

The Blind Man Who Did Not Want To See Titanic

English Audio Description preshow notes

Welcome to 2025 “No Limits”, The Blind Man Who Did Not Want To See Titanic. This programme is co-presented by the Hong Kong Arts Festival and The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust with strategic supporting partner Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong.

I am Roz Chalmers, the audio describer.

The programme will be screened at Laundry Steps, Tai Kwun on 11th January and 12th January 2025 at 3pm; and on the “No Limits” website, from 24 March, 10am to 19 May 2025, 10pm. Admission and screening are for free.

It is approximately 85 minutes, performed in Finnish, for in-venue screening, subtitles in Chinese and English, dubbing in Cantonese, audio description in Cantonese, House programme in audio format available; guide dogs welcome.

For online screening, Subtitles and accessible captions in Chinese and English, dubbing in Cantonese and English, audio description in Cantonese and English; house programme in audio format available.

The programme is a Class IIA film and contains strong language.

These pre-show notes include information about the cast and characters, set and costumes.

The Blind Man Who Did Not Want To See Titanic is a Finnish film about a disabled man, Jaakko Jarvinen, and his adventure experience of traveling alone to another city.

Jaakko has multiple sclerosis, which has taken his sight and his ability to walk, and he uses a wheelchair to get around. He has a white cane that he can use to probe the ground in front of him or locate fallen belongings

The film's cinematography is unusual - the field of vision is restricted, focusing mainly on Jaakko's expressive face or the back of his head with its crisply outlined hairline. Other people and objects are blurred and indistinct, stripped of detail and reduced to blocks of colour.

Jaakko's a white man in his forties with dark hair shaved down to stubble. His eyes are blue and his smile wide, crinkling the corners of his eyes. He often closes them to express emotions, joy, anxiety, frustration or pain. His hands have long, elegant fingers and he uses them fluently to read the world around him.

In his apartment he wears a black T-shirt and joggers. When he's out and he adds a black peaked cap and a black woollen jacket over a black T-shirt with an indiscernible grey pattern.

He lives alone, but telephone calls with his long-distance girlfriend Sirpa lighten his days, although they have never met in person. When her image appears, her head and shoulders fill the screen. She's a white woman in her late forties, in a pale blue sweater, and she has short, curly auburn hair and a finely boned face with blue eyes. They are etched by lines of pain.

Jaakko has a dark sense of humour, sometimes directed at his assistant, the woman who helps him to get ready for the day and keeps his apartment clean. There's a glimpse of her blonde hair, white T-shirt and pale grey joggers, but otherwise she's a voice in the blur.

Jaakko's one bedroomed apartment holds a bed with a rail to stop him from falling out. He can use a control to raise it, helping him transfer to his wheelchair. The only other areas that he visited are a sink where he cleans his teeth, shelves where he keeps his treasured collections of classic DVDs, with a strong showing from the American director John Carpenter's dystopian movies, and a balcony, where traffic is

heard from the street below, and the voices of neighbours float in.

He takes phone calls on his mobile, where messages are read in the system's AI voice, but the voices of his girlfriend Sirpa and his father are also heard regularly.

Jaakko travels to the local railway station, assisted by a taxi driver, Marko, visible as just a dark mass pushing the wheelchair. The station forecourt is filled with unexplained noises and wide-open spaces and Jaakko listens intently to make sense of them. The station platform is almost empty apart from a man in the distance. When he draws closer there's an impression of a black hoodie, shades, bleached pale blue jeans and a T-shirt with the shape of a mushroom cloud on the chest. He's carrying a backpack with yellow straps. Later, meeting him on the train, Jaakko dubs him 'Mr Scorpions'.

At the end of the train journey Jaakko arrives in a dilapidated building with graffiti paintings in swirls of orange on its broken plaster walls. A central doorway leads to a pitch-black interior and then to an enormous empty space where sun streams through windows onto a crumbling concrete floor. A man he encounters there is heavily bearded, dressed in a black jacket

and trousers with a red and black hooped top. His hair is covered by a grey baseball cap.

Other people appear for moments, like a train conductor in a neon green hi vis jacket, sometimes they're just voices like Jaakko's neighbours or a father and child on the train.

Occasionally they stay longer, like a burly dogwalker in black with a busy brown and white dog.

While the story is fiction, the actor who plays Jaakko, Petri Poikolainen, is blind with multiple sclerosis.

Cast and production credits

Jaakko – Petri Poikolainen

Sirpa – Majaana Maijala

Mr Scorpions – Samuli Jaskio

Direction and writing – Teemu Nikki

Cinematographer – Sari Aaltonen T.S.C.

Editor – Jussi Sandhu

Design – Sami Kiiski and Heikki Kossi

Sound mixing – Peter Albrechtsen

Line producer – Tuula Nikkola

Production coordinator – Aino Suvanto

Recorded by Roope Mantere, Sam Kiiski

Lighting designer – Mikko Soukkala

Grip – Mikko Soukala, Samuui Pyykkönen

Digital imaging technician – Jussi Sandhu

Sirpa's make-up artist – Fanny Haynonen

Production trainee – Erika Sailinkangas

Petri Poikolainen's assistant – Lassi Poikolainen

Editing assistant – Ada Pajari

Picture post-production – Grade One Oy

Post-production producer – Mikko Savinainen

Colour specifier – Petri Falkenberg

This is the end of the pre-show notes to The Blind Man Who Did Not Want To See Titanic. Please enjoy the film !