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Author(s)	Gunnar Rehlin
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ADULT BEHAVIOR: IT'S ALL IN THE MIND

(VUXNA MANNISKOR)

(SWEDEN)

A Svensk Filmindustri release (in Sweden) of a Svensk Filmindustri production, in association with SVT Drama, FLAB and FLX Comedy. (International sales: Svensk Filmindustri, Stockholm.) Produced by Waldemar Bergendahl, Jan Blomgren.

Directed by Fredrik Lindstrom, Felix Herngren. Screenplay, Lindstrom, based on an idea by Lindstrom, Herngren. Camera (color), Goran Hallberg; editor, Janne Persson; music, Bo Kasper's Orchestra; production designer, Jan Olof Agren; costume designer, Lolo Murray; sound (Dolby SR), Eddie Axberg, Bengt Sall. Reviewed at the Saga, Stockholm, Sept. 20, 1999. Running time: 97 MIN.

With: Felix Herngren, Karin Bjurstrom, Cecilia Ljung, Mikael Persbrandt, Kalla Bie, Magnus Harenstam, Fredrik Lindstrom, Alvin Nystrom, Annakarin Johansson.

By GUNNAR REHLIN

A hit with Swedish crix and public, "Adult Behavior" is a funny and revealing look at urban thirtysomethings and their constant search for sexual thrills.

Pic should be an easy sell abroad, especially to TV channels looking for intelligent entertainment.

Frank (co-helmer Felix Herngren) is a lawyer at a respectable firm in Stockholm. For eight years, he has been married to the beautiful Nenne (Karin Bjurstrom), who runs a boutique in a posh district of the city. They have no kids.

Frank is not only massively insecure but also constantly thinking about sex; he even dreams of sleeping with the therapist he and Nenne visit to sort out their problems. At a gallery, he meets young Sofia (newcomer Kalla Bie), and they start an affair; Frank's guilty conscience just gets worse.

Nenne's workmate Rosie (Cecilia Ljung) suspects that Frank is having an affair and tries to summon up the courage to tell her. Little does she realize that Nenne is also having an affair — with Rosie's b.f. Georg (Mikael Persbrandt), a pretentious single-father journalist.

Herngren is the brother of Mans Herngren, one of the men behind the 1997 hit "Adam & Eve." In many ways, "Adult Behavior" is a companion piece to that movie: They take place in similar Stockholm circles and both deal with men's constant infidelity and inability to feel satisfied with what they've got. But where "Adam & Eve" made innovative use of cinema as a form, "Adult Behavior" is more conventional, like a TV movie.

Still, pacing is brisk and there are lots of funny one-liners. Herngren and co-director/scripter Fredrik Lindstrom — both well-known comedians from stage and TV — employ voiceovers by Frank that are in direct contrast to what is taking place on-screen. Device works well for a while but eventually wears thin.

As an actor, Herngren is fine in the low-key role of Frank, and Persbrandt is excellent, as usual, as the journo. Bie is a real find in the part of Frank's lover.

A scene in an art gallery that features sculptures of erect penises could cause ratings problems in some territories.