

## PRESS RELEASE

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## THE WHALEBONE BOX RELEASED EXCLUSIVELY ON MUBI DESPITE CINEMA CLOSURES

*Four and five star reviews for Andrew Köttling's mystical odyssey*

*"We need to preserve the notion of culture being important, even during an international crisis," says HOME's Creative Director for Film and Culture, Jason Wood*

Cinemas may be closed and screenings cancelled, but last weekend HOME and MUBI did something other distributors are being forced to do to preserve film culture – they released a film. *The Whalebone Box* was one of only a small handful of films released in the UK last week and is one of the top ten most-watched films on MUBI in its opening three days.

The release date was originally chosen as a counterpoint to *No Time To Die* – the two films couldn't be more different. When the lockdown was announced, HOME's Creative Director for Film and Culture, Jason Wood, decided to stick with the release date nevertheless.

# HOME

Jason said: "There was a sense that at a time of reflection there was perhaps a chance that more people might discover it. Additionally, we need to preserve the notion of culture being important, even during an international crisis."

Andrew Kötting said: "This is a kind of approximation of a film. It's a film that really doesn't belong in cinemas. Distributors would never look at this. But I have a relationship with Jason Wood at HOME and HOME have been supportive of all the work I have done since *Swan Down*. It would be difficult without his belief that there are still people out there that would want to go and see this type of film. I'm also lucky that MUBI will stream this for the best part of a month and people might stumble across it. That gives me hope and joy. I am in a privileged position in that I have a body of work behind me but I am fearful for other artists that don't have that luck."

The film has received four and five star reviews, and was chosen as the Observer film of the week by Mark Kermode, who said: "As a huge fan of Andrew Kötting's films, I'm fully aware of the great work HOME and Jason Wood have done supporting his creativity, and making sure that artists like him find the audiences they deserve. Art doesn't exist in a vacuum, and films don't distribute themselves. HOME has played a great role in creating the kind of thriving ecosystem in which films like *The Whalebone Box* can become a vital, vibrant part of the modern movie landscape. Thank heaven for Andrew Kötting, and for HOME."

Jason Wood added: "My relationship with Andrew goes back to when I interviewed him for *This Filthy Earth* and our paths have crossed many times since. I admire his work as an artist but also his enthusiasm not only for the act of creating but his enthusiasm for life. This applies to Eden too.

"The first Andrew Kötting film I was involved with as a distributor was *Ivul* when I worked at Curzon Artificial Eye. Andrew's relationship with HOME extends back to *Swan Down*, which was supported by HOME's former Artistic Director of Visual Art, Sarah Perks. HOME has since distributed *Edith Walks*, *Lek and the Dogs* and now *The Whalebone Box*. It's important to have a diverse and bracing film culture when everything feels a bit bland and homogenised and the films, books, music and art of Andrew and Eden contribute greatly to that."

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

**HOME** is Manchester's centre for international contemporary culture. Since opening in 2015, HOME has welcomed over two million visitors to its five cinemas, two theatres, art gallery, book shop and restaurants. HOME's five screens showcase the best new independent film releases alongside a unique programme of film seasons, festivals, and special events. HOME's bold and diverse programming has screened over 600 films from nearly 60 countries in the past year, and its robust audience numbers consistently make HOME one of the UK's top performing independent cinemas for new releases. A popular choice for established and emerging filmmakers keen to participate in Q&A events with engaged audiences, HOME has welcomed the following filmmakers and more since opening: Clio Barnard, Gurinder Chadha, Felix Chong, Paddy Considine, Armando Iannucci, Ken Loach, Alice Lowe, Rungano Nyoni, Lynne Ramsay, Nicolas Winding Refn, Whit Stillman, and Ben Wheatley. Overseen by Creative Director for Film and Culture Jason Wood, HOME also produces a specially curated, original programme of film



seasons and special events and is committed to supporting UK film talent and introducing emerging filmmakers to a wide audience. The patrons of HOME are filmmakers Danny Boyle and Asif Kapadia, actress Suranne Jones, playwright and poet Jackie Kay CBE, artists Rosa Barba and Phil Collins, and actress and author Meera Syal CBE. [www.homemcr.org](http://www.homemcr.org) | @HOME\_mcr  
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