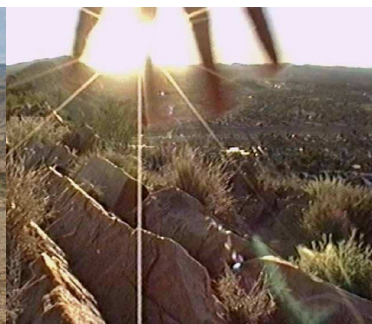


Living the Light



LUNGEFELT - ROB MÜLLER SAMOONS PRODUCTIONS IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH CHROMOSOM FILM & SCHNEIDLOS REALISATION ROB & ANDRÉ MÜLLER
 DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY CARP VAN DER KAMM MUSIC BY ARIAN ARENS EDITOR JIM VAN LEEUWEN COSTUME DESIGNER ARMEDAGH PRODUCED BY HUGO KSA BASED ON THE BOOK BY JONAS DÖRNER
 THE FILM WAS SUPPORTED BY THE FILM FUND OF THE NETHERLANDS FILM PRODUCTION INCENTIVE AND THE BERLIN BRANDENBURG MEDIA BOARD

LIVING THE LIGHT – ROBBY MÜLLER

a film by Claire Pijman

English, Dutch, German and French spoken

World premiere: *La Biennale di Venezia 2018, Italy - Venice Classics Documentary Films*

Dutch premiere: *EYE, The Netherlands, 17 September 2018*

Belgium premiere: *Flanders International Film Festival Ghent, Belgium, 9- 19 October 2018*

Festivals:

La Biennale di Venezia 2018, Italy – Selection Venice Classics Documentary Films

Flanders International Film Festival Ghent, Belgium, 9- 19 October 2018

Netherlands Film Festival 2018, The Netherlands – opening film Director's Forum 2018

ICFF Manaki Brothers

Camerimage, Poland – Special Event

SYNOPSIS

ROBBY MÜLLER- LIVING THE LIGHT

By Claire Pijman

Robby Müller is one of the few people in the world who knows how to play the sun. How to catch its rays like butterflies. How to strike its beams like chords. Not only does music reverberate and resonate from these tenderly spun threads of light, as we can see and hear in the opening images of *Living the Light* when Robby moves his camera, the camera turns into a musical instrument as well. And the whole world dances, radiates, is illuminated.

For her extraordinary film essay, *Living the Light*, Director and Director of Photography Claire Pijman had access to the thousands of Hi8 video diaries, pictures and Polaroids that Müller photographed while he was at work on one of the more than 70 features he shot throughout his career; often with long term collaborators such as Wim Wenders, Jim Jarmusch and Lars von Trier. The film intertwines these images with excerpts of his oeuvre, thus creating a fluid and cinematic continuum. In his score for *Living the Light* Jim Jarmusch gives this wide raging scale of life and art an additional musical voice.

It discloses how life and work and art and life again were always inspiring and informing one another. One continuous stream of expressive yet sensitive images that show how the world is best seen through a camera. How the world comes to life (and lives) through a lens. How the roads and hotel rooms he filmed with Wim Wenders were *his* roads and hotel rooms. How his surroundings travelled from one medium into another. His true destination was always portrayal, revealing what he saw. And in those rooms and on those roads he was drawn to the most reflective of surfaces: windows and mirrors, resulting in an endless flow of self-portraits of the cinematographer as a man with a camera.

With his ground-breaking camerawork, and inventive and innovative lighting methods, his exceptional sense for the depth of colour, and the freedom of framing, plus his on-going quest for simplicity, he has encouraged generations of DoPs to discover their own eye. Besides being a master of the analogue, he became a pioneer of the digital when he shot his first features with Lars von Trier.

His work has been compared to that of painters like Vermeer and Hopper, like him, also masters of light like himself. But even when his films are finished, his images keep on moving. The light never fades because he has always created space for the human story to speak through the images. To come into the light.

Living the Light is the story of that light.

MAIN CHARACTER

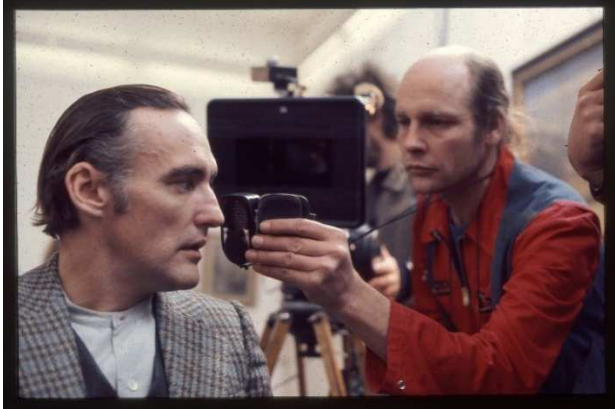
Robby Müller (1940-2018) was born in Willemstad, Curaçao. In 1953 his family moved to the Netherlands. From 1962 until 1964 Müller studied at the Netherlands Film Academy in Amsterdam.

After his studies he went to work in Germany where his international career took off. He worked as a Director of Photographer with directors such as Wim Wenders, Lars von Trier, Jim Jarmusch and Michael Winterbottom.

Müller has been granted several awards for his work; in 2006 he received an award for his oeuvre at the Camerimage festival in Poland, in 2009 he received the Bert Haanstra oeuvre prize and in 2013 The American Society of Cinematographers (ASC) in the USA. In 2016 an exhibition was organised in the EYE Film Institute in Amsterdam exhibiting the entire works of Müller called *Master of Light*.

Robby Müller passed away on the 3th of July, aged 78 years old.

STILLS



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I am fascinated by camerawork and went to film school to study it. Of course, I had heard of Robby Müller, Wim Wenders' cameraman and I knew their films, especially the older black and white ones. Later I was very impressed and moved by the film *Paris, Texas*.

For a long time Robby lived in Germany. In 1992 he moved back to the Netherlands but I had never met him.

Then suddenly I got a call one day, from Robby Müller, himself. He needed an assistant.

That was in 1996. I was surprised that he would call his assistant himself rather than have the production team do it. I found that quite remarkable.

He sounded like a genuinely nice, gentle man over the phone and it was with a heavy heart that I refused. I had just decided to give my own camera career as a cinematographer a serious chance and not to assist anymore.

Müller respected my decision, which was typical of him. In the same conversation, he invited me to drop by and get acquainted.

It was a pleasant encounter. It surprised me. I didn't meet a technician or a cameraman, but someone who has made the language of image his own, someone who always initially talks of feeling and mood and never really about technique. Robby is interested in everything around him and incorporates that interest into his imagery.

I could finally enjoy the conversations about image and imagery that I had missed so much. I could enjoy on a different level what really fascinated me: image.

Next, Robby asked me to operate a camera during the shoot of *Buena Vista Social Club* in Amsterdam (1999) and took me with him as second-unit DOP.

And finally, when he no longer had the strength himself, I took over as DOP on his last film, *Jarmal* (2009).

Müller became my mentor. He has taught me a lot in an unconventional way. Not directly but more by what he said between the lines, how he felt about things, and by observing how he dealt with what was happening around him. Müller looked through the camera as he looked through his own eyes. Not through a lens, but from the perspective of his own feelings and position. It was clear that the main issue was how you dealt with life.

He was forever curious about what I did and how I handled things in my documentary work. There was always an interaction with Müller: he w

as open to the things I – a relative rookie – had to say. Our working relationship grew into a long-term friendship.

URGENCY

Müller has been ill since 2007. He suffered from Binswanger's disease, a form of dementia. His movement and speech was slowly deteriorating. He hadn't been able to talk for several years. I made a portrait of Müller for his wife, Andrea's, birthday. He stared at me with his open, inquisitive look. I was struck by those eyes which had perceived things in a certain way and which had captured so many images through the lens. He might not be able to speak anymore, but he still has much to tell with his images.

PERSONAL ARCHIVE

Robby gave me his personal archive . It is all the material that Robby has filmed and photographed throughout his career, all video8 and DV tapes. I was also given access to the Polaroids he has taken during his life, his photographs and his chest full of memories, each with its own story. Seeing these images reinforced everything he taught me. It has proved to be a veritable treasure chest and I have used it gratefully to tell his story, his love of the light. I am very honoured that I had the chance to do so.

Claire Pijman

Amsterdam, January 2017

BIOGRAPHY DIRECTOR

In 1990 Claire Pijman graduated in cinematography at the Netherlands Film Academy in Amsterdam. Since then she works as a cinematographer on documentaries and fiction. Pijman has worked as a cameraman in the feature 'Good Morning Karachi, by Sabiha Sumar and 'Jermal' by Ravi Bharwani.



A longtime friendship and apprenticeship with Robby Müller started after she operated one of the cameras on the "Buena Vista Social Club", by Wim Wenders.

Pijman considers Robby Müller as one of her most important inspirations.

Pijman made several documentaries amongst 'Foot on the moon', on the set of 'Dancer in the Dark', 'Talking Guitars'. 'Living the Light'-on Robby

Müller and his work, based on his personal archive- is her most recent film.

PRODUCTION COMPANY

Moondocs develops and produces documentaries, auteur films, commissioned films, art films, TV series and transmedia projects. Socially engaged and quality-oriented, the makers cover a wide range of socially relevant and cultural subjects. The productions are made for regional and national broadcasters; local and central government; non-profit organizations, arts and cultural funds; as well as companies. Moondocs has built up an impressive track record, including many productions that have received national and international awards.

CREDITS

Title LIVING THE LIGHT – ROBBY MÜLLER

Director Claire Pijman

Director of Photography Robby Müller en Claire Pijman

Editor Katharina Wartena

Sound Rik Meier, Piotr van Dijk e.a.

Audio post-production Hugo Dijkstal

Music score Sqürl; Jim Jarmusch & Carter Logan

Producer Carolijn Borgdorff

Executive producer Jorinde Sorée

Produced by Moondocs

Coproducer Chromosom Film & stichting Docu Shot

Poster David de Winter

Editor trailer Jeffrey de Vore

Distribution Cinema Delicatessen

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