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Coward

Lukas Dhont

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- **Acclaimed filmmaker:** Lukas Dhont is Oscar-nominated for *Girl* and widely praised for *Close*
- **Beyond-the-making-of publication:** Combines historical research, set imagery, and insights into Dhondt's creative process
- Explores overlooked aspects of barracks life, including moments of beauty and theater amid war's violence and sorrow

Lukas Dhont is an internationally acclaimed filmmaker who earned an Oscar nomination for *Girl*. With both his debut *Girl* and its follow-up *Close*, he moved audiences and charmed festival juries alike. Now ***Coward*** his third and most ambitious film, set against the backdrop of the First World War, is on its way. Once again, the focus is on two characters and their personal journeys, amidst the violence and sorrow of war. Central to the narrative is life in the barracks, where space was nevertheless found for beauty and theater – an aspect of the war that has often been overlooked. With this book, we therefore aim to go beyond a mere 'making-of'; it also delves into the historical material that forms the basis of this project. Peppered, of course, with unique set images and a glimpse into the notes – and thus the creative mind – of creator Lukas Dhondt.

Lukas Dhont is a Belgian film director and screenwriter. He was featured in *Forbes 30 Under 30 Europe* list in 2019. Dhont was born in Ghent, Belgium. As a teenager, Dhont worked as a costume design assistant on film and television sets. He made his feature-length debut in 2018 with *Girl*, a drama film inspired by the story of Nora Monsecour which focuses on a trans girl pursuing a career as a ballerina. *Girl* premiered at the 2018 Cannes Film Festival, where it won the Caméra d'Or award for best first feature film, as well as the Queer Palm. It received the André Cavens Award for Best Film given by the Belgian Film Critics Association (UCC) and was selected as the Belgian entry for the Best Foreign Language Film at the 91st Academy Awards. It received nine nominations at the 9th Magritte Awards and won four, including Best Flemish Film and Best Screenplay for Dhont. Dhont's second feature, *Close*, starring Emilie Dequenne and Léa Drucker, premiered in competition at the 2022 Cannes Film Festival, where he shared the Grand Prix with Claire Denis' *Stars At Noon*. It also won the Sydney Film Prize in June 2022. The film is based on his own experiences at school, and tells the story of the friendship between two boys in their early teens.

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