

Document Citation

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|---------------|--|
| Title | Sawdust and tinsel |
| Author(s) | Steve Geller |
| Source | <i>Dartmouth Film Society</i> |
| Date | |
| Type | program note |
| Language | English |
| Pagination | |
| No. of Pages | 2 |
| Subjects | |
| Film Subjects | Gycklarnas afton (Sawdust and tinsel), Bergman, Ingmar, 1953 |

Dartmouth Film Society Film Notes

SAWDUST AND TINSEL

a film by Ingmar Bergman

Cast

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|-------------------|--------------------|
| Ake Gronberg | (Albert) |
| Harriet Andersson | (Anne) |
| Anders Ek | (Frost) |
| Annika Tretow | (Agda) |
| Kiki | (Agda) |
| Gunnar Bjorstrand | (Director Sjoberg) |

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Music | : Karl-Birger Blomdahl |
| Photography | : Sven Nykvist & Hilding Bladh |
| Production | : Sandrew Productions |
| Producer | : Rune Waldekranz |
| Direction, Scenario: | Ingmar Bergman |

When Ingmar Bergman's THE SEVENTH SEAL was presented last year at the Nugget, even the most "expressive" Nuggeteer was silenced by the film. Try as he may, there was nothing funny about the story, the actors, the production itself. Vowing to get even with the Swedish director, Our Hero returned to the theater to comment upon the love sequences in WILD STRAWBERRIES, another Bergman picture. Again he was stifled, and returned to the eloquent silence of his dormitory room, more neurotic than ever. We sincerely hope that Our Hero has realized that he has not won the battle with Bergman. If he feels another bout necessary, SAWDUST AND TINSEL will well prove to be more than a formidable opponent.

Humiliation is the theme of SAWDUST AND TINSEL, and Bergman is not content until he has laid open the soul of the individual, exposed the dirt, and tormented it until a course of action is taken. The flashback sequence with the clown, setting the mood and theme of the film, is perhaps one of the greatest sequences of suffering and humiliation ever photographed.

Ingmar Bergman can be considered the Actor's Director and, unquestionably, the Director's Director, for he knows not only how to get the most out of a performer (Bergman is also an important theatrical director in Sweden, producing one play each season) but also how to get the most from a camera. Bergman's thorough knowledge of design and composition, his tasteful use of natural scenery for symbolic effect, his choice of music only when a sequence calls for it, and his tremendously stimulating and powerful ideas are so skillfully interwoven that the total effect is one of highest possible quality.

Bergman's standards are high, his method of procedure so meticulous that he has never produced a bad film. And, more important, Bergman has never been influenced by the values of the cinema audience, but almost seems to thrust his own values upon them, challenging them to accept his ideas.

For the student of The Swedish Master, SAWDUST AND TINSEL is a key to certain technical and intellectual ideas of his later films, the above-mentioned WILD STRAWBERRIES and SEVENTH SEAL, SMILES OF A SUMMER NIGHT, BRINK OF LIFE, and, most obviously, THE MAGICIAN. Pay attention to the photographic techniques employed: scenes shot through mirrors, used so effectively in MAGICIAN; the high contrasts in film quality during the

flashback, contrasts similar to the surrealist dream in WILD STRAWBERRIES; his use of sound in the flashback involving Frost the clown and his licentious wife, Alma; and the quick cutting in the brutal fight sequence, cutting from Albert to Franz (using medium, close-up, then extreme close-up); Bergman's lighting in the theater.

These are but a few of the clues to Bergman's genius and his cinematic procedure.

A word about Bergman and casting: As some have probably noticed, Bergman uses approximately the same cast in all of his films, giving an actor an important part in one film (Max Von Sydow as the Knight in SEVENTH SEAL) and a minor role or walk-on in another (Von Sydow as the gas station attendant in WILD STRAWBERRIES, etc.) This not only shows the good that comes of a repertory company, but enables the viewer to compare the talents of a Bergman actor in more than one film. And certainly it does not "type" an actor. For instance:

Harriet Andersson, who plays Albert's wife, is the maid in SMILES OF A SUMMER NIGHT,

Gunnar Bjorstrand, who plays Director Sjöberg, was the Squire in SEVENTH SEAL, the doctor's son in WILD STRAWBERRIES, Eggermann in SMILES OF A SUMMER NIGHT, the doctor, in THE MAGICIAN,

Anders Ek, with his brilliant portrayal of Frost, the clown, as the angry penitent who prophesizes Man's doom in SEVENTH SEAL. (Possibly the most brilliant three minutes of motion picture acting ever shot.)

These are but a few of the important Bergman players.

It is with great pleasure, then, that the Dartmouth Film Society presents one of the products of Ingmar Bergman's genius, SAWDUST AND TINSEL.

Steve Geller

The short subject today is Joris Ivens' RAIN, (1929) a lyrical impression of a summer shower in Amsterdam. Mr. Ivens today works behind the Iron Curtain.

PLEASE NOTE! Next week's film is F.W. Murnau's THE BOX OF PANDORA. There will be one showing only, introduced by Mr. James Card of the George Eastman House in Rochester, at 7:30 pm in Webster Hall. In as much as we would like a large audience for this program, each film society member is encouraged to pick up two complimentary passes, good for this program only, in the office after today's programs. It is intended that these passes be given to person's seriously interested in the film who are not members of the Film Society.