, and with more time and cultural nuance and fewer cooks in the kitchen, it might well be realized. Watching this bungled slopsicle of a movie, it's hard not to conclude that somebody let the wrong one in."
- [Variety](#)'s Guy Lodge also called the film a disappointment, saying: "If *The Snowman* were merely a chilly, streamlined precis of a knottier page-turner, it could stolidly pass muster. The sad surprise here, considering how deftly Alfredson and Straughan previously navigated the far more serpentine plot machinations of a [John le Carré](#) classic, is the snowballing incoherence of proceedings."
- [Manohla Dargis](#) of [The New York Times](#) called the film a "leaden, clotted, exasperating mess"
- In response to the negative critical reviews, Alfredson blamed the short filming schedule in which 10–15% of the screenplay was not shot during principal photography. This led to huge narrative problems when editing commenced:

- Our shoot time in Norway was way too short, we didn't get the whole story with us and when we started cutting we discovered that a lot was missing. It's like when you're making a big jigsaw puzzle and a few pieces are missing so you don't see the whole picture
- Alfredson also revealed he had a lack of time to prep the film properly:
 - It happened very abruptly, suddenly we got notice that we had the money and could start the shoot in London

SEQUEL/LEGACY

- In the final scene, Harry volunteers to investigate the murder of a woman who was found with 24 stab wounds in her mouth from an unidentified weapon. This alludes to the events of the novel "The Leopard", published after "The Snowman"