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## THREE REMARKABLE DIRECTORS: INGMAR BERGMAN, TARANTINO AND WOODY ALLEN<sup>1</sup>

### *TRÊS DIRETORES NOTÁVEIS: INGMAR BERGMAN, TARANTINO E WOODY ALLEN*

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#### ABSTRACT

The article performed a review of academic texts centered on works by the three directors whose films are studied. Some books were also used, in addition to two dissertations and one doctoral Thesis – searched on Google Scholar and the Capes Portal. There was an effort to search for recent texts. No texts focused on comparing films, making parallels between films and other works of art, or applying models from the most diverse theories are adopted. Films that have received attention from more than one academic point of view are the occasion of a richer and robust analysis. The purpose was to understand these directors in greater depth, through works that were analyzed by the academy. Given that they have been studied by countless academics, a rich analysis of each of these three directors could be conducted. The article's limitations pertain to the chosen method: only academic texts on the works of the specified directors were selected. Consequently, there may be notable films for which no material was found, and which were not included for the reader. Future work may include more detailed analyses of new film works and other notable directors.

**Keywords:** cinematographic industry, entertainment, Ingmar Bergman, Tarantino, Woody Allen.

#### RESUMO

O artigo realizou uma revisão de textos acadêmicos centrados em obras dos três diretores cujos filmes são estudados. Alguns livros também foram utilizados, além de duas dissertações e uma tese de doutorado – pesquisadas no Google Acadêmico e no Portal Capes. Buscou-se encontrar textos recentes. Não foram adotados textos que se concentrassem na comparação de filmes, no estabelecimento de paralelos entre filmes e outras obras de arte ou na aplicação de modelos das mais diversas teorias. Filmes que receberam atenção de mais de um ponto de vista acadêmico

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possibilitam uma análise mais rica e robusta. O objetivo foi compreender esses diretores com maior profundidade, por meio de obras analisadas pela academia. Dado que eles foram estudados por inúmeros acadêmicos, uma análise rica de cada um desses três diretores pôde ser conduzida. As limitações do artigo dizem respeito ao método escolhido: apenas textos acadêmicos sobre as obras dos diretores especificados foram selecionados. Conseqüentemente, pode haver filmes notáveis para os quais nenhum material foi encontrado e que não foram incluídos para o leitor. Trabalhos futuros podem incluir análises mais detalhadas de novas obras cinematográficas e de outros diretores notáveis.

**Palavras-chave:** indústria cinematográfica, entretenimento, Ingmar Bergman, Tarantino, Woody Allen.

## INTRODUCTION

Cinema has an incredible communicative power, through a unique language; it plays an increasingly important role in the lives of societies and individuals – becoming omnipresent through technology, which easily brings cultural products from around the world to millions of people through streaming. This article is qualitative and descriptive, focusing on films by renowned directors: Bergman, Tarantino and Woody Allen. The method adopted was the study of multiple cases, having chosen articles/dissertations that deal with enough exhaustion with a subject, in this case a film or even the body of work of one of these directors, to the point. The research work over the years stands out, filtering texts focused on analyzing such subjects in depth. Works from different periods were found, which reinforced the importance and relevance of the research. The role of the text is highlighted, in which each film was considered as a research unit analyzed individually – so that no analyses or comparisons are presented in the study between the various film works analyzed – also due to the difficulty of establishing criteria for such approaches.

## METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

This is an exploratory and qualitative article that deals with some of the chosen directors' cinematographic works. Academic texts were used, the result of research on the Capes Portal and Google Scholar, as well as some books. Articles that compare



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film works or apply political or social models were not included. Texts that focus on very specific or technical aspects were also not included, which illustrates the use of cinema in the most varied areas of knowledge. It is worth noting the existence of excellent authors and scholars in the area, who provided the research with extremely rich material. Some works received details from more than one author, which makes their analysis more robust. The purpose of the study is to show the role of these three directors. The articles sought delve into a certain work, that is, they deal with the subject as case studies, having been the subject of laborious research.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Ingmar Bergman*

Ernest Ingmar Bergman Åkerblön was born in Uppsala, a Swedish university town, in 1918, the son of the austere pastor Erik Bergman. His work is autobiographical, has human resonance and is relevant in world cinematography, given the aesthetic, social and philosophical reflections it raises. He was a hit at the Cannes Film Festival with “Smiles of a Summer Night” (1955). He established himself as a director – he was already a renowned screenwriter – with “The Seventh Seal”, which won the special jury prize at the 1957 Cannes Film Festival (GONÇALVES, 2010; JÚNIOR, 2011; AVANCINI, 2020).

The horror film was influenced by Bergman, as it explored themes such as existentialism, faith and death. In this vein, “The Seventh Seal” (1957) made him popular and served as a reference for other works, such as “The Exorcist” (1973), which uses images of Bergman and the fetish actor himself. Even in Bergman films in which there is nothing related to horror, the atmosphere is claustrophobic and distressing: “The Magician” (1958), “The Rite” (1969) and “The Virgin Spring” (1960). In 1967, Bergman released “Hour of the Wolf”, which was brilliant in terms of crucial aspects of horror films, such as atmosphere, iconography and theme (CASTAÑEDA et al., 2012).



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“The Magician” (1958) is romantic-fantastic; it reflects on the role of the artist today. The protagonist creates illusions and explores tricks to deceive people, just as cinema is for Bergman a magic lantern capable of embodying fantasies and realities with disconcerting ambiguity (LIMA, 2016).

Bergman’s work is a must-read for anyone who loves cinema and uses cinema in teaching. His approach to existential themes is solid, proven over a long and award-winning career. “Wild Strawberries”, “Cries and Whispers”, “Persona”, “Winter Light”, “Hour of the Wolf”, and “Autumn Sonata” are set in the 20th century. “The Seventh Seal” and “The Virgin Spring” refer to the Middle Ages, analyzing existential themes. The director achieved the feat of films with diverse plots, all faithful to the existential themes. His films are dense, with well-constructed characters. Bergman won no less than three Oscars for Best Foreign Language Film: “The Virgin Spring” (1960); “Through the Looking Glass” (1961); “Fanny and Alexander” (1982) (MINADEO, 2024).

In some of his early films: “Crisis” (1945), “It Rains on Our Love” (1946), “A Ship to India” (1947), “Night is My Future” (1947), “Port of Call” (1948), “Prison” (1949) and “Thirst” (1949), we see a young Bergman, confused about technique and production, creating mixtures of styles, even working with some elements of noir and a fatalistic vein. These works revolve around the conflict between generations, in which man’s tragic inability to give meaning to his existence, to make it something essential and useful, is one of the cornerstones of the dramatic art that, throughout his work, finds itself increasingly mature. Climatic seasons are elements that drive the narrative: in autumn and winter the characters experience emotional decline combined with existential conflicts, while spring and summer are marked by hope. From these films, some of his stylistic and philosophical aspects are already presented to us, as in “Thirst” (1949), whose original name was inspired by the fourth movement of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony (Ode to Joy), this being the musical theme of the film; an occurrence that is also seen in “Saraband” (2003), his last film, which also takes its name from the musical theme composed by Bach (GONÇALVES, 2021).



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“Through the Looking Glass” (1961) and “Persona” (1966) were filmed on Farö Island, which is a succession of trees, beaches, lakes and reefs; Bergman liked this island so much that he moved there. There is a unity that makes the human face the central stage of the action. Marie Nyreeröd interviewed Bergman at the age of 86, in 2004, which was the basis for the film “Bergman Island” (2006). In “Silence” (1962), Bergman describes his optimism, loyalty and strength at work (AVANCINI, 2020).

“Wild Strawberries” (1957) won the Golden Bear at the Berlin Film Festival; it is one of Bergman’s most important works. Isak Borg, a doctor, at the end of an empty and cold life. He travels to receive an honorary doctorate; the film is set during this journey. At the beginning, there is a monologue by Borg, in which he says that he criticizes those who associate with him. The day before the trip, he dreams of his own death. He travels with his daughter-in-law; on the way, he stops at the “strawberry house”, where he spent his childhood holidays and had his first love. Then he visits his nonagenarian mother, with whom he lived coldly. After helping some young people who were going to Italy, he reviews his life, thanks to a dream in which a court convicts him. He realizes that he did not live well because he did not know how to love; he suffers from a lack of meaning. Memories pile up. From dreamer, the observer becomes participant. Recurrent themes in Bergman are touched upon: God, the soul, and the role of the family. The film became a classic. Borg makes peace with his past when he sees his mother again, hears about his daughter-in-law's pain, and his son, whose hardness reflects his own trajectory. Marianne listens to him and comes to like him, who becomes more flexible, accepting, for example, the gratitude of the village where he began to work. There are scenes that surprise, such as Borg’s dream, disoriented when he sees a clock without hands, and which, therefore, does not tell the time; the surreal rounded shape of the clock matches an object formed by two large eyes, in the frame of immense glasses; such an image signifies paralyzed time (KRACAUER, 1960; CAÑIZAL, 2001; CLEMENS, 2005; PRATS, 2005; CASTAÑEDA *et al.*, 2012).



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“Cries and Whispers” (1972, directed and written by Bergman) tells the story of Agnes, who suffers from cancer, which is the reason for her loneliness. She lives in a country house with her sisters Karen and Maria, and their housekeeper Anna. The sisters are cold, while Anna takes care of the sick woman with zeal, having lost her daughter when she was still a child. Time seems to stand still, the clocks mark the presence of time, and their sound alludes to the character’s pain. There is a surreal sequence in which the dead woman calls out to Karin and Maria, who repel her, and Anna’s kindness comes; the sequence is reminiscent of Michelangelo’s “La Pietà”, in an anthological scene in which the maid offers the dead woman the protective warmth of a body (LIMA, 2016). In this film, in which the dead cannot die and is therefore forced to disturb the living, the theme of isolation is a fundamental constant. The silence, the ticking of clocks, Agnes’ screams of pain, the whispering in a muffled atmosphere are essential characteristics in an environment that awaits the arrival of death – an environment conducive to the dissipation of individuals’ masks and the revelation of the true face of the self (GONÇALVES, 2021). As in most of his films, in “Cries and Whispers” the face plays a fundamental role. Along with the aesthetics full of black, white and red, the faces populate a time/space full of death. The aristocrats Maria and Karin follow the last days of their sister, Agnes, cared for by the maid Anna. The film deals with issues dear to the director: death, femininity, family relationships, good and evil, the inability to communicate. The narrative time is interspersed with flashbacks of the four women, which begin and end with the red that invades the shot, bringing back memories that reveal the intimacy of each of them: Agnes’ doctor, Karin and Maria’s husbands and Anna’s dead daughter. Life and death unite them. The time of death, marked by clocks, is interspersed with temporal suspensions, whose starting point is the close-up faces of the actresses. The memories of Maria and Karin are narrated by an omniscient narrator; Agnes’s are narrated by herself, who narrates excerpts of her relationship with her mother, whose flashback is turned on and off by a white rose, a metaphor for her mother, whom Agnes always thinks about. In the post-mortem



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blessing, the pastor says: “her faith was stronger than mine”. However, the sisters did not love her, due to their fear and repugnance of death (CONDATO; CARMO, 2017).

The dualities of life and death and faith and doubt are central to “The Seventh Seal” (1956), which won an award at Cannes. Two people travel through the Middle Ages, victims of the Black Death, the Inquisition and the Crusades. The heroes are mystical pilgrims experiencing the “great journey”, and the journey structures the narrative. The film makes us reflect on the return to the simplicity of life in the face of death. The journey makes the knight Antonius Blok reflect on birth and death. The couple Jof and Mia enter the scene, with their young son; while Bergman questions Christian dogmas, he reaffirms the Christian family triad (Joseph-Mary-Jesus), which in the film escapes death, emphasizing the survival of the family. The literary reference of the knight/squire comes from Don Quixote, with the antagonism of Sancho Panza’s superficiality and Quixote’s philosophy. The film points out that we are doomed to die, including death itself. Block is invited by Death to play a game of chess that runs through the film – a backdrop to reflect on the meaning of life. Block avoids giving checkmate, that is, given the chaos of the world we may not be prepared for the immortality of the body; he goes to a confessional to vent, but it is Death who is there, without him noticing. The film revolves around the existence of God and the search for meaning in life. “The Seventh Seal”, an allusion to the Apocalypse, is one of the most realistic and symbolic works about death in its complex relationship with life. The film combines the drama of death, through the plague epidemic, and fear, seen in the light of a caricature of faith. Comedy also enters the scene: a) betrayals and false regrets; and b) an ironic squire – a counterpoint to the knight. The film travels through vast empty fields with few houses, mixing hunger, disease, war and religious fervor in a frenetic atmosphere. The scenes of ordinary life create a realistic character through opposites: the madness of the human soul and the insane condition of having to be alive. The agents of war, plague, famine and despair, in addition to death, are inserted in such a way as to generate in the viewer the discomfort of life with this raw face, which exposes the paradox of certainty-uncertainty. There are scenes that resemble



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paintings, with theatrical or plastic features, combining beauty and drama; scenes in the center of the screen, with triangular structures, focusing on religious and collective aspects of death. The playful aspect seems to symbolically mediate Man's tense relationship with Death through a game of chess. When Block is faced with Death, he questions his existence, faith and God. Block considers his life useless, but hopes, with the time gained by defying Death, to acquire as much knowledge as possible (GONÇALVES, 2010; AVANCINI, 2020).

In "Persona" (1966), two women never stop changing. Persona in Latin means the actor's mask. Elisabet's mask is her muteness and Alma's is her optimism. The film explores two points of view on art. On the one hand, Alma plays the role of a nurse who considers art an important aspect of life: it helps people adapt to reality, especially for those who have some kind of difficulty; on the other, Elisabet plays the role of an actress who finds the false side of art ridiculous. Alma is a simple person who does not reflect on her social conditioning and who hopes for a secure future in her work and with her family; she idolizes the actress. Elisabet demonstrates a strong will, makes firm decisions; she creates a system in which she takes refuge in silence and no longer lies. According to the psychiatrist, the actress does not have a physical or mental illness, she simply plays a new role: to show her presence and attract the attention of others; she refuses to play roles related to her career and reality, wife and mother, and the actress will tire of this silence. The two women seem like two sides of one woman. Elisabet is like the knight in *The Seventh Seal*: just a disguise for the anguish felt by the characters. The film represents the falseness of art, which makes what is false true and reveals what brings anguish to human beings (PIRES, 2013).

Ingmar Bergman is rich in works with characters in crisis, dealing with feelings such as guilt. "Winter Light" (1963) is set in a peaceful Swedish village, where pastor Thomaz, due to the death of his wife, is experiencing a crisis of faith – evidenced by the absence of a soundtrack. He tells this to Jonas, a fisherman, who went to church seeking support for his existential crisis: he feels anguish about the future, fears the atomic bomb and has difficulty living his freedom. Instead of supporting Jonas, the



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pastor expresses his disbelief; the fisherman then kills himself. The pastor's conflict is accompanied by Marta, his assistant and the most skeptical character in the work. There are more indoor scenes than outdoor ones, increasing the anguish in the viewer. One of the only outdoor moments occurs when the pastor goes to see the fisherman's corpse. "Hour of the Wolf" (1968) deals with Alma's anguished love for Johan, whose madness is growing. She discovers a diary of his that tells of his relationship with Veronika Vogler, a scandal because she is married; he continues to harass her and is hospitalized for it. Alma is not jealous, seeing her main task as saving her husband; and tells him that, despite everything, she will be faithful to him. The anguish of love arises in Alma, who shares her husband's madness and regrets not having taken proper care of his salvation. The film reflects on the ideal love between two people, hoping that a long union will reach the point where one person resembles the other. Alma saw herself as opposed to Veronika, for whose insane love Johan felt hopeless, because she was married and fickle. Alma's love for Johan also has unreasonable elements, given the permanent threat of losing her object and the harsh chance of never having been loved. Alma's need for healing is distressing; she lives day to day, feeling the insignificance of her love. Nothing would calm her anguish, because in all love there are finite and unrepeatable possibilities. The work reflects the meaning of love: to love only oneself is a denial, to love only the other is an annulment of the self. "Autumn Sonata" (1978) revolves around the couple Viktor and Eva, in whose house, in a lonely village, the latter's sister, Lena, who is sick, also lives. Their mother, Charlotte, a famous pianist, comes to see them. Viktor tells the viewer how he met Eva, who he also reads a book about, in which she does not know if she is loved. When Charlotte arrives, the contrast with Eva is incredible: the mother is beautiful and imposing, while Eva is shy and childish. Charlotte does not like to see her daughter sick. A tense dialogue between Eva and her mother shows that she needs her mother's love. Another conflict occurs when a resentful Eva remembers that her mother left the family for another man, and that she began to feel trapped, taking care of everything and comforting a betrayed father. Charlotte apologizes, saying that she was raised the



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same way, finding solace only in music (MORAES, 2005; FRANÇA, 2012; SAMICO; CALDAS, 2015).

“The Virgin Spring” (1959) is set in the Middle Ages. Young Karin prepares for a journey through the forest to take candles to the chapel of Our Lady. In order not to go alone, Karin asks her parents for the company of maid Ingeri, who worships Odin and hates Karin. Ingeri is pregnant, but it is not known who the father of the child is. On the way, Karin talks to the peasant Simon, which arouses jealousy in Ingeri, since he seems to be the father of the child that she is carrying but has not admitted this. The two advance and reach a stream; a worshiper of Odin helps Karin cross and then welcomes Ingeri into his hut, trying to grab her. Karin continues, followed at a distance by the maid, and encounters three brothers, whose musical instrument she likes, and is then raped and killed, without the maid showing any reaction. The three steal Karin’s beautiful clothes, and by chance are welcomed into the victim’s family’s home and try to sell the clothes, claiming they belong to a sister. Ingeri tells Karin’s parents about the crime, saying that she had asked Odin for this death. Karin’s father kills the three. Then they search for the body, the father regrets his revenge and promises to build a stone cathedral with his own hands. Water begins to gush from under Karin’s body. While Ingeri represents pagan fertility cults, Karin symbolizes the Catholic ideal of chastity; Ingeri is the mother of a future bastard, Karin says that her motherhood will come about when she is married, being an honorable housewife. After Ingeri invokes Odin, Karin’s parents pray near the Cross. These scenes are important because they demarcate the coexistence of paganism and Christianity in Scandinavia in the Late Middle Ages. And these deities permeate the plot through their worshipers. Odin is the greatest in Norse mythology and Jesus is the visible manifestation of God in Christianity. Bergman tries to deny God, but his films are full of references to the divine (JÚNIOR, 2011).

“Shame” (1968) features Jan and Eva, a musical couple who decide to live on an island after the orchestra they were playing in is dissolved. The scene is a time of war, an apocalyptic atmosphere in which the two will find themselves involved almost



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from the beginning to the end of the play. One day, Jan and Eva come across the city mayor, Colonel Jacobi, who, accompanied by the fisherman Filip, tells them that war is coming. Jacobi warns them that they must resist. The couple visits the antique shop Lobelius. Back home, Eva reveals her desire to be a mother. Tensions rise, and explosions are heard. The couple tries to escape the threat of war, which is increasingly evident, but they are arrested and interrogated. Once released, they return home. The tension escalates, Jan and Eva are arrested again and taken to a school where other prisoners are being interrogated. Colonel Jacobi intervenes on behalf of the couple, frees them and takes them to Jan and Eva's house. There, he gives Eva all the money he saved, trying to win her love as a reward. However, he is arrested, accused of favoring the invaders, and executed by Jan under Filip's orders. Filip and his followers search for the money and set fire to the couple's house. The two try to take shelter in a greenhouse when a deserter arrives, trying to leave the island. However, he is shot by Jan, who uses the money Jacobi gave Ana to buy places on a fugitive boat. In the end, on the high seas, the boat crashes into dozens of corpses and is unable to continue its journey (TEIXEIRA, 2014).

"Scenes from a Marriage" (1975) has six episodes, each one with 50 minutes. Marianne and Johan are married and live a life of apparent happiness. The couple is interviewed by a journalist, in what is supposed to be what readers should take as an example of a happy marriage. Johan and Marianne talk about their life together, the steps they have taken, how they deal with the routine of a marriage and how they experience sexuality. At a certain point in the interview, while Johan walks away to make a phone call, the conversation becomes more intimate. Marianne talks about fidelity. Love in crisis, with an invariably unhappy outcome, is the tone of this disturbing work (TEIXEIRA, 2014).

"From the Life of the Marionettes" (1980) discusses some of the fears of death, incommunicability, the deepest existential pains, and the most traumatic social nightmares. Katarina and Peter, a couple who had already appeared in *Scenes from a Marriage*, as an example of these, live an apparently happy relationship. Peter's



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problems arise, his personality becomes unbalanced, and he commits the crime that leads him to prison: after saying he was motivated to kill his wife, he murders a prostitute. The explanation is found in the final scene, when the doctor interprets the situation: Peter carries childhood traumas, unresolved problems from a psychotic relationship with his mother, and a disturbed sexuality (TEIXEIRA, 2014).

“Fanny and Alexander” (1982) is set during 1907 in the Ekdahl family home, where the matriarch Helena, her three sons – Oscar, Gustaf Adolf and Carl –, daughters-in-law and grandchildren are living. Fanny and Alexander are the children of Emilie and Oscar, who fall ill and die. The funeral is officiated by the bishop, Vergérus, who comforts the young widow and proposes marriage to her, after which Emilie and her children move into the bishop’s house and submit to his strict doctrine. Alexandre becomes angry with his stepfather, rebels and is punished. Emilie is expecting a child, visits Helena, talks about the situation and the impossibility of getting a divorce. Helena asks for help from the antique dealer Isak Jacobi in rescuing her grandchildren. Vergérus takes revenge on his wife; she gives him a sleeping pill and escapes from the prison in the episcopal palace. The bishop dies in an accidental fire. The work revisits Bergman’s themes, from death to the function of art. In the story, twelve-year-old Alexandre represents Bergman, and Fanny represents his ten-year-old sister; to reinforce the autobiography, the film is structured based on Alexandre’s point of view (GARCÍA MANSO, 2016; LIMA, 2016).

“Saraband” (2003) is Bergman’s last work, as he died in 2007. The film is a retelling of “Scenes from a Marriage”, a screenplay by Bergman, with the same Erland Josephson and Liv Ullmann in the roles of Johan and Marianne. In “Scenes from a Marriage”, supposedly evoked Bergman’s marriage to Ullmann, and the artist thematizes the rise and fall of a passion, the conflicts that culminate in the separation. “Saraband” is about Marianne’s reunion with her ex-husband Johan for the first time in 30 years. Johan’s son, Henrik, lives near his father with his daughter Karin, a cellist. The film is divided into ten parts, starting with Marianne sitting at a table in front of photographs of her life with Johan, with whom she had two daughters. When she sees



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Johan, she becomes involved in the drama between him and Henrik and Karin. The film brings up themes seen in other films by the filmmaker: the incest between Karin and her father; the conflicts between Henrik and Johan; the pain in the relationship between Marianne and Johan; the clocks that, in addition to representing the passing of time, also refer to an inheritance left by Bergman's father; the characters' anguish; their relationship with theater; their passion for music (the film's name) and the attempt to reconcile with the past. Marianne wants to reconcile with this past, first through photographs and then by visiting Johan. Upon arriving at Johan's house, Marianne sees his family dramas with his son Henrik and granddaughter Karin. Henrik's wife Anna had passed away and Henrik had gone to live with his daughter. Henrik and Johan despise each other. Henrik and his daughter Karin seem to be living in an incestuous relationship. Seeing these conflicts, Marianne reflects on her relationship with her daughters, especially Marta, who has mental problems and lives in a nursing home. The song that shapes and permeates the film is Bach's "Saraband for Cello No. 5". It sets the tone and the meaning of the emotional chaos of the film's characters. Just as the actors act out the drama for the viewer, the music, lighting, colors and props help to give meaning and demarcate the film (TEIXEIRA, 2014; BARBOZA, 2015).

### *Tarantino*

At the age of 25, he wrote his first screenplay, "True Romance" (1993, Tony Scott), in which Brad Pitt is a drug addict, Val Kilmer plays the ghost of Elvis Presley; Christian Slater and Patricia Arquette have a romantic scene at the end. He tried to sell this screenplay for five years, without success, and only found an interested party after directing "Reservoir Dogs" (1992) (GILMOUR, 2009).

Characteristics of Tarantino's works: they mix reality and fiction; they use exaggeration; they use references and metalanguage. The text is non-chronological, making the viewer stay focused on the plot, to bond the elements and understand the film. There is no definition of the genre used. He uses pastiche – criticism of the caricatures of the characters. "Pulp Fiction" is perhaps his most famous film, which



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earned him the Oscar for best screenplay and the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival. The film also revived John Travolta's career (ALVES *et al.*, 2024). Gilmour (2009) believes that there is not even a single truly human moment in *Pulp Fiction*.

There are three modes of representation in Tarantino (BAPTISTA, 2008):

A) Instead of realism, there is a magnification of the banal, seen as a scene from everyday life, unlike the naturalistic representation of Hollywood, which seeks the appearance of reality. In Tarantino, pop culture is part of the prosaic side of life in the same way as routine activities such as eating fast food, driving in Los Angeles or going to the bathroom. It is the daily life of a city where reality is permeated by the cultural, film, television and music industries. In "*Pulp Fiction*" (1994), there are criminals who are enthusiasts of fast food or who buy donuts, murderers who discuss the meaning of massage, drugs in Holland, a boxer who risks his life to recover a family gold watch.

B) Exploitation films are low-budget independent American productions from the 1950s and 1970s, with more violence and sex than Hollywood. Tarantino adds moments of extreme violence, bizarre sex and drugs, which shock and offend. He is the first director of great magnitude to incorporate such films into a creative postmodern cinema project.

C) It is playful in relation to the cinema of the past and to itself; it is a creative cinema, full of parody: a) with the music: a radio program (*Reservoir Dogs*), the noise of the dial (*Pulp Fiction*); in *Jackie Brown*, the opening song is from the Band Apart label, the director's production company; b) in the performance of the actors, who play a double role: actors and characters; c) characters in unreal positions: in the *Reservoir Dogs* shed; d) artificial clothes of the characters: jacket, black tie and white shirt of the robbers, the appearance of a member of gang of police officer Holdaway (Randy Brooks, in *Reservoir Dogs*), Jules's (Samuel Jackson, in *Pulp Fiction*) jacket and haircut, Ordell's (*Jackie Brown*) beanie and hair braid; e) images that are not real, but rather those that the media has made of the world: when boxer Butch (Bruce Willis) chooses the samurai sword and goes down the stairs in a fighting stance, the film plays with images from martial arts films; f) allusion to different eras of crime films: in *Pulp*



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Fiction it is ironic in showing how several assumptions of crime cinema have lost their validity: the femme fatale, paranoia, the threatening city. John Travolta and Uma Thurman's night out in *Pulp Fiction* brings together a retro atmosphere, with quotes from cinema and music of the past, and the realism of the couple's conversation.

Characteristics of Tarantino's work (Morais, 2020):

A) Dialogue with documentation on the issues addressed is vital: the comic vision of the Ku Klux Klan (*Django Unchained*, 2012); the banal representation of gangster violence, crime and drug use (*Reservoir Dogs*, *Jackie Brown* and *Pulp Fiction*); revenge (*Inglourious Basterds*, *Django Unchained*, *Death Proof*, *Kill Bill* and *Once Upon a Time in... Hollywood*); the allegorical representations of the USA before and after the Civil War (*Django Unchained* and *The Hateful Eight*), to be seen considering the issue of race, violence and American history.

B) Themes: exaggerated violence; dark humor (Ku Klux Klan members discuss the use of hoods in *Django Unchained*; gangsters argue in a car and one of them accidentally kills a guy in the back seat in *Pulp Fiction*); explanatory flashbacks (*Death Proof* and *The Hateful Eight*); revenge (Jews vs. Nazis in *Inglourious Basterds*, slaves vs. masters in *Django Unchained*, women vs. misogynists in *Death Proof*); banal dialogues and references to pop culture (*Pulp Fiction*: gangsters discuss the name of the hamburger in other countries; *Reservoir Dogs*: discussion about tipping and the meaning of "Like a Virgin"); division by chapters (almost all films); appropriate soundtracks, popular classics, quotes (*Pulp Fiction* and *Kill Bill*), new soundtracks (*The Hateful Eight*/Ennio Morricone); caricatured characters: the flight attendant Jackie Brown (Pam Grier) from *Jackie Brown*; Vincent Vega (John Travolta) and Jules Winnfield (Samuel L. Jackson) from *Pulp Fiction*; the bride Beatrix Kiddo (Uma Thurman) from *Kill Bill*, Lieutenant Aldo Raine (Brad Pitt) from *Inglourious Basterds*; the bounty hunter Dr. Schultz (Christoph Waltz) from *Django Unchained*; the fugitive Daisy Domergue (Jennifer Jason Leigh) from *The Hateful Eight*; the fickle Rick Dalton (Leonardo DiCaprio) from *Once Upon a Time in... Hollywood*.



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C) Film quotes: In *Reservoir Dogs* (1992) he alludes to “Extreme Danger” (1986, Ringo Lam) and “The Big Score” (1956, Stanley Kubrick). In *Pulp Fiction*, Travolta dances as in “Saturday Night Fever” (1977, John Badham) and forms a duo with Jules Winnfield (Samuel Jackson) to commit crimes, as in exploitation films. In *Kill Bill*, in addition to references to “Karate Kiba” (1973, Ryuichi Takamori/Simon Nuchtern), Bruce Lee is reminded of the yellow of Beatrix Kiddo’s outfit. In *Inglourious Basterds*, revenge is aestheticized under the influence of the spaghetti western and the reference to “The Dirty Dozen” (1967, Robert Aldrich). *Once Upon a Time in... Hollywood* has several references to the western style.

The Western that influences Tarantino is the spaghetti western, which is more appropriate for parody, since it is more closely linked to the archetypes of Western mythology than to its relationship with the historical context of the birth of a nation. Leone does not talk about “the West,” but about the “Western.” His concern is not with the story, but with the way of telling it, with cinema itself. Tarantino addresses the self-awareness of the myth to treat it from a new perspective. But unlike the Italian Western, Tarantino focuses not only on the elements of the myth, but also on the very story that underlies it (BORGES, 2017).

Tarantino demonstrates his knowledge of cinema, hence his attention to the history of the medium as a language. His filmography is full of references that surprise us with its mastery of subgenres such as kung fu, exploitation and spaghetti western. His authorial style, which includes his cinephile exhibitionism, is directed both at erudite knowledge, identified in the quote, and at the pleasure that allows his films to be read by film connoisseurs and through the “naïve” gaze of the mass culture spectator, who enjoys the comedy, drama, love and suspense of the well-told plot. “*Inglourious Basterds*” dialogues between cult films, to suggest the valorization of the marginal (JORGE, 2013).

*Kill Bill I and II* (2003/2004) have rich languages: fight sequences inspired by Japanese cinema; colors fused with black and white, special effects that simulate surreal violence, oriental-style cartoons, the heroine’s dialogue with a sense of



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proximity and elucidative elements. Intertextuality allows for a rich set of meanings and ways of receiving the message. The work is made in non-chronological modules, a new intertextual element; it mixes languages, as in Internet environments. Kill Bill I tells the story of a murderess who was almost killed by her accomplices when she left the life of crime, when she left the eat, take revenge. The aesthetics are not real, which is evident in the bright colors, black and white scenes, sometimes with some color or light effects and exaggerated effects, such as people flying after a blow or huge squirts of blood after a cut. The soundtrack is a varied selection of songs by different authors, eras and genres. The noises and sound effects are inserted at volumes above the cinema standard, which gives them a farcical aesthetic. Actions that occur accompanied by music of intense movement followed by silence show how this can be a strong generator of meaning. In this way, the silences are explicit, as if the director's objective were to emphasize these moments, without letting them go unnoticed (GONÇALVES; RENÓ, 2009).

Tarantino's cinema is authorial and authentic, forming a framework of references, full of parody. Kill Bill is an example of this. Not only because of the stylization of these genres, but sometimes it makes direct reference to them. The intertextual relations constructed in Kill Bill are not limited to a single form, flowing between quotations, allusions and intertextual stylizations. In Kill Bill the focus is on Hong Kong martial arts films and spaghetti. Its narrative role maintains scenes that deviate from the chronological order (BONA; SANTOS, 2015).

Conceived as a fictional revenge drama with a strong dose of violence, Kill Bill references old Asian kung fu and samurai films, spaghetti westerns, trash, anime; there are also references to popular music and pop culture. Kill Bill brings Beatrix Kiddo's (Uma Thurman) revenge against her former partners in the Deadly Vipers Assassination Squad, who tried to kill her at her wedding rehearsal. In a reference to Bruce Lee (Game of Death, 1978), Uma Thurman wears a yellow jumpsuit with straight black stripes. The plot features a woman who takes revenge on a group of people who tried to kill her – it is an adaptation of the 1973 Japanese film Lady Snowblood. It is



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also like François Truffaut's *The Bride Wore Black* (1968), which tells the story of five men who make a bride a widow on her wedding day; seeking revenge, she methodically kills all five (ALVES *et al.*, 2024).

In “*Inglourious Basterds*” (2009), Tarantino shows his love for cinema through the plot: the plot and characters revolve around cinema. Almost all the characters have a connection to cinema: Shosanna owns the cinema, Bridget von Hammersmark is an actress, Archie Hicox is a critic, Fredrick Zoller is the star of Goebbels' film, who heads the German film industry, and the bastards will have to disguise themselves as Italian directors and cameramen to gain access to the premiere of “*The Pride of the Nation*”. The dedication to cinema of the characters does not prevent them from setting fire to or blowing up a screening room, with hundreds of reels, to end World War II – which had been a trap for the Nazis. The conception of cinema as an element of war strategy leads to the death of the Nazi high command. Cinema is used by both sides: for the Nazis it is propaganda, the bastards use it as a weapon. In the film, the reference to exploitation is ironic in relation to the pleasure that the viewer feels in the face of cruelty. The film is a reference to violent genres while ironizing cinema's passion for excess. The main reference to exploitation is Eli Roth, who carries out our desire to teach the Nazis the lesson they deserve. Revenge goes beyond the personal dimension and becomes social and historical, and this is one of the reasons why the viewer rejoices in the execution of the plan (JORGE, 2013).

“*Django Unchained*” (2012) is a metawestern in which, instead of a cowboy who enters a town, fights with the sheriff and falls in love with the owner of the saloon, the hero is a black man saved by a German during the Civil War, in the slave-owning South of the United States. The clashes do not take place in saloons, but in the plantation mansions – whose owners are the villains. The bounty hunter Dr. Schultz buys the slave Django after learning that he knows three brothers who are wanted by law. The dialogues are ironic, and the violence is exaggerated. Schultz frees Django after they complete the proposed mission – with countless adventures in which Django becomes a valuable assistant and gains the trust of the experienced hunter. The fable



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here is represented by the young and beautiful Broomhilda who needs to be saved by her beloved, and the situation is reversed when Schultz decides to help Django in this task (MINADEO, 2021).

“The Hateful Eight” (2015) is filmed in 70mm, which allows for more elements to be worked on and creates a *mise-en-scène* effect, which deceives the viewer, with strong dialogues in the foreground between the characters Major Marquis Warren (Samuel Jackson) and Kurt Russel that make us lose sight of what is happening elsewhere, especially with Oswaldo Mobray (Tim Roth) and Michael Madsen. It is about eight people trapped in an inn during a blizzard in the post-Civil War, a time when the West was being occupied. This meeting seems casual, but as the plot evolves, it becomes clear that the encounter is an ambush. Warren knows that the general, during the Civil War (1861-1865), had left a group of prisoners from a regiment made up entirely of black soldiers to die of cold. Despite becoming enraged, Warren is warned by Sheriff Mannix that he could not kill an unarmed old man, under penalty of being hanged. This is corroborated by Oswaldo Mobray, who claims to be the state's executioner to hang criminals, and by John Ruth, who personifies the ethical values, albeit dubious, of bounty hunters. Convinced that it would not be good to kill him there and then, in cold blood, Warren waits for the right time; at dinner, he approaches the general and they talk about their lives after the war; the general says he wants to find his lost son. Warren sees his chance and insinuates that he had met the general's son, who had tried to kill him because there was a bounty on his head, but that he had won the challenge. Warren gives the general a gun, tells his sordid story to provoke him, which happens, but when he tries to kill Warren, the general dies. It is a real Western. The work addresses slavery: not only the old racist Southerner, but the tension between the characters, forced to ride in the same stagecoach, whose initial antagonism is reversed by the final scene. Before their final breath, they reread the letter attributed to Lincoln, relativizing the difference between them. The plot of the criminal's rescue seems to be just a pretext to deal with the clichés of the western genre (BORGES, 2017; SANTOS, 2017).



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### *Woody Allen*

“The Purple Rose of Cairo” (1985) is about the waitress Cecília, married to a former soldier who drunkenly rapes her. Her escape is to watch her favorite films at the cinema; she dreams of a life as an artist and imagines that the hero comes out of the screen to have a new life with her and takes her to the cinematographic work. In a certain film, a character leaves the screen and falls in love with her, followed by another, who fight over her, against the backdrop of the possible advantages between “living in the film” or in the real Hollywood, Cecília’s choice; the actor disappears, having falsified his love for her. The work surpasses reality and fiction, with the richness of cinematic language. The protagonist asks her husband to accompany her to the cinema and escape from her problems. The character’s voice is a new form of expression that sometimes adds to and sometimes replaces the elements communicated until then, such as image, body language and cards with written texts (MINADEO, 2024).

“Match Point” (2005) tells the story of Chris Wilton, an ambitious former professional athlete and tennis coach who becomes friends with Tom Hewett, from a wealthy family. Furthermore, Chloe, Tom’s sister, will be Chris’s wife – who is in a relationship with Nola, Tom’s girlfriend. Nola becomes pregnant and pressures Chris to choose between her and their unborn child and Chloe. Despite his desire for Nola, his interest in Chloe’s fortune leads Chris to kill Nola – faking a robbery and killing Nola’s neighbor to cover up the crime. Chris was in full conscious control of his actions when committing the crimes; he was not drunk or under the influence of drugs. Although he suffered while committing the crimes, there was nothing excusable in his actions: he knew his victims were innocent and was aware of the cruelty of his actions. According to Chris’s moral values, it is acceptable to dissemble, lie and betray, that is, “better to be lucky than good” – morally speaking. Luck helps Chris: the police do not see him as a suspect: the object – Nola’s neighbor’s wedding ring – that should be eliminated and could lead the police to accuse Chris, is found by chance by a drug



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addict with a criminal record, who in the eyes of the police could have committed both murders (AQUINO, 2015).

In “Whatever Works” (2009) Boris is the narrator and protagonist. He was raised in a religious home, but has no religion, has never played sports and has few friends; has had two divorces; has a Ph.D. in Physics and was a university professor. He sees everyone as inferior to him. He talks about the time he lived with Jessica and their son. When his son was in college, he would wake up at night afraid he was dying. He recounted one day at four in the morning, he was screaming thinking that he was dying; he went downstairs to his room; goes to the kitchen and his wife follows him, saying that he is fine, that it is late and that she should rest. Jessica says that his panic attacks are becoming more frequent and asks if he is taking his medication. They argue, he goes to the window and jumps. Boris complains about life, health, politics, economy, racism, religion. After the divorce, he lives alone and becomes a chess teacher. Boris’s lack of social skills is notable; for example, he mistreats his students. His second wife, Melody, begged outside his house. Most of the film deals with the relationship between the two. As soon as Melody stayed with Boris, he took her to New York’s tourist attractions. At Grant’s Tomb, Boris is out of breath, saying that he has never been there and understands why one should not go to a grave. Melody talks about what her mother used to tell her about graves and death, God and heaven. She sees Boris wake up screaming, with his hand on his stomach; she asks him what he feels and says that he is sweating. He claims that when he woke up sweating and feeling unwell and like he was going to die, he thought he had AIDS. She takes care of Boris, without questioning whether what she felt was a misperception. When Melody says she is in love and wants to marry Boris, he tells her what he has to offer: bad mood, hypochondria, morbid fixations, and anger towards human beings. Melody often does not understand what he says but asks him to explain what he meant; in this way, she is Boris’s audience. One day, Melody tells Boris that she has fallen in love with someone else, gathers her belongings, and leaves. Then Boris’s second failed suicide attempt occurs. (MACHADO, 2016).



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“Midnight in Paris” (2011) presents a sunny Paris to the sound of jazz notes. The city is the protagonist of the plot. The warm tones fade away as the sky becomes darker. The scenes include Place de la Concorde, the Arc de Triomphe, Notre Dame, and the facade of a Dior store. Umbrellas and raincoats, the shiny ground and the headlights and lights that open the way to nocturnal Paris. Gil is a Hollywood screenwriter who dreams of making a living from writing. He is in Paris with his fiancée Inez. He is impressed by the city, and she wants to put an end to his daydreams in a harsh way. Gil is fascinated by American literature from the 1920s – the best time to live, in his opinion. His dream leads him to decide to stay in France and rebuild his life there. Temporality is the center of the plot. In the first few minutes, key spaces are marked out for the narrative: the path to the antique store, visited by Gil; the road that guides the car's path to the past; the cafés and squares where Gil reflects on his life; the city in the rain or at midnight; the everyday city, which Gil chooses to recreate his life. The film contains interesting quotes: the chimes of midnight, which refer to fairy tales; it is also worth pointing out the role of painting, sculpture and music. When the credits end, the two are in Monet's gardens in Giverny (COUTINHO, 2018; HAUSBRICH, 2018).

## CONCLUSIONS

Bergman's work is a must-read for anyone who loves cinema and for anyone who uses cinema in teaching. His approach to existential themes is solid, as evidenced by a long and award-winning career. *Wild Strawberries*, *Cries and Whispers*, *Persona*, *Winter Light*, *Hour of the Wolf*, and *Autumn Sonata* are set in the 20th century. *The Seventh Seal* and *The Maiden Spring* refer to the Middle Ages, presenting existential themes at a deeper level, even because they allow us to abstract ourselves from the plot – naturally far from our reality. The director managed to create films with diverse plots, but all of them are faithful to the existential theme that characterizes him. His films are dense, with well-constructed characters. Bergman won no less than three



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Oscars for Best Foreign Language Film: *The Maiden Spring* (1960); *Through a Glass-Glass* (1961); and *Fanny and Alexander* (1982).

Tarantino's language is unique and must be understood for its appreciation of the banal, its use of exploitation and its playfulness in relation to cinema – with countless references and quotes from other films and film genres, as well as musical references. The result is that his work presents unique touches of humor, alongside criticism of themes such as all forms of racism and slavery. The director won two Oscars for Best Original Screenplay: *Pulp Fiction* (1994) and *Django Unchained* (2012).

Woody Allen presents extreme situations, such as the criminal in *Match Point* who is blessed by luck. *The Purple Rose of Cairo* is a rich situation of escapism through cinema itself. In *Midnight in Paris*, the director presents a romantic work that is completely different from *Anything Goes Well* – which highlights the problems of an empty life. The director won four Oscars: Best Director and Best Original Screenplay for *Annie Hall* (1977); Best Original Screenplay: *Hannah and Her Sisters* (1986) and *Midnight in Paris* (2011).

Future studies may delve deeper into the work of one of these three directors, focusing exclusively on one of them. Actors with great impact may also be worthy of future articles. The difficulties faced were related to obtaining materials with good descriptions of one or more works, and with the presentation of a certain degree of analysis.

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