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was born on July 14, 1918, in a vicarage in the Swedish university town of Uppsala. The fact that his father was a Lutheran clergyman made a great impact on his development. While a student at the University of Stockholm, Bergman began to direct productions of the amateur university players and became an assistant stage director at the Royal Opera in Stockholm. Later he went on to become the director, a stage director and the artistic adviser at several municipal theaters outside of the Swedish capital. In 1960 he became one of the stage directors at the Royal Dramatic Theater in Stockholm. Three years later he was appointed the director of the theater.

As a film director, Ingmar Bergman's career started with KRIS (Crisis), 1945-46, - based on a popular Danish play it was a box-office failure while it received mixed reviews but it could not be compared to HETS (Frenzy, Torment), 1944, which Bergman had written and Alf Sjöberg had directed. Both films were marked by anguish and protest - themes that were characteristic of the youthful Bergman. In 1946 Bergman directed DET REGNAR PÅ VÅR KÄRLEK (It Rains on Our Love), a film about young, homeless love, which was his first screen success. It was followed by SKEPP TILL INDIALAND (A Ship Bound for India), 1947, and MUSIK I MÖRKER (Music in Darkness), 1947-48. In 1948 he was contracted by Svensk Filmindustri, Sweden's largest and oldest production company, to make HAMNSTAD (Port of Call), which clearly manifested his admiration for the neo-realism of Roberto Rossellini. "Port of Call" was marked by a documentary realism that was more uncompromising than anything previously attempted in Swedish films.

Despite its artistic and commercial success, "Port of Call" was only a parenthesis in the creative activity of Ingmar Bergman. Desperately trying to develop a style of his own, he returned in 1949 to forms of expressionism in the symbolically entitled FÄNGELSE (Prison). Without a doubt "Prison" was the most cruel, anguished, desperate and disharmonious of his early films. It was also the first film that he directed from his own screenplay. It is also not surprising that many Swedish critics consider "Prison" to express more of the moods of the anguished literary movement of the 1940's than any other Swedish film.

Bergman's first period from 1945 to 1950 can be described as a time of artistic experiments and explorations in a variety of styles and marked by feverish and rather juvenile exaggerations of some fairly

trite philosophical views. An atmosphere of claustrophobia and a vision of man's spiritual imprisonment predominate.

The second period in Bergman's films starts in 1950 and carries up to the present. It can be divided into a "black" and "rose" stage. Gratified by the success in 1952 of the impromptu comedy KVINNORS VÄNTAN (Waiting Women), Bergman conceived a truly impressionistic and witty matrimonial farce, EN LEKTION I KÄRLEK (A Lesson in Love), a year later. In SOMMARNATTENS LEENDE (Smiles of a Summer Night), 1955, he came tantalizingly close to creating the perfect high comedy.

"Smiles of a Summer Night" is set at the turn of the century to stress visually the basic premise of the erotic comedy - that the step between the sublime and the ridiculous in love is a short one, but, nevertheless, one that many people stub their toes on. Although Bergman made ingenious use of slapstick situations, "Smiles of a Summer Night" is a comedy in the truest sense of the word. It is an arabesque on an essentially tragic theme - of man's insufficiency, as an illustration of the incurable loneliness of the soul. "Smiles of a Summer Night" was Bergman's first real international success. It was awarded a special prize at the Cannes Film Festival in 1956 and became a model for some of the French "new wave" films. The critics of "Cahier du Cinéma", the French film periodical around which many of the French "new wave" critics and directors collected, were the first to promote Bergman abroad. His earlier works were shown at the Cinémathèque Française in a retrospective series. In his "black" films, Bergman has returned to the tragic inability of human beings to develop something positive and valuable out of their lives. Now his technical virtuosity - rather than obscuring his meaning - has become a subtle ally in carrying out his intentions. The montage effects in his prologue to GYCKLARNAS AFTON (Sawdust and Tinsel/The Naked Night), 1953, combined with the very expressive music of composer Karl-Birger Blomdahl, mark a peak in Bergman's development of a new and constructively filmatic style that exploits dialogue and sound effects with artistic imagination and sensitivity. The film - a drama dealing with the erotic and psychological atmosphere of the artist - as conceived by Bergman, contrasts a primitive art form, the circus, with the more highly developed one - the theater. The main character, Albert, the manager of the circus, is an imaginative descendant of Murnau's "The Last Laugh" and Sternberg's "The Blue Angel". His resplendent uniform symbolizes his dreams of artistic merit and esteem, of integrity, but

it fits very tightly on his chubby body. When finally stripped of his illusions, Albert, aware of his deep humiliation, attempts suicide. But for this clown of life, this man for whom everything has failed, the revolver misfires. Albert seeks consolation in shooting the circus bear imprisoned in its cage - obviously symbolic of Albert's own imprisonment in the cruel, tragicomic circus of life.

In SMULTRONSTÄLLET (Wild Strawberries), filmed in 1957 for Svensk Filmindustri, Bergman's technique was apparently inspired by Strindberg's "The Road to Damascus". The protagonist is a venerable surgeon and medical scholar on his way to the university town of his youth where he is going to be honored, fifty years after graduation, for his accomplishments. On the journey fears of death and nostalgic memories of the past, including an unhappy love and a blighted marriage, pass in review; during this day he comes to realize more clearly that the price he has paid for emotional detachment is his loneliness. Although the severity of his penalty is made clear, the film ends on a note of reconciliation with life. The elderly professor of medicine was magnificently portrayed by Victor Sjöström.

In the intimate and strictly realistic NÄRA LIVET (Brink of Life), 1957, Bergman did not use a script of his own for the first time in many years. The film was scripted by Ulla Isaksson, a female writer who also wrote the script for JUNGFRUKÄLLAN (The Virgin Spring), 1960, which was based on a Middle Age ballad. As many other of his films, "Brink of Life" focused on women and was set in an exclusively female world, a maternity hospital.

One of the realistic traits of "Brink of Life" was the entirely natural sounds. In earlier works Bergman had usually used ordinary film music. In his later works, however, he has used sound much more restrictively. He has chosen to rely on either silence, realistic sounds or some classical music. This development parallels similar trends in recent Italian and French films, but it is undoubtedly a personal one for Bergman. In 1959 he married the well-known concert pianist, Käbi Laretei. As a result his interest in this other art form obviously grew. A cembalo piece by Bach, for instance, played a key part not only as sound but also as part of the "message" in "The Silence", 1963, one of the few words that can be understood by the lonely and ailing sister and the elderly waiter, a citizen of a strange foreign land, is Bach.

Throughout his works Bergman has a series of recurrent themes; views expressed in one film tie in with his next film. Religion, a hesitation between conviction and doubt and a will to believe in the existence of God, is one of his most basic subjects. Returning from ten years of battle, the Crusader in *DET SJUNDE INSEGLET* (*The Seventh Seal*), 1957, is pained by his faith, his search of knowledge and the meaning of life in a panic-stricken medieval world suffering from the plague. Visually "*The Seventh Seal*" is one of Bergman's most beautiful films, a morality with striking symbols, inspired by 15th century church murals from central Sweden. The Crusader was portrayed by Max von Sydow, who was playing his first major part in a Bergman film. He has since appeared in a number of others. He plays the important part of being a projection of one side of Bergman's personality.

The relationship between *SÅSOM I EN SPEGEL* (*Through a Glass, Darkly*), 1961, *NATTVARDSGÄSTERNA* (*Winter Light*), 1962, and *TYSTNADEN* (*The Silence*), 1963, has been stressed by Bergman himself. He has called them a trilogy of chamber plays (referring to the works of August Strindberg, with whom Bergman has very much in common, not only in form). In "*Through a Glass, Darkly*", the first part in his trilogy, the existence of God was strangely enough proven by the meaningless sufferings of a young woman, who finally succumbed to her mental illness. The three persons around her - her selfish father, a writer who even makes use of his daughter's approaching insanity for his art, her kind, but rather boring husband, and her younger brother - all fail to save her, but the film still ends in hope: "Love is God". At the end of the film the father has a serious talk with his son for the first time. In the closing moments the boy explains: "Father talked to me", which did not only refer to his earthly father.

The ending of "*Winter Light*" was not quite as clear, but it still conveyed a suppressed tone of hope. The leading character, a priest by the name of Thomas - as the Doubter - comes to the realization that he has selfishly worshipped a private god, a spider god (the same imagery and thought was used in "*Through a Glass, Darkly*"), but still at the end he decided to celebrate divine service, although his church was all but empty. There was no hint of triumph in this act, but the act, however, took place. "*Winter Light*", opening and closing with a church service, was a brilliant illustration of Bergman's realism, not only his observance of liturgical details, but also in the depiction of the futile cares of man. When a fisherman, who is worried about the

destruction going on in the world, turns to the priest for help and guidance, the priest is too engrossed in himself to pay much attention. After this fruitless conversation the fisherman leaves and commits suicide. His visit in the sacristy is shot as if it also could have been a fever dream, and in this mixture of utmost realism and something unreal or even supernatural the film could be compared to Victor Sjöström's KÖRKARLEN (The Phantom Carriage). The importance of nature, at least, is a heritage from Sjöström, but this time he did not use the light, romantic Nordic summer (as in "Smiles of a Summer Night") or the glowing snow, but a bleak, November landscape, extremely dull and ugly, expressing the tediousness in the country.

The last part of the trilogy, "The Silence", 1963, also deals with religion and has been the subject of some very interesting theological interpretations. Sex, so openly treated in the film, offers no solution and this time God leaves the ailing sister alone without hope. The future lies as a kind of inheritance in the few words of the foreign language that the dying woman has been able to translate for the little boy. The longing for consolation thus no longer turns to God but in a new way against the surroundings, looking for a form of basic human contact.

A most recent recurrent theme, deeply felt by the extremely susceptible Bergman, is the theme of "Sawdust and Tinsel", 1953 - the humiliation of the artist, who is not in a position to defend himself against his critics. ANSIKTET ("The Face" in England, "The Magician" in the U.S.), 1958, was set in the early part of the 19th century and refers in many ways to C.J.L. Almqvist, the extremely imaginative Swedish writer of the period. The main part, an occult charlatan, was portrayed by Max von Sydow. The magician pretends to be mute.

Bergman's most recent version of this theme formed the serious undertone to his comedy FÖR ATT INTE TALA OM ALLA DESSA KVINNOR (Now About These Women), 1963, which was his first colour feature.

The rebellious Ingmar Bergman had come a long way when he was appointed director of the Royal Dramatic Theater in Stockholm, the most prominent position of its kind in the country. During the three years that he devoted to guiding and stimulating theatrical activity in Sweden, Bergman found little time to work in film studios. He only started and completed one film during the period. His resignation as director of the theater in 1966 - he plans to continue to stage productions there in future - gave him more opportunities to return to regular film work.

For 20 years Bergman had turned out at least one film each year. Through the years he has gathered around himself a technical and artistic crew who have contributed to creating his very personal style. Many of the performers who have appeared in his films have been trained by him and also gained international acclaim through working with him.

PERSONA (1966) is a return to the mainstream of Ingmar Bergman's cinema. "Persona" is a film about Bergman's doubt of the meaningfulness and usefulness not only of his own art, but of all art. Like many other films in the European sixties, "Persona" is a meditation on the artificial and treacherous character of the film medium as such. In the beginning, middle and end of the film the audience can see film being run through a projector. The director's voice is heard and there is a scene showing the crew actually shooting the film. These devices all break the illusion that the film should show reality. A film is a film is a film is a film.

The main character in the film is Elisabeth (played by Liv Ullmann). She is a famous actress. One day, however, Elisabeth becomes mute. She refuses to say a word, probably because she has lost faith in her art and also in language as a means of communication. Elisabeth is taken care of by a young nurse, Alma (played by Bibi Andersson). The relationship between the mute and secretive Elisabeth and the seemingly secure, healthy nurse Alma is a very peculiar one. In the most famous shot in the film the faces of these two women seem to become identical. Elisabeth's mysterious ailment is slowly transferred to Alma. While Elisabeth gradually recovers, Alma becomes more insecure. Her robustness has been a front hiding a deep mental disorder which is brought out in the open by the confrontation with Elisabeth. "Persona" is a film about mental contagion and about the immediate presence of destructive forces beneath the healthy surface of so-called normal people.

"Persona" was filmed in the ascetic chamber music style of Bergman's most important films from the sixties and seventies. VARGTIMMEN (Hour of the Wolf), 1968, however, was a relapse into the flamboyant and heavily dramatic style of Bergman's earlier works. As in many of Bergman's other works the main character is an artist and the film is the story of his frustrations. "Hour of the Wolf" is about the sick, thwarted visions of the painter Johan Borg. Bergman paints his vision of infernal agonies with a brush that seems to be borrowed from Hieronymus Bosch. In "Hour of the Wolf" which appears to be more

autobiographic in its psychological details than any other Bergman film, Bergman relates his experiences of horror and insanity to his own traumatic childhood experiences. The style and mood of "Hour of the Wolf" is gothic. It is a horror film in the true sense of the word, an intellectual and sophisticated 1960's version of "The monster of Frankenstein". While ruthlessly self-revealing, "Hour of the Wolf" is completely restricted to Bergman's private world. There are no doors to contemporary social life, no references to the 1960's. "Hour of the Wolf" might just as well have been made in the 40's or the 50's as in 1968.

The TV play RITEN (The Rite/The Ritual), 1969, has parallels to "Hour of the Wolf". It is a typical Bergman product with its exaggerations and its tormented, quivering intensity. He works with frequent close-ups, which lay bare the actors and force themselves on the audience with unimaginable strength - even though the symbolism at times seems dark and obscure.

"The Rite" could be taken as a depiction of society's interference in the world of artists, as a ritual dance around this theme. It takes place in a country where a touring theatrical troupe is confronted with a local judge. He is inquisitive and craves for sensation - he places himself over their art but at the same time wants to confide in them, to embody himself in their art and find expression for his anguish in their performance. Between the artist and society there is thus - so it has been asserted - an almost sado-masochistic relationship.

There is another theme in "The Rite": man is captive in his obsessions and fears, he seeks a security which does not exist, perhaps - as one critic expressed it - an earthly grace instead of the divine grace that is denied him.

Together these themes form a heavy pattern which Bergman has presented more clearly in "Sawdust and Tinsel".

SKAMMEN (The Shame), 1968, on the other hand has very obvious references to our time and its agonies. "The Shame" is about two people who live in a situation similar to that of contemporary Vietnam. Liv Ullmann and Max von Sydow play two young artists who live in a country, half of which is occupied by an anonymous enemy. The other half is being liberated by a nationalist movement. But the two young artists have as little sympathy with the liberation movement as with the occupants. Both parties represent violence and destruction. Bergman sees himself

as a terrified bystander, numbed with terror, incapable of action. He therefore refuses to give his sympathy and support to any party. His pathos is liberal and humane on an abstract and somewhat vague level.

The most important tragedy of the film is that the sensitive artist, played by Max von Sydow, is influenced by the brutality of war so that he becomes as brutal and non-human as the people he despises for their lack of humanity. The title "The Shame" refers to Max von Sydow's self-pity and his lack of real interest in the outside world. Beyond doubt the film is largely self-critical, since these characteristics are also those of Ingmar Bergman himself.

Like "Hour of the Wolf" and "The Shame", EN PASSION (A Passion), 1969, takes place on the island of Fårö in the Baltic. Bergman has been living on this barren and beautiful island since the mid-sixties and since 1972 he has his own studio there. He has also made a documentary about "his island" - FÅRÖDOKUMENT (A Fårö Document), 1969.

"A Passion" is another Bergman film in the chamber music manner. The action is minimal, the acting highly discreet, sometimes to the point of being vague. The psychology is subtle, the colours pale. "A Passion" is about four people who are isolated in the barren landscape of Fårö. They are all living there, trying to find solace for the traumatic experiences of their earlier life. They hide to avoid not only other people but also themselves. Their "life lies" are as obvious as those of any Ibsen character.

In "A Passion", like in most of his other films, Bergman deals with the problem of man's real identity. One of the four characters in the film is a photographer. He collects photos of human faces with mad fervour, and he is fascinated by the relationship between surface and reality. Anna, played by Liv Ullmann in one of the best moments of her career, is an invalid after a car crash that killed her husband and son. Nobody knows what caused the accident. Anna was driving. She pretends that her marriage was a perfect one, although everybody else knows that it was anything but that. She believes in her own lie like a religious fanatic. The real theme of "A Passion", as of "Persona", is the frailty of what we call reality, feelings and experiences. And how close violence is to the idyll, how easily destructive and sadistic impulses can be stirred in seemingly normal and healthy people.

As in all Bergman's best films, the substance in "A Passion" is the almost undefinable feelings and moods that change shape permanently

like clouds in the sky. Bergman's films are at the same time limited and endless in variation on their consistent theme.

BERÖRINGEN (The Touch), 1971, is a much less important film. It has a more everyday character than Bergman's great films from the 60's. "The Touch" is Bergman's first attempt to make an international film. The film is co-produced with an American company and one of the main roles is played by the popular American actor Elliott Gould. Gould plays a Jewish archaeologist who comes to Sweden to do research in mediaeval Swedish churches. He meets a doctor's wife, played by Bibi Andersson. She lives a comfortable but dull and lifeless upper middle class life, described by Bergman with an ironic touch, which sometimes resembles that of Chabrol. Gould represents something restless and vital that contrasts sharply with the cool self-control of the Swedes. But his relationship with Bibi Andersson cannot last - his neurotic attitude towards life and his dark memories attract the blond Swedish housewife, but she is not ready to give up her comfort and her quiet well-being.

VISKNINGAR OCH RÖP (Cries and Whispers), made in 1971, première in 1973, shows yet another side of Ingmar Bergman's greatness as a filmmaker. He has said that the original idea for the film came to him in a dream lasting only a few seconds: he saw some women in white moving about in a red room.

In another association he relived the sound of numerous clocks, as in his childhood. The clocks tick in the stillness, one more second gone from our time, yet another...

Together these associations shaped themselves into one of Bergman's most remarkable and highly praised films, a chamber play in chiaroscuro.

It is about four women who come together in a manorhouse. In one of the rooms Agnes (Harriet Andersson) lies dying. She has cancer and is in great pain. She keeps a diary, which like all books in life is never finished. Glimpses of the past flash through her mind. These glimpses are full of summer light, as happy memories often are - summer light, childhood, youth. She strolls in the park with her sisters, they sit in the garden swing, rocking as indolently as in a smile.

The other sisters are still in the midst of life; they don't hear the clocks striking. Maria (Liv Ullmann) is the sensual one, but she is also fickle and faithless. Karin (Ingrid Thulin) is the bitter,

repressed one, dressed in black, with her body and heart in a corset. Then there is Anna, the serving spirit, Agnes's only comfort, since Anna alone is capable of giving and never taking.

Ingmar Bergman's dark pain, which colours all his visions, pervades the whole film. The bright memories slowly flicker out and pain with its stifling weight comes closer and closer to us. Fellowship is disgust or deceit or at most a desperate consolation, as though love were solely a mother's love for her child.

Nevertheless, many people have sensed a feeling of happiness in this film. Perhaps akin to the experience of hearing a requiem by one of the great masters of music. And Bergman has used music with a limpid purity; merely single instruments which, like lonely voices, shape their messages to us.

"Cries and Whispers" is in red "because in some curious way I've got an idea that the inside of the soul is red".

"And so the whispers and the cries die away", it says at the very end of the film. But that is not so. We hear them - though they cannot be heard.

As soon as Bergman had finished making "Cries and Whispers" he retired to Fårö to write the TV series "Six Scenes from a Marriage". (In USA it will be re-edited into a feature film and will have its première in the autumn of 1974).

"I wrote it in order to tidy up a huge wardrobe of experiences of different kinds. A kind of spring cleaning of the wardrobe. My own and others' experiences have been added to it".

The main characters in "Scenes from a Marriage" are Marianne (Liv Ullmann) and Johan (Erland Josephson). "Those parts are two people whom I have spent a lot of time with in my writing and film-making; sometimes I have liked them and sometimes not. But I have enjoyed writing a development story in which two people describe a course of events. They part from each other with astronomical rapidity, only to meet again after terribly long journeys".

The TV series was made in Ingmar Bergman's own studio at Fårö. It took 45 days and the team was very small, with the director of photography Sven Nykvist at the centre.

For most people "Scenes from a Marriage" is a tangible story, a story which reaches them by means of its clarity and its surge of emotion.

Naturally it has also been subjected to in-depth analyses; some critics imagine they have traced a development of Bergman's view of women all the way from FÄNGELSE (Prison). However, the chief thing in favour of the TV series is that it was enormously popular with the man in the street. As Bergman has said so many times: "Nothing I have done means anything until two other people start talking about it on the basis of their experiences". Through a glass darkly.

During the spring and summer of 1974 Bergman is busy producing Mozart's "The Magic Flute" for Channel 2 of Swedish television. It is one of the biggest ventures that the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation has embarked upon. The classically beautiful Drottningholm Theatre has been built in the studios at Film House in Stockholm.

Bergman throws himself into this with customary intensity and discipline. Music is something that concerns him: "Music is just as important as bread in my life".

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