

EDVARD MUNCH

Cast

EDVARD MUNCH

Geir Westby

MRS. HEIBERG

Gros Fraas

The Munch Family in 1868

SOPHIE	Kjersti Allum
EDVARD	Erik Allum
LAURA	Susan Trolldmyr
PETER ANDREAS	Ragnvald Caspari
INGER	Katja Pedersen
HOUSEMAID	Hjørdis Ulriksen

The Munch Family in 1875

SOPHIE	Inger Berit Oland
EDVARD	Åmund Berge
LAURA	Camilla Falk
PETER ANDREAS	Erik Kristiansen
INGER	Anne Marie Dæhli

The Munch Family in 1884

DR. CHRISTIAN MUNCH	Johan Halsbog
LAURA CATHRINE MUNCH	Gro Jarto
TANTE KAREN BJØLSTAD	Lotte Teig
INGER MUNCH	Rachel Pedersen
LAURA MUNCH	Berit Rytter Hasle
PETER ANDREAS MUNCH	Gunnar Skjetne
HOUSEMAID	Vigdis Nilssen

Also appearing

ODA LASSON	Eli Ryg
CHRISTIAN KROHG	Knut Kristiansen
FRITZ THAULOW	Nils Eger Pettersen
SIGBJØRN OBSTFELDER	Morten Eid
VILHELM KRAG	Håkon Gundersen
DR. THAULOW	Peter Esdaile
SIGURD BØDTKER	Dag Myklebust
JAPPE NILSSEN	Torstein Hilt
MISS DREFSEN	Kristin Helle-Valle
AASE CARLSEN	Ida Elisabeth Dypvik
CHARLOTTE DØRNBERGER	Ellen Waaler

The Bohemians of Kristiania

HANS JÆGER	Kåre Stormark
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Others

John Willy Kopperud	Asle Raaen
Ove Bøe	Axel Brun
Arnulv Torbjørnsen	Geo von Krogh
Arne Brønstad	Eivind Einar Berg
Tom Olsen	Hjørdis Fodstad
Hassa Horn jr.	Ingeborg Sandberg
Håvard Skoglund	Marianne Schjetne
Trygve Fett	Margareth Tofte
Erik Disch	Nina Aabel
	Peter Plenne

Patrons of the Café "Zum Schwarzen Ferkel"

AUGUST STRINDBERG	Alf Kåre Strindberg
DAGNY JUELL	Iselin von Hanno Bast
STANISLAV PRZYBYSZEWSKI	Ladislav Rezni_ek
BENGT LIDFORS	Anders Ekman
ADOLF PAUL	Christer Fredberg
DR. SCHLEICH	Kai Olshausen
DR. SCHLITTGEN	Hans Erich Lampl
RICHARD DEHMEL	Dieter Kriszat
OLA HANSSON	Peter Saul
LAURA MARHOLM	Merete Jørgensen

Pianist: Einar Henning Smedby

Pianist: Harry Andersen

We also wish to thank the men, women and children
of Oslo and Åsgårdstrand who appear in this film.

EDVARD MUNCH

Crew

**Directed and Edited by PETER WATKINS
and written in collaboration with the cast, many of whom
express their own opinions and feelings in this film.**

Production Manager	ULF FJORAN
Director of Photography	ODD GEIR SÆTHER
Lighting Supervisors	ERIK DAEHLI and CATO BAUTZ
Sound Supervisors	KENNETH STORM-HANSEN BJÖRN HARALD HANSEN
Production Designer:	GRETHE HEIJER
Properties Supervisor:	JAN AAGE SOHLBERG
Costume-design Supervisor:	ADA SKOLMEN
Makeup Supervisor:	KARIN SÆTHER
Research:	ANNE VEFLINGSTAD
Graphics Consultant:	KNUT JØRGENSEN
Paintings Consultant:	HERMANN BENDIKSEN
Dialogue Consultant:	ÅSE VIKENE
Production Assistant:	SIDSEL UDNÆS
Casting:	ODA SCHJØLL ANNE VEFLINGSTAD
Continuity:	WENCHE LIE
Assistant Cameraman:	OTTAR FJELLANGER
Assistant Editor:	LORNE MORRIS

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STATENS HÅNDVERKS OG KUNSTINDUSTRISKOLE (The Norwegian State School of Handicrafts and Industrial Arts)
RAGNA STAANG, Ph. D.
TRYGVE NERGAARD M. A.

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OTTILIE SCHIEFLER	Hamburg	DR. JANDA	Staatliches Museum
JIRI KOTALIK	National Gallery, Prague	ULF AABEL	National Museum, Sto
DR. WERNER TIMM	Berlin	DR. REINHOLD HELLER	University of Pittst
DR. CARL GEORG HEISE	Oberbayern	JEAN ADHEMAR	Bibliothèque Nationale, F

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PAL HOUGEN ARNE EGGUM
and the remainder of the staff at the Munch Museum in Oslo without whose
continuing help, advice and encouragement this film could not have been made.

Produced in Norway by N R K and S R 2

Running Time (35mm cinema version): 174 minutes

About EDVARD MUNCH by Peter Watkins

From Peter Watkins' website
(<http://www.mnsi.net/~pwatkins/>)

Background: EDVARD MUNCH is the most personal film I have ever made. Its genesis lies in a visit to the Edvard Munch Museum in Oslo, in 1968, during the time of a screening of several of my films by the Oslo University. I was awestruck by the strength of Munch's canvases, especially those depicting the sad life of his family, and was very moved by the artist's directness - with the people in his canvases looking straight at us. I also felt a personal affinity with his linking of past and present, e.g., in the large painting showing the anguish of his family as his sister Sophie is dying: the artist and his brothers and sisters are depicted as adults - as they were in the 1890s when he painted this scene - even though the event had taken place circa 20 years earlier. On another occasion, I was also very moved by Munch's masterpiece *Death of a Child*, hanging in the National Gallery in Oslo; in this painting the artist is broken, and has, in an almost desperate frenzy, blurred the form of his earlier depiction of Sophie's death. This painting, in its time, was attacked as being "incomplete", a charge which branded certain of his other works as well.

It took me three years to persuade Norwegian TV (NRK) to fund this film, and in the end it only happened because Swedish TV convinced them to participate in a co-production.

Filming: EDVARD MUNCH was filmed during two separate periods in 1973: February-March for the winter scenes, and May-June for the spring and summer scenes. Once again I worked with an entirely amateur cast - this time it was Norwegians from our filming locations in Oslo and the small town of Åsgårdstrand on the Oslo fjord. The film crew came from NRK, and was one of the very best working groups I have ever had. This was truly one of the 'magical' creative experiences of my life and I sadly regret not having been allowed, in all those years since, to continue developing this method of working.

Reaction: One could probably find hundreds of reviews of EDVARD MUNCH from the time of its extensive broadcasts on European and Scandinavian TV in the mid-1970s, and subsequent cinema screenings in the US, France, Australia and elsewhere. Most reviews tended to be positive, though there were some critics who found the film repetitive and exaggerated. The extracts of ones included here happen to be the reviews which I still have at hand, and appeared in Britain after EDVARD MUNCH was first shown on BBC-TV in March 1976.

"TRIP ON THE BORDERS OF GENIUS AND INSANITY... I cannot remember a more haunting film about an artist. The silent, wide-eyed and lonely melancholy of Munch (Geir Westby) and the changing expressiveness of his 'Mrs. Heiberg' (Gro Fraas) set the contrasted styles. Watkins managed to be still and restless, clear-cut and disordered, without any contradiction." (The Daily Telegraph)

"MESMERIC MUNCH. The terrific intensity with which Peter Watkins began his dramatic documentary about the painter Munch was such that no spectator could have supported it for three hours and a half without smashing something near at hand or passing into a form of psychiatric care... Grave and eloquent faces of all ages stared into the camera, and whether they were calling for help, asking us to go away or merely to remember carefully the terrible things we had seen was not important. Whichever it was, we were mesmerized, dragged into the film and the year 1884... But for three hours and a half? That EDVARD MUNCH was sometimes repetitive but never became tedious, was due partly to the suggestive handling of the Expressionist process itself - a trembling brush, a haemorrhage of scarlet paint, Munch also hacking the canvas away in 'the struggle to remember, the struggle to forget' - but still more to Watkins' superbly confident direction and editing of a largely amateur Norwegian cast..." (The Times)

"PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST. Peter Watkins' EDVARD MUNCH is a remarkable piece of work. It is the most effective transposition to the screen of the mentality and environment of the 'artist' (or anyone of heightened sensibility and complex intelligence) that I have seen. It is original in its narrative devices: sumptuous in its visual effects (cameraman Odd Geir Saether) and unerring in its selection of faces (all

amateurs) to suggest peasant or metropolitan stock - sickly Norwegian petite bourgeoisie, radiant young bohemian girls, or artists and intellectuals crowding together, plotting to change Norwegian society until bad living puts an untimely end to their hoped for victory... Watkins' initial task was to establish firmly the elements in the Norwegian painter's early life which were to haunt him continually and dictate the nature of his artistic preoccupations... There is a steady overlapping of action, or simply conversation, and intrusive memory. A moment of love provokes images of bloody illness: the fever of work recalls incidents of domestic repression or the torment of rejected love... This overlapping is carried further in that, within the narrative, characters seem to be listening passively to conversations taking place off-screen. And in a marvellous device, disconcerting at first, characters in the film silently regard us as they are talked about... One of the most impressive films made for television in a decade." (Peter Lennon, The Sunday Times)

Aftermath: In the years that followed, I made several further attempts to work at portraying the lives of other artists (including the Italian Futurist poet Marinetti, and the Russian pianist and composer Scriabin), but each of these projects collapsed in the early stages. In several cases, it became clear that TV producers wanted something different - and yet didn't (- exactly the same contradiction at the root of so many difficulties in France for LA COMMUNE). TV organizations appear to want the caché of creating something unique and different - without it in fact being really genuinely different at all. A further and crucial part of the problem lies in the fact that in recent years TV productions have become very much afraid of working with "ordinary people". Which is why films like CULLODEN and EDVARD MUNCH will never be made again. The direct involvement of the public in the creative process of TV - which has always been at the essence of my work - is seen as a threat, for it represents a change in the usual hierarchical relationship between producer and passive spectator. In a word - it represents a loss of control. Of course it is never stated in this way; TV executives usually resort to attacking the 'standard', the 'creative level' of the work instead.

In the case of EDVARD MUNCH, a group of NRK producers met the day after the film was shown to denounce its use of "amateurs" and the fact that the cast employed idiomatic modern expressions in their dialogue, as opposed to the style of Norwegian language spoken at the turn of the century. From that moment on (and in marked contrast to the growing acclaim for EDVARD MUNCH from abroad), NRK demonstrated a high level of antipathy towards the film. They - and the Swedish TV - tried to prevent EDVARD MUNCH from representing Norway at the Cannes Film Festival, and NRK subsequently destroyed all of the original quarter-inch sound recordings (including the final sound mix) at the time when these were needed to produce a cinema version of the film. All that was left were battered and worn 16mm magnetic working copies, and it was only thanks to the ingenuity of Kjell Westmann, a sound mixer in Stockholm, that we were able to filter out the hiss and background noise on these copies, and to reproduce something approximating the original sound for the cinema version of EDVARD MUNCH.

Thanks also to the efforts of Florence Bodin, a member of the TV Sales Department of Swedish TV in Stockholm, EDVARD MUNCH was very widely screened on European TV in 1977, as well as in several cinemas in America. But after that, for many years, especially after the film returned to the care of NRK in Oslo, it sat on the shelves completely neglected. From all available evidence, NRK did very little for almost 20 years to get EDVARD MUNCH shown, and made it very difficult for people to rent the film (often obstructing inquiries altogether). NRK also refused to make new prints of EDVARD MUNCH, sending out poor video copies on those occasions when they let people rent the film. Once even, NRK sent a copy of EDVARD MUNCH to an exhibition of Munch's works at the London National Gallery - and the video turned out to be mostly black.

EDVARD MUNCH in 2004

by Oliver Groom, Project X Distribution

I met Peter Watkins in 2003. I'd long been an admirer of his work and, on discovering that he'd moved from Lithuania to Hamilton, Ontario, I felt that I just had to make contact. We hit it off almost immediately and began discussing how his films could be made more widely available in North America. He was particularly concerned about *The Munch Film* (as he calls it), as he had received some feedback from Sweden that the original 16mm negative (long version, 220 mins) was scratched. Furthermore the 35mm blow-up CRI (Colour Reversal Internegative) of the "cinema version" (174 mins) was lying deteriorating from "vinegar syndrome" in a basement in London. Since there was no duplicate protective element for either of these two master negatives, he was fearful that the film was on the brink of being lost and that concern, for me, was particularly astounding since we were talking of a film that is barely 30 years old.

So, with some scheming, we were able to hammer out a deal with Reiner Moritz Associates Distribution in London (who had just acquired the international sales rights on behalf of NRK, the Norwegian co-producers), whereby certain distribution rights were assigned to Project X Distribution in exchange for making a 16mm interpositive from the original negative and using this to re-master the film to video for the DVD market. Then, spurred on by my growing enthusiasm for the film and encouraged by my friend, Russ Robertson, at Deluxe Sound And Picture in Toronto, these plans were upgraded and we committed to transferring the film instead to *high-definition* video.

Furthermore we started to kick around more seriously the fanciful idea of theatrical re-releases in France and North America and decided to dust off the 35mm version. So the 35mm CRI and its accompanying optical track negative were sent to Canada from London and Deluxe Labs, Toronto, set about striking a new wetgate print. Deluxe first responded with some anxiety about the fragile condition of the negative and it took them three runs at it but Peter finally approved the print and said that he'd never thought he'd see the film looking "that good again". The print was then shipped to France, where it was French-subtitled, and the film was showcased in June to a 20 minute standing ovation in a retrospective of Peter's work during the La Rochelle International Film Festival.

Meanwhile, Filmteknik, the lab in Stockholm, completed the 16mm interpositive of the long version and we set about making the high-definition master. This had a false start as I tried to emulate the 1.66:1 aspect ratio of the 35mm version but that didn't work and so we went back and transferred the film in the full 1.33:1. Again Peter sat in on colour correction sessions to ensure that the very particular look of the film was accurately represented. At this point we discovered, that we had the wrong 16mm magnetic sound: we had the mix without Peter's English narration and we had to scramble to locate the original full mix (Norwegian dialogue / English narration). We knew that there was a 16mm optical track negative in Stockholm but we wanted the original magnetic track for reasons of quality. Then the NRK archivist located 4 large reels of 16mm magnetic track and these were sent over to Toronto. These were transferred to a digital format, put through an analogue "hiss-removal" and clean-up (*de-noising*) process and, thankfully, the sound synched up ok to the high-definition master (which had, by that time, been through 41 hours of digital dirt removal).

Back with the 35mm version, the theatrical re-issue in France is set for 2nd February 2005. The enthusiasm coming out of Paris for the film is infectious – from the distributors (a publishing and distribution collective called co-errances), from exhibitors, from art museums and from the media. *Le Monde* and *Libération* both called the film a masterpiece after the La Rochelle screenings. Here in North America EDVARD MUNCH will open with new prints in Toronto at the Cinematheque Ontario (16th January 2005) and at the Gene Siskel Film Center in Chicago (21st January 2005) and I would like to extend my thanks to both organisations for their support and encouragement.

In the New Year, we'll be working out the contents of the DVD.