

An Abstract of the Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies Thesis of:

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The Prophetic Voice of Ingmar Bergman's The Seventh Seal: Breaking the Seal,  
Breaking the Silence

By examining specific scenes that are revelatory in nature, the thesis takes an interdisciplinary approach to Ingmar Bergman's film The Seventh Seal. These revelatory scenes are viewed through a phenomenological lens, whereby we see the uncommon in the common. The film, although set in the Middle Ages, takes its title from a key verse in the book of Revelation and has been seen as a modern commentary on the fear and anxiety of the atomic bomb. Bergman, the son of a prominent Lutheran minister, created The Seventh Seal as a critique of the worst aspects of religion—the fear mongering, the injustice, the hypocrisy. Through various scenes that feature a confession, a secular communion, and the burning of an innocent woman, the viewer breaks the seal of Bergman's prophecy to the world. Despite the ever-present character of Death in the film, Bergman's The Seventh Seal provides a vision of hope for humanity.