

In any pantheon of cinema-tographers wherein ranking depends on skill, sensitivity and subtlety, Sven Nykvist will be found very near the throne. For more than 50 years he laid his magic gently over some 120 films without fuss, with great care, consummate skill and total belief in what he was doing. By doing so he influenced — and will continue to influence — the look of most intelligent and contemplative films that are made today for our delight and our compassion.

Because the team of Bergman and Nykvist, working together over 30 years, made such an impact — resulting in two Oscars and a Nomination for Sven — it is easy to overlook the much larger corpus of films that he lit (and usually operated) for other directors on a hundred occasions, all of which benefited from his skill. But because of that breadth across Europe and America, it is possible that Sven may be even prouder of being the first non-American ever to receive — in 1996 — a Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Society of Cinematographers. In making the award, ASC Vice-President Owen Roizman said: “Sven has made an extraordinary and unique impact on the art of the cinema. There is no way you can calculate the depth of his influence on contemporary filmmaking.”

Sadly, Sven is now in failing health. To honour this extraordinary man, the Sven Nykvist Fund has been set up to underwrite an eponymous annual scholarship award. The prime movers are the next generation: son, Carl Gustaf, and his wife Gudrun who, working through their own company, Beluga Film, as director and co-producers have made **Light Keeps Me Company**, an 84-minute, Super 16,

# Boldness be my friend

**“Sven (Nykvist) has made an extraordinary and unique impact on the art of the cinema”**

▼ *Carl Gustaf Nykvist is standing between Sven Nykvist's old Arriflex camera and Sven Nykvist, who is standing at their own Aaton Super 16, as they prepare to shoot the last scene in the film.*

retrospective tribute to the man and his work shot on Vision 200T film 7274 and Vision 250D film 7246.

International support for this initiative has been whole-hearted. Appearing in the film are Woody Allen, Bibbi Andersson, Harriet Andersson, Richard Attenborough, Ingmar Bergman, Melanie Griffith, Erland Josephson, Gunnel Lindblom, Roman Polanski, Gene Rowlands, Susan Sarandon, Jan Troell and Liv Ullman. Among the cinematographers who contributed — as well as Carl Gustaf and Dan Myhrman — were Vilmos Zsigmond, Kidd Johnson, Lazlo Kovacs, Gustaf Mandal, Billy Williams, Torbjörn Andersson, Michael Green, Björn Henriksson, Lennart Adell, Arne Carlsson. There was also much support from organisations, some of whom are listed in the panel.

We asked Carl Gustaf the basis on which the awards would be made. “Boldness. Courage. Between 1961 and 1963 Sven and Ingmar made a trilogy **Through a Glass Darkly**, **Winter Light**, and **The Silence**. They were subtle films, psychological, restrained and in black- and-white at a time when saturated colour was all the rage. Many critics were dismissive. But they started a new style of filming which has become very important around the world. They were courageous, bold. That's the tradition we want to encourage.” The first award is scheduled for Gothenburg in February and it is hoped that Sven will be well enough to make the first award.

As befits a true philosopher, the film includes readings from works which have meant a lot to Sven, readings from his own book, *In Reverence of Light*. There are extracts from many of



Carl Gustaf Nykvist and Ingmar Bergman.

## Some of the organisations which have supported this documentary

Arriflex, Munich  
Consultant Commissioning Editors of the Swedish Film Institute  
Danish Film Institute  
FilmTeknik AB  
Kodak Nordic  
Metrocolor  
Norwegian Film Institute  
Panavision Inc.  
Sweden's Regional Film Boards  
Swedish TV Drama  
Warner brothers

his films and — an enormous attraction — some original footage of work on the productions from Ingmar Bergman's private archives, footage which has never been shown before.

The film is eagerly awaited by a number of festivals and film schools. All profits, it goes without saying, will be donated to the Trust, and it should also be emphasised that all the organisations and people who have released material for incorporation in the film have waived their fees and, in that way, made a considerable contribution to the Trust's ability to reward future boldness.

## The First Sven Nykvist Scholarship Award Winner

Hot news from the Gothenburg Film Festival. The first Sven Nykvist Scholarship Award was made to Frank Griebel of Berlin for his work on **Run, Lola Run**. We understand from Carl Gustaf that the choice was made to mark the empathy between director and DP, and the innovative daring with which the director's 'special vision' was translated to the screen.



PHOTO: LENNART ADELL