

KILLS ON WHEELS / Tiszta szívvel

(2016, Hungary, 105', cinemascope, DolbyDigital)

Hungary's Official Oscar Entry 2016

Shortlisted for the European Film Awards 2016

Int'l Premiere: 51st Karlovy Vary IFF - East of the West - Opening Film

UK Premiere: 60th BFI London Film Festival

Belgian Premiere: 2016 Oostende Film Festival

Theatrical Release in France: 2017 Pretty Pictures

TRAILER



Kills on Wheels / Two disabled lads get together with an ex-fireman and form a gang of hired assassins. But, as is the way with life, the reality is a little more prosaic... Attila Till has come up with an original, action-packed comedy which deftly blends reality and fantasy and whose black humour places it right up there with the audience hit *The Art of Negative Thinking*.

Synopsis / Twenty-year-old wheelchair user Zoli, his physically disabled friend, and an ex-fireman, who is also confined to a wheelchair, decide to offer their services to the mafia as a gang of hired assassins. But, as is the way with life, the reality is a little more prosaic... In his highly original, action-packed comedy, Hungarian director Attila Till skilfully blends reality with fantasy as he offers a gentle probe into the lives of protagonists living on the edge of society and desirous of things which able-bodied people take for granted. With its in-your-face black humour, the film is a competent match for the 2006 audience smash *The Art of Negative Thinking* and is set to be a sure-fire hit with viewers as well. The director was inspired to make his film from his own experiences as a volunteer for the disabled; he explains his motivation: "It was crucial to me to make a movie about disabled people where they finally aren't played by actors but get the opportunity to act themselves and be the real heroes." (Lenka Tyrpáková, KVIFF)

CAST & CREW

Written and directed by Attila Till

Director of photography: Imre Juhász

Editor: Márton Gothár

Music: Csaba Kalotás / Sound: Tamás Zányi / Visual design: Márton Ágh

Produced by Judit Stalter / Laokoon Filmgroup

Cast: Zoltán Fenyvesi, Szabolcs Thuróczy, Ádám Fekete, Dr. Dusan Vitanovics, Lídia Danis, Mónika Balsai

SOUNDTRACK available on [**SPOTIFY**](#)

About the director / Attila Till (b. 1971, Budapest) graduated from the Intermedia Department of the Hungarian University of Fine Arts. His first feature film *Panic (Pánik)* premiered in 2008 at the Hungarian Film Week, where it won Best Actress and subsequently screened at a number of international festivals. He shot his first short, *Beast (Csicska)*, in 2011, a chilling drama about modern-day slavery. The film was premiered during Cannes' Directors' Fortnight and then toured more than 100 festivals (incl. the Prague Short Film Festival), also ending up with a Best Short Film nomination from the European Film Academy. He also works in television and is one of Hungary's most respected TV personalities. *Kills on Wheels* (2016) is his second feature film.

Director's statement / I have met several people in wheelchairs while I was volunteering with the disabled. These personal encounters inspired me to present a story about a wheelchair bound boy who is struggling with his own identity as much as with his environment and he finds a way to cope with life's challenges in his own extreme fantasy world. It was crucial to me to make a movie about disabled people where they finally aren't played by actors, but they get the opportunity to act themselves and be the real heroes.

Zoltán Fenyvesi / Still only 23 and studying at university, Zoli is a real star and his wheelchair does not limit this in any way. Zoli is often seen at important fashion events as well as studying, working and giving motivational talks. *Kills on Wheels* is his first feature film but he has also appeared in a Coca-Cola campaign film. He is a key member of the "SUHANJ! (Whizz!) Foundation" and successfully completed the New York marathon on his hand-bike in 2014. Under the pseudonym "@wheelchairguy" he now has a stunning 10,000 followers on Instagram. He partially plays himself in the film, a young guy determined to get the most, and more, out of life.

Szabolcs Thuróczy / Attila Till is not the only one unable to imagine making a film without Szabolcs. Also a great favourite of Béla Pintér Theatre Company, he originally qualified in law, but Hungarian theatre and film would have been cheated of a great talent had he chosen to confine his unparalleled acting skills to the courtroom. Seen and much loved as the rough diamond with sex appeal, he is presently shooting the lead in the second series of *Golden Life (Aranyélet)* for HBO Hungary and recently appeared on cinema screens in Kornél Mundruczó's Cannes UCR Prix winner *White God* (2014) and Lili Horváth's Karlovy Vary IFF East of the West Award winner *The Wednesday Child* (2015). He plays Rupasov in *Kills on Wheels*, a paralysed fireman, who pulls Zoli and Babar into an underworld of crime and violence.

Ádám Fekete / A member of TÁP Theatre Company, and originally qualified as a dramaturge at the University of Theatre and Film Art, is currently working as an actor, director, writer and, of course, dramaturge. He not only enjoys reading poetry but also writes it and is rarely seen without a book in his hand. He is an exciting and entertaining figure, who proves that handicap is a meaningless term in the performing arts. He plays the role of Babar in the film, Zoli's best mate and easily the grouchiest member of the gang.

Dr. Dusan Vitanovics / Dusan is actually a practicing neurosurgeon (who wrote his doctorate about Bob Marley's brain tumour), whose acting talent was initially spotted by Benedek Fliegauf who gave him roles in *Talking Heads* and later *Dealer*. Attila Till was so impressed by his previous performances that he asked him to take to the screen again and so now, after an absence of several years, Dr. Vitanovics returns to cinemas as the dark and charismatic king of crime.

Lídia Danis / Known for her exotic good looks, Lídia works first and foremost as a theatre actress and qualified in her craft from the University of Theatre and Film Art under the tutelage of Géza Hegedűs D. She began her professional career at Budapest's leading theatre, Vígszínház, in 2007, and soon went on to win "Best Actress Under 30" at the Pécs National Theatre Festival (POSZT) and the Éva Ruttkai Memorial Ring in the very same year. Mainly known for her work in theatre, she plays the role of Rupasov's ex-girlfriend.

Mónika Balsai / Following a number of successful stage roles, Mónika had her biggest break with the title character in festival and audience favourite *Liza the Fox-Fairy* (2014) and also appeared in Attila Till's internationally successful short film *Beast (Csicska)* as well as the popular HBO series *Társasjáték* (Hungarian adaptation of *When Shall We Kiss?*). She plays Zoli's mother, who raised her son alone.

Judit Stalter / is one of the most active producers of Hungary. She is running a market leader film production company called [Laokoon Filmgroup](#) with 2 co-owners Gábor Sipos and Gábor Rajna. They are mostly known for their groundbreaking holocaust-drama, *Son of Saul* (2015) that has won most of the awards of the world, including the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film, a Golden Globe and the Cannes Grand Prix. Their focus is the development and production of high-quality auteur feature films, creative documentaries and shorts, but they work with a wide range of genres from art-house features to commercials, TV-series and documentaries. They have worked together with Fernando Trueba, Penélope Cruz, Fernando Bovaira, Federico Brugia and Antonio Banderas among others, as a service production company.

INTERVIEW

‘GANGSTERS IN WHEELCHAIRS’

Kills on Wheels, the third film by Attila Till, will have its international premiere at the KVIFF. A unique blend of genres and moods, the movie is funnier and more heartfelt than you would expect from a film packed full of hitmen and killer dogs.

Hungarian films have found a great introductory platform in the East of the West selection of the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival over the past couple of years. In 2014 two dark comedies – both first features – premiered at the festival: *Afterlife* and *For Some Inexplicable Reason*. In 2015 Hungary was again represented by two films: the whimsically playful *Zero* and Lili Horváth’s debut *The Wednesday Child*, a social drama about a young mother fighting to keep her son, which won the East of the West Award. This year Hungary returns with Attila Till’s *Kills on Wheels* which was chosen as the opening film of the selection.

The 44 year old director, who graduated from the Hungarian University of Fine Arts, has been a well-known media personality in Hungary for over ten years, hosting popular TV shows. But he seems to be able to switch from the role of TV personality to film director (and back) effortlessly. His first feature film, *Panic*, a comedy focusing on the hang-ups and neuroses of its various characters, was released in 2008. In 2011 he stepped out onto the international stage with *Beast* which premiered at the Director's Fortnight in Cannes. The 20 minute film provided a harrowing portrayal of modern day slavery and went on to a very successful international festival tour, winning awards in Tampere and Krakow among others.

Kills on Wheels once again represents a complete shift in gears. It is a darkly funny, emotional and sometimes violent story about a disabled youngster, Zolika (Zoltán Fenyvesi), who together with his best friend (Ádám Fekete) becomes involved in the dangerous and exciting life of an ex-fireman (Szabolcs Thuróczy), who now earns his living as a hitman for hire. It was important for the director to cast disabled people for the roles of the two friends and his decision paid off as Fenyvesi and Fekete (the former new to acting, the latter a part-time theatre actor) hold their own partnering up with Thuróczy, one of the most talented and popular actors in Hungary.

While the film is an original blend of the buddy comedy and the gangster movie, it also has a strong emotional hook about a boy in search of a father figure and a grown man trying to rebuild his life after having lost everything. Till also plays with reality versus fantasy as the events of the film unfold in the form of a comic strip created by Zolika and his friend. While some of the humorous exchanges between the various worn-down hitmen in the film might invoke Guy Ritchie, the director credits the not-so-evident influence of Pedro Almodóvar who also weaves absurdist tales out of the everyday.

“Many families don’t survive the fact that the child is born with a disability”

23 year old Zoltán Fenyvesi (or @wheelchairguy as he is known on Instagram) might be bound to a wheelchair but he is constantly on the move: he takes part in marathons, attends fashion events, studies PR and also happens to play the lead role in *Kills on Wheels*. Part of this interview was conducted on a tram ride across Budapest, because he was already late for another meeting.

As the two members of the cast with physical impairments, did you and Ádám double as experts to make the film more authentic?

There wasn't much need for that as the script was already well-researched and pretty accurate as far as the physical aspects go, but we sneaked some small stuff in from our real lives. For example Ádám does have to have a short drinking straw when he drinks shots. Szabolcs sometimes asked me if he placed his legs right or if it was okay to move from the wheelchair to the bed in a certain way, but that was all. When I watched the movie I paid special attention to whether he seemed authentic and I have to say that if I didn't know that he could walk, I probably wouldn't be able to tell that he is not really disabled.

The movie parallels your real life in some aspects, most importantly that both you and your character grew up without a father. Is this a total coincidence or was this added to the script after you were cast in the role?

It's a coincidence, it was already in the script when I went to audition for the role. But I have to say that this is not an uncommon scenario as many families just don't survive the fact that the child is born with a disability and one of the parents leaves. However, in my case it was a bit different as my parents' marriage was already on the rocks before I was born. When my mum became pregnant they decided to give their relationship another go but it just didn't work out for them. My disability played a part in my father leaving but it wasn't the only factor. It might sound strange but 23 years ago the attitude of people in Hungary towards disabilities was quite different. I'm no expert but my impression is that the bond between parent and child is stronger now in most cases. When I go to races with the Suhanj! Foundation for disabled people I see many parents who bring their child, not so that their disabled kid can spend time with other disabled kids, but to be part of a communal experience with kids and parents together. That's a huge difference.

You haven't really acted before taking on this role. Was there a moment of panic when you realized what you got yourself into?

Yes, in the very beginning when Szabolcs slaps me twice. The first surprise was when Attila told me that we were going to do that on camera for real and the second when I realized that Szabolcs was not going to hit me two times but about a hundred and two times during the different takes. What can I say? Life is hard for an actor. There was also an emotional scene when I really give it to my mum, telling her how she messed up and that was hard for me to do, especially when Móni Balsai, who played my mum, started crying during the scene. I thought of my real mum who always stood by me and I just couldn't go on being a jerk to her.

You're about to graduate from the Budapest Metropolitan University where you study PR and Marketing. What is your diploma thesis on and what are your plans for the future?

It's kind of funny because my thesis was supposed to focus on the representation of people with disabilities in the media, but since *Kills on Wheels* came out in Hungary, Ádám and I have been all over the media, so the topic of my thesis became too self-centred by accident. I think I will alter the original idea slightly so it's not all about me. I realized that communication is my forte after I started my Instagram page in 2013 and it became quite popular, so I want to do something creative with people. It would also be great to get a job with a multinational company because I'd like to spend some time abroad too.

Do you get strange fan requests through your Instagram and because of the movie? And how about offers from girls?

People are usually nice. The weirdest so far was somebody who expected me to know exactly when and where he can watch the movie in a theatre with wheelchair access. Girls, not so much. I recently talked to a non-disabled friend who used to date a girl in a wheelchair, and for him it was a turn-on that the girl was a kind of “damsel in distress” he could help. But the reverse doesn’t work that well: if you are a guy in a wheelchair you can’t do many chivalrous things, on the contrary you are the one who needs help in certain situations, for example entering a restaurant with stairs up front. But I really don’t mind that I don’t have a girlfriend at the moment, my life is so incredibly busy. I’m doing great on my own for now.

Is there anything you haven’t tried before but would love to?

I lead a pretty active life. I recently tried scuba-diving, but I would love to try skydiving! I saw a guy in a wheelchair doing it in Dubai, so it’s definitely possible for disabled people too.

Bori Bujdosó, *Hungarian Film Magazine*, 07/2016

PRESS CLIPPINGS

VARIETY REVIEW

04/07/2016

by Alissa Simon, Variety.com

An engaging, disability-focused Hungarian dramedy that, despite the crass title, is actually an inventive coming-of-age tale.

While Hollywood pays lip service to a call for diversity in front of and behind the camera, the engaging Hungarian dramedy “Kills On Wheels” proves that action speaks louder than words. In his sophomore feature, helmer-writer Attila Till puts a new spin on the term “differently abled” with this tale of two twentysomethings from a Budapest rehab center who enter a new realm when they become involved with a wheelchair-bound hitman. Although the English-language title is technically accurate, it doesn’t suggest the picture’s depth and nuance, nor the fact that it is really a coming-of-age story. (The more evocative Hungarian title translates as “From The Bottom Of My Heart.”) With two physically disabled performers winningly portraying the young leads, the film has been charming Magyar audiences since April and is still in cinemas. Marketing savvy and critical appreciation could lead this festival hit to some kind of specialized distribution offshore; meanwhile, the concept is ripe for a remake.

Zoli (Zoltán Fenyvesi) and Barba (Adám Fekete) are roommates at a care facility. The former relies on a wheelchair because of spinal problems, while the latter has a mild case of cerebral palsy and the peculiar habit of spraying deodorant on the outside of his clothes when he becomes excited and nervous. When they work together on a high-concept graphic novel about a paraplegic former fireman, life and art start to blur in intriguing ways as they interact with their protagonist.

Their creation is badass ex-firefighter Rupaszov (Szabolcs Thuróczy, whose hangdog charisma also made an impression in “The Wednesday Child” and “White God”), who sustained an injury on the job that has left him paralyzed below the waist. After a stint in prison, Rupaszov finds new employment as a hitman for sinister Serbian crime lord Rados (Dusan Vitanovic) while trying to win back his ex-girlfriend (Lidia Danis), a nurse who is about to marry another man. Flush with cash from his new profession, he provides the lads with an, er, sentimental education as well as life lessons. He also offers them an opportunity to demonstrate their resourcefulness as his accomplices.

Throughout the film, director-writer Till cleverly plays with the fact that people frequently underestimate those they perceive as handicapped. The prime illustration of that notion comes in a tense set piece unfolding in a picturesque Budapest square. Pretending to feed the pigeons, Rupaszov patiently awaits the perfect moment to assassinate a slick lawyer who is lurching with his bodyguards at a nearby café. After paying the bill, the target strides through the crowded square. A shot rings out, the man falls, but no one even looks askance at the ruffled, stringy-haired guy in the wheelchair.

As the hits that Rados requests become increasingly difficult, Rupaszov relies more and more on the ingenuity and level-headedness of Zoli and Barba; Barba’s driving skill as a getaway man also plays a crucial role. Meanwhile, the hitman and comic-book storylines eventually neatly merge with a subplot centering on Zoli’s need for a life-saving operation — one his

single mother (Mónika Balsai) hopes will be paid for by the father that abandoned the family when Zoli was just an infant.

Unlike the recent, controversial tearjerker “Me Before You,” where the paralyzed lead character is drawn to euthanasia, “Kills On Wheels” champions the idea that life should be lived to the fullest. Director-writer Till’s screenplay was inspired by his volunteer work with the disabled and the film benefits from his knowledge, sensitive direction, and the casting of non-pros with physical disabilities in parts large and small. A big-screen natural, handsome Fenyvesi is an activist student and Instagram star who completed the New York marathon on his handbike in 2014, while Fekete, who trained as a dramaturge, is a member of TAP Theater Company currently working as an actor-writer-director, and writes poetry to boot. Per the director, a long rehearsal period and good chemistry with Hungarian theater, film and small-screen star Thuróczy helped the younger men to pick up the nuances of film acting and their able-bodied elder to be convincing as a paraplegic.

The inventive cinematography by Imre Juhász (who also works as a camera operator and second unit on big-budget Hollywood titles) is frequently framed to match the perspective of someone in a wheelchair. Editor Márton Gothár does a fine job of blending the various storylines, as well as the segues from hand-drawn art and animation to live action. The score by Csaba Kalotás and choice soundtrack add to the dynamism.

INDIEWIRE REVIEW

05/07/2016

by David Ehrlich, IndieWire.com

‘Kills On Wheels’ Is ‘The Professional’ Meets ‘Murderball’ / Attila Till's charmingly violent new film, already a hit at the Hungarian box office, is a very different kind of empowerment story.

Shooting a hole straight through the gut of the traditional narrative of empowerment, Attila Till’s “Kills on Wheels” effectively does for hyper-violent gangster thrillers what “Murderball” did for inspirational sports documentaries. It starts with a brilliantly cockeyed premise: If the world doesn’t believe that disabled people are capable of living among us, then the police might never imagine that disabled people are capable of killing among us, either. From that idea, Till spins a sloppy but uproariously clever urban fable, one that doesn’t sanctify or belittle the handicapped, but rather shines new light on that invisible population by inviting them to play the most visible of movie archetypes: assassins.

Janos Rupaszov (able-bodied Hungarian star Szabolcs Thuróczy, recently seen in last year’s “White God”) is a salty middle-aged badass unlike any the cinema has known before. On one hand, he’s a classic archetype: The beefy, aging gangster who’s fresh out of jail and already eager to get back into trouble. On the other hand, the authorities consider the wheelchair-bound Rupaszov to be more of a nuisance than he is a legitimate harm to society. He’s a joke, a pet of the prison system whose insistence that he’ll walk again (“I’ll get robot legs, a robot dick, whatever”) makes him even more of a laughingstock. If only the cops knew what he was capable of getting away with — if only they knew what Rados (Dusan Vitanovics), a broadly evil Yugoslavian crime boss, was paying Rupaszov to do.

Rupasov is a fighter, introduced doing pull-ups in his wheelchair and soon revealed to be as tenacious as the last greasy strings of hair that cling to his scalp, but there's no doubt that he's also something of a tragic character — especially once we're introduced to his newly engaged ex. He's lonely. He needs friends. Better yet, he needs accomplices. Enter Zoli (Zoltan Fenyvesi) and Barba (Adam Fekete), twenty-something roommates whose severe disabilities have made them codependent.

There's a sweetly comic "See No Evil, Hear No Evil" dynamic between these two: Zoli, whose spinal progressive spinal condition has made his legs undeveloped and unusable, has the steady hands required to draw the comic books they write about themselves. Barba, whose palsy is more obvious but less centralized, can still drive a (getaway) car. Both kids need money, and — while refreshingly resigned to the subtext — both need something to live for.

The volatile partnership formed between the three outcasts is the same you've seen in a million other movies about a gruff older man learning to care for his proteges ("The Professional" comes to mind), and Till sacrifices clarity and emotional depth in his attempts to avoid any moments that might feel too soft or saccharine.

He needn't have worried, as the casting alone layers "Kills on Wheels" with a bedrock of honesty that could have allowed for a much greater degree of drama. Fenyvesi and Fekete both have disabilities that cannot be acted or faked with prosthetics (Till found Fenyvesi via the first-time actor's Instagram), and while both of their performances are flawlessly convincing, they're also enhanced by a meta-textual degree of wish fulfillment.

It's unlikely that either of these amateur performers ever imagined starring in a mainstream movie (mainstream for the Hungarian box office, anyway), let alone one involving suspenseful action sequences that have no special regard for their condition. Till's script never treats the performers with kid gloves, nor does the camera ever condescend to them — unlike "The Tribe," which repurposed the insularity of Ukraine's deaf community as the silent lining of a dark underworld, "Kills on Wheels" even allows for a few laughs, and Till insists that his jokes only further empower his characters.

When a rival gangster tries to assert his dominance by stabbing Rupasov in the leg, our rugged hero doesn't feel a thing. When Rupasov and his cohorts brazenly execute an assassination in broad daylight, the police barely look at the "invalids" long enough for Zoli to point them in the wrong direction. It's funny stuff, every gag anchored to the idea that these handicaps might as well be superpowers.

In a way, the elements that weaken the story are the same ones that make it more empowering. Till has no time for morality — Zoli and Barba are involved with several murders, and no one blinks an eye since the victims are all bad guys — but the able-bodied version of this film wouldn't have bothered with that stuff, either.

If anything, Till is so committed to delivering an ordinary story of criminals and lowlives that his unique characters fade into archetypes, and the impact of their separate arcs is muted and muddled as the strangely familiar plot shifts into neutral. It's as though Till is so worried about the film being defined by its "gimmick" that he overcompensates by steering it towards cliché. Still, by taking things to such a giddy extreme, "Kills on Wheels" manages to punctuate its point with a bullet: If the able-bodied world refuses to see the handicapped as people, what right do we have to brand them as criminals?

CINEUROPA REVIEW

06/07/2016

by Laurence Boyce, Cineuropa.org

Attila Till's energetic and darkly humorous new film boasts some strong performances and a number of superb set pieces

Attila Till's *Kills on Wheels* is in some ways a riff on the 2004 Belgian title *Aaltra*, as it refuses to head down the "serious and issue-based" route that many movies dealing with disabled people tend to choose. Mixing a number of genres, it's a wonderfully energetic film.

The story follows two disabled teenagers who have a chance encounter with wheelchair-bound ex-fireman Rupaszov. It turns out that he's an enforcer for the mafia, and they soon form a tight bond and become an unlikely group of assassins. But when Rupaszov's boss decides that he doesn't want these interlopers, a course is set that will change everyone's life.

After spending time working with disabled people, it seems clear that Till is passionate about changing the narrative that much of mainstream cinema spins about the disabled. There are no real victims here (well, maybe those who are dispatched in a number of varied and gruesome ways), but rather real, living human beings who drink, smoke and desire something more out of life. However, the film is rarely preachy and is by no means an exercise in realism: this is ostensibly a Tarantinoesque thriller. There are a number of well-executed set pieces replete with black comedy (including one that shows the troubles of escaping a crime scene when in a wheelchair). It does feel a little excessive and silly at points, but the narrative deftly deals with this excessiveness at the end of the film.

The performances from the leads (two of whom are non-professionals) are strong, and have a vitality about them. The direction is also good, with the aforementioned set pieces sitting well against an autumnal world of crime and regret. The mix of comedy, drama and action is particularly well balanced.

The world premiere of the film opened Karlovy Vary's 2016 East of the West competition, and it should find favour on the festival circuit. With its thriller and action overtones, it should also find a popular home amongst the genre festivals.

SCREENDAILY REVIEW

03/07/2016

by Allan Hunter, Screendaily.com

Kills On Wheels has the kind of premise that might have tickled Quentin Tarantino in his formative video store years or inspired Roger Corman in his 1960s pomp. The latest feature from *Panic* (2008) and *Beast* (2011) director Attila Till revolves around a wheelchair-bound former fire fighter who works as a hit man for hire.

A film that initially offers guilty pleasure thrills ultimately reveals its softer, more sentimental side

Despite the black comedy and bloodshed, *Kills On Wheels* is largely sensitive rather than sensational. Till uses the B-movie elements as window dressing for a film that focuses more

on the bonds of friendship, the longing for a sense of family and the challenges of disability. The result is a likeable, offbeat mixture of reality and fantasy with strong performances and a satisfying eleventh hour twist that brings everything into sharp focus.

Wider festival exposure seems assured and there is theatrical potential for adventurous European arthouse distributors. It is also worth noting that this is the first project for producer Judit Stalter since *Son Of Saul*.

Former fireman Raspuzhov (Szabolcs Thuroczy) has spent three years in a wheelchair after an injury at work. A hard-drinking, tough guy with anger management issues, he has lost little of his appetite for life or confrontation. Released from a prison sentence and about to embark on rehabilitation, he meets disabled youngster Zolika (Zoltan Fenyvesi) and his best friend Barba Papa (Adam Fekete). Raspuzsov's irreverent approach to the world is just the bracing antidote the boys need to the cautious conformity of institutional life.

Kills On Wheels integrates two diverse strands of plotting. In one, Raspuzhov is the liberating force that inspires the two youngsters to taste a little of life's pleasures. He takes them to a club, joins them on a fishing trip and widens their horizons.

In the second strand, he starts to involve them in his well-paid work as a hit man for Rados (Dusan Vitanovic), a crime boss who never appears without his pack of devoted Dobermans, including one who is diabetic. Soon Zolika and Barba are acting as look-outs, driving the getaway car and have become partners in crime which goes against the grain of Rados's desire that Raspuzhov should always act alone.

The boys are given priceless material to fuel their ambitions as aspiring comic book artists. Drawings that flow from the pen of Zolika add to the film's graphic novel feel and slight echoes of recent Italian award-winner *They Call Me Jeeg Robot*.

Till effectively brings out the comic absurdity of a killer in a wheelchair when Raspuzhov is trapped in the home of one victim or when he faces a dumb opponent who chooses to knife him in the leg. Being paralysed from the waist down does have some advantages when it comes to his pain threshold. Raspuzhov is a figure we warm to over the course of the film and especially when he is won over by his unlikely new friends. Szabolcs Thuroczy is entirely believable as both a reckless killer and someone coping with his newfound vulnerabilities. When we learn that the love of his life is about to be married, he only becomes more sympathetic.

Till has cast disabled actors as Zolika and Barba and both give immensely appealing, confident performances. Adam Fekete has worked in the theatre but Zoltan Fenyevsi is a complete newcomer. Best known for his endlessly active life on Instagram, Fenyevsi seems a screen natural and shows a good deal of range and promise in his debut.

A film that initially offers guilty pleasure thrills ultimately reveals its softer, more sentimental side. *Kills On Wheels* manages to cast aside the straitjacket of political correctness and treat disability issues with humour, understanding and inventiveness. It is a film that sends the viewer out with a warm hug of an ending.

THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER REVIEW

02/07/2016

by Boyd van Hoeij, [The Hollywood Reporter](#)

The Bottom Line: Small but likeable in a scrappy way.

Hungarian director Attila Till's seriocomic second feature sees three disabled men, including two in wheelchairs, become hitmen for a Balkan crimelord.

A young Hungarian in a wheelchair and his disabled roommate who can hardly walk strike up an unlikely relationship with a cantankerous contract killer paralyzed from the waist down in *Kills on Wheels* (Tiszta Szivvel), the second feature from director Attila Till (*Panic*). More of a dramedy than an outright irreverent comedy, this is a small but charming film that explores what life must be like for those who don't have a lot to lose and for whom challenges are key. At home, this April release is currently the third-most-popular local title of the year, while after its international premiere at Karlovy Vary, these *Wheels* should cover some festival ground and also inspire a few sales, though mainly for home-viewing formats.

Zoli (Zoltan Fenyvesi) is a handsome 20-year-old whose spinal problems have him confined to a wheelchair and a specialized institution; his mother (Monika Balsai) is worried about coughing up the dough for surgery in Germany. The young man is into drawing comics and frequently does so with the help of his roommate, Barba (Adam Fekete), who looks more immature than the clean-shaven Zoli despite having a goatee and glasses. Barba — full nickname Barba Papa, according to the credits — can still walk and even drive, though every movement is an immense struggle for him.

The unlikely duo find themselves in a fight with Janos Rupaszov (Szabolcs Thuróczy), a man in early middle age with greasy long hair and an unkempt beard, also confined to a wheelchair. Unlike them, however, he also has money to burn, which he gets from doing "odd jobs" for Rados (Dusan Vitanovics), a crime lord from former Yugoslavia with a fondness for ferocious dogs and a list of targets longer than the life expectancy of Zoli if he's not operated on soon. Clearly, no one expects a wheelchair-bound killer to show up when scores are being settled — especially since that often seems to happen in desolate wastelands that are not necessarily wheelchair-friendly — so Janos has turned this into an advantage, just like the fact he can't feel anything from the waist down.

But rather than using these unusual advantages as fodder for out-and-out comedy, Till, who also wrote the screenplay, takes a more seriocomic route, anchoring the characters in a recognizable reality even as their world, with its violence, knives and guns, starts looking increasingly like a comic book or a crime saga. This is partly the result of casting non-professional actors who are actually disabled in the leads, thus ensuring a measure of authenticity. But it's also a clear choice on a screenplay level, with Till foregrounding the relationships among the characters and their physical struggles in ways that make them perhaps less riotously funny but all the more sincere and occasionally even insightful.

There are several showdowns between Rupaszov and his newly recruited aides — the three have a love-hate relationship throughout that is occasionally too convenient — that not only give the disabled men some challenges to sink their teeth into but that also instill the film with some tension. These sequences are well-staged and shot by cinematographer Imre Juhasz like any regular action sequence, handicaps be damned. A planned targeted killing in a crowded

square, for example, recalls nothing less than the twitchy, almost paranoid energy of the famous opening sequence of Francis Ford Coppola's *The Conversation*.

The final twist of *Kills on Wheels*, which is actually more of a narrative pretzel than a straightforward 90-degree turn, feels rather odd. Till suddenly takes all of the pic's carefully cultivated sense of documentary reality and tosses it out the window for a development that's been more or less foreshadowed but nonetheless feels jarring because of the sudden shift in tone. That's a minor problem, however, in a film that's small and intimate but also very likeable in its scrappy way.

SCREENDAILY INTERVIEW WITH ATILA TILL

02/07/2016

by Laurence Boyce, ScreenDaily.com

Atilla Till's *Kills On Wheels* opens the East of the West competition at the 51st Karlovy Vary International Film Festival with a bang.

The film follows two young disabled boys who join forces with a wheelchair bound ex-fireman who decide to become assassins. The film runs through the gamut of genres as black comedy, social realism and Hollywood Action blockbuster all blend together to create a unique film that is a far cry from 'issue based' films dealing with disabled people.

This the second feature for Till, who also happens to be a beloved TV personality in his native Hungary. After his 2008 feature debut *Panic*, Till made an impression with the 2011 short *Beast* which played across the world as well as receiving an European Film Award nomination.

Screen asked Till about how he avoided stereotyping and how he hopes Karlovy Vary audiences would react to the film.

*Screen: It's been mentioned that you have done volunteer work with disabled people in the past. How did this morph into *Kills On Wheels*?*

Atilla Till: I worked with a lot for different organizations that help disabled people: I tried to strengthen their communication strategy and to help ask for money from big enterprises. In Hungary, these kind of civil organizations are always in a difficult economic situation. During this time, I met wheelchair-bound people alongside those living with other handicaps. We spent a lot of time together, had parties, and all I know about this world, I learned during that time. I could see the little details of their life, the private matters: what you can't figure out during writing your script if you just stay at home. All of this is in the film. The most important thing was I decided I wanted to make a movie with them, not only about them! Therefore the main characters and half of the "actors" are real disabled people.

*Where there any other films that inspired you? Given that films about disabled issues tend to head down the road of 'worthy, issue based' films did you look at films and how to break those stereotypes. Or look at those that already have done so, for example the Belgian film *Aaltra**

AT: Bingo! *Aaltra* is my favorite film in this topic! That film influenced me very much, because this film was one of the first to show handicapped people not in the standard, usual way. I believe this is a punk film and very cool in every sense. I also wanted to break the

stereotypes, using violent action scenes with blood and with wheelchairs, creating the protagonists like classical movie heroes, and let the players work from their own life.

You've talked about how you didn't want the leads to be 'actors'. How did you go about casting the film and finding search a diverse cast of young and old to portray the protagonists?

AT: As I mentioned, I became familiar with a lot of disabled people when I worked with them, and they are on the screen. Zoli - the main character - is a student, this was the first time that he acted but he has a real talent. I think if you work with non-actors, the most important thing is the time you spend in the rehearsals while having a constant conversation about the film and about the role. We had a long preproduction phase.

Was it easy to get the funding to make the film? It would initially seem that some of the subject matter would make some people uneasy. Or did you find that funding bodies and funders reacted in a very positive way?

AT: My previous film, *Beast* was nominated for the EFA European Short Film Award in 2011 after 50 international festivals and more than 10 awards. After this success, my producer Judit Stalter and I thought that we could easily make a European co-production as the next step, but we were rejected from several EU funds in the likes of France, Germany and Denmark. The success of one short film was not enough, even if we got a lot of positive feedback. Finally the Hungarian Fund supported the film, which was very important help for us. So, at the beginning it wasn't easy to fund this film. All the European decision makers found it too risky because of the use real disabled actors and the mix of genres.

How long did the film take to shoot and did you experience any problems on the way

AT: We shot for almost 40 days which is the normal length for shooting a feature in Hungary. I tried to shoot more during some scenes, because of the newcomers and non-professional actors. We improvised a lot with the actors alongside the original script and dialogue which was written by myself. I let them play with their own words and tried natural situations with them. It took more time, obviously. Two things were quite difficult. The first was shooting action scenes with genuinely disabled guys. It was much more difficult than I thought because the scope for injury is higher. We were very safe all the time but this is – again - time consuming. The second was the fact it was tricky to create serious conversations on screen with amateurs. We were focusing on things very much during the rehearsal phase, which was also an entire year before the shooting. But finally we are here!

Were you ever worried about people being offended by the film? Do you envisage any backlash because the film does not deal with disabled issues in a 'standard way'?

AT: I don't envisage it. I've always discussed all kinds of sensitive details with them. How can we show a naked handicapped body, or use offensive nicknames, or show how a wheelchair bound person pisses. They were more than willing to share ideas. They understood that, if we want to bring the audience closer to this issue, we need to do it. I think this film is in some ways wild and darkly funny, but we don't laugh at disabled people, we just laugh with them. It's a big difference. Overall the film doesn't want to avoid dealing with real handicapped problems and real life situations.

The film will open the East of the West comp at Karlovy Vary. What are you hoping for in the way reaction to the film?

AT: We are very proud to open this competition program! I hope the audience will be interested in this film and will like the characters. Obviously it's always the biggest question as to how the film works on the international level. We are very curious about it and will be happy to introduce our main cast after the screenings. It's a huge step for our disabled actors and also gives a chance for the viewers to let them closer to their heart.

What projects will you be working on next?

AT: I have some different draft scripts already; all deal with serious social issues about current everyday life in Central Europe. We will decide which one suits the best for my third feature film in the second half of this year.

HUNGARIAN COMEDY ABOUT DISABLED GANG FROM 'SON OF SAUL' PRODUCERS

16/06/2016 - The film will compete East of the West section in the 51st Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, which runs from July 1st through July 9th.
by Vikram Murthi, IndieWire.com

The Hungarian comedy-thriller "Kills On Wheels" follows 20-year-old wheelchair user Zoli (Fenyvesi Zoltán) and his physically disabled friend Barba Papa (Fekete Ádám) as they team up with wheelchair-bound hit man Rupasov (Thuróczy Szabolcs) to offer their assassin services to the mafia. Soon, they enter a surreal world of gangsters and guns, all the while coming to terms with their respective disabilities and how best to cope with them. Watch the trailer for the film above.

"Kills On Wheels" is directed by Attila Till, who was inspired to make the film after volunteering with the disabled, saying that it was crucial for him "to make a movie about disabled people where they finally aren't played by actors but get the opportunity to act themselves and be the real heroes." He previously directed the feature film "Panic," about an ensemble cast of characters who all suffer from panic attacks. He also shot a short film "Beast," about modern-day slavery, that premiered during the 2011 Cannes' Directors' Fortnight and toured over 100 festivals. The film is produced by Krisztina Pintér, Gábor Rajna, Gábor Sipos, Judit Stalter, all of whom produced László Nemes "Son of Saul," which won the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film last year.

PRETTY PICTURES ACQUIRES COMEDY-THRILLER FROM 'SON OF SAUL' PRODUCERS

14/06/2016
by Melanie Goodfellow, ScreenDaily.com

EXCLUSIVE: France deal for Hungarian comedy-thriller Kills On Wheels about a disabled gang.

Paris-based distributor Pretty Pictures has acquired French rights to Hungarian comedy thriller Kills On Wheels ahead of its world premiere at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival in July.

The high-octane comedy-thriller revolves around two physically disabled young men who team up with a wheelchair-using hit man to offer their services to the Mafia as assassins. They enter a surreal world of gangsters and gunfights all the while coping with their disabilities. The deal was negotiated between Pretty Pictures founding chief James Velaise and Klaudia Androsovits of Hungarian National Film Fund World Sales.

“The film is funny, a great thriller and full of fun action. We are convinced we have found something very new in its approach to filmmaking and which manages to break many taboos,” said Velaise.

One of the lead actors, Zoltán Fenyvesi, who goes under the Twitter handle of @wheelchairguy, is a celebrity figure in Hungary where he champions living life to the full.

The filmmakers are not expecting to encounter similar controversy to that surrounding current hit romance *Me Before You*, in which the paralysed lead character is drawn to euthanasia, a plotline that has angered disabled rights groups in the UK.

Kills On Wheels is the second feature-length fiction film for director-writer-actor Attila Till after 2008 feature *Panic*. Judit Stalter at Laokoon Filmgroup, which produced the Oscar and Cannes Grand Prix-winning *Son Of Saul*, is the producer.

Pretty Pictures is planning to release the film in France later this year.

IM ERSTEN TRAILER ZUR UNGARISCHEN ACTIONKOMÖDIE SORGT EIN ROLLSTUHLFAHRER FÜR JEDE MENGE TOTE

25/04/2016

von Woon-Mo Sung, Filmstarts.de

Kaum jemand würde wohl einen Rollstuhlfahrer des Mordes verdächtigen. Im ersten Trailer zu „*Kills On Wheels*“ nutzt ein Killer diesen Umstand für sich aus.

Bei Auftragskillern denkt man immer zuerst an perfekt ausgebildete und durchtrainierte Söldner, die kaltblütig jeden umbringen, solange der Preis stimmt. Bei Rupaszov (Szabolcs Thuróczy) verhält es sich ein klein wenig anders: Seine Kaltschnäuzigkeit unterscheidet sich nicht von der seiner Kollegen. Allerdings sitzt er seit drei Jahren im Rollstuhl – die perfekte Tarnung also, um nicht verdächtig zu wirken. Doch dann lernt er bei der Reha zwei junge Männer kennen, die ebenfalls an den Rollstuhl gefesselt sind. Er freundet sich aber nicht nur mit ihnen an, sondern macht sie auch noch zu seinen neuen Komplizen. Rupaszovs Arbeitgeber ist darüber aber nicht glücklich und verlangt von ihm, dass er sie schnell wieder loswird...

Nach acht Jahren ist „*Kills On Wheels*“ („*Tiszta Szívvel*“ im Original) erst die zweite Regiearbeit des Ungaren Attila Till. Produziert wurde der Film übrigens von Judit Stalter, die auch den in diesem Jahr mit einem Oscar ausgezeichneten „*Son Of Saul*“ mit auf den Weg brachte. Am 28. April 2016 geht der Killer auf zwei Rädern in seiner Heimat auf Jagd, ob und wann der Film in Deutschland laufen wird steht noch in den Sternen.

DEATH COMES ROLLING IN THE *KILLS ON WHEELS* TRAILER

19/04/2016

by Todd Brown, Twitchfilm.com

It wasn't so long ago that Hungary felt as though it was a nation about to explode on the international film scene with directors such as Gyorgy Palfi (*Taxidermia*), Nimrod Antal (*Kontroll*) and Aron Gauder (*The District*) all appearing on the scene within a few years of one another and wowing on both the cult and arthouse festival circuits. What could go wrong? Well, the economy, for one thing with Hungary hit so hard by the global economic crisis that their national film fund - the principal financier on all Hungarian films - completely shut down for several years with the entire national industry essentially put on hold for the duration. But Hungary's back now and, oh yes, still finding the balance between art, genre and deliciously black humor that drew attention back with that early wave.

Coming soon from director Attila Till [Note to self: Hungarian directors have awesome names.] and *Son of Saul* producer Judit Stalter is upcoming action-comedy *Kills On Wheels* (*Tiszta Szivvel*), the story of a trio of wheelchair bound hitmen.

What's the perfect alibi for a professional contract killer? To be handicapped and bound to a wheelchair... *Kills on Wheels* is the story about a crippled young man fueling his life by joining a gang of hitmen in wheelchairs working for the mafia. Kill by kill this action comedy challenges the border between reality and imagination in a boy's search for friendship, for his roots and for meaning in life.

Production values here are fantastic with the trailer striking a strong balance between character work, action and humor - the opening gag, in particular, is pretty damn fantastic - that I can only hope translates through the entire feature. English subtitles are included on the trailer, take a look below!

UN TUEUR A GAGES EN CHAISE ROULANTE SUR LES BORDS DU DANUBE

13/11/2014

by [Euronews](#)

VIDEO - Le tournage, se déroule à Budapest, le réalisateur s'appelle Attila Till et les comédiens sont handicapés.

C'est l'histoire d'un pompier accidenté et en chaise roulante qui se reconverti en tueur à gages pour prouver que les handicapés peuvent être utiles à la société.

Dans le film, le comédien qui interprète le rôle du pompier accidenté, est le seul acteur valide de l'équipe.

Tous les autres acteurs sont handicapés, le réalisateur y tenait pour accentuer à l'extrême le réalisme de son film.

KILLS ON WHEELS: A VERY SPECIAL HIT MAN FOR ATTILA TILL

09/10/2014 - The filmmaker is currently shooting his second feature, produced by Lakoon Cinema and sold abroad by the Hungarian Film Fund

by Fabien Lemercier, [Cineuropa.org](#)

Having created quite a buzz with his feature debut, *Panic* (which garnered the Best Actress and Internet Audience Awards at the Hungarian Film Week 2008), as well as with his short film *Beast* (selected at the Cannes Directors' Fortnight in 2011 and nominated for the European Film Award in 2012), Attila Till has been shooting his second feature, *Kills on*

Wheels, since 7 September. The cast features Zoltan Fenyvesi, Szabolcs Thuróczy, Ádám Fekete, Mónika Balsai and Dusán Vitanovics.

Written by the director himself, the story is based on a simple idea: what is the perfect alibi for a professional hit man? What about being confined to a wheelchair? The plot revolves around a young disabled man who decides to join a group of contract killers who work for a crime syndicate. Assassination after assassination, the characters' exploits toy with the limits of their imagination and push the boundaries of reality, shining a spotlight on a protagonist who is looking to make friends, put down roots and find a meaningful purpose in life.

Produced by Judit Stalter (European Film Promotion's Producer on the Move 2012) for Laokoon Cinema (which co-produced Till's feature debut), *Kills on Wheels* is backed by the Hungarian Film Fund (which is handling international sales) and by A-Company Hungary (which will bring the film out in local cinemas). The eight-week shoot will wrap on 30 October.

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