SWEDEN is a country with a relatively small population and that certainly provides reason for the Swedish film producer to reflect upon the unpalatable fact that the motion picture is born Janus-like with one face representing art and the other industry. Throughout its entire existence the inescapable commercialization has been a heavy shackle on the cinema. This is, of course, bound up with the fact that the cinema is a medium of mass communication. Film production costs are so high that they necessitate a large audience if the producer is to have the chance of recovering his outlay. Film art is more dependent on public favour than other art forms. The film producer finds himself in the centre between the interests of art and commerce.

This is widely recognized as applying to motion picture producers the world over. However, for a film producer in a country such as Sweden the financial problem, however commonplace it may sound, becomes of decisive importance. Since its beginnings fifty years ago, the Swedish film industry has been in constant states of crisis, except for brief periods, primarily because of the small home market — Sweden has a population of only 7½ millions. In the silent era one had the possibility of overcoming this difficulty with film markets abroad. However, the arrival of the talkies changed the picture and the Swedish language suddenly became an almost unsurmountable barrier. More recently there has been a certain improvement, but as a rule the Swedish film producer cannot count on receiving anything from abroad from his films. Yet markets abroad are of vital importance for the Swedish film industry as they offer
the only way of maintaining production with our constantly rising costs.

Sweden first experienced television in 1957 and since then it has spread like wildfire quicker than in any other country. The competition from television has greatly reduced the number of visits people pay to the cinema, indeed in Stockholm cinema visits are down by 40 per cent. This makes film production even more difficult than before, because it affects the condition under which film production has been made possible in Sweden. Film studios and cinemas in Sweden have of necessity always been closely connected and as a rule the large Swedish film producing companies have also owned chains of cinemas. Often the profits of the cinemas were used to cover the inevitable production losses. But what will happen now that cinema receipts have been reduced by the competition from television and now that motion picture producers can no longer count on this financial support which aided them previously?

Television is the natural enemy of film production in Sweden. Another difficulty is the entertainment tax. At 38 per cent a few years ago the level of this tax was the second highest in the world, but even if it is reduced to 25 per cent now the reduction is not sufficient to make up for the loss inflicted by television on the cinemas and the film studios. The entire Swedish film industry is between the devil of television and the deep-blue sea of entertainment tax. The result has been that Swedish film production has been heavily reduced. Previously 30—35 full-length feature films were produced every year in Sweden. In 1959 less than half that amount was made. No one knows what will happen in the future. However, an uncommon measure of optimism belongs, or should belong, to the essential equipment of every motion picture producer. We live in hope, even if that hope is not much to live on.

Swedish film-makers have a proud tradition to live up to, a tradition which springs from the period more than 40 years ago when Victor Sjöström and Mauritz Stiller made Swedish and international motion picture history with Körkarlen (which was screened internationally under the title The Phantom Carriage) and Herr Arnes pengar (Sir Arne's Treasure) and a number of other films.

Svensk Filmindustri, which was once the studio of both Sjöström and Stiller and is now the studio of Ingmar Bergman, hopes that friends of the Swedish cinema will see and recognize the threads which link Ingmar Bergman with the creators of what can be justifiably called the Classics of the Swedish Cinema. It is a matter of pride for us that, in this critical time for motion picture production, we are able to present a film for which the artist was given a completely free hand without being obliged to pay regard to commercial considerations.

Carl Anders Dymling
JUNGFRIUKÄLLAN
(THE VIRGIN SPRING)

A 13th-century legend and Swedish folk-song "Töre's dotter i Vänge"
("The Daughter of Töre of Vänge")

Töre's daughter in Vänge deep
Did one morning too long sleep;
Mass she missed, she slept it thro'.
But God will surely bless her too.

1. To the loft Mistress Martha goes
   — cold is the forest air —
   Karin, her daughter, she arose,
   — When green the trees are there.

2. Her daughter wakes with eyes awide
   Prepares to Kaga Church to ride.

3. Proud Karin sits upon her bed
   Platting her golden locks about her head.

4. Proud Karin dons her silken robe,
   A work by fifteen maidens sewed.

5. Proud Karin dons her petticoat fine
   Richly embroidered with golden twine.

6. Proud Karin dons her blue cloak bright,
   She rides to church now it is light.

7. She rides around a giant tree,
   Now three herdsmen does she see.

8. They say to her, "Come be our wife,
   Or thou shalt forfeit thy young life".

9. "Do not lay a hand on me,
   Or my father's wrath ye'll see".

10. "For thy kinsmen care not we,
    We'll kill them all as well as thee."

11. The herdsmen three took her to wife
    And then they took from her her life.

12. They took her by her golden hair
    And dragged her 'neath a birch tree there.

13. They took her by her golden head
    And left her 'gainst the birch tree, dead.

14. And on that spot her body lay,
    Burst forth a spring, so legends say.
15. They stripped her of her golden robe,
   Into their bundle was it stowed.
16. Her body in the mire they lay
   And with her garments went away.
17. When this foul deed had they done,
   They took the way that she had come.
18. They went along that wooded lane
   Until they Vänge village came.
19. They came up to the farm of Töre
   And found the farmer at his door.
20. Töre stood outside all clad in hide,
    He came and let the men inside.
21. Then went they into Töre's homestead,
    Where they partook meat and bread.
22. A thought in Töre's mind did turn:
    Why does my daughter not return?
23. Ere Martha joined her man in bed,
    The herdsmen came to her and said:
24. "Wilt thou have this silken robe,
    Upon which some nine maidens sewed?"
25. Martha saw the robe in horror,
    It filled her heart with deepest sorrow.
26. Martha kept herself from weeping,
    Approached her man who was sleeping.
27. "Awake now, dearest husband mine,
    For they have killed daughter thine."
28. "They have her robe, I know her fate,
    This strikes my heart a blow so great."
29. Töre to avenge his daughter's life
    Rushes on the men with unsheathed knife.
30. He kills one, he kills another,
    Now he falls on the little brother.
31. Now Töre casts his knife away.
    "O Lord, forgive my deed this day."
32. "How can I this deed atone?
    To God, I'll build a church of stone."
    "Gladly shall we do such work
    — cold is the forest air —
    Kärna shall we call the kirk."
    — When green the trees are there.
Ingmar Bergman is the most fascinating personality in the present-day Swedish film world. It is no exaggeration to say that in recent years he has become one of the most talked-about film directors in the world. His artistic achievements have been recognized in a wide variety of countries and he has received numerous motion picture awards.

As a film director he is most interested in the struggle between good and evil in the lives of people of today; he has given voice to the desperate and affection-hungry younger generation of the post-war years and often his films show a tense idealism and the search for a way of life. Bergman is the only Swedish film director who uses film as a means of personal expression; with few exceptions he scripts the films he directs and throughout these films his own personality and outlook on life is reflected.

Ingmar Bergman was born on the 14th July 1918 in a vicarage in the Swedish university city of Uppsala. The fact that his father was a clergyman had great bearing on his development. In 1937 he sat what is known in Swedish as studentexamen (the Swedish equivalent of the English Higher School Certificate or the American B. A.) and then went on to study literature and the history of art at the University of Stockholm. Svensk Filminindustri, the oldest and one of the most important film production companies in Sweden, engaged him as a script writer in 1943 and the following year his first script enabled the well-known Swedish director Alf Sjöberg to make that very distinguished film *Torment* (*Hets*), which was shown throughout the world with great success. Ingmar Bergman made his debut as a film director in 1945 with *Crisis* (*Kris*) in which he worked on the theme of loneliness and the desire for companionship.

During his very first years in films his works were full of harmony and a lyrical beauty as typified by the film *For Joy* (*Till glädje*), which he made in 1949.
In the main Ingmar Bergman’s films show the moving patterns of everyday life and range from the documentary-like Port of Call (Hamnstad) of 1948 and The Summer with Monika (Sommarner med Monika) of 1953 to the exquisite Illicit Interlude (Sommarek).

Ingmar Bergman has received many international awards. In 1954 he delighted everyone with his comedy of manners A Lesson in Love (En lektion i kärlek) and followed it in 1955 with Smiles of a Summer Night (Sommarnattens leende), which was awarded the special prize by the jury of the Cannes Film Festival of 1956. The following year Bergman was again awarded the same prize for his 1956 film The Seventh Seal (Det sjunde inseglet), a symbolic drama set in the plague-ridden Middle Ages. This made Ingmar Bergman the first and only director to achieve an important award two years running at the Cannes Film Festival.

In 1957 Bergman made Smultronstället, which also has a poetic title in English: Wild Strawberries.

Since 1958 Bergman has completely dominated Swedish film production and has become a centre of interest for the world press. No other Swede has attained critical approval and gained as many motion picture awards before; his films have appeared more often at film festivals than those of any other director.

Bergman has been acclaimed throughout the world as one of the film’s most creative artists. The main honours he has received since 1958 are:

**Berlin:** First Prize in 1958, the Golden Bear Award for Wild Strawberries (Smultronstället).

**London:** Wild Strawberries (Smultronstället) and The Seventh Seal (Det sjunde inseglet) dominated the critics’ choices.

**Paris:** The French Motion Picture Academy awarded Bergman the “Grand Prix International de l’Académie du Cinéma” for The Seventh Seal (Det sjunde inseglet).

**Cannes:** Best Director Award for Brink of Life (Nära livet) — the Best Actress Award was also gained with this film.

**Venice:** Critics’ Prize award to Wild Strawberries (Smultronstället) despite its not being an entry in the competition.

**New York:** Overwhelming press acclamation for the artistic achievements of Ingmar Bergman.

**Mar del Plata Festival, Argentina:** First prize 1959 for Wild Strawberries (Smultronstället) — the Best Actor Award was gained with this film.

**Venice:** 1959 The Magician (Ansiktet). Prize of the Jury for “the best directing, poetical originality and exquisite style”. The Pasinetti Prize (the Prize of the Italian press) “the best foreign film of 1959”.

To fill out this portrait of Ingmar Bergman it might be mentioned that in addition to his motion picture work he also makes a considerable contribution to the Swedish theatre as a playwright, producer, manager and artistic director of Malmö Stadsteater, the Municipal Theatre of Malmö, Sweden, which is the largest theatre in northern Europe. From time to time he helps out the Swedish broadcasting system as a writer and producer.

Bergman’s Malmö production of Goethe’s Faust was played in Swedish in London in May 1959 and received tremendous acclaim from both critics and public. The Malmö Municipal Theatre has also given Bergman performances in Paris.

In 1960 Ingmar Bergman is to become one of the main producers at Kungliga Dramatiska Teatern, the National Theatre of Sweden.
A Page from My Diary

by

Ingmar Bergman
Director of The Virgin Spring

Maytime in Dalarna: Shooting the Exterior Scenes of The Virgin Spring.

ONE rainy morning in the early summer of 1959 we assembled at about half past seven by a stream near a lake in the forest. The shooting schedule for the day called for a number of close-ups of the people from the farm going to the spot where the daughter of Töre had been raped and killed.

Thirty metres of camera track had been put down across the uneven and difficult terrain. The electricians were setting up their lights by the camera track. Actors, actresses, make-up men, and even the director, all helped to get things going. All were active in order to keep warm. The temperature was about the freezing point, and now and then snowflakes appeared from the ice-grey mist.

That day our location unit consisted of twenty-two persons, attired in an amazing variety of costumes: raincoats, oilskins, Icelandic sweaters, leather jackets, old blankets, coaching caps, medieval cloaks and other items obtained from the wardrobe mistress. The Swedish summer is at times a trifle chilly.

It would have been an exaggeration to have called the atmosphere cheerful, but on the other hand we were not downhearted. All were caught up with that unique family feeling which is typical of filmmaking in Sweden.

We rehearsed the first scene; the track was old, and uneven. As our tracking devices were a little primitive, everyone, with the exception of those in front of the camera, had to help with the ropes, the cables and the lamps. We tried time after time; things got better as time went on. Then the rain changed to snow. We continued to be active and managed to raise our humour by several degrees.

Suddenly a break appeared in the clouds, the wind dropped and the sun burst through.

We decided to shoot.

However, as the rays of the sun penetrated and sparkled across the mysterious darkness of this water in the forest and through the transparent spring green of the Swedish birch trees, someone called out loudly and pointed to the sky.

Everyone looked upwards.
There above the tops of the pine trees soared two cranes in their majestic flight. Slowly and almost without movement they circled around over our heads.

We dropped what we were doing and raced up to the crest of a small hill above the stream in order to get a better view of the birds in flight.

We stood there quite a long time, looking and pointing. Finally the cranes flew off to the west and disappeared over the extensive forest in the distance.

We returned to work in a happy mood, enchanted by this experience.

Then this thought started playing on my mind: “It would be a fine thing to have one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and it would be very pleasant to have a camera track that was not buckled, a camera truck that does not creak, and it would be quite an event just for once to make a motion picture with a budget of over two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, just for the experience. However, despite all that I am turning the American offer down flat”.

I felt a sudden happiness and relief.
I felt secure and at home.

“Copyright 1960, Ingmar Bergman. No reproduction without express permission of the author.”
A selection of stills from the film “The Virgin Spring”.
Ulla Isaksson

Ulla Isaksson, who was born in 1916, made her appearance as an authoress during the forties with several relatively unnoticed novels. The critics first showed interest in her with her book published in 1950 under the title “Ytterst i havet” (Far Out at Sea), in which the religious problems which had been posed in most of her earlier books were reformulated in a bold and artistically emancipated manner. Her first work to be filmed was “Kommobuset” (The House of Women), a novel written in 1932 depicting a group of females. A group of women was also involved in “Brink of Life” (Nåra livet), a film-script directed by Ingmar Bergman which was based on a tale in her collection of short stories published in 1934 under the title “Dödens faster” (The Aunt of Death). One of her most important pieces of writing is “Dit du icke vill” (Where You Never Wish) an account of a witchhunt in Dalarna in 17th-century Sweden, the intense effect of which was to a great extent brought about by the expressive language of the authoress. “Klämningen” (The Woman’s Frock) written in 1959 provides a subtle analysis of the conflicting viewpoints between mother and daughter and gives a picture of love experienced by one on the brink of life and by one who has already had her chances.

Some Reflections on The Virgin Spring

by Ulla Isaksson

Distinguished Swedish author and scenarist of the film The Virgin Spring (Jungfrukållan)

The Virgin Spring (Jungfrukållan) is a film based upon a medieval folk-song known as “Töres dotter i Vänge” (“The Daughter of Töre of Vänge”). The folk-song exists in several versions both in verse and prose. It was romantic in origin, but it was in Scandinavia that it gained the character of a legend, and it is only in Scandinavia that it has been connected with a specific spring and church. According to the legend, a young virgin called Karin was on her way to church when she was raped and killed by three brutal herdsmen, and her innocence was proclaimed for all by the miracle of a spring bursting forth from the spot where she lay. And at this spring her father vowed to erect a church to absolve himself for the sin of the revenge he had taken for his daughter's death. The embellishment of the legend both broadens and intensifies the story of the folk-song. This primitive drama of violence and revenge is put in a Christian setting with the need for atonement and the assurance of the grace of God as the important message of the folk-song.

Even today in Kärna churchyard in the County of Östergötland in central Sweden there is a spring which tradition firmly links
with the legend. Here the villagers assemble at Midsummer when the woods are green. Here they drink water from the spring, which is considered to have healing properties, and here they make special thanksgiving offers to the church on a specially erected thanksgiving pole. Here they also sing and dance to the folk-song.

The folk-song is throughout highly dramatic and extraordinarily expressive — an excellent basis for a miracle play. The various actions stand out sharply and clearly against each other and readily divide themselves into acts. And these acts capture not only the tone of the song and tell a story, but they have a definite Christian aim. The frank medieval realism of the descriptions of rape and murder is balanced and rectified by the beautifully clear purification and atonement motive. The unknown composer has not trifled with truth and reality in either of these respects. It is evident that the Scandinavian version of the folk-song has a meaning which is deep and sincere.

The film has as far as possible kept to the original story of the folk-song, which is at the same time both cruel and beautiful in its imagery and has both an uncompromising insight into human behavior and a Christian message. However, as the folk-song takes only two pages when printed in book form personal characterizations and psychological motives are not to be found. The film is therefore obliged to present the story in a considerably different manner if the young virgin Karin and her parents are to be real and believable people in keeping with the period and its thinking and the setting. However, it is not possible to recreate with complete realism the standards and ways of thought of an age so long ago and to create in modern people a sympathetic comprehension of such. It was important to find as much common ground as possible, and to base the film on that so that the spirit of the folk-song could be preserved and could be used for the film. Certain additions were therefore unavoidable.

This creation has a line of tension running through it, which while it strictly speaking does not come into the folk-song, springs from the period itself: the tension between Christianity and paganism in Sweden at that time.

Sweden had officially been Christian for several centuries by the time the folk-song emerged, but all the time the old gods were worshipped in secret and sacrifices were made behind locked doors here and there throughout the countryside. It is therefore quite understandable for the unhappy fostersister to turn to the old Viking god Odin in her hate for the happy, fortunate sister. She calls on Odin in the old accepted manner to give her sister into his power. The toad, which she in a moment of hate had stuffed into her sister's provisions for the journey, becomes, for those who insist on interpreting everything psychologically, a symbol for her evil desires, but is really a symbol, according to ancient tradition, for death and the devil.

The old man at the mill-race is one of the surviving pagans who make sacrifices to Odin, and the shrunken objects which he
shows to the foster-sister are remains of his last sacrifice. With them he seeks to strengthen her in her malicious purpose, but instead she flees in dread. Following this meeting she sees her wishes concerning her sister materialize.

The tension between Christianity and paganism is also to be seen in certain details. One can compare the two high chairs, the old man's decorated with images of gods and secret signs, the father's fine, church-like and adorned with two portraits of saints. The father's murderous revenge also is of barbaric origin; he takes his revenge as a matter of course and without a moment's hesitation and is wholeheartedly supported by his wife in this. The steam bath he takes to prepare himself for revenge has no ritual background, but is symbolically used in the film to represent his need to cleanse himself before the revenge — such cleansing is both a Christian and pagan practice before making religious offerings or pagan sacrifices.

Many objections and points of view can be raised against the idea of interpreting a folk-song of this nature in filmic terms, and at least some can be raised against the methods of interpretation. Those who undertook this delicate and stimulating task were moved and gripped by the reality of the folk-song, and the strong incentive which the work gave was the hope that the folk-song could be as expressive for men to-day as it was for men in medieval times.

Ulla Isaksson

Max von Sydow

Max von Sydow is only 30 years old. He has always been interested in the theatre, and even as a young boy he helped to found a dramatic society at his school. Shakespeare became his favourite playwright at an early age and for his audition in 1948 for entry into the training school of the National Theatre in Stockholm he chose a passage from *Henry IV*. He was one of the few to be accepted. Since then he has made a name at the Malmö Stadsteater and his distinguished performance in Ingmar Bergman's production of Goethe's *Faust* was greatly admired in London, where the Malmö company performed to appreciative audiences in May 1959. His film roles have not as yet been numerous, but those he has played have all borne the stamp of true artistry. He attracted world attention with his penetrating interpretation of the part of the conscience-burdened knight in *The Seventh Seal* (*Det sjunde inseglet*) and with his performance of the mystic Doctor Vogler in *The Magician* (*Ansiktet*) he held this critical interest. In *The Virgin Spring* (*Jungfrukällan*) he continued his cooperation with Ingmar Bergman in one of the most arduous roles he has ever had in a film.
Birgitta Valberg

Birgitta Valberg is one of the foremost of Swedish actresses and a tower of acting strength at the Kungliga Dramatiska Teatern in Stockholm, the National Theatre of Sweden. After sitting studentexamen (the Swedish examination which is equivalent to the English Higher School Certificate or the American B. A.) she attended the dramatic school of that theatre from 1940 to 1943. Having completed her dramatic training she was engaged by the same theatre and has devoted her talents to it ever since.

Her stage performances show a most intense personal characteristic style. They are based upon a conscious intellectualism united with a fine sensitivity and a temperament of often overpowering strength. She has created a number of quite unforgettable roles.

Birgitta Valberg is one of the few really good readers on the Swedish radio, and special mention can be made of her performance as the Queen of Denmark when Hamlet was telecast in Sweden. Although her motion picture roles have not been numerous they have been distinctive. She has been previously directed by Ingmar Bergman in Port of Call (Hamnstad) and in Smiles of a Summer Night (Sommarnattens leende). The Virgin Spring (Jungfrukållan) provided her with her most important motion picture role to date as the mother of the young woman who was raped and killed.

Gunnell Lindblom

Gunnell Lindblom was born in the seaward suburb of Göteborg, the main port and the second largest city of Sweden. Even as a child she was attracted towards acting and at the age of eighteen she was accepted by Göteborgs Stadsteater, the Municipal Theatre of Göteborg. She has now been a successful actress for nine theatre seasons.

Her most impressive theatrical performances have been under Ingmar Bergman at the Malmö Stadsteatern, the Municipal Theatre of Malmö. Her really great success was in the Ingmar Bergman production of Goethe's Faust. She was a member of the Ingmar Bergman theatrical troupe which attracted great attention and tremendous acclaim by its guest performances in London in the spring of 1959.

Her best motion picture performances have been under the direction of Ingmar Bergman. She had a significant role as the dumb woman in Ingmar Bergman’s medieval drama The Seventh Seal (Det sjunde inseglet), and she played a young woman of the turn of the century in Wild Strawberries (Smultronstället). Her biggest motion picture role to date is that of Ingeri in The Virgin Spring (Jungfrukållan), in which she plays an unhappy and primitive young woman who hates everybody and everything and in the end hates herself as she feels partly responsible for the tragedy that has happened.
Birgitta Pettersson

Birgitta Pettersson belongs to the most recent Swedish acting talents — she was born in 1939. After two years training at the Malmö Stadsteatern, the Municipal Theatre of Malmö, the southern seaport and third largest city of Sweden, she showed great acting promise. Her motion picture debut was made at the age of fifteen in Salka Valka directed by Arne Mattsson and based on the Icelandic epic by Halldór Kiljan Laxness, the great Icelandic author of modern times who has gained the Nobel Prize for Literature.

It was Ingmar Bergman who really developed Birgitta Pettersson and launched her on her promising film career. From 1954 to 1959 Ingmar Bergman was the artistic director and chief producer at the Municipal Theatre of Malmö and Birgitta Pettersson became his protegee. She appeared as a maid in the Ingmar Bergman film The Magician (Ansikteet) and then went on to the leading role in The Virgin Spring (Jungfrukällan). The young woman whom Ingmar Bergman put in this role bears a remarkable resemblance to the character in the Scandinavian folksong which inspired the film — she is tall, blond and has wide brown eyes.

When she was tested at the Malmö Theatre School she chose to play the witch in Ingmar Bergman’s brief drama Wood Painting (Trämålning), which provided the idea for his film The Seventh Seal (Det sjunde inseglet). The jury which included Ingmar Bergman was most appreciative of her and motion picture audiences are likely to endorse this expert judgement.

Tor Isedal

Tor Isedal is 35 years of age and has had to wait a long time before he appeared on the stage. As a boy he was attracted by acting and took part in school theatricals to such an extent that his studies suffered. Other than that Norrköping, Sweden’s Manchester, where he grew up, offered no opportunities for dramatic training so his talent went undeveloped. For a time he was a laboratory assistant, then he studied interior decorating and this brought him to the theatre — as a decorator.

Being in the the theatre renewed his desire to act. He started to take dramatic lessons in Stockholm. After two years of training he went on tour throughout Sweden and later became one of the pillars of the small avant-garde theatre in Stockholm. He progressed to Folkteatern in Göteborg where he came into contact with Ingmar Bergman, who was then the artistic director and the chief producer of the Malmö Stadsteatern, the Municipal Theatre of Malmö. He then went to Malmö and began getting worthwhile parts, in such plays as Molière’s Misanthrope and Goethe’s Faust as well as other pieces. With his motion picture debut as the mute in The Virgin Spring (Jungfrukällan) he made an immediate hit.
Axel Düberg

Axel Düberg is now 34 years of age and was as old as 26 when he started his dramatic training at the Malmö Stadsteatern, the Municipal Theatre of Malmö.

Axel Düberg had many jobs behind him before turning to the theatre. As a 16-year-old boy he had been apprenticed to a chimney-sweep and might now be still clambering over roofs if it had not been for a knee injury which forced him to seek other employment. He then tried other jobs including that of an electrician and also office work.

He first went on the stage in a test performance of Ingmar Bergman’s play Wood Painting (Trämålning) and it was from this little piece that grew the motion picture The Seventh Seal (Det sjunde inseglet). He then began taking tiny parts in Swedish films which included Ingmar Bergman’s Dreams (Kvinnodromen). Later came the recent Ingmar Bergman film The Magician (Ansiktet) with the part of Rustan the servant, for Axel Düberg.

For the next year he was on the stage in a number of productions of the Malmö Stadsteatern, including the Ingmar Bergman production of Goethe’s Faust in which he had the famous part of the student. He was also a member of the Ingmar Bergman theatrical troupe from Malmö which played in London in the spring of 1959.

Axel Düberg’s biggest motion picture part is in the present The Virgin Spring (Jungfrukällan) in which he takes the part of the slim herdsman; his performance has received the most favourable praise from the Swedish film critics.

Sven Nykvist

Sven Nykvist is one of the most skillful and artistic of the younger generation of Swedish motion picture cameramen.

He has been the director of photography for almost twenty Swedish motion pictures, including several for Alf Sjöberg. From his own script he has made a documentary film in Africa called In the Witchdoctor’s Footsteps (Fetishmännen skär). Together with the Swedish actor Olof Bergström he made a full length African film entitled Under the Southern Cross (Under södra korset). While in Africa he visited Albert Schweitzer and made a documentary about Schweitzer’s work. This film was shown under the title Reverence for Life (Värnhed förr livet).

Sven Nykvist has also been the director of photography for some German feature films directed by Kurt Hoffmann. He first worked with Ingmar Bergman on the Swedish motion picture Sawdust and Tinsel (Gyckelnas aften), called The Naked Night in the U. S. The critics have lavished praise upon Sven Nykvist for his outstanding and artistic black-and-white photography of The Virgin Spring (Jungfrukällan).
THE VIRGIN SPRING
(JUNGFRUKALLAN)

(Synopsis)

Sweden of the fourteenth century provides the setting for this story, the action
of which takes place in a country district. Karin is the daughter of Töre, a
landowner of Vänge, and his wife Fru Märeta. She is their only child. One
morning she is to set out early to ride to church to light candles for the Holy
Virgin.

Bright, upright and smiling she sits upon her fine horse, Svarten. As she takes
the reins from her father, she bends down and kisses him.

"Christ protect thee", he says as he is perhaps worried for the safety of his
daughter. However, his stepdaughter Ingeri, a somewhat insolent young woman,
will be Karin's fellow-traveller and will take care of her, he believes. May the
Holy Virgin guard her from all danger.

Karin rides off ahead of Ingeri. She is radiant wearing her fine robe and
riding Svarten. Everything is pleasing to her — the sun, the air, the soft breeze,
the song of the birds... In the forest she meets three herdsmen. First twirling a
stick above his head comes a mute followed by a slim herdsman and a boy barely
fourteen years old.

With a pleasant smile Karin draws her horse to the side to allow the three
to pass unhindered on the path. She is fascinated by the Jew's harp of the slim
herdsman and thinks that he plays this simple instrument with amazing skill.

When Karin is sure that the herdsman have friendly intentions she dismounts
and invites them to sit down and share her food as she has not yet eaten. Before
long the mute and the slim herdsman start to be intrusive. Lust and desire are
to be seen in their eyes. Karin realizes that something is going on which she
does not understand. She is anxious and sits there like a small bird between them
looking first at one and then at the other. The mute senses that she is struck with
fear and this excites him. In his slurred, indistinct manner he mumbles something
indecent to her.

Karin still does not understand what it is all about, but has a foreboding that
the entire situation has changed and that a dreadful danger is threatening her.
Afraid she jumps to her feet and looks for her horse, which just before was
grazing near her. However, she is not quick enough, the slim herdsman beats her
to the horse and takes the bridle. He shows his brownish-black teeth in an evil
grin of expectation...

Panting Karin sees the two men closing in on her with eager necks and lowered
brows, it seems that any moment they will take her. Trembling she tries a final
plea seeking protection behind her holy mission, "I am on the way to church to
light candles to the Virgin".

A smile flashes across the faces of the two men and the boy suddenly blabbers
excitedly.

She is raped, killed and stripped.

*

It is peaceful at Töre's farmhouse in the still of the evening when the three
herdsmen arrive and ask for lodgings for the night. They are invited to a meal
at the table. The boy gasps with fright when he hears Töre say the very same
grace which the young woman had said before the meal in the forest. All are
affected by the ominous silence. The family and servants know nothing of Karin's
fate, only that she should have returned long before. Töre eats determinedly but vacantly while his wife, Fru Märeta, trembling, can only eat with the greatest effort.

Later the slim herdsman makes the fatal mistake of offering Karin's robe to Fru Märeta. She knows that this robe is quite without equal in the entire district as it was "the work of fifteen virgins". Fru Märeta deliberately conceals any sign of shock; she goes to her husband and explains what has happened. The frightful event is described by Ingeri, who witnessed the rape but was powerless to do anything about it. She had returned home but had not dared enter.

Vengeance strikes the rapists like a of lightning. Töre plunges his cattle-slaughtering knife right into the heart of the mute, and after a violent fight the slim herdsman also meets his fate. The boy escapes the knife but not death as he is thrown against one of the walls. Retribution is then complete.

Töre, his wife and his servants then make their way that spring morning to the spot where Karin met her frightful end. There Töre vows that to expiate his deed of vengeance he will build a church of stone with his own hands. And where Karin's body has been resting, a trickle of water comes forth and bursts into a stream — The Virgin Spring.

THE VIRGIN SPRING
(JUNGFRUKALLAN)

Directed by INGMAR BERGMAN
Script by Ulla Isaksson
Director of Photography Sven Nykvist
Sets designed by P. A. Lundgren
Film Editor Oscar Rosander
Music composed by Erik Nordgren

The Cast:

Herr Töre .................................. Max von Sydow
Fru Märeta, Töre's wife .................. Birgitta Valberg
Ingeri, Töre's step-daughter ............ Gunnel Lindblom
Karin, Töre's daughter .................. Birgitta Pettersson
The slender herdsman .................... Axel Döberg
The mute herdsman ........................ Tor Isedal
Beggar ..................................... Allan Edwall
Boy .......................................... Ove Porath
The old man ................................ Axel Slangus
Frida, a serving woman ................. Gudrun Brost
Simon, a young peasant ................. Oscar Ljung
First farm-labourer ...................... Tor Borong
Second farm-labourer .................... Leif Forstenberg

Running time 88 minutes