

A close-up portrait of a young man with short, dark brown hair and numerous freckles on his face. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral, serious expression. He is wearing a dark-colored jacket with a light-colored, ribbed collar. The background is a plain, light gray.

SOME DISABILITIES ARE INVISIBLE

# UNSPOKEN DE WAARHEID TRUTH

## FILM DETAILS

**MOVIE TITLE** De Waarheid / Unspoken Truth

**COUNTRY** The Netherlands

**LANGUAGE** Dutch

**SUBTITLES** Dutch, English

**PRODUCTION** March 2024

**PRE-RELEASE** 22 october 2024

Screenplay **Irmo Stijnberg**

Director **Irmo Stijnberg**

Production company **Censtudios**

Producer **Moreno Koning**

Executive Producer **Irmo Stijnberg**

Director of Photography **Belal Abhar**

Gaffer **Wim de Jong**

Sound Design **Remo Kuhlmann**

Editor **Irmo Stijnberg**

Original Music **Fayez "Divergent" Saraya**

Colorist **Boudewijn van de Velde**

Digital Compositor **Anthony Clifford**

**Cast** Mike Bloemberg

Jelle Meijerink

Corinne Mulder

Jeroen Scholten

Sen Lenderink

Roberta Romelli

Color/BW **Color**

Length **16 minutes**

Camera **Sony a7siii**

Aspect Ratio **2:1**

Sound Format **5.1 & Stereo**





## Logline

Timothy, a passionate young graphic designer with a stutter faces an accusation of sexual harassment by a client. Trying to understand the situation, his inability to speak fluently complicates his defense with HR.

## Synopsis

One day, HR calls Timothy in for a meeting, where he is unexpectedly confronted with accusations of sexual harassment by a female client, specifically the client's assistant, Sofie.

In earlier scenes, we see how Timothy excels at his work but struggles socially. His enthusiasm is dampened by a colleague named Jonah, who initially seems friendly but gradually shows signs of jealousy.

During the HR meeting, Timothy has difficulty defending himself, and his stuttering leads to misunderstandings. We also get a glimpse into his thoughts while he speaks and stutters, experiencing how his mind races ahead of his body, the effort it takes to speak, and the things he cannot express. However, Timothy's pleas for clarification seem to fall on deaf ears.



## DIRECTOR'S VISION

In an era where people all across the world get to share their story, their struggles, those who have physical challenges to speak (1-2% of the adult population) feel left behind. When people think stuttering is just anxiety or something you can 'get over' instead of a disability, how can they see your story as worth hearing?

Speaking is a fundamental human trait, so much so that freedom of speech is enshrined as one of the primary laws in most civilized nations. While writing provides an alternative, it doesn't fully capture the essence and immediacy of spoken communication. This limitation profoundly impacts one's freedom of expression and sense of humanity. This challenge is often overlooked.

As someone who stutters, I have experienced similar situations to those portrayed in this film. This had a long-lasting negative impact on my mental well-being. In communities of people who stutter, I often read about how stuttering is misunderstood and inaccurately represented. This ultimately drove me to dig deep and create my first short film, writing, producing, and directing it to realistically depict the physical and social struggles of stuttering.

Stuttering, and expression itself, is not just about how someone speaks. It's also about how others choose to listen.

# CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS



## **Timothy**

(Mike Bloomberg)

**Karakter:** ambitious, gullible, spiritual

Timothy, a helpful and passionate young man, pours his heart and soul into his work. He has found his calling in graphic design and recently joined a design agency, where he quickly developed a close friendship with his colleague Jonah.

However, behind his cheerful appearance lies a complex inner world shaped by the challenges of his speech impediment. Timothy feels the absence of simple interactions and is ashamed of it. Although he would like to join in conversations with everyone, he often withdraws himself and says very little.

His stuttering has a deeper impact than he shows. He frequently skips words or entire sentences in an effort to make things easier for himself, but even these words come out with difficulty. This often makes his stories incoherent and prone to being misunderstood, causing problems for him at times.

Nevertheless, Timothy's courage to pursue his passion and his perseverance make him an inspiring figure in his work environment.



## **Jonah**

(Jelle Meijerink)

**Karakter:** playful, competitive, jealous

Jonah, an ambitious young man, has been working at the company for some time, while Timothy is new. He finds the graphic design work monotonous but enjoys meetings, treating them as a game to extend meeting times, allowing him to bill extra hours to the client.

Jonah also seeks popularity among both colleagues and clients, striving to balance his own interests with the social dynamics within the company.



## **Lena**

(Corinne Mulder)

**Karakter:** private, determined, harsh

This HR manager is a pragmatic and resolute professional who has already formed an opinion about Timothy's guilt before the meeting. She approaches the situation with a determined mindset, assuming that his explanation will not affect her decision. For her, the meeting is mostly a formality; she intends to inform Timothy of the accusations and then continue her workday without further emotional involvement.

She finds it strange and even uncomfortable when Timothy discusses his emotions and personal struggles, as she herself adopts a more reserved approach to her feelings. For her, emotions are private matters that do not belong in a professional setting. This attitude makes it difficult for her to show empathy and can affect her ability to conduct a fair and just discussion.

Her focus is on handling the situation efficiently, leaving little room for Timothy's personal experiences or the impact of his speech impediment on his communication. This can contribute to a tense and one-sided course of the conversation.



## **Jip**

(Jeroen Scholten)

**Karakter:** vastberaden, vragend, verdenkend

Jip, the HR manager, approaches the situation with a preconceived judgment about Timothy. Although he initially appears curious about what Timothy has to say, his curiosity is merely a formality. Jip is already prepared with an opinion and seems to expect Timothy to provide a specific explanation.

When Timothy does not meet Jip's expectations or fails to give the answer he hoped for, Jip's attitude shifts. He begins to suspect Timothy and remains convinced of his guilt. Jip finds it strange and uncomfortable that Timothy reacts emotionally, as he himself offers little room for emotional expression in a professional setting.





## **Sofie**

(Sen Lenderink)

**Karakter:** ongeduldig, competitief, bevooroordeeld

Sofie is the young assistant to Wesley and has a strong ambition to make her mark within the team. While she understands that Wesley has his own vision, she is determined to show that she can also make decisions and exert influence.

During meetings, Sofie often clashes with Jonah, particularly because she vigorously defends her own viewpoints and ideas. Despite these conflicts, she manages to handle him well outside of meetings, indicating her ability to separate professional and personal relationships.

Sofie perceives Timothy as particularly insecure. She places little value on his input because she believes his doubts and uncertainty make him less relevant compared to her own viewpoints and decisions. This makes her less inclined to take his opinions seriously and may contribute to a lack of empathy for his situation.



## **Wesley**

(Roberta Romelli)

**Karakter:** creatief, zelfverzekerd, observatief

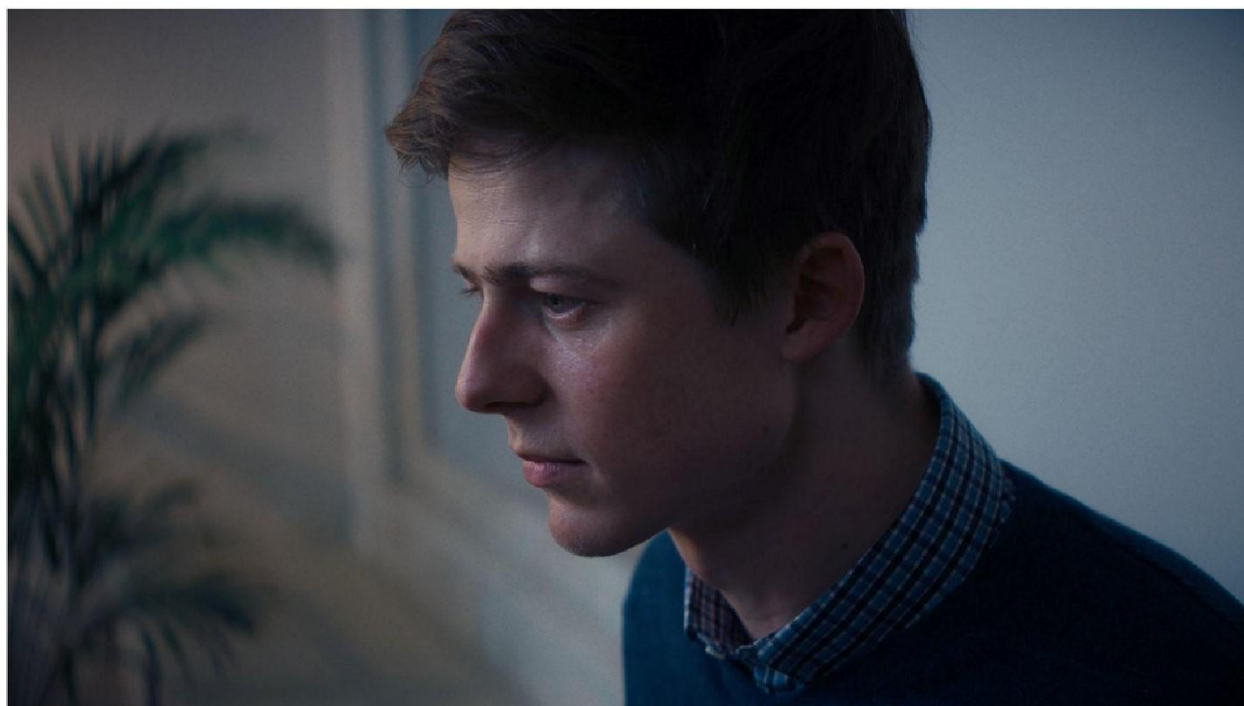
Wesley is an artistic and influential client at the graphic design agency where Timothy works. As an artist, she primarily takes a backseat during discussions, tending to observe and listen attentively rather than actively participate. This observational approach allows her to gain a deep understanding of the team dynamics and work relationships.

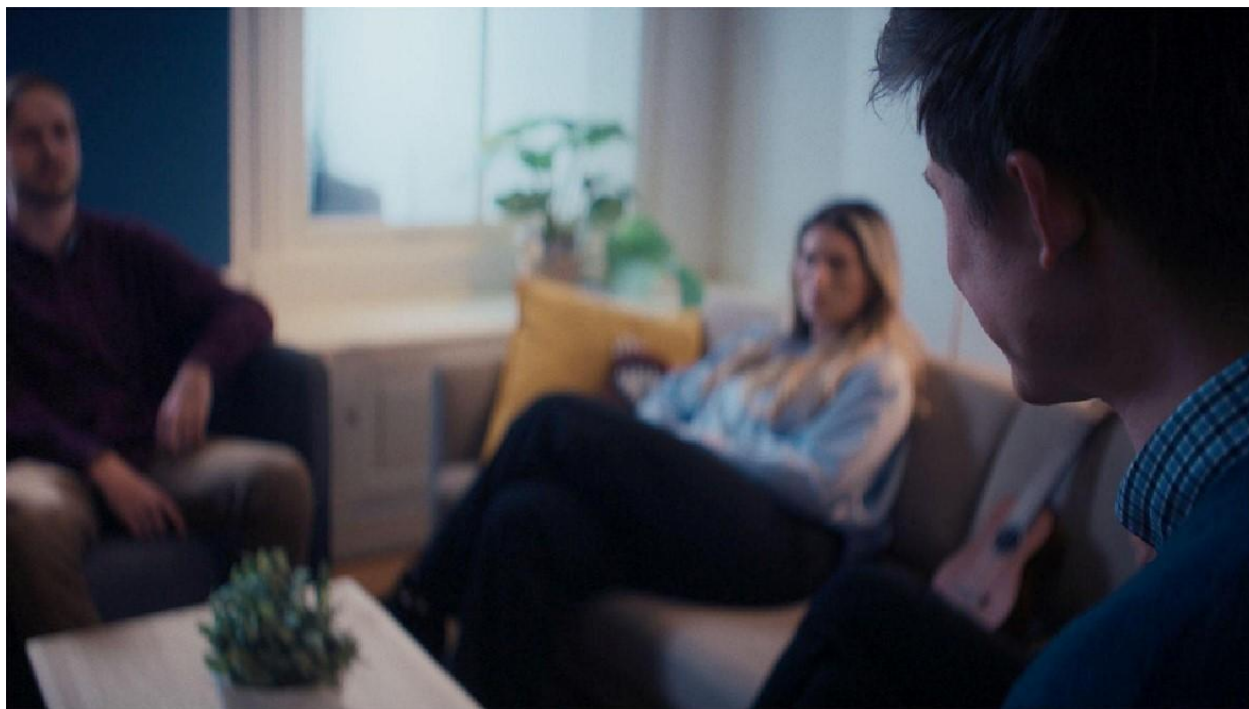
Wesley finds Timothy particularly interesting because he gives her the attention she values as a client. He asks for her opinion and seems genuinely interested in her ideas and wishes, providing her with a sense of involvement and respect. This sets Timothy apart from others around her and enhances her positive impression of him.

Confident and comfortable in herself, Wesley does not hesitate to speak openly about her extravagant and sometimes unconventional private life. This openness reflects her confidence and the freedom with which she approaches her personal and professional life. Her willingness to share her life contributes to her outspoken and colorful personality.

Wesley's unique combination of observation, appreciation for genuine interaction, and self-confidence makes her an intriguing and influential figure within the graphic design agency. Her presence and communication style impact how she is perceived by others, including Timothy.

## STILLS







# CONTACT

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# UNSPOKEN TRUTH

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