

Show Me Love's Alexandra Gets Behind the Camera



Alexandra Dahlström is the director of the short film *Lacrimosa* which was shown at the Stockholm Film Festival.

Photo: Alexandra Aristarhova

14-years old and she was thrust into the movie theaters as the rebel Elin in *Show Me Love*.

After several years in Italian exile, Alexandra Dahlström is now currently in Sweden. This time as a director.

Friday, November 23rd is Alexandra Dahlström's directorial debut, the short film *Lacrimosa*, at the Stockholm Film Festival. She finds herself now in Thailand to assist Lukas Moodysson on the set of his new film *Mammoth*. We are able to correspond with her via email.

You were an assistant director already in *Lilja-4-ever*. It seems that these ideas have been around for a while?

- Mm, I wanted to put myself in the spotlight at the movies when I was only fourteen. Then, when I was seventeen, a friend and I put up *Medea*. We prepared two translations, one of Hjalmarsson Gullberg and Agneta Pleikel, for several months. When we finished, we had compressed this colossal tragedy for half an hour. It was among the funniest things I've done in my entire life.

How seriously do you want to bet on a directing career?

- I want to produce eventually. But first I want to have a law degree. But you still have to do one thing at a time. I started buying records when I was thirteen and put nearly all my money into it. Then I discovered that I knew more about film, even though I never made an effort in the same way. If you're a movie geek and like to write, it's probably a natural consequence wanting to direct sooner or later.

Female directors are so far under-represented in the Swedish film industry. Does that scare you?

- I look so little on Swedish stuff. I have always loved Claire Danes, Agnès Jaoui and even Asia Argento. And they're not Swedish. It's such a waste of energy to keep on thinking along such lines. You should do what you want and believe in it and not constantly look for problems.

What is your dream project as a director?

- A film about war and fire, the royal family and impossible love that still manages to disprove human evil in the end. Though I have not written it yet.

We have not seen you on the silver screen in Sweden since *Miss Sweden*. But next year you show up in Manuel Concha's movie *Bashtu*. Why has it taken so long?

- Because I have focused on a European career. I've been shooting in Rome, a television series in Amsterdam and sample filmed a shitload in Paris. I have been very careful to not lose touch with Sweden so I've been hanging around here as often as I could.

In your blog, you describe an Italian film industry that is both sexist and appearance fixated. How do you handle it?

- By not taking it too seriously. One can play with her blonde hair and gaze their bright eyes at them to test shoot for you. But the key is to learn good Italian and remember what it is you want and why. Italians are extremely racist and superficial. Though it has been well understood how they think so it is quite easy to fool them.

Alexandra Dahlström Facts:

Age: 23

Residence: Rome

Family: Yes.

Earlier Films: *Truth or Dare, Show Me Love, In Bed With Santa* and *Miss Sweden*.

Current: As a director of the short film *Lacrimosa* and an actress in Manuel Concha's *Bashtu*.

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Martin Ekelund

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Footnote: *Bashtu* was the working title of Manuel Concha's film now known as *Mañana*.