

# BLACKHEARTS

HOW FAR WOULD YOU GO  
FOR THE MUSIC YOU LOVE?

**Title:** BLACKHEARTS  
**Genre:** Creative Documentary  
**Release:** March 2016  
**Language:** English subtitles  
**Spoken:** Greek | Spanish | Norwegian | English | Farsi

## FORMATS:

**Cinema feature:** 83 min  
**TV version:** 52 min  
**Episodes:** 3 x 18 min

**Director | Screenwriter:** Fredrik Horn Akselsen  
**Co-director | Producer | Screenwriter:** Christian Falch  
**Production Company:** Gammaglimt AS  
**DOP:** Viggo Knudsen  
**Editor:** Anders Teigen  
**Co-editor:** Marius Smit  
**Assistant Producer:** Torstein Parelius  
**International sales:** Gammaglimt AS  
**Festival distribution:** The Norwegian Film Institute  
**Financed by:** The Norwegian Film Institute, The Mid-Norwegian Film Center, The Freedom Of Speech Foundation, The Arts Council of Norway, Filminvest Midt Norge, VGTV, DR, YesDocu

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## SYNOPSIS

How far will people go to pursue a musical genre and lifestyle they love?

BLACKHEARTS follows three diehard black metal fans from Colombia, Iran and Greece as they risk their lives, get thrown in jail, and attempt to sell their souls to Satan, all for a chance to bring their bands to the frozen hell-like birthplace of black metal – Norway.

25 years ago in icy Norway, a new subgenre grew from the roots of heavy metal. Dubbed black metal, the music was extreme in both sound and imagery. It merged fast, harsh, highly distorted metal music with a Satanic and occult ideology and imagery. Black metal made front-page news and quickly got worldwide attention as a result of a series of murders, suicides, grave desecrations and church burnings in Norway in the early 1990s.

But fast-forward to Norway today, and black metal is a part of Norway's musical mainstream. The genre has left behind its criminal past, and the music is as benign as any other genre. But for international black metal fans, Norway maintains its aura of infamy – attracting thousands of black metal fans from around the world who make the pilgrimage to the birthplace of their beloved black metal.

shown at over 50 different festivals and been sold in 15 countries across Europe and beyond. Falch currently has four documentary films in production.

BLACKHEARTS does not look at the genre historically, but instead dives into the lives of its characters: black metal fans from vastly different cultures. Sina, from Iran, Héctor, from Colombia, and Kaiadas, from Greece all jump at the opportunity to play at a metal festival in Norway, a country that has deeply influenced their lives because of its ties to black metal. Three very different personal stories unfold as we meet them in their countries and follow them on their journey to pursue their radical passion for the black metal music and lifestyle.





HÉCTOR is a devoted Satanist and frontman of Colombian black metal band Luciferian. His dedication to black metal music and its lifestyle doesn't quite square with his village's uber-Catholic majority. As Luciferian organizes its trip to Norway, Hector realizes they will have some difficulties fulfilling the visa application requirements. He seeks counsel from his Satanic mentor, the "Black Pope," in his hometown of Pereira, Colombia, and they organize a Satanic ritual – which involves Héctor selling his soul to the Devil – in order to secure their visas. Will selling his soul to Satan help Hector fulfill his dream of playing his music on Norwegian soil?

SINA is from Iran, a country in which performing and recording black metal music is strictly prohibited by law. Yet Sina works tirelessly, writing, composing and releasing music online for his one-man-band, From The Vastland – the only black metal band in all of Iran. When asked to play a Norwegian black metal festival, he faces a big dilemma, as the exposure brought by the festival could put Sina and his family in a life-threatening situation. If he goes to Norway, he may never be able to return to his homeland.

KAIADAS is a member of the Greek Parliament by day, where he represents the right-wing party Golden Dawn. By night he is frontman of the black metal band Naer Mataron. He and his band feel a strong emotional link to Norway and Norwegian history through their passion for black metal. The film gives us unique access to the inner chambers of Golden Dawn, and to Kaiadas' private black metal lifestyle. Naer Mataron is given the opportunity to play at a Norwegian black metal festival, but just as they receive the news, Kaiadas gets locked up for alleged association with a criminal organization. If indicted, he faces 20 years in prison.

BLACKHEARTS is an observational documentary geared toward a mainstream audience that explores the themes of dedication and fanaticism, aspiration and personal identity. It gives the viewer a unique look at something never before seen. The scenes are at times funny and surprising, and at other times surreal and disturbing. They show the extent to which humans are willing to go in pursuit of what they believe in. How far would you go for the music you love?

## BLACK METAL

- | Extreme subgenre and subculture of heavy metal music.
- | Characterized by fast tempos, shrieking vocals and highly distorted guitar riffs.
- | Associated with views that favor Satanism, misanthropy and the occult.
- | Popular 80s bands like Slayer, Venom and Bathory personified the music and are considered its "first wave".
- | Developed into a distinct genre in Norway considered the "second wave," with bands like Mayhem, Darkthrone and Burzum.
- | Gained international infamy for its series of church burnings, murders and grave desecrations in Norway in the early 90s.



**FREDRIK HORN AKSELSEN**  
DIRECTOR | SCREENWRITER

Director and scriptwriter Fredrik Horn Akselsen studied film at NTNU in Norway and QUT in Australia. His first documentary, "Treason and Sabotage," premiered at the Kosmorama International Film Festival in 2010 and was shown on NRK the following year. His second feature documentary, "The Exorcist in the 21st Century," premiered in 2012 and received much international attention through festivals, TV and later through its DVD release in the US. "The King and the Crook," Akselsen's third documentary premiered on NRK and received outstanding viewer ratings. Akselsen has also directed a number of Norwegian TV series and is currently working on the documentary "Biff a la Lindstrom."



**CHRISTIAN FALCH**  
CO-DIRECTOR | PRODUCER | SCREENWRITER

Producer and screenwriter Christian Falch has managed the Norwegian production company Gammaglimt AS since 2003. His past films include titles such as "Treason and Sabotage", "The Exorcist in the 21st Century", "Street of Dreams" and "The King and the Crook." Falch has also co-produced several international documentaries and has worked as a producer for Faction Film AS, where he produced award-winning documentary "Two Raging Grannies." His documentaries have been shown at over 50 different festivals and been sold in 15 countries across Europe and beyond. Falch currently has four documentary films in production.