

Bergman, Ingmar (1918-), Swedish motion-picture director and producer, possibly the most distinguished figure in Scandinavian cinema. Born in Uppsala and educated at Stockholm University, Bergman has directed, produced, and written films that range from light comedy to profound psychological and philosophical drama. His comedies—which include *Lesson in Love* (1954), *Smiles of a Summer Night* (1955), and *The Devil's Eye* (1960)—are especially marked by lyrical treatment of their explicit sexual content. Among his dramatic films, *The Seventh Seal* (1957) is a somber allegory of the relationship of humanity to God and to death. His themes are frequently conveyed through the use of Christian symbols (see **Christianity**) and are imbued with a sense of dark mystery. *Wild Strawberries* (1957) and *Persona* (1966), both profound studies of the human psyche, use the typical Bergman techniques of flashbacks, dream sequences, and visions. His trilogy—*Through a Glass, Darkly* (1961), *Winter Light* (1962), and *The Silence* (1963)—explores such difficult metaphysical questions (see **Metaphysics**) as the existence of God, the loss of faith, the capacity for giving and receiving love, and the tormenting human inability to communicate. *The Virgin Spring* (1959), *Through a Glass, Darkly*, and *Fanny and Alexander* (1983) won Academy Awards for best foreign language film. Bergman's films also include *The Magician* (1958), *Hour of the Wolf* (1968), *Scenes from a Marriage* (1973), *The Magic Flute* (1974), *Face to Face* (1976), and *Autumn Sonata* (1978).

In the early 1980s Bergman announced his intention to retire from filmmaking, and since the mid-1980s he has focused chiefly on theatrical directing. His screenplay *The Best Intentions*, essentially the story of his parents' courtship, was filmed in 1992 by Danish director Bille August, and Bergman published a rewritten version as a novel in 1993.

Other writings by Bergman include his autobiography, *The Magic Lantern* (1988), and a film memoir, *Images: My Life in Film* (1993). His many honors include the prestigious Irving Thalberg Memorial Award, presented by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in 1970.¹

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