

# AKSEL IS A FISH IN THE AQUARIUM

## SYNOPSIS

Aksel, a Turkish university student obsessed with moving to Norway, dreams of starting a new life there. Immersing himself in Norwegian culture, he studies the language, applies for jobs, and even fakes documents to chase his dream. But after a series of rejections and strange moments of hope, his fixation deepens into something weirder. As his behavior becomes increasingly erratic, his personal relationships suffer, and his obsession starts to consume him. Just when Aksel thinks his dreams are within reach, an unexpected twist sends him spiraling, forcing him to reconsider everything. Will he ever find the life he's searching for?

## CAST

Aksel ..... Efe Şahbaz  
Ramil ..... Soltan Zeynalli  
Turgay ..... Ferit Özcan  
Friend of Ramil ... Barış Sufracı

## CREW

Director ..... İsmail Çetin  
Screenplay ..... İsmail Çetin  
Production ..... Paprika Danmark  
Akureyri Pictures

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

This is a very personal film for me as a young Turkish filmmaker that comes from a generation that is frustrated with our country's intense political climate and lack of opportunities. Many of us feel trapped, longing to escape and discover ourselves elsewhere. Aksel's obsession with Norway reflects this restless urge—an attempt to fill the emptiness with a dream of belonging somewhere better. Through Aksel's delusional journey, I explore the absurdity and heartbreak of cultural obsession and idealization. This film is about a generation stuck between the reality we have and the fantasy we chase, questioning what it really means to seek a different life. As a filmmaker, I wanted to capture the deep sense of alienation that arises when external circumstances make it feel like you can't truly shape your future. Aksel's relentless pursuit of Norway serves as a metaphor for how many of us pin our hopes on distant places, thinking they hold the key to our happiness. The film also delves into the emotional cost of pursuing such dreams, often at the expense of personal relationships and self-acceptance. Ultimately, this story is not just about Aksel's dream, but about the collective experience of feeling adrift in a world where opportunity feels out of reach. I hope you like our short and maybe find a little bit of yourself in it. Enjoy!

## DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

As a young filmmaker and visual artist from Turkey, I'm İsmail Çetin. My passion for life and cinema inspires me to explore the real, the weird, and the beautiful aspects of our world. I aim to capture the ways a life or an idea can be through my short films. Each project is a personal and meaningful love story for me. Love for the video, for the memories, and for the big curious world we live in.

## DETAILS

**Runtime:** 25 minutes  
**Languages:** Turkish, Norwegian  
**Global release:** September 7th, 2024  
**Countries of production:** Turkey, Denmark  
**Contact:** paprikadanmark@tutanota.de

one life, one dream.

