

Cine-concert

CREATION 2014

ensemble
Sillages
la musique aujourd'hui

THE WIND

A film by Victor Sjöström. Original music by Carlos Grätzer* performed live.



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by **Sillages ensemble**,

Artistic Director : **Philippe Arrii-Blachette**

With

Ingrid Schoenlaub

cello

Stéphane Sordet

saxophones

Et recorded sounds

Electronics realized by the INA-GRM, Musical Research Group studios

Production: DRAMA | Sillages.

With the support of La Muse en Circuit, National Centre for Musical Creation

*State commission

About the film



A quasi-western, but lacking bravura scenes, shot in the middle of the desert with wind constantly blowing dust... Letty Mason arrives in Texas to move in with her cousin, persuaded that she is going to find a nice place to live. Instead, she finds herself amongst farmers living in ramshackle cabins, and her cousin's wife does not exactly view the arrival of this potential rival kindly. After a few days, Letty finds herself forced to choose a husband in order to get away from this place. There are three possible choices: Wirt Roddy, a charming travelling salesman, Lige Hightower and Sourdough, two cowboys who are friends of the family...

In 75 minutes, the film shows in detail the transformation of a disappointed woman, a Madame Bovary of the South, who must confront the harshness of the world symbolized by the unending torment of the wind and sandstorms. Sjöström's strength in the use of scenery elements to express human passions finds a fantastic echo in an ever-juvenile Lillian Gish. Just as he manages to exploit any part of the body whatsoever to make it express emotions, Sjöström undeniably has a great sense of detail. *The Wind* is an admirable masterpiece, a 'must-see' film...

American - 1928 – 75'

Genre: Drama

All publics

Directed by Victor Sjöström

Film inspired by the novel by Dorothy Scarborough

With:

Lillian Gish, Lars Hanson, Montagu Love

Dorothy Cumming, Edward Earle, William Orlamond,

Laon Ramon

Victor Sjöström (aka Victor Seastrom)

Swedish actor and director (1879-1960)

In his youth, he was a stage actor until the day Charles Magnusson, founder of the Swedish Cinematographic Society, suggested that he go into directing. As an actor, he made his film debut under the direction of Mauritz Stiller in 1912 and, the same year, directed *The Gardener*. In 1924 he returned to Hollywood where he directed several films (including his first talking film, *A Lady to Love*), remaining until 1937 when he returned to Sweden.

His experience as an actor would stand him in very good stead when he became a filmmaker, directing his actors with a tact and accuracy that profoundly internalize all his films. *Terje Vigen* and *The Outlaw and his Wife* were hailed by Léon Moussinac, a great French critic of cinema's first period, who admired the balance, the visual aspect, the lifelike settings, the simple picturesque quality always in keeping with the dramatic development, and the nobleness of the writing.

Much later, Ingmar Bergman paid him an emotive homage by offering him the role of the old man in *Wild Strawberries* (1957).

Lillian Gish

This American actress (1893-1993) was one of the most prominent female stars in silent films. At MGM, most of the time she chose her scripts, partners, directors...

The Wind, her fifth film, is the crowning achievement of Lillian Gish's career. She knew how to show the signs of her emotional power hidden behind the appearance of a seemingly frail but bewitchingly beautiful actress. Griffith would use her to a maximum to develop the image of the juvenile, pure and courageous heroine.

Carlos Grätzer's statement of intent

It was whilst doing research that I discovered images of a film that immediately swept me away with its beauty and force: director Victor Sjöström's *The Wind*.

'Shot under difficult conditions in the Mojave Desert (United States) in 1928, this hard, brilliant melodrama is unquestionably a key silent film. It describes the relationship between Man and Nature in a drama that unfolds in a rural setting of extraordinary beauty and highly moving lyrical sweep.

However, Gilles Deleuze made this film the prototype of the action film, refusing to see it as a naturalistic film for, says he, the original world - The Wind that constantly blows across the plain - is actualized in a determined area: the Great Plains. The story according to Deleuze: *"A young woman from the South arrives in this region to which she is not accustomed and finds herself caught up in a series of duels: a physical duel with the environment; a psychological duel with the hostile family that takes her in; a romantic duel with the rough cowboy who is in love with her; a hand-to-hand duel with the cattle dealer who tries to rape her... After killing the latter, she tries desperately to bury him in the sand, but each time The Wind uncovers the body. This is the moment when the environment challenges her the most and when she reaches the core of the duel. Then the reconciliation begins."*

'In this tale, between melodrama and fantastic western, *The Wind* becomes an ally allowing the young woman to become self-confident and face up.

At the summit of silent pictures, when the mastery of the cinematographic narrative was total: variety of framings, double exposures, subjective camera, acceleration of the rhythm - everything is there. The wide shots isolate the characters in a hostile environment, the close-ups show clothing whipping about frenetically: struggle is omnipresent. For me, there was no doubt: watching the film, powerful ideas of sound and music came to me. Similarly, the shots of a white horse dashing with the storm, or blending with Lillian Gish's frightened face, are full of a poetry and fantasy that correspond perfectly to the Indian legend explaining tornadoes as being caused by a phantom horse that lives in the clouds.

The artistic and musical project

This was conceived starting from the idea of a cinematographic show planned for showing not only in conventional theatres but also in places that can receive a diverse audience, varied in terms of age and background. For this reason, the instrumentation and technique were elaborated with great care in order to create, with limited forces, the whole palette necessary for the expression given to this music.

The work is composed for two instrumentalists - amplified saxophone(s) and cello - and electro-acoustic sounds. A wind instrument and a stringed instrument are in harmony with the theme and images of the chosen film. This instrumentation allows for playing on their contrasts and complementarity, but these two sound sources can also, through diverse playing styles and transformations, merge and broaden their spectra. The film's harsh landscape, the intensity of the acting and the 'action of Nature' are revealed by the expressive possibilities of these instruments. The electro-acoustic sounds further broaden this palette.



Carlos Grätzer is born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1956. He was given his musical training by his father, Guillermo Graetzer (a student of Paul Hindemith).

He has divided his artistic work between music and cinema, making animated films, which became awarded films.

In 1984, he was given a scholarship by the French government, come to Paris and settle down. He has taken trainings courses at CNSMD of Paris, Darmstadt, IRCAM, Wellesley College (USA)...

Prizewinner at Alea III (Boston), Bourges, World Music Days 2000 and the International Rostrum of Composers at UNESCO. Grätzer's music is performed by majors orchestras like Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Ensemble Intercontemporain, etc. Carlos Grätzer has collaborated with the Ensemble Sillages in projects of music to be played with silent movies "A tribute to Sherlock Holmes", commission of the French ministry of culture, it was premiered at the European Short Film Festival (Brest, France), and "Georges

Méliès, the magician of cinema", commission of Geneva City.

www.carlosgraetzer.com

Ensemble Sillages

Founded in 1992 by Philippe Arrii-Blachette, the Sillages ensemble is a group of musicians who express their performer's sensibility through composers of our time. Sillages and Le Quartz, the national theatre of Brest, have been associated since 1996, giving rise to numerous projects: premieres, dissemination of the contemporary repertoire, cultural and educational actions - a whole arsenal of proposals that Sillages is developing everywhere for instructing the public in the music of our time.

Working with living composers is at the centre of the ensemble's artistic policy for an accurate interpretation of their musical thoughts and to also favour bringing them closer to the public through a living comprehension of their works. In addition to the contemporary repertoire, Sillages elaborates projects always with the aim of bringing the widest audience possible into contact with the new musical forms.

Associated with Le Quartz, the national theatre of Brest, the Sillages ensemble is subsidised by the Ministry of Culture and Communication Brittany Regional Department for Cultural Affairs (DRAC), City of Brest, Brittany Region, General Council of Finistère, SACEM (cultural action), SPEDIDAM (defence of performing artists' rights). ADAMI

Technical rider

4 loudspeakers
2 microphones
1 DVD player
1 video projector
1 sound engineer
Playing time: 75'
Financial conditions available upon request

Contacts

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