

# “Sometimes it’s the Great Silence of Outer Space”

by

**Martijn van Mierlo**

**Sometimes it’s the Great Silence of Outer Space** is a short visual novel (3’10”) based on Ingmar Bergman’s *Scenes from a Marriage*.

## **Synopsis and film structure**

This film is a short visual novel, wherein a voice over functions as the narrator of the story. A story about two individuals who work on their relationship and have this utopian idea of their relationship, although they do have to face reality.

Images are are found footage material. Although as a maker I don’t consider them as found footage material. I consider making use of this kind of material as another way of creating (new) images, instead of using a digital or analog camera I make use of the computer to look at the so called ‘virtual world’ and try to (re) capture new images out of it. By re-using, re-editing, reframing and re-contextualize this material I create a new imagery based on consisting images.

In the first shot we see a abstract images of a scale model of the Twin Towers which represent the indestructible couple and sets the date back to 1973 (year of as well opening of the WTC in New York as first screening of Bergman’s *Scenes From a Marriage*).

In the last shots we see one of the works of Constant Nieuwenhuys (1920-2005) a dutch artist/architect. The image reference to the concept of ‘utopia’ as well in the philosophy and architecture as the utopian way of thinking we know from being in a relationship.

Instead of using only black and white imagery, which Bergman admires so much, I used colored images, however the colored part is all in red and is still monochrome in a sense. The color red symbolizes love, passion and desire.

Some parts are quite literally and very illustrative but there is a certain amount of abstraction in the film which brings the film to the poetic language of novels. The film is like a visual novel in a sense very detailed but still there is room for imagination. The viewer (or reader) is in that sense engaged in the story his or her imagination and reflection upon the story becomes an important part of the film.

## **Inspiration, starting point & motivation**

The second part of the first scene of Ingmar Bergman’s *scenes from a marriage* formed the inspiration for this short film. Important themes in Bergman’s work are; loneliness caused by lack of communication between people, loneliness in general, somberness. Especially man’s inability to communicate on a deeper sense and miscommunication between people is a constantly recurring theme in his works.

Those themes aren’t only well connected with each other and very common in Bergman’s oeuvre but can also literary be found in this particular scene of the script from *scenes from a marriage*. Some quotes out the script will illustrated that;

"MARIANNE They don't speak the same language. They must translate into a third language they both understand in order to get each other's meaning."

"....We talk everything over and we understand each other instantly. We speak the same language. That's why we have such a good relationship."

"MARIANNE If they spoke the same language and trusted each other, as we do....."

*(Scenes From a Marriage, scene one, p.26-27)*

Bergman also makes use of semiotic and symbolism in his work. And many of Bergman's films (although this is not the case with *Scenes from a Marriage*) are shot in black and white, Bergman praises black and White films because it gives the spectator the opportunity to "voir les colours" in his or her own imagination. It gives freedom to the spectator to fill in parts of the story themselves by using his or her own imagination and emotions. Bergman consider his works as art, his films are not made to just entertain the spectator, he believes that the audience has to put effort in understanding the story while he or she is being in the role of spectator. A interesting concept which is used by many other artist in the past and is still used in many contemporary (experimental) cinema. These thoughts and concepts relates to my way of working as a visual artist / film maker and so I used Bergman's *Scenes from a Marriage* as a starting point for this film.

### **Credits and technical aspects**

A film by Martijn van Mierlo

Voice over by Jason Edwards

special thanks to: Noud Heerkens, Nikos Kostopolous and Matija Pekic

Full HD digital video (1920 x 1080) 25 fps

Stereo sound

Language: English spoken / no subtitles.

Duration: 3 min 10 sec (3'10")

### **Film Trailer / Teaser:**

<https://vimeo.com/164233539>

*(meant for public sharing and use as advertising)*





# **Sometimes it's the Great Silence of Outer Space**

A Short Visual Novel by Martijn van Mierlo



## **Curriculum Vitae artist**

Martijn van Mierlo (Rotterdam, 1987)  
Lives and works in Rotterdam & Utrecht, The Netherlands.  
www.martijnvanmierlo.com  
martijnvmierlo@gmail.com

### **Education**

2015- Ma of Fine Arts in Photography AKV St.Joost Breda  
2011-2015 BDes Photography University of the Arts Utrecht

### **Internships (& assistant)**

2014 Annegien van Doorn  
2014 Jan Adriaans  
2014 Paradox

### **Publications**

2015 Voortuin, Issue: 'Ikke' Voortuin Magazine#25  
2015 Platform Platvorm, First Issue  
2014 Vitale Stad, Elba Media magazine  
2012 Mt.Figure, Issue#1 Ilussion  
2012 .Unst, Hku magazine

### **Exhibitions**

2016 Sometimes it's the Great Silence of Outer Space | Film screening | Eye museum for film | Amsterdam | The Netherlands | Group exhibition

2016 Study into Silence (Installation - draft#1) | (Pop-up) De Blofte 11 | Kunstliefde | Utrecht | Netherlands | Group exhibition

2015 Travelling Without Moving; a study room (Installation)| Fotofestival Schiedam | Schiedam | The Netherlands | Group exhibition

2015 Sunlight in Empty Rooms (video installation) | Chambres de Schie, Fotofestival Schiedam | Schiedam | The Netherlands | Group exhibition

2015 Sunlight in Empty Rooms (video installation) | NFF byob | Tivoli Vredenburg | Utrecht | The Netherlands | Group exhibition

2015 Travelling Without Moving (Installation) | In Other Words Graduation show | University of the Arts Utrecht | The Netherlands | Group exhibition

2015 Travelling Without Moving (ed. Print) | Bart Invites | Amsterdam | The Netherlands | Group exhibition

2014 Flow (Interactive Install.) | Academie Gallery HKU | Utrecht | The Netherlands | Group exhibition

2013 ICE (ed. Print) | Alchemie concept store Hoog Catharijne | Utrecht | The Netherlands | Group exhibition

2012 Raamsdonk (series) | Townhall | Raamsdonksveer | The Netherlands | Solo