

## Swedish Film History's Sweetest Pair



Alexandra Dahlström (left) plays Elin and Rebecca Liljeberg plays Agnes in Lukas Moodysson's film *Show Me Love*.

Photo: Charlotte Eliasson

I meet the protagonists of *Show Me Love* - Rebecca and Alexandra - right after seeing the movie, so it takes a while before the images of Agnes and Elin fade as we sit among the cinema armchairs. In private they are more similar to each other. Both have hooded sweatshirts. Rebecca is much older than she looks. Alexandra has glasses and less makeup than in the movie.

How did you find role models for your roles, do you know some young lesbians?

Alexandra:

- I'm 14. No one I know has come out. I would respond with "Damn, that's great! How nice you dared to say it." It would be great if someone came out thanks to the movie.

Rebecca thinks it's important to give people a little courage to see that life is not falling apart because others might find out that you're gay, it is often the opposite.

She believes that it is difficult to know in advance how a friend would react if you came out.

- I know some gays but they are older, around 25. And a couple of 55-year-olds who I know quite well.
- I grew up with a clear vision, my mom is Left party, communist, feminist. We've always talked about love between girls and between guys just like heterosexuals.

Alexandra:

- I get angry at my mom when she starts talking about the nature that God created. There shouldn't be any special kind of man to man love, it's just that one falls in love with someone.

### **Bisexuality**

- I tell my girlfriend that I love her, I do. It would feel strange to have sex with her... but I do not rule out at all that I'm bisexual. I think that's all it is.

Rebecca agrees.

- I believe that even I am, although I've never had a steady girlfriend. I have known feelings that resembled an awful lot like love, though they have been for a girl. I know many others who have as well.
- The line between friendship and love, it's so damn blurry.

She gets a serious expression and says:

- The only obstacle is in people's minds, what they have been persuaded to think. But the world will change and everyone will fall in love with everyone. Still, I've always opted for guys. I find it easier to fall in love with guys for some reason.
- I think guys my age are disgusting! exclaims Alexandra.

There has been much discussion in the media about girls being called "whores" in high school. "Cock", "homo", "pussy" used as profanity which adds to the score. Elin says in the film "What do I get if I kiss her?" and her sister replies "Well, you'll get AIDS probably." How was it when you went to high school?

- I'm still in fucking high school, sighs Alexandra.
- Sometimes I think that there lives a little old lady in me that's like, 30, and she just gets annoyed at everyone my age. I think

there are many who worry about how big their thighs are, if they have the proper clothing and if they have been with many guys or if they are a whore, or if they don't get all the guys, it's like so... stupid. It's not interesting to talk with them.

- There is certainly someone who is the biggest nerd and I even notice that I will be so in love with him when I'm 20.

### **Feminists**

- You're so limited in appearance too, it's really tough. I'm all for appearance but I feel so fucking manipulated.

Are you feminists?

- Yes, absolutely, they both say, but Alexandra hastens to add:
- Though I don't burn the H&M posters.
- Nah, I don't demonstrate in front of porn clubs, I could do it but... I am clearly a feminist, says Rebecca.
- Last time I read *VeckoRevyn* I wanted to burn it, says Alexandra in her pithy way, and continues:
- It's the 13-year-olds that read it. Girls who are insecure and looking for something to help them and support them and tell them how to behave. The covers of *VeckoRevyn* are about "25 things that will make you more interesting", "the five best ways to get your boyfriend to climax" and then anal sex in the first place. All the girls who write to them and wonder if they are abnormal and if they get it wrong when they satisfy their guys - they learn of course to just hate themselves.

Rebecca believes that it is more insecure girls who are being affected.

- They will hopefully grow out of it, but some don't and that's what is so terrible.

Alexandra adds that she, after all, is looking to let *VeckoRevyn* interview her, because it is still quite big to be interviewed in the newspaper when you're 14.

- I was supposed to sit there and just chew gum and paint my nails.

- And confirm their view of girls

Rebecca says she longed to be out of high school in Nynashamn every second.

- It was just ooh move, move.

And she did well as soon as she finished.

- High school was really not fun. Luuk has really gotten it right. I don't really know why, but he knows it is.

It is rare that in high school you call each other "fucking dyke", it is more accepted with lesbians, they both think.

- Girls usually are supposed to kiss each other at parties. It is quite common when you are drunk that a girl will kiss another girl.

### **Love Scenes**

So it wasn't dramatic to do love scenes then, or?

- No, they both say.
- It was difficult with Mathias, who plays Johan, says Alexandra. I didn't know him as well as Rebecca. It was hard to know if you should shove tongues down each other's throats.
- We determined they direct us to do that, says Rebecca, laughing.

You can tell that they like each other and during the shoot when they hug and Rebecca kisses Alexandra's cheek, turning suddenly to Agnes and Elin from Åmål again. Swedish film history's absolute cutest couple.

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Camilla Ridström

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