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| Sjöström, Victor David (1879-1960) |
| Victor Seastrom |
| Victor Sjöström was a Swedish film director, screenwriter and actor. He is, with Mauritz Stiller, the founding father of Swedish cinema and a pioneer of silent film art. His first worldwide success, *Ingeborg Holm* (1913)*,* was a drama heralding what would be the hallmarks of his cinema: a strong sense of truth, a refined form of expression (he studied painting in his youth), slow pacing, representations of nature enveloped in violent mysticism, but also a strong sense of realism exemplified by *Strejken* [*The Strike*] (1914), where some scenes were shot during a real strike. In 1915 he initiated his golden age: *Terje Vigen* [*A Man There Was*](1916), *Berg-Ejvind och hans hustru* [*Love: The Only Law*] (1918) and *Ingmarssönerna* [*Sons of Ingmar*](1918). These works are full of flashbacks, daring camera movements, crossfades and point-of-view shots which denotes a free modernist narrative. One of the last films he made before coming to Hollywood due to the crisis in Swedish cinema was the fantasy drama *Körkarlen* [*The Phantom Carriage*] (1921). After a difficult period adapting to the United States, he filmed, true to his style, what is probably his masterpiece: *The Wind* (1928) with Lillian Gish. Although it was a commercial failure, he discovered his favourite subject: the individual struggle against a hostile universe sustained by love and faith. He never fully transitioned to the talkies, so after some minor movies, he devoted himself to acting. His final performance was the elderly professor in Ingmar Bergman’s *Smultronstället* [*Wild Strawberries*] (1957). |

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| Further reading:  Florin, B. (2013) *Transition and Transformation. Victor Sjöström in Hollywood* 1923-1930, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.  ──── (2010), “Victor Sjöström and the Golden Age” in Larsson M., and A. Marklund, *Swedish Film: An Introduction and Reader*, Lund: Nordic Academic Press: 76-85.  Forslund, B. (1988) *Victor Sjöström: His life and his work*, New York: Zoetrope.  Hayes, C. (2013): *Cinema’s First Master: The Cinema of Victor Sjöström, 1912-1923*, Kindle version, Amazon.  Lardeau, Y. (1984) “Victor Sjöström: le monde des non­a”, in *Cahiers du Cinéma,* 366: 42-47.  Pensel, H. (1969) *Seastrom and Stiller in Hollywood*, New York: Vantage Press.  Werner, G. (1984) “Victor Sjöström et la tradition suédoise”, in *Avant-Scene Cinema*, 331: 2-9. |