

Press release



DEUTSCHE
KINEMATHEK
MUSEUM
FÜR FILM UND
FERNSEHEN

Exhibition

Robby Müller – Master of Light

6 July to 5 November 2017

Deutsche Kinemathek – Museum für Film und Fernsehen

The Deutsche Kinemathek will be presenting **the exhibition “Robby Müller – Master of Light”** from **6 July to 5 November 2017**, turning its attention to one of the most important and influential cinematographers in international cinema.

Robby Müller (1940 –) is considered one of the best known of all cinematographers – internationally as: “Director of Photography.” The Dutchman has won numerous awards for his camerawork and has contributed considerably to the success of an entire generation of independent film authors since the 1970s. His international career started soon after he graduated from the *Nederlandse Filmacademie* in Amsterdam in 1964. In Germany, he not only shot numerous early films by Wim Wenders, but also worked alongside such directors and authors as Edgar Reitz, Hans W. Geissendörfer and Peter Handke. Müller would eventually be responsible for the cinematography of fourteen of Wenders’ films. In the USA, Robby Müller was discovered in the late 1970s by Peter Bogdanovich and, among the films he made in the 1980s, shot *DOWN BY LAW* (1986) for Jim Jarmusch. Under Lars von Trier’s direction, he experimented with the use of the handheld camera in *BREAKING THE WAVES* (1996) and with new video techniques in *DANCER IN THE DARK* (2000). The influence of Edward Hopper is evident in his work, while his use of light is reminiscent of Vermeer’s paintings. Robby Müller is clearly a virtuoso in his field. Averse to inflexible systems, unnecessary regulations, and conventional ways of working, Müller kept faith with his own approach throughout his career: no unnecessary technical aids, no excessive lighting, and no conspicuous “camera acrobatics,” as he himself puts it. He thus created breathtakingly beautiful shots, and he is admired the world over for his visual ingenuity.

In the exhibition, originally conceived by the EYE Filmmuseum, Amsterdam, large-scale projections of selected film scenes convey an impression of the visual acumen and intricacy of his works. Directors like Wim Wenders, Lars von Trier, Jim Jarmusch and Steve McQueen report in interviews of Müller’s outstanding abilities as a cameraman. Glimpses into his private archive enrich the exhibition in an unusual way. Documents and scripts – and especially dozens of film shoots – describe his life on the set as if in a diary. Several hundred hours of film material were viewed and arranged according to their motifs. The selection illustrates how Müller uses his camera to capture hotel rooms, for example, to film animals, record landscapes, shoot from airplanes or cars, and experiment with light. Camerawoman Claire Pijman sorted the video material and created loops which are shown on various screens. Finally, the exhibition presents a selection of his Polaroid photos. They show how he “thinks” photographically in regard to color, light, shadow and composition, and they tell us more about his photographic vision, also characteristic of his films. In a totally different way, Robby Müller’s Polaroid series makes him a “Master of Light” once again.

Berlin, June 2017

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The “Robby Müller – Master of Light” exhibition will be accompanied by a film series that can be seen at the Kino Arsenal, Berlin, 4–17 August.

The press conference will take place on 5 July at 11:00 a.m. at the Deutsche Kinemathek – Museum für Film und Fernsehen, Potsdamer Strasse 2.

The exhibition was organized and conceived by the EYE Film Museum in Amsterdam.