

MARGARET KOSKINEN (ed.):

Ingmar Bergman Revisited: Performance, Cinema and the Arts

Wallflower Press, London 2008. Pp. 242. ISBN 9781905674336.

Since the death of Ingmar Bergman at the age of eighty-nine in August 2007, a number of books on this major film artist have appeared or reappeared. English-language translations of Bergman's autobiographical works from the late 1980s, *The Magic Lantern* and *Images*, have both been re-issued, after being long out of print. The University of Mississippi has at last added Bergman to their burgeoning director interviews series. And of course there is the mammoth 600-page Taschen tome, *The Ingmar Bergman Archives*, with its encyclopedic breadth, coffee table-size girth, and \$200 list price. As a collection of new scholarly essays, however, *Ingmar Bergman Revisited* is certainly one of the most significant contributions to Bergman studies in a long while. Emerging from the first international 'Ingmar Bergman Symposium' in 2005, these essays collectively take an interartistic and intermedial approach to the protean range of Bergman's working life. Bergman wrote and directed some fifty films, staged about 130 plays, and creatively worked in television, radio, music, opera, and literature. As the essays progressively argue, his creative process in any one medium was constantly informed and inspired by his work in the others.

The volume opens with a prologue by Liv Ullmann, whose text here is the affectionate opening address she gave at the 2005 symposium, discussing her long professional and personal relationship with Bergman. Thereafter the anthology is divided into three main sections, all structured around "intermediality" as an organizing principle. It is an ambitious approach, one aimed at exploring a more fully inclusive "interart" Bergman oeuvre. The first section, "Music, Stage, Film – Between the Arts", inaugurates this overarching intermedial approach through editor Margaret Koskinen's article "Out of the Past: *Saraband* and the Ingmar Bergman Archive". Here she traces the correspondence of music, television, theatre, and still photography in Bergman's work back to his unpublished diaries and manuscripts in the Bergman archive. Next, Ulla-Britta Lagerroth argues that Bergman not only theatricalises his films but cinematises and pictorialises his theatrical productions. As evidence, she discusses four of Bergman's Shakespeare productions at the Royal Dramatic Theatre in Stockholm. Stefan Johansson meanwhile takes a personal, anecdotal look at Bergman's early passion for opera, dating back to his teenage Wagnerian phase and his unpaid internship during the 1941-42 season at the Royal Opera in Stockholm. Lastly, Marilyn Johns Blackwell explores a rich dialectic between Bergman's stage and screen work through the privileged, ritualized and often sexualized spaces of platforms and beds.

The anthology's second section, "Picturing the Self – Between Words and Images", focuses on issues such as authorship, self-fashioning and selfhood, while also making interdisciplinary links to philosophy, psychology, and neuroscience. In "Analysing Self-Fashioning in Authoring and Reception", Janet Staiger examines the artist's own sly agency in crafting and perpetuating the *author function* and brand known as "Bergman". In making this neo-auteurist case, she mines Bergman's autobiographical works, particularly *Laterna Magica*, as well as revealing interviews such as James Baldwin's 1959 *Esquire* magazine piece. Linda Haverty Rugg then examines still photography in Bergman's work, while relating Bergman's self-projections in film to recent ideas by scholars working at the intersection of philosophy and neuroscience. She compellingly reads Bergman's most modernist, experimental film *Persona* within interlinked concepts such as aphasia, disassociation, performance, and spectatorship. Finally, Paisley Livingston (author of *Ingmar Bergman and the Rituals of Art*) reads Bergman through Eino Kaila's *Psychology of the Personality* from the 1930s and speculates on the Finnish philosopher's possible influences on the young Bergman.

The third section, "Picturing the World – And Beyond", moves into more social-political terrain. John Orr writes on "Bergman, Nietzsche and Hollywood." The passages that pay particular attention to the influence of classical Hollywood comedy (especially the "comedy of remarriage") in Bergman's work are the essay's most cohesive and successful. Among the strongest entries in the anthology is Thomas Elsaesser's critical recovery of *The Serpent's Egg*, the English-language film that Bergman made in exile in Bavaria in 1976 and set in 1920s Weimar Berlin. Focussing on a film that has often been treated as a failed, anomalous, strange orphan in the Bergman canon, Elsaesser locates its rich cinematic intertext within a "retro-fashion" genre of historical films made in the 1970s by European directors such as Visconti, Bertolucci, Truffaut, Malle, Pasolini, Fassbinder, and Schlöndorff (and even in dialogue with Bob Fosse's *Cabaret*). Erik Hedling's article "The Welfare State Depicted: Post-Utopian Landscapes in Ingmar Bergman's Films" addresses a heretofore neglected approach, Bergman's films as a social critique of Sweden's affluent welfare society. Lastly, Astrid Söderbergh Widding works against the grain of much Swedish scholarship on Bergman's religious motifs, which she argues have focused either positively or negatively on their literal character as opposed to their aesthetic or creative dimensions.

In the anthology's epilogue, the doyenne of Bergman scholars, Birgitta Steene, provides an elegant overview of this volume's interart approaches as well as a meditative, historical analysis of the development of Bergman reception and academic studies. (She cites that there are to date some fifty book-length studies of Bergman, as well as more than thirty dissertations).

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Both Steene's afterward and Koskinen's introduction also begin to wrestle with the thorny question of why Bergman's international reputation and pantheon position in the international cinema canon have fallen so steeply after his great heyday in the art house cinema boom of the 1960s and 1970s. Even in the wake of his death, cineastes like Jonathan Rosenbaum have not been shy about attacking Bergman as overrated, a middle-brow entertainer whose works are both too literary and too theatrical when compared to more cinematically-engaged masters like Hitchcock, Welles, Godard, Bresson, and even fellow Scandinavian Carl Dreyer. Shifts in canon-shaping tastes and film aesthetics have temporarily left Bergman's stock at a relatively low ebb, especially in the light of his titanic status as possibly the world's greatest filmmaker only a generation ago. The pendulum will no doubt swing back in Bergman's favor. In the meantime, scholarly works such as *Ingmar Bergman Revisited: Performance, Cinema and the Arts* do a superb job of validating Bergman's intermedial strengths across the arts as a key source of the creative dynamism of his films – a triumphant virtue rather than a fatal “anti-cinematic” failing.

DW revisits his life and incredible masterpieces, while uncovering some surprising facts. Respected across the Arts world. Away from cinema, many other top names from the world of culture have spoken highly of Bergman. The new edition of his memoirs, "The Magic Lantern," which was republished recently in Germany, includes a foreword by French writer Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clezio, the winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature. Arts.21: The Legacy of Ingmar Bergman's Life Exclusively at a German Publishing House. Behind the facade. In May, a new documentary was premiered at the Cannes Film Festival which revealed some surprising insights about the director's life. In honor of Ingmar Bergman's one hundredth birthday, the Criterion Collection is proud to present the most comprehensive collection of his films ever released on home video. One of the most revelatory voices to emerge from the postwar explosion of international art-house cinema, Bergman was a master storyteller who startled the world with his stark intensity and naked pursuit of the most profound metaphysical and spiritual questions. The struggles of faith and morality, the nature of dreams, and the agonies and ecstasies of human relationships Bergman explored these subjects in films ranging from *Maaret Koskinen* is professor at the Department of Cinema Studies at Stockholm University, film critic for national Swedish daily *Dagens Nyheter* and the author of *In the Beginning Was the Word: Ingmar Bergman's Early Writings* (2002). Product details. Publisher : Wallflower Press; Illustrated edition (March 24, 2008). Language : English. Paperback : 256 pages. ISBN-10 : 1905674333. ISBN-13 : 978-1905674336. (2008) *Ingmar Bergman Revisited: Performance, Cinema and the Arts*, Great Britain, London: Wallflower Press. Google Scholar. 6. Wood, R. (1969) *Ingmar Bergman*, London: Studio Vista; Gado, F. (1986) *The Passion of Ingmar Bergman*, Durham: Duke University Press. Google Scholar. 21. Braudy, L. and Cohen, M. (eds.) (1999) *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, Fifth edition. This edition includes Bordwell, D. "The Art Cinema as a Mode of Film Practice", pp. 716-724 (originally published in *Film Comment*, Volume 4, no. 1, Fall, 1979). Google Scholar. Ingmar Bergman. 32K likes · 580 talking about this. "Film as dream, film as music. No art passes our conscience in the way film does, and goes directly..." See more of Ingmar Bergman. on Facebook. Log In. or. Create New Account. See more of Ingmar Bergman. on Facebook. Log In. Forgot account?