



NEW RELEASES

The Most Beautiful Boy in the World

His face recalled the noblest moment of Greek sculpture – pale, with a sweet reserve, with clustering honey-coloured ringlets, the brow and nose descending in one line, the winning mouth, the expression of pure and godlike serenity. Yet with all this chaste perfection of form it was of such unique personal charm that the observer thought he had never seen, either in nature or art, anything so utterly happy and consummate.’ – Description of the young character Tadzio in Thomas Mann’s novel, *Death in Venice*.

‘The boy was exquisitely beautiful. He is fragile. And that is beautiful... on film. You have to be very careful with such children.’ – Margareta Krantz, Swedish casting director for *Death in Venice*.

In 1970, filmmaker Luchino Visconti travelled throughout Europe looking for the perfect boy to personify absolute beauty in his adaptation for the screen of Thomas Mann’s *Death in Venice*. In Stockholm, he discovered Björn Andrésen, a shy 15-year-old teenager whom he brought to international fame overnight and led to spend a short but intense part of his turbulent youth between the Lido in Venice, London, the Cannes Film Festival and the so distant Japan.

Fifty years after the premiere of *Death in Venice*, Björn takes us on a remarkable journey made of personal memories, cinema history, stardust and tragic events in what could be Björn’s last attempt for him to finally get his life back on track.

Directors’ note (Kristina Lindström and Kristian Petri)

The Most Beautiful Boy in the World is a story about obsession with beauty, about desire and sacrifice, about a boy whose life was changed forever when the film director Luchino Visconti declared him to be the ‘world’s most beautiful boy.’

Who was this boy and what happened to him? This is the story of a film that destroyed someone’s life.

It is also a story of family secrets, of searching for the truth.

We filmed *The Most Beautiful Boy in the World* during five years in Stockholm, Copenhagen, Paris, Budapest, Venice, and Tokyo, following in Björn’s footsteps. We searched together with him to learn the truth about his mother’s death and his father’s identity by reaching into the archives and interviews with close family.

We searched for people who had crossed his path over the decades. It was naturally difficult to find some of them after 50 years, but miraculously many of them were available and willing to talk on camera. The rich archive material which we found throughout the process was also a big source of joy.

The base for everything has been trust and Björn’s courage and wish to tell his story.

We believe in interesting questions more than in simple answers. This is not an easy story. We hope it is gripping. We hope that Björn will come forward as the complex and interesting person that he is. This is a story with many layers, a box within a box within a box.

This film lets us listen to the boy's own story. He, who was made into an image by others, an icon, a fantasy, which took over his young life.

Producer's note (Stina Gardell)

The Most Beautiful Boy in the World is, at its core, a film about objectification and the effects it can have on an individual.

Beauty is admired and can open many doors, but the world's obsession with someone's appearance can tear that person apart on the inside.

As the native American tale goes: 'For every photo taken, a little bit of one's soul is taken away.'

The Most Beautiful Boy in the World is the untold story of a fascinating life about a boy who becomes a star at a very young age, and how that came to influence the rest of his life. Fifteen-year-old Björn Andrésen seduced both men and women with his role in *Death in Venice*, and he forever became a gay icon.

'He sees me as a piece of meat on a plate,' was Björn's own words about the director Luchino Visconti. How does it affect someone to be viewed as an object? Where does the sense of self go?

Few child stars manage to live up to the expectations of their early exposure, which the public never forgets.

Today, 50 years later, Björn Andrésen still lives in the shadow of his 15-year-old self. For many years he continued to make a career in the limelight – in film, as a model, and as a musician. Björn continued to be drawn to the world that broke him. Is there something in his nature that wants to be recognised?

As a producer, there were several reasons why I fell for this story.

Björn's life story is fascinating, he has a rich life behind him with many depths and global moments. It takes us to 1970s Italy, to the world of Japanese advertising and to the old bohemian Paris. Everything has been archived and we had access to the material.

We meet Björn today in the film, but we also find him in the archives.

Björn's motivation to regain his self-respect is the core of this film. It is a process of discovery, where he goes back into the past in order to regain something that has been lost. It was interesting to me that this story about beauty and objectification is about a man. To explore this topic, which is often centred around women, from a different gender perspective felt right.

Production notes

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL BOY IN THE WORLD

Directors: Kristina Lindström, Kristian Petri
©: Mantaray Film AB, Sveriges Television AB, ZDF/Arte, Jonas Gardell Produktion
Produced by: Mantaray Film
A co-production with: Sveriges Television, ZDF-Arte, Jonas Gardell Produktion, Filminvestering i Örebro
With support from: The Swedish Film Institute, Creative Europe Media, Nordisk Film & TV Fond
In collaboration with: YLE
Presented by: Mantaray Film
World Wide Sales: Films Boutique
Producer: Stina Gardell
Co-producers: Ingemar Persson, Jonas Gardell, Sabine Bubeck-Paaz, Anette Mattsson
Commissioning Editor Sveriges Television: Charlotte Hellström
Production Co-ordinator: Frida Neema Järnbert
Controller: Pär Lindström
Post-production Co-ordinator: Sam Trelje
Script: Kristina Lindström, Kristian Petri
Director of Photography: Erik Vallsten
Additional Photography: Iván Blanco, Moa Lichtenstein
Editing: Hanna Lejonqvist, Dino Jonsäter
Additional Editing: Charlotte Landelius, Kalle Lindberg
Editing Consultant: Lena Runge
Graphic Design: Martin Hultman
Music: Anna von Hausswolff, Filip Leyman
Audio Design/Sound Design and Mix: Brian Dyrby, Kristoffer Salting
Voice-over Recordist: Niklas Antonell
Sound Technician: Jonas Goldmann

With
Björn Andrésen
Robine Román
Annikke Andresen
Jessica Vennberg
Ann Lagerström
Miriam Sambol
Silva Filmer
Margareta Krantz
Max Seki
Masatoshi Sakai
Hajime Sawatari
Riyoko Ikeda
Johanna Lidén

Sweden/Germany 2021©
98 mins

A Dogwoof release

NEW RELEASES & RE-RELEASES

Limbo
From Fri 30 Jul
The Most Beautiful Boy in the World
From Fri 30 Jul
Now, Voyager
From Fri 6 Aug
The Story of a Three Day Pass
From Sat 7 Aug
CODA
From Fri 13 Aug
Censor
From Fri 20 Aug
Souad
From Fri 27 Aug

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