

"I'm so damn happy."

Alexandra Dahlström on being cocky, in love and an adult: I have longed.



Alexandra Dahlström is now 25-years-old and has decided to invest everything into film making and directing. "Before, I wanted to be an academic. In high school, I longed for University. I anticipated that I would have to immerse myself more." she says.

Foto: Björn Lindahl

Ten years ago, she played a drug craving teen with small-town angst.

Today Alexandra Dahlström is in a new comedy and newly in love.

"It sounds so unsympathetic to say but I'm really happy," says the actress.

Helena af Sandeberg and **Alexandra Dahlström** have nearly identical hairstyles.

It is no surprise or a problem in itself, but before filming began for the comedy *Mañana* it became a problem. The actresses simply could not look the same in the movie.

The solution was to darken Alexandra's blonde hair just before filming.

For Alexandra Dahlström, who plays the hairdresser Petra, she took excellent initiative.

"I asked them technically how it works and how you look at a head, when to cut it, what you think and stuff like that," says Alexandra methodically and enthusiastically.

There were many scenes in which this knowledge was not needed for *Mañana*. And of the few scenes that it was needed, she was helped by those who worked in the hair salon where they recorded.

"It's more out of desire"

I bring up the 'need for control' at Rival hotel's most reclusive café table but Alexandra protests.

"It's more out of desire and curiosity than control. But I do not like when people are careless. It's about me wanting the results to be good. So I think it is necessary to pay attention to detail and not just believe everything will work out itself. One has to do their job fully, then it will be the best."

It's an attitude that has taken 25-year-old Alexandra far. Both in her career and geographically.

Since her last feature film *Miss Sweden*, Alexandra has fluctuated between countries and roles, mainly outside of Sweden.

She has been in Rome for over two years where a few feature film projects fizzled. Instead, Alexandra focused on auditions, learned the Italian film industry, acquired

an agent in France, directed her first short film and recorded fifteen episodes of the Dutch soap opera *Goede tijden, slechte tijden*.

Alexandra played the Swedish exchange student Skylar Nilsson and mixed Swedish, Dutch and English.

"They sat with a Nordic name book and thought it was a typical Nordic name. There was no one who could explain to them at the time that it is not a very common name," says Alexandra and laughs.

"The series runs every day after the news and is like its own little subculture. Some actresses have been on for 18 years. But one becomes very connected with the series. It was great fun but maybe it was not my destiny to be with the Dutch television series."

Her first Swedish film in five years

Alexandra now lives permanently in Stockholm but works in both Italy and France.

Mañana is her first Swedish film in five years.

"I was so happy over the role of Petra because I get to show a more mature side of myself. Now it really feels like I've come into a new part of my life where I'm a bit more grown up and ready for such challenges. One becomes an adult whether you like it or not, and I'm very glad that I have. I think it's a wonderful thing."

Does it have to do with age or are there other things in your life that make you ready?

"I have friends who have a little anxiety about being 25. We live in a very age-fixated society. But I like to sit on the bus with dinner in a grocery bag and think about how I'm going to cook it. I feel the anticipation of things ahead and take responsibility. I really like it. I think I have longed to become an adult. It's easy to romanticize the teenage years but there is not much to romanticize. It's an interesting time because it is so fragile and everything is over in a pinch. But it's nice to leave those days behind."

Just as the fragile adolescence was captured in *Fucking Åmål*. The film was Alexandra's breakthrough as an actress, but also a cutting-edge youth movie that inspired a whole generation of teenagers. At least.

"I had a very special adolescence and was involved in such amazingly profound, special and fun things. I've always been grateful that I have had the chance to learn this profession on my own."

"Rewarding to have made the film"

It's been over ten years since the film premiered. How do you see "Show Me Love" today?

"I say to Lukas (Moodysson) that - 45% proud, 45% pleasure and maybe 10% less to talk about. I don't want a movie to define my life; there are a lot of other things that are more relevant and important. I will always have the role of a peer and it's very touching. And I will always have a connection to the youth. In that way, it is very rewarding to have made the film and that it's okay to be associated with it."

You and Lukas have been friends since then?

"Yes we have. I'm really good friends with his wife Coco Moodysson, she's a cartoonist and I am absolutely crazy about their kids. It feels like a kind of family. But they are quite media shy and do not like me talking about them in interviews."

What do you think about your own children?

"I'm 25. I'm so damn happy with how things are right now. It sounds so unsympathetic to say that I'm very happy but I am actually there. I'm in love. And I'm so glad for what I have in my life."

Directing feature films

Future plans are in place for her career. And she has things clearly mapped out.

"I want to direct a feature film. It's one of my..."

Alexandra starts.

"Goals and objectives - Or, I see it as a matter of time. It sounds so damn cocky to say but it seems like a natural progression of what I do now. I'll continue to combine acting with directing. And I am quite interested in making music videos. I'm open to different things, roles and projects. There is nothing written in stone. I'll take it as it comes - while I'm working hard and purposefully."

So she works. Hard, purposefully and with attention to detail.

We parted ways and exchanged email addresses with each other.

Alexandra would like to check our quotes.

FACTS

Name: Alexandra Dahlström
Age: 25-years-old
Profession: Actress and director
Lives: Stockholm
Family: Mother, Father, Sister and boyfriend.
Income: 63 400 SEK
Currently: Playing Petra in the comedy *Mañana* which had a theatrical release on May 8.

Alexandra on...

...the filming of *Mañana*:

"It was very nice and familiar filming. Manuel Concha is a very warm and generous director, and I think that can be seen. And I liked the movie as soon as I read the script. I thought it was hard to dance in a nightgown for one of the scenes. But the best part was that Manuel did it before me so it was okay to have fun. He took the sting out of it.

...playing Petra in *Mañana*:

"I thought it was great because she is so far from how I am in private. It was a challenge and it's fun to see what goes on when you do something completely different. I've also been through a breakup and relationships that have stalled even though you do not want to finish them. But this thing about security and stability may not be as important to me as it is for Petra. I am the person who thinks about paying off loans at 22-years-old. I am 25 and still a little roving, although I have started to calm down a little.

...working internationally:

"Yes, it is. I saw that there was a chance; I was quite shocked when I received fan mail from Japan or anywhere. In Germany they have carved wooden figures as a birthday gift when you turn 19. There has been so much response from *Fucking Åmål* but also *Miss Sweden*. When I noticed that there was an opening in Italy and France, the country that I love, I wanted to see what it could provide. And I've always thought about other cultures and found it exciting to learn more about them.

...directing her first short film *Lacrimosa*:

"I flew down my photographer from Sweden and we did everything completely with our own equipment. I cast and produced the film all by myself and got into the Stockholm International Film Festival. I won an honorable mention, and then I realized that perhaps I was on the right track.

2009-05-09

Joacim Persson

Source: <http://www.aftonbladet.se/nojesbladet/article11811878.ab>

Translated by: <http://alexandra-dahlstrom.net>