

Steene, Birgitta. 2005. *Ingmar Bergman: A Reference Guide*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. 1152 pages. ISBN 9053564063. (hdbk) €62.5.

Nearly twenty years ago, Birgitta Steene published a reference guide to Bergman's work up to and including the year 1984 with the publisher G. K. Hall, and it amounted to three hundred pages. It was a serviceable but unattractive looking volume with a typescript appearance. Amsterdam University Press are to be congratulated for bringing out what will most certainly be the definitive bibliographical and filmographical resource for current and future Bergman film and theatre scholars. By page length alone, it is nearly four times the size of the earlier volume, printed on beautiful sturdy paper, with a pleasing font style and point size. This book is clearly a work of love and devotion on the part of now retired Professor Birgitta Steene; she makes a strong case by the sheer massiveness of this compilation that Ingmar Bergman is not just Sweden's major film artist of the twentieth century but possibly Europe's.

The work is divided into ten chapters. I list them here as this review may encourage readers to ask their university library to purchase the volume in this era of book-buying restraint and online publication bias. In chapter one, Steene gives a short narrative overview of Bergman's life and work; chapter two reviews and documents his life as a writer; chapter three discusses his life as a filmmaker, followed in chapter four by a comprehensive filmography; chapter five lists his radio and television works; chapter six gives a narrative overview of his involvement in theatre, followed in chapter seven by a theatre and media bibliography 1940-2004; chapter eight lists interviews with Bergman; chapter nine provides an annotated bibliography of critical works on Bergman; chapter ten rounds out the volume with varia: documentaries made on Bergman, his screen and theatre performances, his awards and tributes, and archival sources. Indexes are key to a volume such as this, and Professor Steene generously provides a subject index as well as a name and title index. She even provides a subject index supplement which lists book-length studies and dissertations on Ingmar Bergman, and special journal issues on his work. The book is lightly illustrated with some black and white production stills, but also includes a photograph taken of Ingmar Bergman's neat handwriting of an early short story.

Each section is dealt with chronologically, and each entry is given an identifying number (there are over 1700 entries). The film section proceeds with a synopsis of the film, a credit list, a commentary (usually identifying sources and background), and Reception—a listing of Swedish and foreign reviews and

Dept. of Film, University of British Columbia

articles of interest. The theatre section also follows this structure. Steene provides some fascinating details. In Bergman's production of *Peer Gynt* in 1957, for example, we learn that the production lasted five hours, despite dramatic cuts to the text, and the unconventional fare of hot dogs were served in the lobby in the intermissions! Swedish reviewers hailed the production a masterpiece, but Norwegian reviewers, Steene reveals, were devastating in their criticism. Bergman's vision of *Peer Gynt* as a dark-haired lad with gypsy blood (played by Max Von Sydow) apparently did not go over well with Norwegian critics.

This volume is an annotated reference guide, and so we are always conscious of Steene's views on the critical works, and the success or otherwise of Bergman's theatre and film work. This is an added bonus, because Steene is an expert in the field, and her comments are always fully informed, even if one does not quite agree with her emphasis. However, one generally marvels at Steene's discipline in this mammoth taxonomic task. She has naturally had to make the usual editorial decisions of inclusion and exclusion. Thus the work of some writers, such as Peter Ohlin and Peter Harcourt published in this journal previously are included, but other writers' work in diverse publications are not. This is not a serious issue as Steene is seeking to give attention to sources not easily picked up by electronic searches. Also sections in books on Bergman are plentiful and usually (and I include my own modest work here!) easily findable in general bibliographies. It was surprising and amusing, nonetheless, that an entry is given over to a parody of Bergmania by two students in the late 1960s, published in the student newspaper at UBC.

While I still believe in the aura of the book, and, of course, Professor Steene does too, one wonders if such a volume would be taken on by many publishers today. The trend towards online publication for bibliographies and filmographies is now pervasive, even annotated ones, as it allows updating and correction. What is missing often, however, is the expert guiding hand, and this is what Professor Steene brings, a sense of comforting authority. This work will guide further research on Bergman, and assist greatly on the accuracy of that scholarship. We will be forever grateful for Professor Steene's monumental work.

Brian Mclroy
Dept. of Film, University of British Columbia