

Small - But Adult

Name: Alexandra Dahlström

Age: 15

Lives: With family in Alvik, Stockholm

Boyfriend: Yes

Background: Debuted in *Truth or Dare*. Broke through as Elin in *Show Me Love* and won a Guldbagge with Rebecca Liljeberg. Has also appeared in a music video for *Babalou Smith* and plays Little Red Riding Hood in a short film on ZTV against a black spirit (Jonna Bergh plays Alexandra's robot mom).

Currently: In the play *Kranes Konditori* at the Royal Dramatic Theatre. Also has a role in Kjell Sundvall's upcoming film *In Bed With Santa*.

From Åmål to Swedish Theatre

The years have forced Alexandra Dahlström to grow up fast. On Wednesday she made her debut on the stage at the Royal Dramatic Theatre.

- Hello, said Alexandra Dahlström the first time we meet. Can I borrow your cowboy hat?

Alexandra stomps around the apartment in Trollhättan. She is nervous, stressed, wearing a long dress and has borrowed her mother's high-heeled shoes that she has not quite mastered. Lukas Moodysson looks amused and asks if she really would wear those shoes at the premiere. "You'll hardly be able to get there."

- Of course I will, said Alexandra and devotes all her concentration to painting her nails in a colour called Las Vegas.

No One Could Have Imagined

It's almost, but not quite, a year ago today that Alexandra and the others from *Show Me Love* saw the finished film for the first time. No one could have imagined how it would change their lives.

Show Me Love was never a "regular movie". It was not something you paid for, watched and then it was over. *Show Me Love* was something completely different, it made a difference. *Show Me Love* changed many young Swedes' lives; most significantly it altered Alexandra's.

No Candy Questions

In one year she has become Sweden's youngest public adult person, she has spoken verging on adult language. A parallel to the *A-Teens* gets

interesting. Ever since the 16-year-olds in the **A-Teens** became Sweden's most sought after pop act, the questions they received in general stopped at what their favourite candy is. Alexandra was 14 when **Show Me Love** premiered and I don't think anyone knows what kind of candy she eats, however, they are probably clear on where Alexandra stands on issues such as the increasing obsession with appearance.

- But it's clear that I sometimes feel that I am expected to respond to adult issues. It's probably because I'm so precocious, Alexandra says, adding that Amit in **A-Teens** attends her school.
- I think he is a bit annoyed. I have heard that people go and sing "Su-per Troo-per" to him in the hallways, it's bad.
- I've been forced to take a stance for or against things, and then I had to pay for it before the entire Swedish population. But not one gets quite what I'm saying. Not even in my social studies classes do they understand everything that I mean.

The day before Alexandra and I will meet in another context, I tell her that I'm going to see Stanley Kubrick's **Eyes Wide Shut** the next day and then I write a note to Alexandra with two questions. "What do you want us to talk about tomorrow?" and "What do you not want to talk about tomorrow?" When I get it back it says that she wants to talk about Boogie Circle and she does not want to talk about the Guldbagge Gala (boring).

Debut at the Royal Dramatic Theatre

Barely a year after the premiere of **Show Me Love** Alexandra makes her stage debut at the Royal Dramatic Theatre. It's pretty overwhelming for a fifteen year old who has never stood on a stage before. Three hours, four nights a week for some time, she will devote herself to playing Borghild Stordal, the daughter of the desperate Katinka (Solveig Ternström) in **Kranes Konditori**. She is on stage three, intense times during the two-hour play.

- I thought the worst things about the Royal Dramatic Theatre before. No way, maybe not bad things exactly, but I thought I would have to excuse myself all the time and people would pat me on the head. But those I work with are the best, they don't expect me to know everything, but they do not embarrass me either.

A Busy Girl

It has not been easy to get a meeting with Alexandra. School and theatre rehearsals absorb almost all of her time. But on the day of

our meeting, the phone rings just after lunch. It's Alexandra who asks if she can go to see **Eyes Wide Shut**.

- Please! she says.

The movie is good, but it irritates us that the girls are naked all the time but we only get a glimpse of Tom Cruise's penis. Alexandra loves Stanley Kubrick since she saw **A Clockwork Orange** last summer.

- In seeing it, I realized that revenge doesn't work. It's true, but...

Last summer, she decided to take revenge on a guy, make him jealous. The moment she saw a cute guy who was sitting on the pavement, Alexandra pounced on him and kissed him. Now, Alexandra and the guy on the pavement are coming to Luleå together.

- It's obvious that sometimes I utilize my celebrity status. As in that situation. But it ended up being lucky after all. Furthermore... I've never been the worst looking girl, she laughs out loud.
- Yes, I'm good looking! But I have strange clothes and I don't shave my armpits. Would you like to see?

Alexandra pulls up her shirt and shows me a hairy armpit.

- How is it, nice? It's just beautiful, like life.

Let's talk about Boogie Circle (the Russian toaster) now?

- When I was in Luleå and visited him last time, we were in a basement with some of his buddies. They are Rastafarians, but have an awesome track of music, there were old Pandora hits and everything! They asked me to toast in Russian in a song they did, so I did it.

What did you toast about?

- Mostly that I'm annoyed with myself because I keep on forgetting Russian.

Bikini in Russia

Alexandra loves Russia, her mother comes from there, but when she recently found out she was depicted in a bikini for **Show Me Love**, she was pissed. To Lucy, a mailing list that we're both on, she sent out a desperate message. "Aaagh, I talked with my mom saying that I wanted to sue them as recently as this morning, when she said that it is

lawless there. I shall in all cases get the image removed. I love the country but damn how wrong that is. Not just from a feminist perspective."

- I must remember that. But I get pissed. I don't even have a bikini on me in the film. Later I got a call that someone would paint over the bikini and let it be a black dress instead.

This evening Alexandra will have to pull-through at the Royal Dramatic Theatre and asks if I want to go with her. When we are waiting for the elevator to take us to Alexandra's dressing room, she takes a deep breath and absorbs the Royal Dramatic air.

- You know, there is something special here, isn't there?

She says cheerfully that she got a hug from Jonas Gardell and she said "Hi!" to Micke Persbrandt. She likes the lessons from her voice teacher. She has learned how to speak with a "theatre voice".

- To talk to, says Alexandra with a voice that rumbles between the walls. The performance is good and Alexandra's character Borghild is afraid. Alexandra herself is not afraid of anything.
- I'm simply not inclined in that direction. I'm not scared about the future. I don't really know if I want to be an actress, but that stuff fades. Only I get to do what I want most of all when I grow up.

Avoids Criticism

Because of Alexandra's young age, she will most likely not be criticized too much in the reviews of *Kranes Konditori* even if she was bad (which she is not) I think she is good.

- It's probably good to avoid having read that it sucks when you're fifteen. I'm not finished yet, and it's the first time.

After the performance, the ensemble has a get together and we say goodbye. As I sit on the bus home suddenly Alexandra jumps on.

- I was good, so I could leave at once, she says.

She is going to a friend's house, she must unwind a little before she goes home, and when she stands up to get off at her stop she says suddenly.

- You asked before if I thought that I want to do more theater? Now I know that I want to, it's so awesome! Film can be good at first, but the theatre is more difficult. I think it's more fun.

Bye, see you!

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Jonna Bergh

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