

Edging Out of Darkness

*Norway's Long Struggle to Establish
a Thriving Film Industry*

By Donald Dewey



ALL PHOTOS: NORWAY'S NATIONAL FILM ARCHIVES

A scene from *Kampen om tungvannet* (*The Battle for Heavy Water*) shows German soldiers guarding a shipment of heavy water against possible Norwegian saboteurs during the Nazi occupation of Norway in World War II. Inset: Posters for two of Norway's most memorable films—*Kon-Tiki* and *Nine Lives*.

The Norwegian (film) industry has always been obscured by its film-producing neighbors.



Norway's first woman director

Edith Calmar made 10 domestic dramas and comedies from 1949 to 1959. She died at 91 in 2003 having earned the title of the Grand Old Lady of Norwegian Cinema.



Calmar's last film, *Ung flukt* (*The Wayward Girl*), gave Liv Ullmann her first starring role.

ADMIT IT: WE HAVE SOME PRETTY LAME ASSOCIATIONS OF Norway with motion pictures. Those of a certain age or who watch movies on television, for instance, would have little more to submit than *Edge of Darkness* and *The Moon is Down*, both released by Hollywood in 1943, both dealing with the resistance against the Nazi occupation, and starring such typical Norwegians as Errol Flynn, Ann Sheridan, Walter Huston, Sir Cedric Hardwicke and Lee J. Cobb. A generation later, there were Kirk Douglas, Richard Harris and other Vikings of the period foiling the Nazis in *The Heroes of Telemark* (1965). Ten years after that, we had the noted Norseman Sean Connery riling the real British Parliament with *The Terrorists* (1975), a thriller that suggested NATO ally Norway didn't like MI5 lying to capture political radicals in Oslo and no tears were to be shed if London's agents got shot to death for their deceit. Aside from these ventures into American and Anglo melodrama, Norway's association with motion pictures has, in the United States anyway, largely rested on one 50-year-old documentary (*Kon-Tiki*, 1951) that some have had to be convinced wasn't shot by the Japanese and one actor-director (Liv Ullmann) many have been surprised to discover isn't Swedish.

If we have any excuse for these aberrant impressions, it is that Norwegian cinema history has gone to lengths of its own to abet them. Within

Scandinavia, the Norwegian industry has always been obscured to the rim of invisibility by its film-producing neighbors—first by Denmark, then by Sweden, most recently by Denmark again. Internally, its creative sense of adventure was stymied for generations by a censorship system both moralistic and fickle in establishing one standard for, say, Oslo and another for Bergen. And as much as those Hollywood movies about the Norwegian Resistance might have verged on caricature, Oslo's own producers spent years churning out little else. This might have made for national balm in dealing with the wounds from the Nazi occupation, but it did nothing for international acknowledgement of local filmmaking. In our own time, despite three productions nominated for a Best Foreign Film Oscar in the last 20-odd years, too many of the country's most ballyhooed pictures have borrowed the mechanics of Hollywood without its dynamics. It wasn't until the 21st century that Norwegian directors started getting assignments abroad, and these almost always for small pictures with seriously troubled neurotics at the center of the action (or non-action). What has taken so long for even these modest signs of health to emerge?

As with other European countries, Norway's introduction to film came through traveling shows organized elsewhere. In this particular case, the trailblazers were brothers Max and Emil Skladinowsky, who had developed a

Many regard Roede's *The Curse of Poverty* in 1911 as the country's pioneer feature.

projector in Berlin they called the Bioskop and who, for a couple of months anyway, shaped up as the continent's equivalent of Thomas Edison. But just as they were about to unveil their invention in Paris in 1896, another brother tandem, the Lumieres, marketed their more sophisticated Cinematograph, sending the Skladinowskys off to Scandinavia to exhibit their novelty in relatively less conspicuous locales while they worked feverishly to improve the Bioskop to keep up with the superior French competition. It was on April 6, 1896 that they held their first program at the Bial Music Hall in Oslo (then Christiania)—the start of a decade of shows around the country that were billed as “living pictures” in their filmed records of dancers, gymnasts, wrestlers, and anybody else who had to move to perform. In 1897, a Norwegian photographer named Ragnar Knudsen took on much of the local business for the Lumieres, but only with the crucial assistance of an instrument maker named Olaf Bjercke. Called on for help when a projector broke down during a screening, Bjercke became so fascinated with the machine he was repairing that he took on a new trade, touring with the Lumiere strips. An even more intriguing character was the energetic Gertrude Kopke, arguably the world's first professional woman projectionist as she traveled from one community hall and theater to another to answer the increasing demand for the film shows.

IT WASN'T UNTIL OCTOBER 30, 1904 THAT THE COUNTRY HAD its first permanent movie house, Hugo Hermansen's Kinematograph at Stortingsgaten 12 in the capital. By then, the Cirkus Variete and other music halls had been showing up to a half-hour of film loops as the prelude to live acts. Within a couple of years, Hermansen and another entrepreneur, Jens Christian Gundersen, were either directly operating or licensing scores of exhibition spaces around Norway. They weren't going broke, either. Despite the fact that Norway made only 16 films of unassuming lengths between 1906 and 1919, the new medium entranced the country, with entertainment venues having to offer a film show for survival, let alone profit. That rage soon exacted a price.

Hermansen was also the producer of Norway's first homemade film, though its disappearance shortly after its release has bred more anecdote than fact. There isn't even agreement on when the variously titled semi-documentary *Fiskerlivets farer* (*Dangers of a Fisherman's Life*) and *Et drama pas havet* (*A Drama at Sea*) was shot—some saying 1906, others 1908, and the habitually careful splitting the difference at 1907. What consensus exists is that it dealt with fishermen (duh!), it ran between seven and eight minutes, and it put in a claim for fishermen Alma Lund and Henry Hagerup as Norway's first screen

performers. Because of the sketchy information on *Fiskerlivets farer*, many regard Halfdan Nobel Roede's *Fattigdommens forbandelse* (*The Curse of Poverty*) in 1911 as the country's pioneer feature, certainly its first completely fictional work. Roede, something of a Renaissance man as a producer, director, pianist, composer and theater owner, would go on to make several more films divided in focus between Norway's social problems and Denmark's realization that the saucier and more erotic the tale, the greater the box office bonanza.

The lustful winds blowing in from Denmark were the last straw for

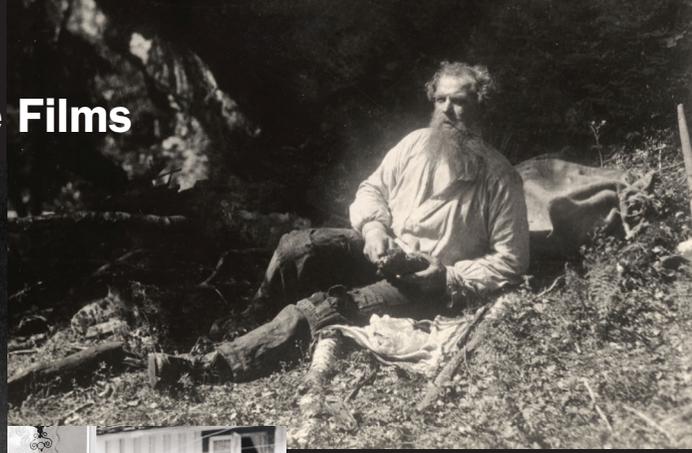


The Danish Poet, 2007, earned Norway one of its two Oscars (for animated shorts).

groups that declared themselves protectors of Norwegian morals. From the beginning, in fact, various quarters had been unhappy about the passion with which the citizenry had embraced the new medium. Barely had Hermansen and Gundersen set up the publicity machines accompanying their projections than small businesses were complaining that movie posters were diverting too much attention from serious shopping, teachers and pastors were warning of the nefarious influence of salacious images on youth, and townships were griping about the additional street-cleaning required for discarded flyers. By 1910, the *Foreningen til Saedelighetens Fremme* (Society for the Promotion of Morality) was in full voice denouncing movies as dangerous, demanding that Oslo and other communities pass laws limiting the number of cinemas and exercise direct authority over programming.

The first major victim of all the indignation was *Demonen* (*The Demon*),

Some Memorable Films



Two film versions of noted books by Nobel Prize winning writer Knut Hamsun (inset) are *Markens grøde* (*The Growth of Soil*), above, and *Pan*, left.



Norway's first sound film was made in 1931 by Henrik Ibsen's grandson Tancred. It was *Den store barndaapet* (*The Big Christening*), right. *Søndagsenglere* (*The Other Side of Sunday*), below, from 1996, was one of four Norwegian feature films to be nominated for an Academy Award.



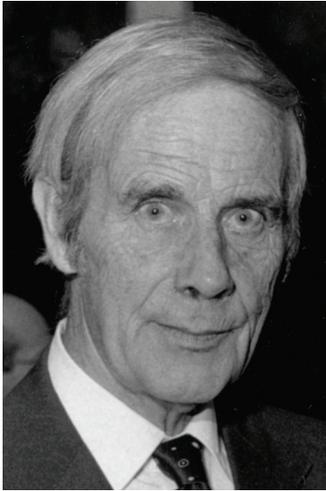
The most prominent of rural storytellers was Rasmus Breistein, whose 1920 production of *Fante-Anne* (*Gypsy Anne*), right, launched the genre and who is generally regarded as Norway's premier silent moviemaker. Nils Gaup's *Veivisere* (*Pathfinder*), below, shot in the director's Sami language, is set in the year 1000. It was nominated for a foreign-film Oscar and put Gaup on Hollywood's radar.



Toralf Sande's *Englandsfarere* (*We Leave for England*), 1946, recorded the grim end of a group seeking to escape to England during the German occupation.



Around the World in Two Hours *was the first full-length Norwegian film shot in color.*



Arne Skouen, is director of 17 films including *Nine Lives*, perhaps the greatest Norwegian film ever. He has also written eight plays and 10 novels and commands a prominent place in the cultural life of Norway during the late 1900s.



A scene from *Nine Lives*, starring Jack Fjeldstad playing a Norwegian saboteur returning to Norway during the Nazi occupation and his tribulations in escaping to Sweden after his presence in Norway had been betrayed.

written, produced and directed by Gunderson in 1911. In November of that year, the police superintendent of Trondheim informed his Oslo counterpart that he couldn't allow his community to watch two scenes from *Demonen* that had apparently not ruffled officials in the capital. According to the superintendent, each community had its own standards and values, and Trondheim did not have Oslo's. The scenes in question were a provocative dance and a chance encounter at a carnival among a man, his wife, his mistress and a second man—humorlessly referred to by the police official as the “bordello scene.” Ironically, with the loss of *Demonen* a few years later, the film's only surviving sequences are those the police superintendent scissored and stored in a Trondheim vault.

What the *Demonen* episode crystallized was that the arrival of motion pictures in Norway was widely viewed as a social problem. Distribution and exhibition were immediately subject to stringent laws giving leery municipal authorities the prerogative to license any and all public entertainments, from concerts to lottery drawings. In practice, this worked out to officials touring prospective projection halls and having the final say not only on the number of seats, but on how the seats were arranged. What the police might not find potentially objectionable from a legal point of view, the fire department might veto in the name of safety. The location of the projection sites didn't escape scrutiny, either, and more than one municipality thumbed down

attempts to show films in working-class neighborhoods behind the fear that the images might inflame apparently already restive audience members. It was against this background that the Storting (Parliament) passed the Film Theater Act in 1913—a piece of legislation that would have a marked influence on all aspects of the Norwegian film history.

The Theater Act established two main obstacles for filmmakers. The first was a national board that graded films by age category and that had the power to order cuts and ban outright both Norwegian and foreign pictures. Depending on the period and the board members, this might mean a kissing scene was pruned or excised totally, a dance was regarded as so scabrous as to pollute the entire picture, or a punch in the mouth was deemed a threat to the social order. In this latter connection, for example, Italy's spaghetti westerns of the 1960s and 1970s were ruled too violent for adults as well as children. Slasher pictures like the Friday the 13th series were better off not applying, but so was a lampoon like *Monty Python's Life of Brian*. When the Norwegian Board of Film Classification finally ended its preemptive rulings in October 2003, no fewer than 300 pictures were on the banned list.

Even when features gained approval from the national board in the 20th century, they still had to deal with individual municipal councils, empowered by the Theater Act to license films within their own jurisdictions. But here the story also got murkier since many of the councils decided they were



The internationally successful documentary, *Kon-Tiki*, about Thor Heyerdahl's 101-day raft voyage across the Pacific to show that pre-Columbian people from South America could have ventured as far as Polynesia, won an Oscar for best documentary.

spending so much time meeting about film showings they might as well operate the cinemas themselves and add a few kroner to the public treasury. By 1930, more than half of the nation's 200 cinemas were directly in the hands of municipalities and 90 percent of the industry's turnover passed through council hands. No surprise, few films with commercial cachet ended up being shown in private, independent theaters. What made this system yet more enervating for a fledgling industry was that the councils seldom felt the urge to reinvest profits in new productions. Unlike some state lotteries that could be mentioned, proceeds really were funneled into education.

UP TO 1920, THE PROFITS OF THE MUNICIPALITIES CAME primarily from foreign imports, particularly from comedies featuring the likes of France's Max Linder and Hollywood's Keystone Kops since they offered few censorship challenges. Over the following decade, Norway was no more immune than any other European country to the U.S. domination of the world film market, surrendering all but 30 percent of its admissions to American imports. But it was also during the 1920s that



Bjørn Skagestad and Elisabeth Matheson starred in the film based on *Kristen Lavransdatter*, the medieval novel that earned Sigrid Undset her Nobel Prize for Literature in 1928. The film was directed by Liv Ullmann.

filmmakers hit upon a domestic genre—the rural melodrama—that was all Norwegian. The typical tale threw together a young man and a young woman, ideally from different classes, who labored to express their love for one another against the panoramic backdrop of fjords and mountains. If the principals or subsidiary characters paraded around in traditional costumes, so much the better for arousing the nationalistic sympathies of audiences.

The most prominent of the rural storytellers was Rasmus Breistein, whose 1920 production of *Fante-Anne* (*Gypsy Anne*) launched the genre and who is generally regarded as Norway's premier silent moviemaker. His 1930 production of *Kristine Valdresdatter* (*Kristine, Daughter of Valdres*) easily outdrew such international classics as *City Lights* at the box office. But Breistein's influence didn't end with the silent era. As a stage actor himself, he used his connections to break existing taboos against theater performers going before the cameras and attracted leading members of the *Det Norske Teatret* to the casts of *Fante-Anne* and his other productions. Many years later, in 1949, his documentary *Jorden rundt po to timer* (*Around the World in Two Hours*) was the first full-length Norwegian feature to be shot in color. And three years after that in

A puppet directorate administered the making of 23 films during the occupation.



Anja Breien directed the much-lauded *Hustruer (Wives)* in 1974. Her film is seen as a polemical reply to John Cassavete's cultish *Husbands*.



Wives is the story of three women who abandoned their men and families to face an uncertain future on their own, and contains barbed references to the complacency of life in Norway.

1952, he ventured as far as Pakistan for a second documentary, *Tirich Mir til topps (Tirich Mir to the Top)*. The record of a climb up the Hindu Kush turned out to be Breistein's swan song, although he ended up living in retirement for another 24 years.

Given the accent on the rural in the 1920s, it was appropriate that the period also marked the first of the numerous adaptations of the works of Knut Hamsun, the Nobel Prize-winning novelist whose self-absorbed characters (or, later, Nazi sympathies) have never been much of a deterrent to Norwegian filmmakers. In 1921, Gunnar Sommerfeldt brought to the screen *Markens Grøde (The Growth of the Soil)*, a lugubrious story centered around a farmer's wife being sent to prison for slaying her hare-lipped son. A year later, Harald Schwenzen made the first of several versions of *Pan*, about a man who goes off to a cabin in the woods to get away from humanity only to fall in love with a woman from the area. If the public liked *Pan*, the author himself wasn't too impressed. Reached by telephone by a reporter for his reaction to the screen adaptation, the fleetingly personable Hamsun snapped "I don't understand film and I am in bed with the flu," and hung up. By the new millennium, however, there had been some 20 productions inspired by his books, placing him second only to Henrik Ibsen as source material.

It was Ibsen's grandson Tancred who directed the first Norwegian sound film, *Den store barsedåpen (The Big Christening)* in 1931, about a neurotic

homeless man who finds happiness by taking care of a woman's child. Although embraced critically and by the public, *Den store barsedåpen* also shed light on the Norwegian industry's lack of preparation for dealing with the intricate technical requirements and higher costs posed by sound. The Ibsen feature reached theaters only thanks to Swedish technicians and equipment, sucking up a substantial portion of the profits. Costs ballooned so wildly that Norway's 29 pictures in the 1930s were produced by 15 different companies, and more than half of those managed only a single production. Alarmed by a financial situation that threatened to worsen in lean economic times, the municipal councils overcame their reluctance to invest in the future and hammered out a deal with the central government to establish the country's first motion-picture studio, outside Oslo. Operating the studio was a new production company, Norsk Film. The entity would last until the end of the 20th century.

The April 1940 Nazi invasion put Norsk Film and the industry as a whole under the control of a puppet directorate that administered the making of 23 films during the occupation. Although most of them steered away from explicit Nazi propaganda, they were the next worst thing—idiotic farces with titles like *Den forsvundne pølsemaker (The Lost Sausage Maker)* and *En herre med bart (The Mustached Gentleman)* that made sure entertainment-seeking audiences didn't have to think much. The signal but hardly distinguished

Petter Naess directed *Mozart and the Whale*, about two lovers with Asperger's Syndrome.



Eric Skjoldbærg's highly praised suspense thriller *Insomnia* in 1997 prompted an English-language remake with Al Pacino and Hilary Swank five years later.



Stellan Skarsgård starred in *Insomnia*, a mental maelstrom of a moody police thriller filmed in Tromsø, Norway. Its American remake switched the scene to Alaska.

figures of the period were directors Leif Sinding and Walter Furst. A veteran industry presence who, among other things, had edited the country's first film magazine and directed its first screen musical, Sinding accepted the post of directorate chairman with rationalizations about using it to "professionalize" Norwegian moviemaking. His denunciations of pre-occupation work zeroed in on the municipal council system for "promoting amateurism" and leaving Norway vulnerable to Hollywood monopolization. Furst, an ad man by trade, was so dedicated to organizing Norwegian youth groups to Nazi ends that he briefly changed his name to Walter Prince so he would be more trusted and not mistaken for part of the German invasion. He also directed the most aggressive propaganda efforts—*Vi er Vidkun Quislings hirdmenn* (*We Are the Soldiers of Vidkun Quisling*) and *Unge viljer* (*Young Wills*). Both Sinding and Furst were convicted of collaborationism after the war and sentenced to several years at hard labor.

The postwar years unleashed a flood of dramas set during the German occupation. With rare exceptions, the Norwegian characters were presented as heroic martyrs, mum being the word about figures like Sinding and Furst. One of the earliest examples was Toralf Sande's *Englandsfarere* (*We Leave for England*, 1946), which recounted the grim end of a group that seeks to escape the occupation. In 1948, 17 years before the Hollywood version with Douglas and Harris, there was also a first attempt to tell the Telemark story about

sabotaging Hitler's atomic bomb plans. *Kampen om tungtvannet* (*The Battle for Heavy Water*) was also noteworthy for being a joint production with France and was co-directed by Jean Dreville and Titus Vibe-Muller. The most accomplished of the occupation dramas, though, was Arne Skouen's 1957 production of *Ni liv* (*Nine Lives*), based on the authentic exploits of resistance fighter Jan Baalsrud. Narrowly escaping from a thwarted sabotage mission and staying only a few steps ahead of his German army pursuers, Baalsrud has to trek through the mountainous terrain of Norway to reach the safety of neutral Sweden. The various communities he comes into contact with along the way never hesitate to help him, while the protagonist himself (played by Jack Fjeldstad) is shown going snowblind and amputating his own frozen toes during the heroic journey. *Ni liv* was the first Norwegian picture nominated for a Best Foreign Film Oscar. It was also one of 17 collaborations between Skouen and composer Gunnar Sønstevoid, a Scandinavian version of the Sergio Leone-Ennio Morricone partnership.

The emphasis on occupation stories paid off in more than audiences trying to feel good about themselves again. Deciding that the films were valuable for restoring Norway's image, the government began pouring subsidies into the industry for even more of them. This gradually ripened into the attitude that the film industry itself deserved backing as a national resource, and government subsidies were soon covering a substantial portion of budgetary costs for

As in every other country, the home screen bludgeoned the movie-going habit.

all film genres. It was also in this period, in 1955, that the funds were found for establishing a national film institute for archiving motion picture materials and promoting the industry abroad.

Dominant though they might have been, the occupation tales weren't the only pictures produced in the late 1940s and 1950s. The most lauded work was unquestionably *Kon-Tiki* (1951), a documentary recording the 101-day voyage on a raft across the Pacific by anthropologist Thor Heyerdahl and five companions to demonstrate the possibility that pre-Colombian peoples from South America could have ventured as far as Polynesia. Assembled by Ollie Nordemar from footage shot during the often harrowing voyage, the picture won an Oscar in the documentary category, one of only two statuettes taken home by Norway (The other was for *The Danish Poet*, a 2007 animated short co-produced with Canada). The middle of the century also introduced the one-time furniture maker Ivo Caprino, whose puppets and animatronics would lead him to *Flaklypa Grand Prix* (*Pinchcliffe Grand Prix*) in 1975, a three-and-a-half-year labor of love about a car race that would prove to be the single biggest box office hit in Norwegian film history. The country's first woman director, Edith Calmar, made 10 domestic dramas and comedies between 1949 and 1959. Her final picture, *Ung flukt* (*The Wayward Girl*), gave Liv Ullmann her first starring role. When Calmar died in 2003 at the age of 91, she was saluted as the Grand Old Lady of Norwegian Cinema.

NOT EVEN GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES COULD HELP OUT THE industry with the advent of television in 1960. As in every other country, the home screen bludgeoned the movie-going habit. In 1956, for instance, 35 million tickets were sold for a population of slightly more than three million; in 1968, a population of 4.2 million bought merely 19 million tickets. One response was to keep churning out safe domestic rural comedies and importing foreign blockbusters for filling up orchestras. Another, reflecting the political turmoil throughout Europe in the late 1960s and early 1970s, was emulating the New Wave influences coming from France and the United States, such as in Pål Løkkeberg's 1967 *Liv* (*Life*). Then there was the socialist realism approach to national problems epitomized by Oddvar Bull Tøhus's *Streik* (*Strike*) in 1972. Documentarians such as Sølve Skagen and Malte Wadman also insisted on projecting their work in factories and other workplaces to instigate debates on the ills of Norwegian society. The political ferment helped bring more women to the fore, notably Anja Breien whose *Hustruer* (*Wives*, 1975) was a polemical reply to John Cassavetes's cultish *Husbands*.

Neither the New Wave nor socialist realism was much in evidence over

the closing years of the century. With an eye to more layered storytelling and greater action, the industry gave the impression of waking up from a long sleep and rediscovering the values of Hollywood, Paris and Rome. One high point was a Silver Lion award at the 1986 Venice Film Festival for Oddvar Emarson's *X*, about the relationship between a photographer and a 14-year-old homeless girl in Oslo. A more curious project was Nils Gaup's *Veiviseren* (*Pathfinder*) in 1987. Shot in the director's Sami language (and entitled *Ofelas*



Norway's submission for best foreign feature film of the year in 2009 was *Max Manus*, based on the real-life escapades of the underground hero during the Nazi occupation of Norway.

in that tongue), the film is set in the year 1000 and recounts the harrowing adventures of a Lapp warrior bent on redeeming himself and saving the Sami people from a fierce enemy tribe. *Veiviseren* was nominated for a Foreign Film Academy Award and also put Gaup on Hollywood's radar. But though he got as far as agreeing to direct the 1995 production of *Waterworld*, the exploding costs of what turned out to be a fiasco for star Kevin Costner sent him back home before filming began. As for Ullmann, the most famous traveler between Norway and the U.S., she went from marriage and leading actress with Ingmar Bergman to directing four projects, but only one of them, *Kristin Lavransdatter* in 1995, was a Norwegian production.

Aside from *Ni liv* and *Veiviseren*, the features nominated for Oscars have been *Søndagengler* (*The Other Side of Sunday*) in 1996 and *Elling* in 2001. Directed by Bent Neshem, *Søndagengler* narrates the struggles of a teenager

At one festival in Estonia, Norway swamped other nations by submitting 15 films.

in the 1950s to liberate herself from a claustrophobic religious community and especially from her pastor-father. For its part, Petter Naess's *Elling*, based on a popular novel by Ingvar Ambjørnsen, has been something of a franchise. Its protagonist of a middle-aged neurotic trying to readjust after a period of institutionalization spawned not only three earlier films, but a prequel and a sequel. The acclaim accorded Naess for *Elling* got him one step beyond Gaup with American backers. In 2004, he directed Josh Hartnett and Radha Mitchell in *Mozart and the Whale*, a story of two lovers with Asperger's syndrome. And he wasn't the only one to cross the Atlantic in the first years of the 21st century. Among the others have been Harald Zwart (*One Night at McCool's* in 2001 and *Agent Cody Banks* in 2003), Eric Skjoldbjaerg (*Prozac Nation* in 2001), Hans Petter Moland (*Beautiful Country* in 2004), and Bent Hamer (*Factotum* in 2005). Skjoldbjaerg's highly praised suspense thriller *Insomnia* in 1997 also prompted an English-language remake with Al Pacino and Hilary Swank five years later. *Agent Cody Banks* aside, just about all these films depended heavily on anxious, introspective characters for dramatic impact, with psychiatrists recurring characters.

Administratively, the industry underwent a major change in 2001 when Norsk Film was replaced by the Norwegian Film Fund. The change followed years of murmuring by filmmakers that Norsk Film had lost its way both creatively and managerially. The new Fund entity oversees television as well as motion pictures, and has been given credit in many quarters for establishing relations with producers and directors that have in turn made Norway more visible at foreign film festivals and other international marketplaces. He has prestigious awards at festivals from Chicago to Tokyo. At one festival in Estonia in November 2009, Norway swamped other nations by submitting 15 films.

In more ways than one, in other words, the Norway producing films at the start of the millennium is a century away from the Norway of Hugo Hermansen and Halfdan Nobel Roede. It is even further away from the Film Theater Act of 1913. The Norwegian Board of Film Classifications left little doubt of that by marking the 90th anniversary of the legislation by issuing a blanket okay-for-18-and-above certificate for previously banned films. As the panel's chairman put it, "traditionally there was an emphasis on moral criteria in censorship. Today, professional criteria have become more important."

Donald Dewey, a regular contributor to *Scandinavian Review*, has published 23 books of fiction and nonfiction as well as numerous plays. He has written definitive biographies of actors James Stewart and Marcello Mastroianni.