

ANATOMY OF A (NON-)ART FILM

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ABSTRACT

It has long been assumed that art films and mainstream films are distinct sorts of media offerings possessing far more differences than commonalities. But is this actually the case? This presentation explores the unexpected parallels that exist between the form and contents of two well-known cinematic offerings: Swedish director Ingmar Bergman's 1953 art film, *Sawdust and Tinsel*, and U.S. director Victor Fleming's 1939 mainstream classic, *The Wizard of Oz*. Among noteworthy others, they include circular storytelling paths that lead their central characters both everywhere and nowhere, early feminist characters who control their own destinies and are much stronger than their surrounding males, and surprisingly bold/potentially controversial on-screen representations of sadistic tendencies as they unfold. When all is said and done, this analysis demonstrates that these two fantastic movies — perhaps quite surprisingly — share a common filmic anatomy.

Keywords: cinema; fantasy; feminism; narrative storytelling; representation