



museum of arts and design

## Roy Andersson's Uniquely Incisive and Meticulously Crafted Films to be Surveyed at MAD in Spring Retrospective of Swedish Iconoclastic Director

**'It's Hard To Be Human: The Cinema of Roy Andersson'**  
**Includes Special Screening of Venice Film Festival's 2014 Golden Lion Winner**  
**'A Pigeon Sat on a Branch Reflecting on Existence' on June 2, 2015**

***Andersson to Introduce Screenings June 2 and June 5, 2015***



**'A Pigeon Sat on a Branch Reflecting on Existence,' 2015. Roy Andersson, Courtesy of Magnolia Pictures**

New York, NY (April 30, 2015)—The Museum of Arts and Design presents *It's Hard to Be Human: The Cinema of Roy Andersson* from May 29 through June 27, 2015. A retrospective of this singular auteur's work, the series traces Andersson's career from his early 1970s features—including his breakout success *A Swedish Love Story*, to his rarely-screened short films and commercials, as well as a recently completed trilogy, with the final film, *A Pigeon Sat on a Branch Reflecting on Existence*, previewing exclusively to Museum members on Tuesday, June 2, 2015 at The Theater at MAD before its June 3 theatrical release through Magnolia Pictures.

Andersson will appear in person to introduce the screenings of *A Pigeon Sat on a Branch Reflecting on Existence* on Tuesday, June 2, 2015, 7 p.m. and *Songs from the Second Floor* on Friday, June 5, 2015, 7 p.m.

Working with a small group of tight-knit collaborators, Andersson is known for his repertoire of films that feature hyperrealist, meticulously handcrafted sets. Each of Andersson's scenes is shot from a fixed-camera position, with sets that are built from scratch and carefully composed on a soundstage. This purposefully constructed, time-consuming process results in beautifully rendered tableaux that juxtapose the banalities and eccentricities of everyday life. His comically deadpan, pallid characters, often played by non professional actors, are thought-provoking in their bleak familiarity, and provide a biting humorous and sophisticated philosophical take on the human condition.

"Roy Andersson emerged from a twenty-five year 'exile' from the Swedish film industry to become one of its most distinct voices. His films are astounding in both their originality and their technical achievements," says Jake Yuzna, MAD's Director of Public Programs. "He draws inspiration from a multitude of sources, including poetry ranging from the works of César Vallejo to ancient Norse *Poetic Edda*, and offers an comically absurdist view of the trials and tribulations of life in today's society."

Premiering on May 29 with the **Short Films of Roy Anderson**, the series showcases the director's career thus far. Screenings include Andersson's complete trilogy, with a special MAD Members screening of its final installment, ***A Pigeon Sat on a Branch Reflecting on Existence***, on Tuesday, June 2; Andersson's debut feature, ***A Swedish Love Story***; and ***Tomorrow's Another Day***, a documentary film by Johan Carlsson that chronicles Andersson's labor-intensive production process.

## ABOUT THE SERIES

*It's Hard to Be Human: The Cinema of Roy Andersson* is organized by Jake Yuzna, MAD's Director of Public Programs. Tickets and more information are available by calling 1-800-838-3006 or visiting: <http://madmuseum.org/series/its-hard-be-human-cinema-roy-andersson>.

This program was made possible in part with support from Magnolia Pictures and The Embassy of Sweden in Washington, D.C.

## SCREENING SCHEDULE

### [Short Films of Roy Andersson](#)

**Friday, May 29, 2015, 7 p.m.**

**Encore Screening: Thursday, June 25, 7 p.m.**

**Free**

During his twenty-five year hiatus from the Swedish film industry, Andersson continued his practice by making many commercials and short film works. During this time, Andersson developed and honed his deadpan, humorist and labor-intensive approach to cinema. This screening presents a selection of these short works, many never before screened in the U.S.

### [A Pigeon Sat on a Branch Reflecting on Existence](#)

**Tuesday, June 2, 2015, 7 p.m.**

**Exclusive MAD Members Screening**

**Director in Person**

**2014, Dir. Roy Andersson**

**With Holger Andersson, Nils Westblom, and Viktor Gyllenberg**

**101 min, Digital Projection**

The title for the final film in Andersson's trilogy references a painting by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, *The Hunters in the Snow*, which depicts birds perched on a branch looking out over the activities of a small

village. Shot through the perspective of a detached outsider, the dark comedy follows a pair of traveling salesman and features 37 fixed-camera compositions that examine the painful and poetic nature of human life in today's world. The film was awarded The Golden Lion for Best Film at the 71<sup>st</sup> Venice Film Festival in 2014.

### [Songs from the Second Floor](#)

Friday, June 5, 2015, 7 p.m.

Encore Screening: Friday, June 19, 2015, 7 p.m.

\$10 General, \$5 MAD Members and Students

#### Director in Person

2000, Dir. Roy Andersson

With Lars Nordh, Stefan Larsson and Bengt C. W. Carlsson

98 min, 35 mm

In the first installment of Andersson's trilogy, a down-on-his-luck bookstore owner hatches a plan to burn down his shop for insurance money. When nothing goes quite as planned, the owner finds himself wandering through darkly comedic tableaux of modern life. Encountering ghosts, a religious icon salesmen convention, desperate economists consulting crystals balls and other surreal scenes, the bookstore owner seeks answers as to why life must contain suffering. *Songs from the Second Floor* was awarded the Cannes Film Festival Jury Prize in 2000.

### [A Swedish Love Story](#)

Thursday, June 11, 2015, 7 p.m.

\$10 General, \$5 MAD Members and Students

1970, Dir. Roy Andersson

With Ann-Sofie Kylin, Rolf Sohlman and Anita Lindblom

113 min, 35mm

Roy Andersson's debut feature, *A Swedish Love Story*, is a coming-of-age tale that chronicles the story of Annika (Ann-Sofie Kylin) and Par (Rolf Sohlman), two idealistic teenagers who find love for the first time. Resisting pressure from cynical parents and social tensions, the young couple creates their own reality, oblivious to the strains of the adult world that surrounds them.

### [You, the Living](#)

Friday, June 12, 2015, 7 p.m.

Encore Screening: Friday, June 26, 2015, 7 p.m.

\$10 General, \$5 MAD Members and Students

2007, Dir. Roy Andersson

With Elisabeth Helander, Jörgen Nohall and Jan Wikbladh

95 min, 35 mm

The second installment of Roy Andersson's trilogy, *You, the Living* is a tragicomic exploration of the grandeur of existence. Through a series of short vignettes, the film follows a group of colorful characters—including a pickpocket, a sousaphone player, a heartbroken rock groupie, a school teacher with emotional issues, and a psychiatrist who has lost faith in people's ability to be happy—as they attempt to reconcile the positive and negative influence of happiness in their lives.

### [Tomorrow's Another Day](#)

2 COLUMBUS CIRCLE NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10019 P 212.299.7777 F 212.299.7701 MADMUSEUM.ORG

**Saturday, June 27, 2015, 3 p.m.**  
**\$10 General, \$5 MAD Members and Students**

**2011, Dir. Johan Carlsson**  
**With Roy Andersson**  
**90 min, Digital Projection**

Go behind-the-scenes of Roy Andersson's feature film, *You, the Living*, with this documentary about his labor-intensive, detailed and artisanal production process. Struggling against financial woes, difficult schedules and other unexpected hurdles, *Tomorrow's Another Day* reveals the tenacity, talent, and blinding optimism required to craft and pursue one's truly unique cinematic vision.

#### ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN

The Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) champions contemporary makers across creative fields—presenting artists, designers, and artisans who apply the highest level of ingenuity and skill to their work. Since the Museum's founding in 1956 by philanthropist and visionary Aileen Osborn Webb, MAD has celebrated all facets of making and the creative processes by which materials are transformed, from traditional techniques to cutting-edge technologies. Today, the Museum's curatorial program builds upon a rich history of exhibitions that emphasize a cross-disciplinary approach to art and design, and reveals the workmanship behind the objects and environments that shape our everyday lives. MAD provides an international platform for practitioners who are influencing the direction of cultural production and driving 21st-century innovation, fostering a participatory setting for visitors to have direct encounters with skilled making and compelling works of art and design.

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