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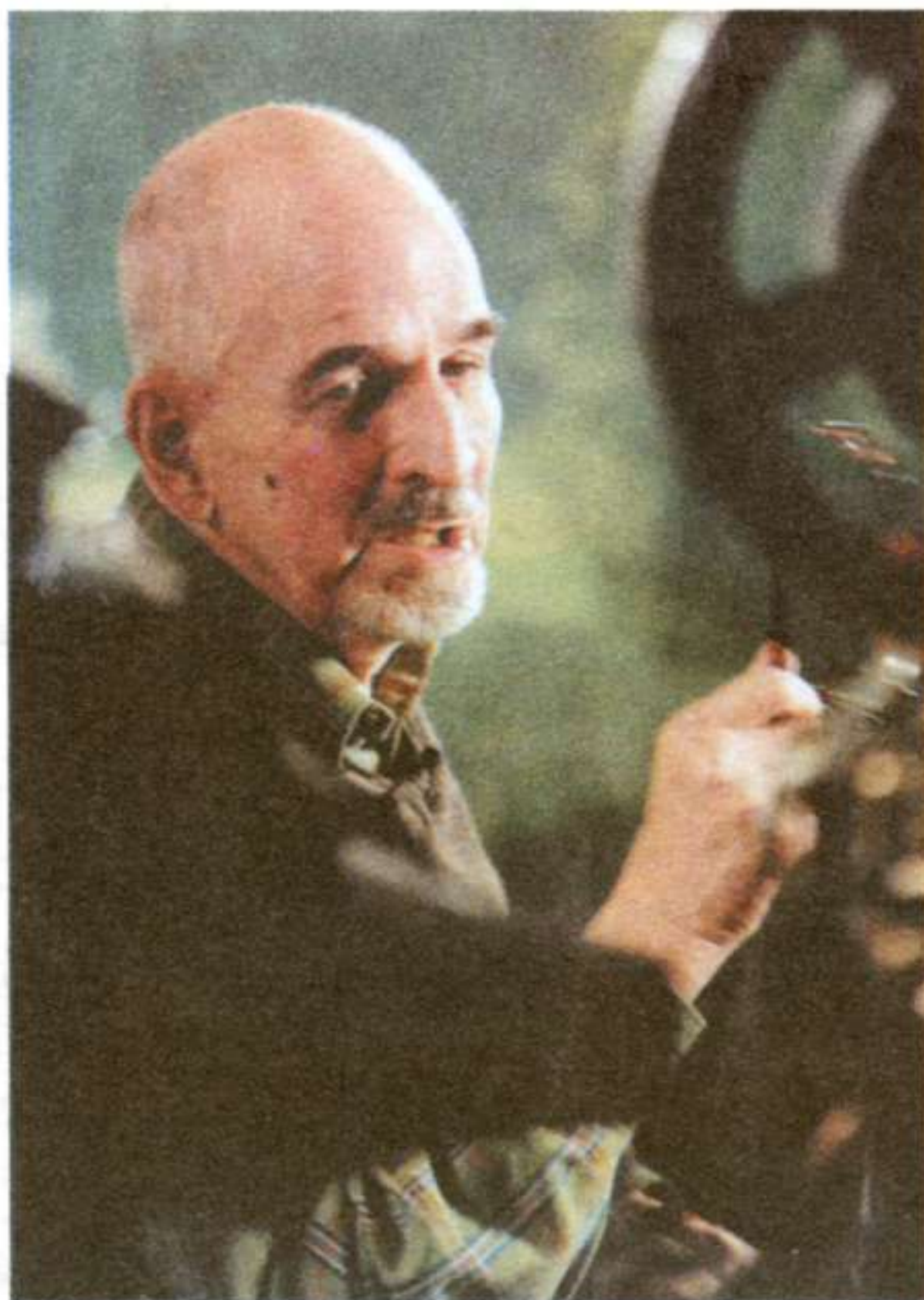
WINTER LIGHT: A TRIBUTE TO INGMAR BERGMAN

JANUARY 11 – JANUARY 14

"Any filmmaker trying to get into the texture of human relations ends up in Bergman territory. What I learned from Bergman is that you can explore human relationships with a certain level of brutality and crudity as long as you love your characters." – Olivier Assayas

Bergman's death last year prompted a number of reminiscences about his life and work, as well as the chance to reflect on the Swedish director's long assumed status as one of the masters of world cinema. The very notion that Bergman's reputation would need posthumous revision would have been unthinkable only a couple of decades ago. And yet today he remains a name universally recognized but not always understood.

Bergman attained a position at the very center of post-war European cinema with a string of breakthrough films during the fertile period from the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s, beginning with *Smiles of a Summer Night* (1955), *The Seventh Seal* (1956) and *Wild Strawberries* (1957). These extraordinary films announced the central preoccupations (love and lust, existential fear and loathing, the encounter with death) and signature stylistic flourishes (his use of extreme close-ups of his actors' faces and Sven Nykvist's lucid and effulgent cinematography) that would help to shape Bergman's personality as a director.



INGMAR BERGMAN

Over the decades, however, these aesthetic and thematic preoccupations have hardened into a stereotype in the public mind, even as Bergman kept finding ways to renew them. Overlooked are the strange crudity and harsh brutality that Assayas astutely observes, as well as strains of the grotesque, the erotic and the theatrical that run throughout Bergman's work and keep it from becoming stale or arid. (As Thomas Elsaesser has noted, the medieval grotesquerie of *The Seventh Seal* is far closer to Roger Corman than to Dreyer's *Day of Wrath*.)

The sampling of Bergman's work represented below, consisting largely of prints drawn from the HFA's collection, includes both masterpieces and rarities, from all phases of Bergman's long career. The eclectic nature of the selection is designed to remind audiences, and particularly viewers new to Bergman's work, that his talents far exceed the assumed caricature of a director interested only in intense psychodrama and religious or Freudian symbolism.

SUMMER INTERLUDE (SOMMARLEK)

FRIDAY JANUARY 11 AT 7PM

Like the somewhat later masterpiece *Monika*, *Summer Interlude* focuses on a young woman's summer of love. Reflecting Bergman's affinity for backstage drama, the woman here is a ballerina reminiscing on her first lover, the awkward and reticent Henrik. The tenderness of their tentative lovemaking serves as a contrast with the older Marie's experience of disappointment. The film, Bergman's first with a female protagonist, marked a new maturity in the young director's filmmaking.

Directed by Ingmar Bergman. With Maj-Britt Nilsson, Birger Malmsten, Alf Kjellin

Sweden 1951, 35mm, b/w, 96 min. Swedish with English subtitles

WINTER LIGHT (NATTVARDSGÄSTERNA)

FRIDAY JANUARY 11 AT 9PM

In a kind of passing of the baton from one Bergman actor to another, Gunnar Björnstrand plays a pastor struggling with a crisis of faith even as he tries to minister to Max von Sydow, playing a severely depressed parishioner. Justly renowned as one of Bergman's best films, this austere portrait of a man's crisis of faith also boasts some of Sven Nykvist's most strikingly beautiful cinematography. Profoundly moving, *Winter Light* is shot through with human warmth despite the wintry setting and the severity of the theme.

Directed by Ingmar Bergman. With Ingrid Thulin, Gunnar Björnstrand, Gunnel Lindblom

Sweden 1963, 35mm, b/w, 80 min. Swedish with English subtitles

SAWDUST AND TINSEL (GYCKLARNAS AFTON)

SATURDAY JANUARY 12 AT 7PM

The owner of a ramshackle traveling circus makes a desperate attempt to reunite with his estranged wife while his mistress, the bareback rider, suffers a humiliating affair with an actor. This bleak view of human relationships is mirrored in the film's striking use of shadows and darkness. Overlooked upon its first release, *Sawdust and Tinsel* has gained steadily in reputation over the years and is now regarded as one of Bergman's early masterpieces.

Directed by Ingmar Bergman. With Harriet Andersson, Åke Grönberg, Hasse Ekman

Sweden 1953, 35mm, b/w, 89 min. Swedish with English subtitles

THROUGH A GLASS, DARKLY (SÅSOM I EN SPEGEL)

SATURDAY JANUARY 12 AT 9PM

Perhaps Bergman's greatest film, *Through a Glass, Darkly* renders a fragile woman's descent into insanity as a cruel and beautiful poem. Harriet Andersson brings a dangerous incandescence to Karin, whose mental disintegration unleashes long buried incestuous passion and transforms her fits of religious ecstasy into harrowing visions of an uncaring, punishing god.

Directed by Ingmar Bergman. With Harriet Andersson, Gunnar Björnstrand, Max von Sydow

Sweden 1961, 35mm, b/w, 89 min. Swedish with English subtitles

THE MAGIC FLUTE (TOLLEJÖTEN)

SUNDAY JANUARY 13 AT 3PM

Stockholm's Drottningholm Theater is a marvel: a still-working theater with 18th-century stage machinery. Bergman takes full advantage of both the theater's wonders and Mozart's music in his staging of the opera *The Magic Flute* (performed here in Swedish) and in turn, his filming of that staging. The tale of young lovers tested is set against Bergman's attention to the goings-on in the wings during the performance, and in the audience. The cast

features a young Håkan Hagegård, all but stealing the show as Papageno, the comic bird catcher.

Directed by Ingmar Bergman. With Josef Köstlinger, Irma Urrila, Håkan Hagegård

Sweden 1975, 35mm, color, 135 min. Swedish with English subtitles

IN THE PRESENCE OF A CLOWN (LARMAR OCH GÖR SIG TILL)

SUNDAY JANUARY 13 AT 7PM

Committed to an Uppsala asylum in the mid-1920s for attempting to murder his fiancée, an eccentric inventor obsesses on death and Schubert. Once released, he schemes to make the first sound film, basing it on his obsessions and on a melodramatic fairy tale told to him by another inmate. Bergman made this dark tragic-comedy for television, and it plays as a kind of valedictory to the cinema, Bergman's look back at his own career, and an homage to the silent cinemas of Sweden and Germany.

Directed by Ingmar Bergman. With Börje Ahlstedt, Marie Richardson, Erland Josephson

Sweden 1997, video, color, 120 min. Swedish with English subtitles

THE VIRGIN SPRING (JUNGFRUKÄLLEN)

SUNDAY JANUARY 13 AT 9:15PM

When Max von Sydow's young daughter is raped and gruesomely murdered, fate delivers the killers into his hands. The plot of *The Virgin Spring* is as simple and as clear as a parable, but the power of the film comes from Bergman's ability to give all the blood-letting a real impact. *The Virgin Spring* remains a shocking film, and sadly, its ambivalence about retaliatory violence has also retained its timeliness. (Horror fans will note that the film was remade as *Last House on the Left* by Wes Craven.)

Directed by Ingmar Bergman. With Max von Sydow, Birgitta Valberg, Gunnel Lindblom

Sweden 1959, 35mm, b/w, 88 min. Swedish with English subtitles

FROM THE LIFE OF MARIONETTES (AUS DEM LEBEN DES MARIONETTEN)

MONDAY JANUARY 14 AT 7PM

This film opens with the killing (in color) of a prostitute by a middle-class young man, then backs up for a series of scenes (in black and white) explaining what led to the crime. *From the Life of Marionettes* marks an interesting point in Bergman's career: exiled from Sweden to Germany to avoid charges of tax evasion, the master here works in German without any of his usual stable of actors in this tale of a tortured relationship between a pair of young lovers that leads to sexual obsession and murder. This tense, even harsh film contains faint echoes of Lang and Pabst, on the one hand, and a slight acknowledgement of the New German Cinema on the other.

Directed by Ingmar Bergman. With Robert Atzorn, Christine Buchegger, Martin Benrath

Germany 1980, 35mm, b/w & color, 104 min. German with English subtitles

THE FACE, AKA THE MAGICIAN (ANSIKTET)

MONDAY JANUARY 14 AT 9PM

When a mid-nineteenth century traveling magician and hypnotist rolls into town, he is summoned to give a command performance for the authorities, who are eager to debunk him. He proves too clever for them in this allegory about art as artifice and its ability to outflank those who think they are immune to it. *The Face* is at once a spooky Gothic and a darkly erotic comedy.

Directed by Ingmar Bergman. With Max von Sydow, Ingrid Thulin, Åke Fridell

Sweden 1958, 35mm, b/w, 100 min. Swedish with English subtitles



INGMAR BERGMAN *THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY* 1961