

No. 16

Inside Mads' favourite partnership

MADS MIKKELSEN and his most frequent director, **ANDERS THOMAS JENSEN**, on why they just can't stop collaborating



Director Anders Thomas Jensen and frequent collaborator Mads Mikkelsen.

ON WHY THEY KEEP WORKING TOGETHER...

MIKKELSEN:

"There's no-one like him; what he's doing is very unique. He's very poetic, he wants to tell stories about the big things — life, death, religion, Satan, God — all the questions that we ask ourselves in our early teenage years and keep asking ourselves until we die. He wants to twist and turn them up in the air [and] wrap them up in insanity. I love his universe, which is almost like a fairy tale [combined] with his very down-to-earth, pragmatic way of looking at life. I think it's a beautiful, poetic combination."



JENSEN:

"He's the ultimate actor. He's perfect: he was born to be an actor. He has such a sharp eye for sensing people's comedy, for sensing people's thoughts. We both share a common love for people who lie to themselves — people who are too puffed up, who take everything too seriously! He's good at making these observations of characters and [understanding their] psychology. As we saw in [Thomas Vinterberg's] *Another Round*, he can be physical too: he can dance — he can do everything."

ON WHAT THEIR WORKING RELATIONSHIP IS LIKE...

MIKKELSEN:

"It's insane, the way we've done things, but I am proud — proud we went there and proud that in many people's eyes, we've succeeded. We went so far at times, complete suicide, especially when we did [2003 comedy] *The Green Butchers*: we thought it was the end of our careers! [Anders' films] have been a huge chunk of my development as an actor. I've done things in his films that have pushed me so far that I was then brave enough to do other things in other films. I can't imagine myself not being a part of his world."



JENSEN:

"*Riders Of Justice* is very personal. I had a minor breakdown a few years ago and I had this idea of Markus, a man who is suffering from depression and hiding from his life. [Having Mads play Markus] was a huge help because he knows my universe so well. I've become better at it, but I'm no extrovert — I'm not that great at talking to too many people, so [working with Mads] gives me comfort and that safety and [then] I dare to do more with the characters. I trust him so much."

ON NOT BEING AFRAID TO TREAD NEW GROUND...

MIKKELSEN:

"[*Riders Of Justice*] was different turf for us. The breakdown in the bathroom was [based on Anders'] own experience with a strong character he'd seen cracking up like that, so I could see it had an impact that it hadn't before on him when he was directing. It was a beautiful experience to see him embrace it and take that step forward."



JENSEN:

"*Riders* was a bit awkward because Mads is not doing the 'nerd' that we're used to doing. This is me watching the Hollywood movies where Mads is this macho villain and [thinking], 'I want to do a film like that with him too!'" **ELIZABETH AUBREY**

RIDERS OF JUSTICE IS IN CINEMAS THIS SUMMER