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Hugo och Josefin

("Hugo and Josefin")

Sweden : 1968 : dir. Kjell Grede : Sandrews

: 82 min

prod: : scr: Kjell Grede & Maria Gripe : dir.ph.: Lasse Björne

[Fredrik Becklén](#); [Marie Öhman](#)

Inga Landgré; Beppe Wolgers; Helena Brodin; Bellan Roos;

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	KBytes	Ω □ ∄ Z ∞	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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"One of the most endearing and individual of all the screen's children."

Source: *The Moving Picture Boy*



Unto Us A Child Is Born

Source: Unknown

Speelfilm Encyclopedie review:

“Seven-year old girl who receives no attention from her parents is rescued from her loneliness by the gardener, who also provides her with a friend her own age. Striking observation and direction of the children - aside from the striving for effect - make the turbulent fantasy world of children into a moving and poetic film devoid of false sentiment. One of the very best in its genre. ***½ ”

12th London Film Festival (1968)
programme review:

“This amazing first feature by Kjell Grede is nominally a film for children, except that it is, as the Duchess said about something else, much too good for them. It could be described as a kind of pre-pubescent **"ELVIRA MADIGAN"**: Josefin is a lonely eleven-year old who runs away from home. Hugo is fatherless and the two children become friends. The real stars of the film are the luscious Swedish summer and the magnificent colour photography.¹ But essentially, the film depends on its miraculous charm which is as difficult to describe as it is impossible to resist. Shown at the Edinburgh Festival 1968 and Sorrento Festival 1968. At the San Sebastian Festival

1968 it won a Silver Seashell for a Director's First Work.”

NFT monthly bulletin - Dec 82 - review:

“To complement our Scandinavian season, a pair of Swedish Juniors. Firstly this story of two children enjoying holidays together, though Josefin cannot understand why Hugo's father (a conscientious objector) should be in jail. "The charm of the film is that it allows us to enter the children's self-enclosed world without embarrassment, and to share with them the unselfconscious expression of their fears and fantasies" - David Wilson.”

International Film Guide 1969 review:

“A children's film for adults might be the best description of **"HUGO AND JOSEFIN"**, the first feature by Kjell Grede, husband of Bibi Andersson and heretofore a writer and painter. Josefin is a stout-hearted, independent little girl, seven years old. She becomes fast friends with Hugo, whose father is apparently a conscientious objector serving a term in prison. Their adventures, their conversations, their discoveries: these form the fabric of the film.

This is a children's vision of things and yet we, the adults, can interpret the facts that Hugo and

¹ ie: for people with no real interest in children

Josefin can only absorb with curiosity. We can appreciate the kindly tact and concern with which the old gardener treats his two young charges. It is difficult, too, not to respond to the unselfconscious acting of Marie Öhman and Fredrik Becklén, and to the atmosphere of the Swedish countryside in summer, evoked so warmly by Lasse Björne's colour photography.

"Before it opened," says Grede, "I showed the film to two children. One said afterwards that it was fun because it was like a Sunday morning when one lies in bed and experiences a lot of things and one does not know whether or not one is awake or in a dream".

The Moving Picture Boy entry on Becklén:

"Kjell Grede's beautiful **"HUGO OCH JOSEFIN"** is about a little girl living in the Swedish countryside and needing a playmate. When she goes to the village school she falls in with the oddball of her class, a strange loner called Hugo, prone to vanish on private quests and safaris. He has his own sorrow, since his father is in prison (as a conscientious objector), but he also has a kindly uncle who looks after him.

Josefin is played by the enchanting Marie Öhman - a child of utter happiness who often

subsides in helpless giggles - and Hugo by one of the most endearing and individual of all the screen's children. Fredrik Becklén is a wise little troll, with an unpretentious dignity and the most winning of grins. Solemnly explaining his long absence from school as a research project on water-spiders, or bowling along the country lanes on an old penny-farthing bicycle (while the soundtrack, with justified effrontery, bursts into "For Unto Us a Child is Born"), he is a magical creation. An attempt to team Fredrik up, two years later, with another director and another little girl - and the sort of cute, interminable title popular at the time - was unhappily less inspired."

[no listing in "Halliwell's Film Guide", "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 1996", "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

No further information currently available. Note how two of the critics above hint, only half in jest, that a film this good must be too good for children. This is why English-speaking children's films are so palpably inferior to their Scandinavian cousins – their makers evidently believe that the qualities and professional standards adults would demand are somehow irrelevant to films for children. In Scandinavia they treat children with more respect.

Becklén was about nine, his date of birth not known. The later film Holmstrom refers to is **"HUR MARIE TRÄFFADE FREDRIK, ÅSNAN REBUS, KANGARUN PLOJ OCH..."** (69), which translates as "How Marie Met Fredrik, Rebus Donkey, the Kangaroo Ploughman, and...".

Children's pastoral friendships (almost invariably boy and girl) have provided for some of the more romanticised titles in the archive: **"CIDER WITH ROSIE"**, **"DONG DONG JIAQUI"** ("A Summer at Grandpa's"), **"LE GRAND CHEMIN"** and **"LE GLOIRE DE MON PERE"** spring to mind, but also **"JEUX INTERDITS"** and many others. Happily, there are just as many excellent films – **"PELLE EROBREREN"**, **"PADRE PADRONE"**, **"BROTHER TO THE OX"** **"L'ALBERO DEGLI ZOCCOLI"** - which portray the unrelenting hardship of rural childhood to counterbalance that *nostalgie de la boue*. Nothing further is known of Marie Öhman.

See subject index under **BIKES & SKATEBOARDS**, **BOY MEETS GIRL**, **RUNAWAYS / STOWAWAYS**, **SCANDINAVIA**, **SCHOOL** and (possibly) **PASTORALS / HOLIDAYS IN THE COUNTRY**.