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In this interactive film from the Netherlands the viewer decides the future of the climate and the faith humanity

Grandfather's Century is set in the year 2100. A grandson (Sam van Zoest) and his grandfather (Eugen Zomer) look back on the 21st century. The central question is: "Grandpa, what happened?" The viewer decides the story told by the grandfather.

Grandfather and grandson navigate a history of the future that changes with every choice the viewer makes. In one scenario, mankind averts disaster inspired by protest singers, a green government, or a flood. In a parallel story, part of humanity has fled Earth in an attempt to establish a space colony. And yet in a different future vision, society is polarised to the extent that all that remains of earth is a desolate wasteland where only corn is grown.

Sometimes a well-intentioned choice can backfire

Sam made the film for two reasons: "The climate crisis is the greatest challenge of our time, and I see that people have difficulty imagining their future." With the grandfather's personal story, the film provides insight into various future scenarios. The viewer is given the opportunity to explore different scenarios and to experience the direct consequences of his choices. Sam: "Do you opt for a collective, sustainable strategy? Or for a coup? And sometimes a well-intentioned choice can backfire."

An innovative form

To provide different ending scenarios, Sam wrote no less than forty scenes. This was a big challenge: "There are very few conventions for interactive films," says Sam. The same was true for shooting the movie; its nonlinearity made it impossible to film in chronological order and the actors constantly shifted between different timelines. Sam: "For each scene we had to think about the scenes that could possibly precede and which could follow." For the interactive component of the film, the makers used software called Eko. "Eko is an American start-up that started making interactive video clips. Now they offer a platform to filmmakers who want to experiment with interactives."

What story are we going to tell our grandchildren?

Sam's favourite moment in the movie is when grandfather turns the tables and asks his grandson if he is happy. The viewer is obliged to answer. Sam: "I want people to think about their choice's consequences for the people of the future. That's what this is all about: what story are we, millennials, going to tell our grandchildren?"

Because Sam thinks it is important that the film reaches as many people as possible, *Grandfather's Century* can be experienced online by anyone at eeuwvanmijnopa.nl/english

Note to the editor, not for publication:

Press kit:

drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ezKNIQL_SlzhXR3Y_IHo04fwqRlfBtD?usp=sharing

Trailer: vimeo.com/469525482

About Sam van Zoest - Writer & Director

Sam van Zoest graduated from Edinburgh College of Art. Sam's audiovisual installation *Undercurrent* was on show at Explore the North 2019. Earlier this year, he made the experimental fiction film *The Woman Who Feared To Vanish*, which is being screened at SHIFT Film Festival and the Northern Film Festival. Currently, Sam is working on a documentary about volunteers in refugee camps, and a docudrama about a hedonistic group of friends. Sam also writes poems and is working on his first novel. Sam's website: samvanzoest.com.

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