Don’t relax
Ruben Östlund’s
*Involuntary* hits Cannes

FEATURED FILMS
EVERLASTING MOMENTS
AM I BLACK ENOUGH FOR YOU?
PATRIK, AGE 1.5
INSTEAD OF ABRACADABRA
THE TALE OF LITTLE PUPPETBOY
“THE FILM INDUSTRY HAS ASSUMED THE SHAPE AND FORM OF A BUTCHERY AND FORNICATION BUSINESS”

Ingmar Bergman
Films with a confidence

IT'S WITH joy, pride and a strong sense of self-confidence that we Swedes arrive at Cannes this year. Since last year's festival, we’ve noticed a growing interest in the latest developments in Swedish film. It’s been a long time since we’ve had such a wide variation on offer. From blockbusters such as Amr – The Knight Templar (Amr - Tempelriknaren), which broke box-office records in Sweden, to intimate and revealing love stories filmed entirely on mobile telephones. And we’ve had Swedish films at all the major festivals: Sundance, Clermont-Ferrand, Rotterdam, Berlin and Tribeca. In Cannes we’re especially proud that the original and groundbreaking film In the Wrong Place, and instead of the usual family plot, the director of one of the biggest box-office hits in Sweden of recent years, Vargarna (Masjävlar) by Daniel Alfredson, which went straight to the top of the box-office chart on its release in Sweden, and can also be seen by international audiences in the Cannes film market. The film has sparked off a heated debate in Sweden over the vexed question of the lengths people can go to protect their families against the wolf, an animal threatened by extinction in Europe.

WE COME TO CANNES with a whole range of other interesting features, shorts and documentaries. And as usual, we and the other Nordic film institutes will be holding house at the Scandinavian Terrace, 55, La Croisette. Do come and meet us there, and find out just why Swedish film is so exciting right now. See you there!

CEOs LETTER

Spanish

The Swedish Film Institute has made a name for not shying away from sensitive subjects and taboos, and this year is no exception. Ella Lemhagen is back with a warm-hearted romantic comedy, Patrik, Age 15, in which we meet a gay couple in a middle class area who want to adopt. But a dot ends up in the wrong place, and instead of the cute little baby they envisaged, into their lives walks a sullen 15-year-old with criminal and homophobic tendencies. In Pulp we encounter a strong young woman as far removed from the hackneyed victim role as one can get – an empowering film by Maria Blom, the director of one of the biggest box-office hits in Sweden of recent years, Vargarna (Masjävlar).

And don’t miss Miss Wol (Urs) by Daniel Alfredson, which went straight to the top of the box-office chart on its release in Sweden, and can also be seen by international audiences in the Cannes film market. The film has sparked off a heated debate in Sweden over the vexed question of the lengths people can go to protect themselves against the wolf, an animal threatened by extinction in Europe.

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Clasli Elvin
CEO, Swedish Film Institute

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Mobile: +46-70-330 39 99
berra@filmvast.se
www.filmvast.se

Stockholm Film Commission
Maren Fors, Film Commissioner
Greva Garbo vâg 5, SE-169 40 Solna
Mobile: +46-70-330 39 99
maren.fors@stockfilm.com
www.stockfilm.com

Öresund Film Commission
Mikael Svensson, Film Commissioner
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Mikael Svensson, Film Commissioner
Svens Sparrs gata 3, SE-431 19 Ystad
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**NEWS**

**SIMONSSON/STJÄRNE NILSSON SOUND OF NOISE (FEATURE)**

Portrait of serial drummers

Ola Simonsson and Johannes Stjärne Nilsson have astonished the festival circuit with short films where unusual sounds and music make up most of the onscreen action. Now they’re working on their first feature film, Sound of Noise. They’re the kings of Swedish short film, whose films – with titles like Woman and Gramophone and Music for One Apartment and Six Drummers (Kvinna vid grammofon and Six Drummers) – have screened at festivals the world over and picked up countless awards. After 18 years in the business and almost as many shorts, Ola Simonsson and Johannes Stjärne Nilsson are currently working on their first feature film, Sound of Noise, a co-production between DP Film and the French company Illis. “It’s a film where music and sound have centre stage, and sometimes there’s a fine line between the two. Our hero, Warnebring, is a policeman who’s forced to confront his worst fears – the terrifying world of music in the hunt for his antagonists,” say the duo.

In Sound of Noise a group of eccentric “serial drummers” start baring on just about anything they can lay their hands on except drums. And all sound seems to disappear from the places where these musical guerrillas have struck.

“This winter we’ve been making a series of complicated recordings, things like the sound of bulldozers, heart-lung machines, cash counters, which we’ve turned into music. It’s quite hard to develop a screenplay based around music. Sometimes it’s more important to hear how a car sounds than to see what it looks like.”

HENRIK EMILSON

**ERIK ROSENLUND CHECKOO (SHORT)**

Checkoo yourself!

In Checkoo, Erik Rosenlund marries together an art deco look with 1970s jazz funk to tell the story of a 9 to 5 office worker who can’t keep up with his colleagues. So he decides to take a new miracle drug to help him out, Rosenlund’s special style has already taken him twice to the Cannes Film Festival, with Compulsion in 2003 and Looking Glass in 2007.

With Looking Glass you wanted to make a good-looking film that made for uncomfortable viewing. Is there a similar impulse behind Checkoo?

“Basically I want to entertain the audience and give them something to think about. I don’t have sole interpretation rights just because I’ve made a film. I wanted to stretch the boundaries form-wise for the way I can tell a story.”

What does Checkoo mean?

“It comes from the typeface used in the film. I created it myself based on the word ‘Checkoo’. It’s a word I like, and it looks great way I can tell a story.”

“T o show people who are coping with the fact that they’re slowly dying. And to show how strong the survival instinct is in all of us. That’s how it is for Bertil in the film, his first day in the home is a nightmare, but things soon start to brighten up.”

**PETER PONTIKIS NOT LIKE OTHERS (FEATURE)**

There will be bloodsuckers

Peter Pontikis, who competed at the 2006 Karlovy-Vary festival with The Gift (Paketet), is currently in post production with a low-budget feature entitled Not Like Others (Vampyrer). "I got the idea in a club when I saw a girl standing alone on the dance floor. A guy came up, forcing himself on her as if he were trying to pick her up. She didn’t appear to like it at first, but suddenly they went off together. That was the seed for the opening of the film where two sisters lure a guy into a toilet and drink his blood," says Pontikis. Both sisters are vampires, but one of them wants to leave the vampire life behind. "It’s a film about the fear of being alone, the fear that your nearest and dearest could disappear. You realise in an instant what matters most to you, and this is especially true of the vampires who live cut off from the rest of society."
PATRIK EKLUND INSTEAD OF ABRACADABRA (SHORT)

Magic moments

Last year, Patrik Eklund’s Situation Frank was selected for the Critics’ Week at Cannes. In 2008, his short instead of Abracadabra (Istället för Abrakadabra) about a young man who wants to be a magician, picked up a whole raft of awards at Cannes. In 2008, his short was selected for the Critics’ Week at Bergman Week in Fårö, June 24 – June 29, 2008, please visit www.bergmanveckan.se.

Bergman Week is organised jointly by Fårö Future, the Göteborg International Film Festival, Film Gotland and Gotland University.

Right now, directors David Aronowitsch and Hanna Heiborn are putting the finishing touches to a follow-up to their highly-acclaimed 2002 animated documentary Hidden (Gömöd) about a refugee child in Sweden.

Part two in a planned series of three about children in vulnerable and perilous situations is called Slaves (Slavar). It features two children taken prisoner by the state-funded military police in Sudan and forced into slavery. When the man who freed them visited Sweden to receive the 2003 World’s Children’s Prize for the Rights of the Child, he brought the children with him and the directors were able to meet them.

Like its predecessor, Slaves is based on true life interviews, the animated characters and settings following later. Designed by Mats Johansson at Acme, the two films are somewhat different in style despite belonging to the same series.

“Slaves has more realistic characters than Hidden, and for various reasons. In Slaves we’re striving towards a more simplified form. How much, or rather how little do you need to understand what we want to say? We have masses of thoughts and opinions about simplification. It’s not just about contrasts, but a host of other things, everything from choice of colours to lines and expressions. We’ve quite a lot on that point, and all three of us have quite distinct tastes,” say the two directors.

“At this rate, part three of the series should be ready in about five years’ time,” they quip.
January and July were the best admissions months in 2007.
Source: Facts and Figures 2008

With a background in off-the-wall music videos, Johannes Nyholm’s creativity has now led him to Cannes.

His claustrophobic clay animations make up the chapters of a 15-minute film, The Tale of Little Puppetboy (Sagan om den lille Dockpojken), which has been selected for the Directors’ Fortnight. It’s an angst-filled comedy about a boy who milks his problems to the full.

Based on the animations, Nyholm has also made a short featuring himself as his creation wearing a heavy costume. “I was working at the computer when a lump of clay turned into a sweaty little guy demanding attention. I’ve tried to get rid of him several times, but he’s tenacious. I don’t really care about the lump of clay, but there’s a story I have to tell to the end. So one day there might be another little puppetboy.”

JOHANNES NYHOLM
THE TALE OF LITTLE PUPPETBOY (SHORT)

Puppet Master

Anna Novion, Grown Ups is a relationship comedy about the cultural collisions that arise when a group of Frenchmen on holiday in Sweden are forced to share a house with a Swede and his daughter.

“I like engineering meetings between people who don’t know each other and who wouldn’t meet in the normal course of things,” says Novion, who is visiting Cannes for the first time.

“When I was 18 I said that if I ever went to Cannes it would be with one of my films, and that’s exactly what’s happened!”

Co-produced by the Swedish company DFM Fiktion, Grown Ups was shot on location in Sweden.

ANNA NOVIION
GROWN UPS (FEATURE)

The French connection

Did you know that...

21.6% was the market share for Swedish features in 2007.

1.62 was the number of cinema visits per average Swede in 2007.

January and July were the best admissions months in 2007.
Source: Facts and Figures 2008

A Swedish Wolf in Montreal

Daniel Alfredson’s Wolf (Varg), written by Kerstin Ekman and starring Peter Stormare (Minority Report; Prison Break) as the reindeer herder Klemens, has been a huge hit with Swedish critics and audiences alike. Now the film about Sami life in northern Sweden is set to cross the Atlantic: Wolf has been selected to compete in the Montreal World Film Festival.

Alfredson is also currently involved in the adaptation of The Girl Who Played With Fire (Flickan som lekte med elden), the second part of Stieg Larsson’s Millennium trilogy.
Fredrik Heinig, this year’s “Producer on the Move”, leans back in the green armchair in his sparsely furnished apartment in Stockholm’s Södermalm. He’s been selected by the Swedish Film Institute to represent Sweden when European Film Promotions bring the continent’s hottest young producers together on the French Riviera for this year’s Cannes Film Festival.

St Paul, Heinig’s production company, focuses on commercials and feature film productions, a well thought-out strategy.

“There’s a reason why we combine the two. Since it’s so tough to make features, we wanted to make sure that we get to make the films we really want to. I don’t want to make any old film once a year just to pay our wages,” he says.

HEINIG CAUSED A stir in Swedish film with the production of Darling, Johan Kling’s dark comedy about class differences. Refused production funding by the Swedish Film Institute, the film nonetheless went on to become one of 2007’s biggest Swedish successes. The relevant commissioner at the Film Institute subsequently issued a public apology for what was widely regarded as a glaring error.

Kling is just one of the directors in the St Paul stable. Others are Tomas Alfredson and Kristian Petri. All of them work both with commercials and feature films.

Next in line for Heinig is Johan Kling’s feature Trust Me, with a planned Swedish release date of autumn 2009. It’s one of the most eagerly-awaited films currently in production in Sweden. But it’s certainly no Darling mark II.

“Trust Me is a thoroughly modern farce à la Johan Kling. It’s a comedy that maintains Johan’s integrity and his somewhat cynical tone. It’s a brilliant and extremely funny screenplay, and just like Darling, there’s a strong personal vision behind it. In Sweden we’re often so script-fixated that we overlook what lies behind. People should listen more to directors. Do they have their own voice, a vision, and do they have the qualities and skills to realise that vision?”

ST PAUL’S OTHER forthcoming project, Kristian Petri’s Bad Faith (Ond tro), is a completely different affair. A dark tale about a woman who witnesses a serial killer commit a heinous murder. With the tone of an Edgar Allan Poe story, the film is based on an original screenplay by the playwright Magnus Dahlström, whose By Burning Iron (Järnbörd) caused an upset when it first appeared in 1980.

“Bad Faith has all the ingredients to become a truly disturbing film on many levels. Magnus Dahlström has a very personal style, and anyone familiar with his work will recognise the territory of evil and fear,” explains Heinig. It’s patently clear that Trust Me and Bad Faith aren’t just bread and butter for Heinig: they’re films he passionately believes in. And that’s where the St Paul philosophy kicks in – only ever make the features you really want to. No compromises.

“PEOPLE SHOULD LISTEN MORE TO DIRECTORS. DO THEY HAVE THEIR OWN VOICE, A VISION?”
When you’re travelling by car at night, you’re open to all kinds of impressions. There and then I was struck by just how visual this music is.”

On a road trip in America, director Göran Olsson and a friend were travelling through the Nevada desert when they pulled in to a gas station. As they drove away, classic 70s Philly soul music, recorded at the legendary Philadelphia International studio at 309 South Broad Street, filled their car through the night.

“My first idea was to make a film about Philly soul, then I narrowed it down to Billy Paul, since I feel he’s been rather overlooked in recent years,” says Olsson.

Stevie Wonder and Marvin Gaye are, of course, the giants of soul, iconic artists who have cast a shadow over many others whose careers have not been quite so illustrious. One of these is Billy Paul, now in his early seventies, who in his heyday sang some of the most memorable songs in black music. Best known is the silky-smooth ballad of infidelity Me & Mrs Jones. Yet Am I Black Enough for You?, Göran Olsson’s forthcoming film about the jazz-trained singer, is so much more than a music documentary.

“It’s not primarily aimed at those who are already familiar with Billy’s music, but for people who are interested in music in general. It’s a film about love, marriage, about life’s complications. I’ve always made films that were controversial or different, but this time I’ve gone more measured, more mainstream maybe, and perhaps even a little more American in style.”

DIRECTOR AND DOCUMENTARY filmmaker Göran Olsson has previously made a number of acclaimed films about tough subjects, such as the scandal-ridden Swedish rapper Leila K, attitudes towards

FACTS AND FIGURES Göran Olsson
Director who has made commercial, short and documentary films plus music videos. Worked at Sveriges Television on the cult documentary short film programme Ikon. Invented the A-Cam, a 16mm film camera. One of the founders of Story, a production company that specialises in documentaries for television and the cinema.

How much time did you spend with Billy Paul himself?

"We went to Philadelphia five times, flew with him to Paris and followed him on a month’s tour in Brazil."

What’s most fascinating about Billy Paul is his constant appeal to new generations of soul fans. Göran Olsson has taken a hard look at that appeal:

"Billy sometimes uses an early form of sampling. He takes good melodies from white music, such as Elton John’s ‘Your Song’ or Bob Dylan’s ‘Don’t Think Twice and uses them to his own ends. It’s a sort of 70s version of Puff Daddy."

And then there’s his voice, of course:

"He acts both as composer and producer with his voice: He uses it like an instrument, often re-writing the melody. It takes quite a level of musicality to take a song and make it uniquely your own. And Billy Paul has that special talent."

**F A C T S  A N D  F I G U R E S  B I L L Y  P A U L**

72-year-old soul singer with a background in jazz whose career began back in the late 1950s. Yet it was in the early 70s that he enjoyed his greatest success when he became one of the stars of the Philly soul phenomenon. Emanating from Philadelphia, Philly soul was an almost symphonic take on disco soul, resonant with strings. It was mastered by the songwriter/producer duo Kenneth Gamble and Leon Huff on their Philadelphia International record label. Billy Paul’s greatest hits include ‘I’m Gonna Love Me Again’ and his own take on Elton John’s ‘Your Song’.

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What a difference a dot makes...

Swedes have always been at the cutting edge when it comes to sexual politics and issues of gender. So in many ways, Ella Lemhagen’s forthcoming romcom Patrik, Age 1.5 about gay adoption is just one more step along the road.

“THIS IS THE FILM I’VE MADE, AND I’M PROUD OF IT.”

Decades ago, when Swedish actresses showed their nipples on film somewhere in the Stockholm archipelago, it caused quite a commotion. Since then (Ingmar Bergman’s Summer with Monika was released in 1953) many a Swede abroad has encountered questions about our (supposedly) sinful ways – and we’re still known around the globe for our liberal ways. Not so much perhaps for our views on exposed nipples, but because these days we are at the cutting edge when it comes to issues like equality between the sexes and gay rights.

All of which kind of leads us to director Ella Lemhagen’s latest effort: Patrik, Age 1.5, a romcom about gay adoption. In it she tells the story of how a tiny dot makes all the difference when Sven and Göran are looking to adopt. Instead of a rosy-cheeked baby of 1.5 years, they end up with a homophobic 15 year-old delinquent to take care of!

AS LEMHAGEN PUTS IT, it’s not a coming out story of a gay couple in a small, sleepy Swedish town. It’s rather a coming in story. Sven and Göran want part of the whole Average Joe lifestyle, to mix with the neighbours, get invited to the garden parties and have a family of their own. On the way they struggle with other people’s prejudices – and with each other.

Did you encounter any prejudice when you were making the film?

“A lot less than I thought I would! It has all felt... very liberal. But I guess it’s been different through different phases. When I was writing the script there were no problems, but during the casting I met a lot of actors who weren’t at all comfortable with being intimate with another man. I had to answer a lot of questions about whether there’d be sex scenes and things like that. And when we were location scouting we initially – for some reason – held back on talking about what the film was about. When we eventually told people, not one single person reacted in any negative way. Not one! It was just us being prejudiced against small town people”, Lemhagen laughs.

What do you want people to feel or think when they walk out of the cinema after seeing Patrik, Age 1.5?

“I wanted to make a romcom, a love story about the different relationships between three men. Romcom might sound corny, but I wanted it to be romantic, and I wanted it to be fun. And, I wanted it to be very emotional. If it had been a story about a heterosexual couple it wouldn’t have been as interesting for me. So, even though I’ve made it in a very traditional way, the fact that it’s about two men does have consequences in a lot of situations. That...
said, we’ve given a lot of thought on how to portray their ‘gayness’. Should we make a thing out of it, should we not, how should we do the love scenes? In the end we ended up doing it just like we would have if it were about a man and a woman. No more, no less.”

Still, I got a feeling that the audience at the screening I went to didn’t quite know how to react during some of the scenes...

“My idea was to start slow, with a loving hug and kiss between them, then a little later we have a classical romantic sex scene where the camera sweeps over them and there’s music – we actually looked at From Here to Eternity and blocked it like a super-classic love scene – and then in the end throw in a sex scene that’s a little more raunchy. And that’s exactly what we did. Some people might have a problem with it, I don’t.”

If the early cliché about gay people on film was that they were either suicidal or ice cold killers, the modern cliché is rather that gay men are home decorators, hairdressers, designers or tell the models in Top Model how to strut down the catwalk. What kind of discussions did you have around those clichés?

“Actors Gustaf Skarsgård and I discussed how effeminate his character should be. I didn’t want him to be too effeminate – and I know I’ll probably have to answer to this over and over again – because I wanted the audience to identify with him, see this guy and feel the love story rather than focusing on anything else. Sure, I could have made a film about two men listening to ‘gay’ music, wearing ‘gay’ clothes and all that, because that would be true too. Of course it would! But, this isn’t a film about all gay men. This is a film about these two individuals just as themselves. And I’ve never been interested in making anything else.”

Are you nervous about how it’s going to be received?

“I’m not nervous, but I am fully aware that some discussions are bound to come up. Some people will think it’s too much, others too little, some will say it’s not political enough, while others will think it’s too political. There’s nothing I can do about that. This is the film I’ve made, and I’m proud of it.”
One of the five episodes in Ruben Östlund’s *Involuntary* takes place on a guided coach tour. Playing herself and sitting near the front of the coach, the actress Maria Lundqvist accidentally pulls down a curtain rail. Right at the back is a rowdy gang of youngsters. Following a comfort break, the angry coach driver says that something has been broken. Feeling unfairly accused, the young people wonder what he’s talking about. He explains that it’s a curtain rail, and stares menacingly at the youngsters.

“In that situation Maria Lundqvist has just a short moment to confess what she’s done. If she misses that opportunity, her disgrace will be all the greater the longer time goes on. She opts to remain silent, whereupon the driver refuses to drive on. I’m drawn to situations like that,” says Östlund.

WHEN I MEET him, Östlund is busy with the final cut of *Involuntary*, his second feature. The only clip he can show me from the film is a short one in which a gang of guys are outside and partying. It ends with one of them, naked and standing on his head, having the Swedish flag shoved up his butt, much to the delight of his companions.

A few days prior to our interview Östlund screened a rough cut of the film to an international panel of representatives from the European film industry.

“What’s interesting is just how differently people interpret things. The French, for example, were adamant that the entire gang of guys were gay. So we’ll have to re-edit that scene. And they said about the coach driver that if they had been on the bus, they would have beaten the crap out of him,” laughs Östlund.

The director, who hails from Göteborg, is used to a whole gamut of reactions to his work. His first feature, *The Guitar Mongoloid* (*Gitarrmongot*, 2004), divided Sweden’s critics. One group praised Östlund, seeing in him a new kind of Swedish film narrator. Others regarded the film – on the surface a rambling F

FACTS AND FIGURES
RUBEN ÖSTLUND
BORN: 1974 on the island of Styrsö.
LIVES IN: Göteborg.
TRAINING: The School of Film Directing at the Göteborg University (1998-2001).

“I don’t want relaxed audiences,” says Ruben Östlund, a director whose strict work ethic even extends to the people who watch his films. This year, that includes the Cannes audience – Östlund’s second feature *Involuntary* has made it to Un Certain Regard.

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guided coach tour. Playing herself and sitting near the front of the coach, the actress Maria Lundqvist accidentally pulls down a curtain rail. Right at the back is a rowdy gang of youngsters. Following a comfort break, the angry coach driver says that something has been broken. Feeling unfairly accused, the young people wonder what he’s talking about. He explains that it’s a curtain rail, and stares menacingly at the youngsters.

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episode film about a series of odd individuals in and around Göteborg – as altogether less appealing. It was hard to remain neutral in the face of the extremely naturalistic feel of the film. Long scenes with a stationary camera shot at distance, no close-ups, ‘unnatural’ natural people (no professional actors), and a total lack of any normal plot.

“I wanted fiction and documentary to go head-to-head. Is this for real? So I had a reason to create confusion. With Involuntary I’ve removed that uncertainty in that we’re following five episodes more closely. But the tone is still realistic, so people might think we’ve been amazingly lucky. And the stationary camera is there once again,” says Östlund.

ÖSTLUND DEFINES Involuntary as a tragicomedy or a comic tragedy about people who are trying to get away from social games.

“What I like best is the combination of comedy and tragedy at one and the same time. Because that’s the way it is. And I want the viewer to reflect on what’s happening. You shouldn’t just expect the director to make everything clear. In Involuntary we’ve let things happen out of shot just to frustrate the viewer into imagining what’s happening. I don’t want relaxed audiences,” says Östlund.

One theme running through all of Östlund’s films – from scenes in The Guitar Mongoloid, the National Film Award-nominated Autobiographical Scene Number 6882 (Scen nr: 6882 ur mitt liv), the short Nattbad, to Maria Lundqvist on the coach – is the familiar banter of a group of friends that dies out when things go too far and there’s no turning back.

“When I made The Guitar Mongoloid I touched on stories about things that made people go further and further. One of the people I read about was André, an engineer at the end of the 19th century who wanted to fly to the North Pole in a hot air balloon. From his diary you can clearly read that he was convinced that the project wouldn’t work. But things had got out of hand, and he couldn’t extricate himself from it,” says Östlund.

Like The Guitar Mongoloid, Involuntary is produced by Plattform, the production company Östlund runs together with his friend and colleague Erik Hemmendorf (see insert). Plattform is getting a real helping hand to sell the film abroad from Frenchman Philippe Bober, who has previously co-produced films for such international names as Lars von Trier, Carlos Reygadas and Ulrich Seidl.

“Philippe works with a select group of people, and he works long and hard on their behalf. Our goal from the outset was to be selected for Cannes, a goal that many people thought unrealistic, but it’s important for us to aim high. It means that we’re always working to the utmost of our abilities,” says Östlund.

Bober has also worked with Östlund’s Göteborg colleague, Roy Andersson. (Kalle Boman, who produced Andersson’s A Swedish Love Story and Giliap, was also one of the co-producers of The Guitar Mongoloid.) Andersson is something of a role model for Östlund.

“I think that Roy is one of the most interesting
ERIK HEMMENDORFF
Plattform
for change

A Göteborg production company is challenging conventional notions of what filmmaking should be.

Involuntary is produced by Plattform, a production company founded six years ago by Ruben Östlund and Erik Hemmendorff, who met as students at the School of Film Directing at the Göteborg University. “The Swedish producers who came to the school weren’t interested in our ideas. It was obvious that they were talking about films that had already been made, and we were talking about films that were going to be made. We wanted to start something new in film,” says Erik Hemmendorff.

THREE PLATTFORM FILMS are due for release in 2008: in addition to Involuntary there is Patrik Eriksson’s An Extraordinary Study in Human Degradation (En enastående studie i mänsklig förnedring) – Sweden’s first feature film shot entirely on mobile phone cameras – and the documentary Pang-pangbröder by Axel Danielsson. Future projects will include collaborations with the filmmakers Fijona Jonuzi and Mikael Karlsson. And there are more in the pipeline.

“Just the other day an 18 year-old came into the office and handed over his first film. 18! The film was amazing, of course. Plattform’s future looks bright,” says Hemmendorff.

Plattform is part of what its founders call the ‘Göteborg bubble’, a loose collective of filmmakers who share the same philosophy.

“We want to work like they did in the earliest days of film,” says Östlund.

RUBEN ÖSTLUND

ÖSTLUND HAD NEVER really intended to become a ‘regular’ director. A passionate skier, for many years he made a living making his own skiing films. He shot them during the winter and edited the films every summer. When he started at the School of Film Directing in Göteborg he wasn’t a cineaste at all. What did the whole skiing experience teach you?

“The first year I got to make my own skiing film I had a heavy camera and battery belt which I lugged around the mountains for four months without respite. I was so keen to make a good film. So what I learnt from the experience was that it’s damned hard work, that you can’t cheat your way to a good film. What happens in front of the camera is what you’ll see in the film. For me, that’s the most sensible way to work. And it’s a very demanding one.”

WE WANT TO WORK LIKE THEY DID IN THE EARLIEST DAYS OF FILM,”
On February 19, 2008 Fidel Castro stepped down after almost 40 years in power. The eyes of the world turned once again to the tiny island in the Caribbean which has played a key role through lengthy periods of modern history. Since Castro took power in 1959, Cuba has split people the world over into two camps, divided in their views of Castro’s single-party communist state or the USA’s longstanding trade embargo.

Breaking the mould somewhat was Buena Vista Social Club, which tried to show Cuba beyond politics and prejudice. The 1997 album, produced by Ry Cooder, featured more or less forgotten Cuban artists playing traditional music such as salsa, and Wim Wenders filmed the recording sessions in an Oscar-nominated documentary of the same name.

DIRECTOR DANIEL FRIDELL’S new film Cubaton – El Médico, presents Cuba in an entirely unique way on the silver screen. Its subject is how the Cuban doctor Raynier “El Médico” Casamayor Griñán is sought out by the Swedish music and video producer, Michel Miglis, high up in the Sierra Maestra mountains where Castro’s revolution once began.

Fridell documents the hopes and dreams of Miglis and El Médico and the conflicts that arise when the western record company executive meets the strong-willed Cuban doctor whose passion is to make music. Miglis wants to make a world star of El Médico, whereas the doctor is unsure whether he is willing to give up his proud profession to follow his dream.

“For many people Castro’s Cuba has been the last ideological outpost in an unjust world. For others Cuba is nothing more than a dictatorship, so this is a unique opportunity to present El Médico’s story and the struggle between communism and capitalism that will shape the country’s future and destiny,” observes Fridell.

And the situation grew even more interesting with Fidel Castro’s departure.

“Even while we were filming, Cuba was changing before our eyes. Much of the film has been influenced by the events,” concludes the filmmaker.

FACTS AND FIGURES

**DANIEL FRIDELL**

**BORN:** 1967

**BACKGROUND:** Educated at the Film Academy in Berlin and the Judith Weston Academy in the US. Since his debut film The Searchers (Sökarna, 1993) he has directed seven features, including Cry (30:e November, 1995), Beneath the Surface (Under Ytan, 1997), Swedish Beauty (Dubbel-8, 2000) and Say that You Love Me (Säg att du älskar mig, 2006).

**CURRENT FILM:** Cubaton – El Médico, produced by Thomas Allercrantz, Röde Orm Productions, who worked with Fridell on the television series A Class of Their Own (En klass för sig, 2001), awarded Best Nordic Children’s TV programme in Doublet 2001.

“**EVEN WHILE WE WERE FILMING, CUBA WAS CHANGING BEFORE OUR EYES.**”

**WORD NOAH TOLDO**
I’m sure he must have had a tough time with us Scandinavians.”

Jan Troell is referring to Paul Kohner (1902-1988), a prolific Hollywood personality, to put it mildly. In 1938 he launched a talent agency, whose clientele included many Europeans; Dietrich, Garbo, and von Stroheim soon came on board, as did John Huston, Henry Fonda and Lana Turner. In the 60s and 70s, Kohner picked up a batch of Nordic talent, many of whom had made their mark with Ingmar Bergman; Max von Sydow, Bibi Andersson, Liv Ullmann. Bergman himself also joined the ranks, as did Troell, fresh from the stateside success of his Emigrants saga.

Considerable talent, no doubt. As for the assignments, nothing special. Ullmann got a musical. For von Sydow, there were Nazis, Russian spies and… Jesus. For Andersson, the wife of a Russian spy (von Sydow, no less) and an Indian squaw (go figure).
Bergman got *The Serpent’s Egg*. Hardly *Cries and Whispers*, *Persona* or *Winter Light*. As for Troell, he was sent to Bora Bora to shoot Jason Robards, Mia Farrow and Max von Sydow during a hurricane in… *Hurricane*. Not a good film, they say (and virtually unscreened for decades). Troell can only agree. It was rather ridiculous.

“We quickly realized that Hollywood was something else. The actors were severely typecast, probably due to their accent. I was sent terrible scripts. But it was an adventure and an experience and one mustn’t forget the money they paid you. The amount was fittingly ridiculous, too.”

In fact it was the fee from *Hurricane* that helped Troell to finance several projects well into the 1980s, notably *The Flight of the Eagle* and *Land of Dreams*. As for experience, he says he got priceless advice from John Huston’s technique of directing actors. To this day, Troell swears by the same technique. And then there was Agneta Ulfsäter, a journalist who came all the way from Sweden to French Polynesia and the set of *Hurricane* for a location report. She soon became, and has since remained, Mrs Troell.

“WE QUICKLY REALIZED THAT HOLLYWOOD WAS SOMETHING ELSE”

Which leads us directly to his current cinematic enterprise, *Everlasting Moments*, based on the chronicles of his wife Agneta’s family, focuses on the early years of the last century. It’s the result of extensive research that has been in progress since 1986. And Troell has been on board all along.

She spent a full six years taping interviews with surviving relatives. I listened in, of course. I even came along with a camera and shot one of the interviews.”

Troell became increasingly taken in with the remarkable fates of those seemingly simple people from rural or working class backgrounds. “You can’t give anyone else the film rights for this one – I have to do it”, he told Agneta.

“Her initial idea was to do a television documentary, but I managed to step in and demand the material. Which she happily handed over.”

The two then started to turn fact into fiction. Two years later, a finished script had materialized. “Although we’ve changed things around quite a bit, most of the characters are authentic. Especially Maria, of course.”

Maria is Maria Larsson, the main protagonist of the story. In the year 1900 she is 23 years old and about to become subject to two life-affecting events. First, she wins a camera in a lottery. Then, later that year, she marries Sigfrid Larsson, a robust fellow…

FACTS AND FIGURES

**JAN TROELL**

Born: In Limhamn in the southernmost part of Sweden in 1931.

Background: Troell graduated as teacher, but his fondness of film and photography began at an early age. He directed his first short, *Stad* in 1960 and acted as cameraman in *The Pram* (**Barnvagnen**, 1962) the directorial debut of Bo Widerberg. The two friends have had a great influence on each other. Troell’s 1965 film adaptation of Eyvind Johnson’s short story *Interlude in the Marshland* (**Uppehåll i myrlandet**) really put him on the map. A rewarding career as feature director was soon underway. After a somewhat frustrating American sojourn, Troell returned to Sweden, where he has remained. He continues to produce landmarks cinema after his own head and heart, although he sometimes misses the days of black and white.


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Jan Troell on the set of *Everlasting Moments*.

Maria Bäckström as Maria Larsson in *Everlasting Moments*.

Nille Leander in *Everlasting Moments*.

Swedish actor Mikael Persbrandt in *Everlasting Moments*.
Larssons eviga ögonblick

A raw, fierce comment on the educational system with a dynamic performance from Per Oscarsson (Hans), which became subject to national debate as well as a top award in Berlin. “My own Dogma film” Troell later dubbed it.

Here is Your Life (Här har du dit, 1995)

Troell finally gave up his day job as teacher in order to direct Nobel Prize winner Eyvind Johnson’s massive autobiographical epic. Success was equally massive. Swedish cinema, basking in a golden age, had enlisted yet another major player.

Who Saw Him Die? (Ola, Dolf, 1968)

A new, fierce comment on the educational system with a dynamic performance from Per Oscarsson (Hans), which became subject to national debate as well as a top award in Berlin. “My own Dogma film” Troell later dubbed it.

The Emigrants (Utvandrarna, 1971), The New Land (Nybyg- gamle, 1972)

John Ford was interested in doing it, as were several others. Vilhelm Moberg, the author, said no. After having seen Here is Your Life, he had finally found his called-to-spokesmen. A great success, six Oscar nominations and Troell’s ticket to Hollywood.

attkinson-moments.jpg


A majestic document over the ill-fated 1887 North Pole balloon expedition of Hays and his wife. Troell’s ticket to Hollywood.

Zandy’s Bride (1974)

Gene Hackman and Liv Ullmann as struggling immigrants of the Old West looks good on the page, but Troell was not that pleased — especially since union decrees prevented him from using his beloved camera. Good supporting cast. Though, Susan Tyrell, Eileen Heckart and Harry Dean Stanton.

Bang (1977)

“Troell’s own If!” was marred by almost everyone and everything in its way, save for Ingrid Bergman, who took a shine to this middle-class crime story of a divorced fortysomething teacher. Troell’s only ever Cannes-entry.

The Emigrants

© 1971 AB SVENSK FILM INDUSTRI
STILL BY OVE ALSTRÖM

The Flight of the Eagle

© WARNER BROS. INC.

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8

from Troell

Everlasting Moments (Maria Larsson’s eviga ögonblick, 2006)

Stars Maria Heiskanen, Mikael Persbrandt and Jesper Christensen, with Amanda Ooms, Dolly Harris, Marie Lundqvist, Claire Wikholm, Hans Alfredson, Pierre Lindboe and Antti Reini, many of them regulars from the “Troell stock company”. Principal photography was handled by Agneta Ulfsäter-Troell and Niklas Rådström. The pan-Scandinavian production was a raw, fierce comment on the educational system with a dynamic performance from Per Oscarsson (Hans), which became subject to national debate as well as a top award in Berlin. “My own Dogma film” Troell later dubbed it.

© 1966 AB SVENSK FILM INDUSTRI
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STILL BY OVE ALSTRÖM

Here is Your Life

© 1996 AB SVENSK FILM INDUSTRI
STILL BY OVE ALSTRÖM

Here you are. Plus, unlike Maria (or W.C. Fields), Troell warmly welcomes children into the picture. Animals, too.

“Absolutely. Children can be extremely rewarding when they’re good. And Anders, our cat, has a part in the film. It’s not a big part, but he’s perfect. He almost behaves like a dog.”

AT THE AGE of 76, Troell presents quite a distinguished career; seven Oscar nominations, a Golden Berlin Bear for best film, a Silver Bear for direction, awards from Venice to Valladolid, from San Francisco to Oklahoma City. Plus, not to be frowned upon, an audience, outside the confines of the cineaste milieu.

“I hear many kind words”, he smiles. “So I must have an audience. I sometimes wish it would show up in the cinemas. The Emigrants did extremely well, of course. At the same time, I have never thought in popular terms. Of course I like to communicate. But I have to have fun. Otherwise I won’t do it. And I still think it’s fun, really fun and exciting, this line of work.”

“I HEAR MANY KIND WORDS SO I MUST HAVE AN AUDIENCE.”

with a generous taste for both liquor and women. In the years to come, Maria will give birth to seven children. She will endure much hardship, but also experience blessings. Many of these come from her unlikely relationship with the camera, this curious novelty item with which she captures her “everlast-
ing moments”.

AS FOR THOSE familiar with the everlasting moments of Troell himself, from Here is Your Life through The Emigrants to The Flight of the Eagle and Hamsun, many will instantly recognize and cherish Maria’s story. It bears many of his trademark touches, not least the “moments of tranquillity and hu-
mour, even during harrowing ordeals” as Peter Cowie, that astutely Scandophile film critic, put it back in 1972. Like when a young girl has drowned and her mother asks Maria to take her picture before the funeral. The girl is made up, dressed in her finest dress and peacefully resting on her bed. While Maria prepares the shoot, a bunch of nosy kids sneak a peak through an adjacent window and gets caught on film. Maria shoos them away and gets a “pure” shot. Later on, when the man in the photography shop sees the “ruined” picture, he – like us – is dumbfounded by the poetry of it, a study in purity if there ever was one. Vintage “Troell-schlemmer”. There should be such a word, just as there is “Hitchcockian”, “Godardian” or “Bergmanesque”. Of course he cannot explain his recipe.

“I usually have a text to lead me. Many of these things are there already. It’s just for me to translate them into images.”

There you are. Plus, unlike Maria (or W.C. Fields), Troell warmly welcomes children into the picture. Animals, too.

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“OF COURSE I LIKE TO COMMUNICATE. BUT I HAVE TO HAVE FUN.”

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© WARNER BROS. INC.

© 1968 AB SVENSK FILM INDUSTRI
STILL BY OVE ALSTRÖM

I Capitano (1991)

This account of an authentic murder case that shook Sweden in 1988 has justly been compared to both Deadlands and In Cold Blood. Initial controversy over the subject was considerable, but when the film opened it was met with great praise. Troell won best director in Berlin.
Adaptation

Classics or crime stories? For many years those were the choices when it came to adapting Swedish novels into films. But recently, something has happened: now production companies and directors are looking to all kinds of modern Swedish fiction for inspiration.

When director Daniel Waldentin was first asked if he’d like to make a film of Jonas Hassen Khemiri’s novel One Ede Red (Ena ede röd), he said no.

“You’d have to be stupid to try filming a book like that.”

Waldentin laugh as he says it: his debut film One Ede Red went on release in September 2007. The reservations he held at first stemmed largely from the fact that much of the book takes place inside the head of the main character, Halim.

“I was scared that everyone who liked the book would end up hating me if I didn’t make the film exactly the same way. But when I met Jonas, he convinced me to regard the film as something in its own right: it didn’t need to follow the book to the letter. But it still felt like cutting off one of my own limbs every time I was forced to leave things out.”

If Waldentin’s feelings are typical, then Swedish directors ought to be a pretty tortured bunch by now. Recent years have seen the appearance of 2007’s Easy Money (Snabba Cash), all film versions of relatively newly-written books. And these are shortly to be joined in cine-

mas by Let the Right One In (Låt den rätte komma in), Easy Money (Snabba Cash) and Arn – The Kingdom at the End of the Road (Arn – vid vägens slut).

IT’S HARDLY A new phenomenon in Sweden. 1917 saw a film version of Nobel prize winner Selma Lagerlöf’s novel One Ede Red (Ena ede röd) go on release. Peter Stormare plays the lead.

“If Wallentin’s feelings are typical, then Swedish directors ought to be a pretty tortured bunch by now.”

Jan Guillou’s nov-

els about the Crusader Arn Magnusson have been made into films with a star-studded cast: Stellan Skarsgård, Bibi Andersson, Mikael Nyqvist and Gustaf Skarsgård.

The first film, Arn – The Knight Templar (Arn – tempelriddaren), has broken Swedish box office records with more than one million admissions.


(Ena ede röd) has also been published in 15 countries, including France, Germany, the U.S., the UK and the U.S. One Vännor is the production company behind the film.

Wolf

A short story by Kerstin Ekman was the inspiration for critically-acclaimed drama Wolf. Centering around a Sámi reindeer herder’s struggle for his rights, the film went straight to the top of the box office charts on its release. Peter Stormare plays the lead.

Easy Money

(Snabba cash)

Jens Lapidus’ bestseller about Stockholm’s underworld has sold 400,000 copies in Sweden alone, and has been published in 15 countries, including France, Germany, Italy, the UK and the U.S. One Vännor is the production company behind the film.

Frederik Wikström, a producer at Tre Vännor, has also noticed the film industry’s growing interest in books.

“These days all kinds of books are being turned into films, not just the crime novels that used to be so popular,” he says.

So far, however, bidding wars for film rights are something of a rarity in Sweden. Most writers are keen for their work to fall into good hands, so the price isn’t all that matters. Take Jens Lapidus, for example, whose debut novel, gangster thriller Easy Money, has been one of the best-selling books in Sweden since the millennium. The action takes place in the Stockholm underworld, and has the kind of clear linear development that film compa-

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nies traditionally like. He chose Tre Vännor for the option to buy the film rights.
In “Evil (Onsdok)” I only had one main misgiving: in my book, the main character was both good and bad, but that complication was removed in the film. He was only good, like an American hero. The film company said it had to be that way to get people to go and see it, but I think that’s a patronising view of the audience. In Hamlet it was worse: they took away all the politics and put in car chases instead.”

“How involved are you in the forthcoming film?”

“Not much, I’m not involved in the screenplay, for example - I don’t have the time. But I’ll be attending some progress meetings. I see the film as a separate entity from the book. It would have been hard to make a film that follows Easy Money to the letter. But I don’t want it to differ too greatly from the book, which wouldn’t be any fun.”

Lapidus holds out LA Confidential as an example of a successful film transfer from a novel. The at-

“THEY TOOK AWAY ALL THE POLITICS AND PUT IN CAR CHASES INSTEAD.”

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Lapidus holds out LA Confidential as an example of a successful film transfer from a novel. The at-

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Lapidus holds out LA Confidential as an example of a successful film transfer from a novel. The at-
Chasing rookies

Rookiefilm is a nursery for new Swedish film, established by the major players in the local film industry. At its helm, film commissioner Andrea Östlund is on the lookout for the next generation of Swedish auteurs.

**The directors**

**Petra Revenue** is a playwright and stage director based at Teater Trixter in Göteborg. Her film directorial debut, *The Karaoke King* (*Karaokekungen*), is about Pirko who, looking for his roots, discovers that he has a talent for mimicking others. It is produced by Anagram, Martin Persson and production assistant Annelia Hellström.

**Johan Jonasson** trained at Stockholm's University College of Arts, Crafts and Design and also in England, and has made films previously. His short film *Terrible Boy* was nominated for a National Film Award and subsequently won the 1 km Film Award at the 2003 Stockholm Film Festival. *Guidance (working title)* is about a course of psychiatric treatment that goes wrong. Produced by Mimmi Spång and Rebecca Lafrenz of Garagefilm, their first feature film as producers.

"**IT'S ABOUT FINDING PEOPLE WITH AN UNSHAKABLE BELIEF IN THEIR OWN STYLE AND EXPRESSION.**"

Rookiefilm is a project for seeking out new talent in Swedish film. People who may already have made a film and who might be ready for their first big project. New directors looking for an opening into feature films.

Rookiefilm exists just for them, and film commissioner Andrea Östlund's job is to identify them among all the requests flooding in to the offices of Film i Väst in Trollhättan where she, and Rookiefilm, are based.

"I read screenplays and take a view of projects in the round. It's also my job to watch short films and keep up-to-date with what's happening in the film world. And I seek out people who have come to my attention in some way, encouraging them to send me screenplays."

So it's hardly surprising that she's keen to follow her chosen projects right through to fruition. "I'm a little more involved than usual," she says. "But given that I'm the one who has set things in motion, I want everything to be as good as possible."

**FACTS AND FIGURES**

ROOKIEFILM

A project aimed at first or second-time feature film directors. Productions should have a personal style, vitalising Swedish film by providing new creativity and energy. Rookiefilm is an independent initiative that finances five films at a time with no defined time scale. The first group of official films are being financed by Film i Väst, the Swedish Film Institute, Filmpool Nord and Sveriges Television (SVT).

"I can spot potential: it doesn't have to be a finished or traditional screenplay; I just want to get as clear a picture as possible of the project. I've even been sent a novel, for example, and working together with the director, screenwriter and producer I've been able to give it support funding."
with an unshakable belief in their own style and ex-
pression. But an auteur might also be a screenwrit-
er, so I encourage directors to work together with
screenwriters. So far I’ve been sent around two
hundred projects, mostly from directors who write
their own screenplays, but that’s absolutely not a
precondition for making a Rookiefilm.”

ROOKIEFILM ISN’T ONLY interested in finding new
and exciting forms of expression, but also in new
ways of presenting films.

“How do you reach the audience? You have to
dare to think outside the confines of the cinema
screen. Is it always best to show films at the cine-
mas? Should you just screen films at the weekends,
or should you pay for films to download, on the
iTunes principle? And since you can now reach
more people through DVD, is that then the way to
go? Or via an Internet community? Supposing
750,000 people all over the world saw the film,
wouldn’t that be fantastic?”

ANDREA ÖSTLUND

NEW FILMS

We’re proud of Swedish films. Especially proud to be presenting two
features and one short at this year’s Cannes festival. And we’re very
much looking forward to the rest of the year – there’s more to come.
Please visit our website www.swedishfilm.org for updated information
on Swedish shorts, documentaries and features.
NEW FILMS

Am I Black Enough for You? [DOC]
Being at the center of a black community for 50 years and a close friend to personalities such as Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Richard Pryor and Stevie Wonder, the story of Billy Paul is the story of how the oppression of Afro-Americans came to form black culture, and how the civil rights movement came to form soul music.

ORIGINAL TITLE: Am I Black Enough for You? DIRECTOR: Colin Nutley

ANGEL

Having been a celebrated rockstar in the 80s, fame has slipped away from Angelica “Angel” Holst. Now the time has come to step back into the limelight – but in order to get there you have to create a media hype… What is Angel willing to go through and what price is she prepared to pay to get to the top again?

ORIGINAL TITLE: Angel DIRECTOR: Colin Nutley

GUARNASCHI

Daniel Fridell, director of “THIS IS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT EL MÉDICO’S STORY AND THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN COMMUNISM AND CAPITALISM”

“THIS IS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT EL MÉDICO’S STORY AND THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN COMMUNISM AND CAPITALISM”
Daniel Fridell, director of Cubaton – El Médico. See page 47

CUBATON – EL MÉDICO

El Médico, a young Cuban doctor, realizes that only music can heal his soul and that he needs to do more than write songs in his spare time. Michel, a music producer from Sweden, dreams of renewed fame and fortune, and believes El Médico is the artist that can make it all happen. Their meeting high up in the Sierra Maestra of Santiago, Cuba, will create music, hopes, and a cultural conflict that will both change their lives and give birth to a new blend of Cuban Music, Cubaton.

ORIGINAL TITLE: Cubaton – El Médico DIRECTOR: Daniel Fridell

THE DECEIVER

As the Vatican’s special envoy, Father Mac came to Malmö – a cathoic bishop with a cloak and a stick. In a short time he conquered the city, entertained generously and made many friends. In one year, Father Mac won the confidence of everyone; he conducted weddings and started to invest his new found friends’ money. But when the people of Malmö were supposed to get their loans back with sky high interest, his apartment was found abandoned.

ORIGINAL TITLE: The Deceiver DIRECTOR: Åsa Blanck, Johan Palmgren

ARM – THE KNIGHT TEMPLAR

Based on Jan Guillou’s well-known trilogy, Arm – The Knight Templar takes place in Sweden, Scotland and the Middle East, and evokes a rich tapestry of gallant knights, powerful queens and treacherous kings. An epic saga about war and intrigue, friendship and betrayal, and above all: love. Set in the Middle Ages, the film features many of Sweden’s best-known actors.

ORIGINAL TITLE: Arm – The Knight Templar DIRECTOR: Peter Flinth

BLACK NATION

The Shrine of the Black Madonna was the first church to argue that Jesus was of African descent. In a time when black manhood is in a crisis the church is reaching out to black people with tools for self-determination. “Our mission is to restore black people to their original state of power and dignity in the world”, preaches Bishop Kimathi on Father’s Day. The film follows Bishop Kimathi and members of the church through the desolate streets of Detroit and in some remote place with music and energy.

ORIGINAL TITLE: Black Nation DIRECTOR: Mats Hjelm

SALES

NEW FILMS

Everlasting Moments
In Sweden in the early 1900s – in a time of social change and poverty – the young working class woman Maria wins a camera in a lottery. The camera enables Maria to see the world through new eyes, but it also becomes a threat to her somewhat alcoholic wigmaker of a husband, as it brings the charming photographer Peder Janson into her life.

ORIGINAL TITLE Maria Larssons eviga ögonblick DIRECTOR Jan Troell PRODUCERS Erik Hemmendorff, Ruben Östlund PRODUCED BY Plattform Produktion in co-operation with Film i Väst with support from the Swedish Film Institute/Sveriges Télevision (SVT), Trollhättan Film AB in co-production with Sonet Film AB, XX Film ApS, Film i Väst, Pan Vision AB, Sveriges Télevision (SVT) with support from the Swedish Film Institute/Lisa Ohlin Östlund Diлага. 35mm, 95 min, Swedish with English subtitles TO BE RELEASED: Autumn 2008

Fishy
Micka is a cool and independent single woman who lives for her media career. Until one day when she falls in love with her not so trendy neighbour. Fishy is a tender and funny love story written and directed by Maria Blom.

ORIGINAL TITLE Fishty DIRECTOR Maria Blom PRODUCER Maria Blom PRODUCED BY Plattform Produktion in co-operation with Film i Väst, Sveriges Television (SVT), Tulibacka Film AB with support from the Swedish Film Institute/Lisa Ohlin Östlund Diлага. 35mm, 83 min, Swedish with English subtitles TO BE RELEASED: 2008

An Extraordinary Study in Human Degradation
A documentary about filmmaker Patrik Eriksson who finds himself in a life crisis after ending a destructive relationship. His colleagues Erik Hemmendorff and Ruben Östlund use their mobile phones to film their therapeutic conversations with Patrik and soon he starts using the material for his debut film about human degradation.

ORIGINAL TITLE En exträvacker studie i mänsklig förnedring DIRECTOR Patrik Eriksson PRODUCERS Erik Hemmendorff, Ruben Östlund PRODUCED BY Plattform Produktion in co-operation with Film i Väst with support from the Swedish Film Institute/Sveriges Télevision (SVT), Trollhättan Film AB in co-production with Sonet Film AB, XX Film ApS, Film i Väst, Pan Vision AB, Sveriges Télevision (SVT) with support from the Swedish Film Institute/Lisa Ohlin Östlund Diлага. 35mm, 95 min, Swedish with English subtitles TO BE RELEASED: Autumn 2008

Involuntary
A tragic comedy or comic tragedy about group pressure on the individual.

ORIGINAL TITLE De ofrivilliga DIRECTOR Ruben Östlund PRODUCER Maria Blom PRODUCED BY Plattform Produktion in co-operation with The Coproduction Office with support from the Swedish Film Institute/Péter “Piodor” Gustafsson Diлага. 35mm, 95 min, Swedish with English subtitles TO BE RELEASED: Autumn 2008

Heaven’s Heart
Lars and Susanna have been married for 20 years. They love each other dearly and have created a secure, happy existence. Life has turned out just as happily and comfortably for Susanna’s best friend Ann and her husband UF, who will also shortly be celebrating their 20th wedding anniversary. One evening when the two couples are having dinner together, Susanna tells the others about an adulterous colleague. The story provokes strong reactions that cause a dramatic showdown among the two couples – and turn their lives and marriages upside down.

ORIGINAL TITLE Johannes Nyström DIRECTOR Simon Ståhl PRODUCER Peter Asmussen, Simon Ståhl PRINCIPAL CAST Mats Pettersson, Lars Nyström, Jakob Eriksson, Maria Lundqvist PRDUCED BY Troubadour Film AB in co-production with Svensk Filmindustri AB, Filmcirkus Film AB, Film Aktiebolag AB, Sveriges Television (SVT) with support from the Swedish Film Institute/Lisa Ohlin Östlund Diлага. 35mm, 90 min, Swedish with English subtitles TO BE RELEASED: February 20, 2009


Iscariot – Two Brothers, One Debt
They have a perfect life, Mona and Valle and their young daughter, until Valle’s younger brother Adam shows up. He makes his living as a drug dealer and he’s in trouble. He’s lost four kilos of cocaine in an armed robbery and asks Valle for help as the debt needs to be paid back to the syndicate within two days.

ORIGINAL TITLE Iscariot – två bröder, en skuld DIRECTOR Mikael Lattke PRODUCER Frank Agren PRODUCER Gustaf Skånglid, Janie Eriksson, Helena af Sandeberg, Michael Fryklund, Mats Pettersson, Mikael Lattke PRODUCED BY Pharmacia Productions in co-production with the Filmcirkus Film AB with support from the Swedish Film Institute/Lisa Ohlin Östlund Diлага. 35mm, 83 min, Swedish with English subtitles TO BE RELEASED: March 7, 2008

Mikael Lattke, born in 1968, made his debut film The Kids in Yuppies in 2005. This is his second feature.


**NEW FILMS**

50

### The King of Ping Pong

16-year-old Filip is melancholic and bullied. Everywhere, that is, except in the ping pong room. There he rules, he is the King of Ping Pong. His brother Erik (13) is charming, respected and loved by all. Despite the profound difference between them, they share the same blood; at least that is what they both believe. When they learn the truth about their father during their spring break, they become bitter adversaries engaged in a life-and-death struggle.

**ORIGINAL TITLE** Ping Ponging<br>**DIRECTOR** Jens Jonséer<br>**SCREENWRITERS** Jens Jonséer, Hans Gunnarsson<br>**PRINCIPAL CAST** Jyri Jousilahti, Hannu Johansson, Ann-Sofie Numm, Georg Stakos, Pekka Nissinen

**PRODUCER** Jorjin Bergin, **PRODUCED BY** Bob Pite Sweden in co-operation with Nordic Pite A/S, Finland, Sveriges Television (S/T), Raatio Film Produktion, Gmbh, Jens Jonséer AB with support from Finlandia Film Fund, MEDIA Programme of the European Union, Swedish Film Institute/Peter "Ping Ponging" Galmann, **SCREENING DETAILS** 25mm, 107 min, Swedish with English subtitles **RELEASED** February 9, 2008 Sveriges Television, Sales.

Jens Jonséer was born in Umeå in 1974 and studied graphic design between 1994 and 1998 and life drawing between 1998 and 2001 at the University of Gävle, School of Art, where he received the Silver Bear in Berlin.

### Leo

Leo celebrates his 30th birthday. Surrounded by family and friends, he toasts to the future. But as the party ends and Leo and his girlfriend walk back home, something happens that will change their lives forever.

**ORIGINAL TITLE** Leo<br>**DIRECTOR** Josef Fares<br>**SCREENWRITERS** Josef Fares<br>**PRINCIPAL CAST** Lino Lippert, Leo Fares, Shahar Salim, Sara Edberg<br>**PRODUCER** Anna Anthony **PRODUCED BY**メリット Film Rights AB in co-production with V TV, Sweden, Sveriges Television (S/T), Nordic Pite & TV Fond, Hanno Palmigiani, Trufilms Film with support from the Swedish Film Institute/Peter "Leo" Galmann, **SCREENING DETAILS** 35mm, 78 min, Swedish with English subtitles **RELEASED** November 30, 2007 Sveriges Television.

Josef Fares was born in 1977 in Lebanon. Ten years later he and his family came to Sweden and the town of Oskarshamn. Fares started making films when he was 15 and sent them around to amateur film festivals. About 50 shorts and many award-winning films entered his school in 1998. His association withメリット Film began with the pilot Cool Guy and was followed by box office smash.Jilli (2000). After that Fares directed Koppas (2005) which proved equally as popular with audiences with over 770,000 admissions in Sweden. In 2006 he directed Zulu for which he received The Nordic Council Film Prize.

### Love 3000

What happens when you dare to make the leap and do the unexpected? When you live everyday like it was your last? Meet Sam, a 23-year-old who has gotten sick of the loneliness in Stockholm where he has spent the last four years of his life. Just as he is about to leave the big city and head back home to Österåker, the safe haven where he was born, he has an encounter that completely alters his view on life. Which in turn leads to him meeting Hanna – and life takes a brand new, magical, turn.

**ORIGINAL TITLE** Kärlek 3000<br>**DIRECTOR** Shahriyar Latifzadeh<br>**SCREENWRITERS** Shahriyar Latifzadeh<br>**PRINCIPAL CAST** Shahriyar Latifzadeh, Henrik Lundström, Hanna Arikson, Peter Eegiøn, Lisa Uggla<br>**PRODUCER** Tobias Olof<br>**PRODUCED BY** Stockholm Screening Details, 35mm, 84 min, Swedish with English subtitles **TO BE RELEASED** Autumn 2008 Sälzs Tord Salm.

Shahriyar Latifzadeh was born in Iran in 1972, but emigrated with his family to Sweden in 1985. He studied film making at Malin Film School and made some 50 short films and 10 documentaries. He has produced his own radio show and also worked in theatre.

### Long Distance Love

Long Distance Love is a love story, but also a film about the gigantic migration wave into Russia. Alisher, from the city of Osh in Kyrgyzstan, is a young man looking for love in his life, but who also longs to survive in a country where people are living under severe pressure ever since the breakdown of the Soviet Union. Alisher marries Dildora on a sweltering summer’s day, but soon – as he realizes – almost every young man in this region – he has to go to Russia and try to find a job. The distance between Osh and Moscow is 3,500 kilometres.

**ORIGINAL TITLE** Long Distance Love<br>**DIRECTORS** Magnus Gertten, Elin Jonsson<br>**SCREENWRITERS** Magnus Gertten, Elin Jonsson<br>**PRODUCED BY** Auto Images Screening Details, 80 min, English subtitles **TO BE RELEASED** September 2008 Leo’s Auto Images.

Magnus Gertten is a co-owner of Auto Images and has directed and produced a number of award-winning documentaries. Among Magnus’ latest film are True Blue (Ödjuret, 1998), Eat Biscuits, (2004) and Rolling Like a Stone (2005).

Elin Jonsson has for many years reported and produced news from Central Asia and Russia mainly for the Swedish Radio and Television. She has also produced a number of radio documentaries. Long Distance Love is her feature film debut.

### Let the Right One in

Let the Right One in is a story both violent and highly romantic, set in the Stockholm suburb of Blackeberg in 1998 and 1999 and life drawing between 1998 and 2001 at the University College of Film and Television in Stockholm. He also drew comic strips that appeared in Swedish magazines, which motivated him to make storyboards. In a relatively short time, he has written and directed both Brother of Mine (Bio min, 2001), for which he received the Silver Bear in Berlin.

**ORIGINAL TITLE** Let the Right One in<br>**DIRECTOR** Tomas Alfredson<br>**SCREENWRITERS** Tomas Alfredson, director of the film adaptation of the horror novel Bror min written by John Nordling, Carl Molinder<br>**PRODUCED BY** EFTI in cooperation with Filmpool Nord, Sandrew Metronome Distribution, John Nordling, Birgitta Lindberg, Peter Carlberg, Henrik Dahl, Karin Bergquist, Peter Carlberg, Jonas Boulanger, Jon Nordling, Carl Molinder, **PRODUCER** Magnus Gertten, **PRODUCED BY** Stockholm Screening Details, 25mm, 107 min, Swedish with English subtitles **RELEASED** September 20, 2008 Sälzs Tord Salm.

Tomas Alfredson was born in Stockholm in 1965. He is an autodidact filmmaker who has directed several TV series as well as a couple of features. Alfredson’s acclaimed feature Pukes of Ibiza (Prenner av Ibiza, 2004) received the National Film Award and the film had its international premiere in Rotterdam. He is a member of the comedy group 8Killingg.

### Mamma Moo and Crow

Mamma Moo is a typical cow, except that she wants to do so many uncow-likely things. Her idea of fun is biking and dancing, and when she meets Crow her happiness is complete – the fun is so much greater when you have a friend. But there’s a catch: Crow does not want to be friends with a cow, especially not such a peculiar one…

**ORIGINAL TITLE** Mamma Moo och Crow<br>**DIRECTOR** Igor Veygatgir<br>**SCREENWRITERS** Julia Westlander, based on the books by Anna Berggren<br>**PRODUCED BY** All Swedish Production in co-production with Telepool/Telepool Samla AB, Studio Babelsberg/Arab Satellit (FIL), Film i Väst/Tomas Eliasson, Sveriges Television (S/T), Digibeta, 80 min, English subtitles **TO BE RELEASED** September 19, 2008 Sälzs Tord Salm.

Igor Veygatgir has done animations for a number of commercials and films since 1992. He was the animation director of Captain Salviotti (Kapten Salviotti, 2003) and in 2005 he directed Lovejoy, Äuflie & Daterjag.
NEW FILMS

Mio DOC

As a child, Mio was sent from Thailand to Sweden in order to make enough money to pay for his sister’s education back home. As a 17-year-old he lives in a suburb of Stockholm, an isolated block of flats, far away from the world of his dreams and those ambitions he had back home. Mio dreams of a safe, loving relationship and of being able to send money to his family. With a criminal identity, relationship problems, violence and drugs he struggles to get through the days.

**NOT LIKE OTHERS**

One night two vampire sisters, Vera and Vanja, make a fatal mistake that forces them to run and fight for their lives while being chased by a biker gang. On this particular night Vanja has also promised to share a life-changing event with her sister Vera; Vanja is ready to try to give up the outcast vampire life, adjust to the real world and live amongst the humans. Vera, her sister, is frightened by a vampire life in solitude and is willing to do almost anything to stop her sister from leaving her behind. At the same time the biker gang is closing in…

**NECROBUSINESS**

A documentary set in Lodz, Poland where paramedics and undertakers worked together during the late 90s to get hold of the government subsidies that the relatives of the deceased usually got for the funeral. Something that worked together during the late 90s to get hold of the government subsidies Necrobusiness 1986 been working as an independent filmmaker.

**WOLF**

Wolf is a contemporary drama set in northern Scania. Klemens and Neja own a small herd of reindeer. Klemens lives in tune with nature and according to the rhythm dictated by his work. His young nephew Neja admires him and wants to follow in his footsteps. But neither his mother nor society will allow that to happen. The herd is attacked and they react without regard for the law. A well aimed stroke of the axe puts relationships to the test. What are the consequenc-es and who will take the blame?

**YOUNG FREUD IN GAZA**

A documentary about young Ayed who is the only field psychologist in northern Gaza. Every day, with his medical bag in his hand, he goes on home visits in Jabaliya refugee camp. We follow Ayed and listen to his patients: children, young men and women with suicidal thoughts, former Hamas militants. Outside, there is chaos, war and turmoil. A tragic and comic film from northern Gaza.

**Patrik, Age 1.5**

Goran and Sven have been cleared to adopt a Swedish orphan, Patrik 1.5. But when Patrik arrives he turns out to be someone else, not the little boy they were expecting. A dot had been misplaced, and in comes a 15-year-old homophobe with a criminal past.

**“A LOT OF ACTORS WEREN’T AT ALL COMFORTABLE WITH BEING INTIMATE WITH ANOTHER MAN.”**

Eva Lembärg, director of Patrik, Age 1.5. See page 22.

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DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES
2008 IS SEPTEMBER 12!

“Without question the most important film festival north of the 50th parallel – not to be missed.”

The 19th Stockholm International Film Festival

Nov 20–30 2008

CONTACTS
FESTIVAL DIRECTOR Git Scheunius, PROGRAM MANAGER George Ivanov, E-mail: george@stockholmfilmfestival.se
Telephone +46 8 677 50 00 info@stockholmfilmfestival.se www.stockholmfilmfestival.se