



BETWEEN BROTHERS

a film by Tom Fassaert

The Netherlands, Belgium 2026

106 min / 52 min

Een van de jongens in co-production with Clin d'oeil films, KRO-NCRV, VRT and Shelter Prod

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FILM 
HARBOUR

Between Brothers

a film by Tom Fassaert

Original title:	Tussen broers
Country of production:	The Netherlands, Belgium
Year of production:	2026
Length:	52 / 106 min
Shooting format:	2K
Screening format:	DCP (2.39:1/5.1/25fps)
Language(s):	Dutch
Subtitles:	English
Color or b/w:	Color

Production:	Een van de jongens in co-production with Clin d'oeil films, KRO-NCRV, VRT and Shelter Prod
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Credits

Author and director:	Tom Fassaert
DoP:	Tom Fassaert, Mick van Dantzig
Sound:	Marc Lizier (Sounddesign), Paul Gies (Soundmix)
Editor:	Thabi Mooi, Dieter Diependaele, Tom Fassaert
Music:	Tobias Borkert
Commissioning editor:	Michiel Brongers, Jelle Peter de Ruiter (KRO-NCRV)
Co-producer:	Hanne Phlypo (Clin d'oeil films / Belgium)
Producer:	Hasse van Nunen & Renko Douze (Een van de jongens / The Netherlands)
World Sales:	Film Harbour

Logline:	After the death of their mother, two elderly brothers make a final attempt to clear up the wreckage of their past. In scenes as intimate as they are tragicomic, filmmaker Tom Fassaert, the son of one of them, is drawn ever deeper into the mystery of their long-lost father.
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Synopsis:

Elderly brothers René and Rob can't do with or without each other. René lives the life of a recluse, in a house that is overflowing with stuff. When things threaten to get out of hand, his younger brother Rob intervenes.

Filmmaker Tom Fassaert, Rob's son, documents these weekly visits and recognizes a familiar dynamic. Rob, a retired psychologist, slips into the role of counsellor; René, a longtime psychiatric patient, becomes his client. Their underlying irritation is genuine, but so is their affection.

As Rob and René repeat the same ritual every week, Tom begins to sense that something must be behind it. Something old and unspoken. In the family archives, he discovers a mystery: when the brothers were children, their father disappeared without a trace. No goodbye, no explanation, just an absence that has influenced three generations.

Tom has explored his family history before. In *A FAMILY AFFAIR* (2015), he examined the legacy of an emotionally elusive mother. In *BETWEEN BROTHERS*, he turns to his father and uncle. He takes them on a road trip without a clear destination, in search of traces of a man who deliberately left none behind. En route, it becomes clear that the man who disappeared has left more than just questions. He has left a blueprint for how men in this family withdraw and retreat, each in their own way.

Director's statement:

"My mother's life is over.

The film is over.

Now it is up to me to make sure the trauma does not continue.

I will do it differently."

With these words, my father suggests that the most painful chapter of his life, and that of his brother, has finally come to an end. But is it really possible to close the past? To not repeat history? And to truly decide to "do things differently"?

In BETWEEN BROTHERS, I explore these questions through the stubborn yet deeply loving relationship between my father Rob and his brother René. Two elderly brothers who, at first glance, appear to be opposites. My father: rational, organised, a psychologist. René: fragile, poetic, socially derailed. In our family narratives, René is often portrayed as the living embodiment of everything that went wrong in their childhood, while my father represents the one who “made it.”

While making my previous film A FAMILY AFFAIR, I discovered that it was René who moved me the most. The more he allowed me into his mind and heart, the more he surprised me — with his honesty, his emotional precision, and his ability to speak about the past without filters, including about my father.

The death of their mother forms the immediate catalyst for this film. As their longheld hope for a cathartic reconciliation disappears, a new shift emerges between the brothers. My father decides to intervene in René’s life. What begins as an attempt to restore order soon reveals something far more profound. Beneath their constant friction a shared absence emerges: a deep longing for a father figure who was never truly present. In that search, the brothers become equals, and I, as a filmmaker, am forced to look differently at them, and at myself.

While filming their history, an unavoidable question arises: am I not just as afraid of repeating the past? And will I truly succeed in doing things differently, now that I am becoming a father myself?

Festivals and Awards:

IFFR 2026

Thessaloniki IDF 2026

Docville Leuven 2026

Movies That Matter 2026 (Dutch Focus Award)

It's all true 2026

DOK.fest Munich 2026

Biografilm 2026 (MYmovies Audience Award)

Biography Tom Fassaert

*1979 in Naarden, The Netherlands

Filmmaker Tom Fassaert (1979) spent his childhood in both The Netherlands and South Africa. These contrasting environments have undoubtedly shaped the way he looks at the world. But his love of film stems from his father's passion for home movies.

Common thread in his films is intimacy between himself and his subject. Through this intimacy, he investigates themes like bonding, intergenerational trauma and the desire for autonomy. Gently, he observes both the tragedy and the absurd wrapped inside a recalcitrant reality.

His debut film, AN ANGEL IN DOEL, premiered at the Berlin Film Festival, where it received world-wide attention. This second, A FAMILY AFFAIR, opened IDFA 2015. It won the Special Jury Award and was nominated for a European Film Award. Variety mentioned Fassaert as 'One of the ten documentary makers to watch'.

Filmography Tom Fassaert

2026 BETWEEN BROTHERS, 106 min, doc

2015 A FAMILY AFFAIR, 111 min, doc

2011 AN ANGEL IN DOEL, 78 min, doc