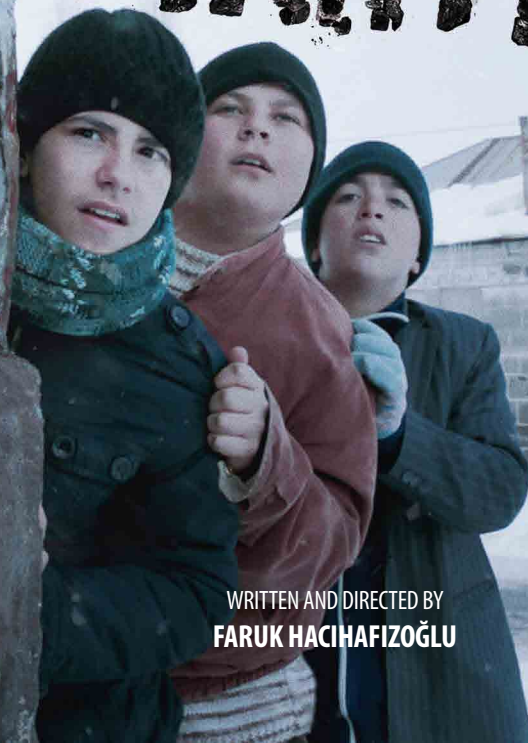


# SNOW PIRATES



65<sup>th</sup> Internationale  
Filmfestspiele  
Berlin  
Generation



WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY  
**FARUK HACIHAFIZOĞLU**



# SNOW PIRATES

**PRODUCER/DIRECTOR  
SCRIPT**

Faruk Hachhafizoğlu

**CAST**

Taha Tegin Özdemir (Serhat), Yakup Özgür Kurtaal (Gürbüz), Ömer Uluç (İbo), İsa Master (1.Cello), İlker Sır (2. Cello), Oğuzhan Ulukaya (3. Cello), Zeki Aktaş (Dede), Figen Oral Cebel (Anne), Yücel Can (Deli Durdağı), Arda İlkin Parlak (Vedat Abi), Süreyya Koca (Vedat Anne)

**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY**

Türksoy Gölebeyi

**EDITING**

Orhan Örsman, Ayhan Ergürsel

**ART DIRECTOR**

Hülya Karakaş

**MUSIC**

Mehmet Ünal

**SOUND DESIGN**

Yalın Özgencil, Sertaç Toksöz

**SOUND**

Mustafa Bölükbaşı

**ASISTANT DIRECTORS**

Yücel Can, Armağan Lale

**COLOURIST**

Alp Çağlar Özlek

**POST PRODUCTION**

Ömer Günüvar

**SUPERVISOR****WORLD PREMIERE**65th Berlin Film Festival  
(2015, Generation)**2015 • 83min • Turkey • Turkish • 1:1.78 • Color • Dolby Digital • DCPV**[www.snowpiratesmovie.com](http://www.snowpiratesmovie.com)

# SYNOPSIS

## SNOW PIRATES

It is 1981... Turkey is at the dawn of one of its most atrocious coup d'etats and its hardest winter... In Kars, a remote city located on Turkey's Eastern border and the site of dynamic trade, ethnicities and even empires, the people's need for coal is as acute as their need for freedom. That winter, coal's value equals almost the same as diamonds.

Yet, hardly available with money, it remains within the reach of a few state institutions and privileged individuals. It is as if the coup d'etat punishes the city with cold. Three children, Serhat, Gürbüz and İbo, whose treasury is made up only of their sleds and dreams are about to start a journey in pursuit of coal. Its blackness contrasting the white of the snow, through their travels they will discover the power of solidarity.

It is this pursuit of coal, rather than rest, which marks their school vacation, because, resources are scarce. In a search of some pieces of coal to put into the furnace, the heroes find intelligence and strength within this struggle and inspiration to look where no one has looked before. An innocent adventure for heating, situated under the shadow of the coup d'etat, will turn into a landmark journey where they come face-to-face with the realities and responsibilities that coming-of-age brings.







# THE SHOOTING

## OF THE FILM

### SNOW PIRATES

Childhood belongs to a world simpler than the one in which we as adults live. We never stop dreaming about our childhood and remembering those wonderful days. This is why we return to our childhood memories whenever life disappoints us.

The idea of **Snow Pirates** emerged from such a reminiscence. When I visited my parents in Lengerich in 2007, I had already been working on a screenplay about the period in which I had lived in London. On a cold and snowy day we, as a family, made a spiritual journey to our coldest past – to our lives in Kars. My childhood memories were generally about sledding and playing snowball and football. The impetus of my mothers' recalling those stormy winter in 1981 when Kars as a city had experienced a coal scarcity, however, took me to the other, darker side of my memory and stirred painful memories related to the coup and the socio-political facts about the period and region.

The only place that offered escape from the gloomy atmosphere of the city created by the coup was the cinema within the Officer's Club where only highly ranked soldiers were allowed to enter. We would escape from home, and if there was no soldier guarding the door, we would enter secretly into the cinema at intermission to watch the second half of the evening's film.

Later, many of our friends who had not seen the films would ask us about them. Since we had not seen the films in their entirety, we would make up stories about the beginning of each one. And because we often forgot our own stories, the plot of the film would change each time we would narrate it to another friend. In each telling, we shared the roles and re-animate the stories.

**Snow Pirates** is in some sense a product of such games.

This is how I began to think about **Snow Pirates**. As a result of a long process of work, my scenario was chosen for the award "Developing Scenario and Writing Dialogue" given by the Culture and Tourism Ministry and we began to shot it with the support of "Film Production". At a temperature of - 27 degrees Celsius with quite limited production conditions, with the extraordinary labor of the whole film team and the actors, we finished the film.

**Snow Pirates** is a film about cosmopolitan culture, childhood, adolescence, purity, military coup and Anatolia. The film will find its value, in the reactions of its audiences.







**SNOW PIRATES**



# DIRECTOR'S BIO

SNOW PIRATES

**Faruk Hacıhafızoglu** was born in Kars, Turkey in 1965. He finished primary-secondary and high school in Kars. He took his BSc degree on Agricultural Engineering at Akdeniz University in 1991, Royal Society of Art Diploma on Photography at University of Bristol in 1997, and BA degree on Contemporary Media Practices at Westminster University in 2002. He worked as a journalist, photographer, producer and director. **Snow Pirates** is his first future film.









# THE TIME OF THE NARRATIVE

## SNOW PIRATES

The coup d'états of the 12th of September 1980 initiated a cruel period of military dictatorship, the terrible psychological and institutional effects of which are still felt. This coup established the conditions underlying the cultural, economic and political transformation of Turkish society over the past 35 years. Violating fundamental human rights such as the freedoms of thought and speech, these conditions ground the later and uneven capitalistic developments in Turkey.

The first years of the coup witnessed brutal violations of human rights and oppressive practices such as curfews, state control of all media, nightly radio announcements of the names of those killed or wanted by the security forces, and random house raids.

The coup has produced different effects in different regions of the country, but permeated small towns and villages of Anatolia especially deeply. Kars is one such town. Reinforced by the dramatic winter conditions, the coup has created a unique cultural atmosphere in Kars.

# THE 1980

## COUP D'ETATS WITH NUMBERS

SNOW PIRATES

**650.000** People were arrested

**230.000** People were persecuted in 210,000 trials.

**517** People were sentenced to death

**50** People, one of whom was under 18 years old, were hanged

**171** People died as a result of torture

**937** Films were banned

**400** Journalists were on trial; collectively, their sentences totaled 4,000 years in prison





# THE SITE

**Snow Pirates** is set in Kars, a remote border town in northeastern Turkey. The characters in the narrative interplay with the unique historical texture of the town. The history of Kars, which is located at the intersection of Caucasus and Anatolia, has been shaped by the distinct cultures of Turks, Kurds, Armenians, Byzantines and Russians. This diverse cultural inheritance is embedded in the architecture of the city.

Viewed from its ancient castle, perched atop a hill, the whole historical site appears before your eyes. Its many churches and mosques, standing side by side, demonstrate the co-existence of diverse linguistic and religious identities.

For its inhabitants, living in Kars is nothing other than enduring a state of limitedness. Snow sharpens this state of limitedness, as Kars is also a town of snow. The white veil, which falls to the ground just at the beginning of winter, fades away from the scene only after the spring comes. At first sight, snow and unimaginable cold seem to hold the town captive.

Yet, this first impression belies the fact that the weather is not merely a hardship, but an integral part of both the joys and sorrows of life there. Indeed, the town dances with the cold, as children with their sleds turn the streets into a place of festival.

**Snow Pirates** is a story about people of Kars. It is a story not about living in a town, but about the life of a town.

# CASTING

## SNOW PIRATES

**Snow Pirates** is a story about Kars. Kars cannot be thought of without cold and snow. In order to reflect the uniqueness of the town, the film was shot in the natural plateau of the town, and this determined the casting as well. Since the film was shot in the natural habitat of the town, where the weather is extremely cold and the geographic conditions are arduous, and since the main characters are children, casting the local children of Kars was the right choice.

Under such difficult circumstances, it was only the children of Kars who gave the city its spirit and would become **Snow Pirates**.







## SNOW PIRATES

In order to choose the best possible cast, an announcement was made in the city. The people of Kars liked the story and were mobilized to carry out the project. Many applications for the parts in the film were received. The most appropriate cast for the screenplay and for the director's vision of the project was selected.

After auditions, the actors had three months to prepare themselves. They adopted their roles easily, as these roles reflect the conditions and facts of life for people in Kars, more precisely, their relationship with snow and cold. Without exception, all actors are amateurs and are from Kars. Despite all the difficult conditions, they acted enthusiastically and had a central role in the completion of the film.

# PUBLICITY

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Press Kit and Photography Can Be Downloaded From

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PUBLICITY

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