

## Henrik Norman - Actor

Taken from: <http://viewreels.com/forum/topics/henrik-norman-actor>

### Give us a brief bio of yourself:

You could say that I'm the drop-out diplomat who sought asylum at the theatre... That is: after having tried acting as a child and to a greater extent during the years I studied at the university, but not realizing that it actually could be a serious professional alternative, I became a journalist and then an officer in the Swedish Foreign Ministry. Then, at the age of 32, it all came back to me: I took up acting again, to begin with a few hours once a week at an evening school – the only hours of the week I was really happy – and then gradually slipped out of the ministry to become a freelance actor in the autumn of 1997.

### How did you originally become interested in acting and what age were you?

As a child I had a vivid imagination and played all sorts of dramatized games, alone or with other kids. This led my parents to suggest I should join a drama group for children, so at the age of ten or eleven I did. But to my great disappointment they had me playing a meatball there, rather than a knight or a cowboy (this was during the swinging seventies), so I quit. Obviously, I wasn't too discouraged, because when asked to join the University Theatre a little later on in life, I gladly accepted. But, as I already have indicated, rather with the understanding that you can play theatre and have fun for a while but then you become something serious. In my case, that seriousness turned out to be a grand theatrical gesture, if you will, while as an actor I feel true to myself.

### What would you regard as your biggest achievement to date?

In life, probably the leap from a highly prestigious and secure job to the great uncertainty it means being an actor. As a (Swedish) actor, probably my role as a roman general in an international film production a couple of years ago called Battle of Empires.

### What do you do for inspiration?

Life itself, isn't that just a most inspiring thing? Then I read a lot, listen to music and write a few songs of my own. I'm also very interested in art, various historical epochs and foreign cultures. Of course, I go to the theatre and watch acting on film and TV, but less so if I'm really preparing for a role.

### Do you have any projects currently in the pipeline?

This spring I will work in a work-shop setting with the British performance artist and filmmaker Emily Wardill, hopefully leading up to her next project and I also will take part in the production of and act in a feature film being shot this summer. Then I record an audio book at the moment and some of my own music.

### What has been your toughest challenge in your line of work?

I've done a couple of musicals and the singing and dancing required was a bit of a challenge, particularly memorizing all the steps. I move pretty ok but is rather slow when it comes to learning a fixed choreography.

### Do you have any tips for those who are looking to kick start a career in your fields?

I wish I had known anything about kick-starting when I began, particularly since I was the age when many actors are already well established. On the other hand, it takes time to develop and often things seem to happen only when you're ready for them. As for myself, I tend to think that if I immediately would have gotten a big part in some important production, I most probably wouldn't have been really ready for it. Today, I feel much more secure about my abilities.

### If you had the chance to work with anyone in the industry, who would it be and why?

I come from Bergman-country, you know, but the master passed away a few years ago, so instead I will mention a great fan of his: Woody Allen. He has a combination of psychological insight and sense of comedy that I find very appealing. (And hopefully he will read this and call me.) Can I also pick an actor? Kevin Kline, since I admire his broad range from pure slap-stick to high drama, in fact I think he incarnates what I believe to be the very definition of being an actor. (So I hope he will call me too.) Then I have this dream to play Shakespeare in the original language, so any theatre company in the UK needing a Swede with a pretty good British accent: Call me!