

# SENIOR ADVOCATE

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## The Good Ol' Days: Ingrid Bergman

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Ingrid Bergman's childhood was rocky. The actress was born in Sweden in 1915 and lost her mother three years later. This meant she was raised by her single father until he too died when Ingrid was twelve. She was sent to live with an aunt, only to have this aunt also die within the year. Next she went to be with her uncle and was finally able to stay with him.

Despite all this tragedy at such a young age, Bergman did not let it get her down. She was interested in acting, pursuing it realistically once she was in her teens. Not only did she do school productions, she managed to get some extra work for films. She enrolled at Stockholm's Royal Dramatic Theater School for college in 1933, and within three years she got the role anyone would envy.

The Swedish movie *Intermezzo*, in which Bergman starred in 1936, made Hollywood producer David O. Selznick do a double take. He wanted to re-make the film, this time as an English language American feature. But instead of hiring all new actors, he wanted Bergman to replay her role in his version of the story.

So Bergman moved to California and signed a contract for seven years' worth of work. The American version of *Intermezzo* was a hands-down success, helping her find other movie roles. Around this time, in 1937, she married Petter Lindstrom and had a daughter, Friedel Pia, the next year. Things were looking bright for Bergman, both at home and with her career.

She continued to star in movies on into the 1940s, including the 1942's classic *Casablanca*. After starring in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, she was nominated for Best Actress, though she did not win it this time. Nonetheless, she didn't have long to wait. In 1944, in honor of her acting in *Gaslight*, she was able to take the Best Actress award home. The 40s continued with a string of movies, such as the Hitchcock features *Spellbound* and *Notorious*, as well as the motion picture version of the Broadway show *Joan of Lorraine*, in which she starred as Joan of Arc. Bergman had played Joan in the Broadway production too.

Although the public assumed Bergman's married life was happy, she had been unsatisfied with it for some time. When she met and fell in love with Italian director Roberto Rossellini, many of her American fans felt taken aback. Some people had put together an image of her as saintly as her character Joan of Arc, and didn't expect to see her behave this way. Meanwhile, Rossellini and Bergman divorced their spouses so they could be married. Soon they had a son, also named Roberto. Bergman starred in a number of Rossellini's films the following years, including *Giovanna d'Arco al rogo*, which translates to 'Joan of Arc at the Stake.' Again Bergman played Joan.

Bergman did end up coming back to Hollywood and her 1956 movie *Anastasia* proved she still could keep the American public enthralled. Her marriage to Rossellini ended, but she was no longer an outcast from Hollywood movies. Even when she was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1975, she did not stop her career. Her last feature film was 1978's *Autumn Sonata*, though she was also in a television miniseries in 1982, playing Golda Mier. She died later that year, on August 29, which was coincidentally her birthday. She was exactly 67-years-old. Despite the rocky start, Bergman had kept going to follow her dreams.

by Danica Davidson