

# The concerns of the ordinary person -- filmmaker King Vidor's focus

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## RESUMEN

Sharply realistic, uncommonly subtle, and deeply poignant, it stands up today as one of the most insightful Hollywood productions of the silent-film period After the all-black "Hallelujah!" and the still-respected "Street Scene" and "The Champ," as well as several minor vehicles, Vidor again broke new ground in "Our Daily Bread," one of the few movies of the '30s to deal directly with the Great Depression.

## TEXTO COMPLETO

King Vidor, who passed on recently in California, was a favorite filmmaker with critics and audiences alike. Moviegoers relished his sense of drama, his sincerity, his concern for ordinary people in a complicated world. Reviewers praised his characterization, his visual structure, his humanistic outlook

His career began in 1913, when he broke into the infant movie industry with a series of short subjects. It continued until 1959, when he met the challenge of completing "Solomon and Sheba" after star Tyrone Power passed on in midproduction. Although his films contain some of the most lauded performances in Hollywood history - Barbara Stanwyck's in "Stella Dallas," for example, and Audrey Hepburn's in "War and Peace" - he often triumphed on purely cinematic terms, garnering applause for visual inventiveness and thematic integrity in movies without "name" performers and big-star glamour

After a number of early successes, Vidor's career took its first major turn in 1925, when he set out to make a war movie from the viewpoint of a common soldier rather than a leader or hero. "The Big Parade" broke the rules of its genre, but proved enormously popular with its powerful images and antiwar perspective. It also marked Vidor as a director with a keen sense of individuality to match his technical and dramatic skills

The film that may be his greatest masterpiece also came before the advent of talkies: "The Crowd," released in 1928. Again, it flouted convention by dealing with commonplace subject matter from an ordinary citizen's point of view, chronicling the vain struggle of a young man to carve out his own niche in a teeming city. Sharply realistic, uncommonly subtle, and deeply poignant, it stands up today as one of the most insightful Hollywood productions of the silent-film period

After the all-black "Hallelujah!" and the still-respected "Street Scene" and "The Champ," as well as several minor vehicles, Vidor again broke new ground in "Our Daily Bread," one of the few movies of the '30s to deal directly with the Great Depression. Though damaged by a poor performance from its leading man, this rousingly optimistic drama still stirs viewers with its tale of a young couple who organize an army of unemployed workers into a cooperative farm community based on sharing and trust. It also makes a fine example of Vidor's most innovative

filmmaking technique - using a rhythmic beat to coordinate performers into a steadily building crescendo of action. Shot with this device, the climax of "Our Daily Bread" turns the digging of an irrigation ditch into one of the most invigorating scenes ever turned out by Hollywood

Credit: By David Sterritt

## DETALLES

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