MOTIVE

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cinema

motive

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contents

EL DORADO

(On Seeing A Picture of Jonas Mekas in the village voice)

Sure he's crazy just like me, & fill the jails with unjust laws
The dirty movie we saw in high school stayed in our repertoire
Predicted to go far, we went nowhere
eating candy & film clips
Made a movie or two on a shoestring, thinking of vaudeville
& every possible pratfall legislated underground, like clowns
& mushrooms, & the bazooms of movie stars, every machine

But the money kept coming in from Moscow, never stopped
Like perverse children we determined to turn back the clock
before it annihilated Jack Smith & others
& the presses were kept warm should it be necessary to print cash
or a book of drawings of butterflies & flowers, & beagles, harmless creatures
St. Francis tripped upon on his first zoological expedition, travelling
post-war, like a mendicant Italian movie company looking for an American market

We didn't elect a president, but named him Orpheus. He might have been named Auden
Any appeal to conscience might mean a bullet-ridden sarcophagus
today, now, in this city & state, NY, brother
Naturally, the Mafia can be counted upon & will do its part
A new line of jokes will issue from the jailhouse, imbedded with blues & laws
&, Easter winging in, at least one masterpiece entitled "Resurrection Symphony"
Bureaucracy is Nature, our lives the landlords' flock of rats & dogs

Only Niggers are free to murder their ghosts, & marry Hamlet's father
Who had our mouths washed out with television toothpaste & saved our eyes
We'll flock like a chorus, like birds, & name all the children we love

—FRANK KUENSTLER

R. O. HODGELL

At a time when in each issue "the picket line" seems to always have a letter or two criticizing your publication, I would like to share with you the effect that *motive* had on my life.

I started reading *motive* in 1957 as a college freshman and as I went through various periods of being an Episcopalian to a dogmatic atheist to a mild Methodist to a committed Christian value educator, *motive* has followed with me. At first I was too poor to even have my own subscription and finally for the past four years since being out of school, I have been a full subscriber.

I don't always agree with the articles. I don't always understand the point that some of your writers are trying to make, and my knowledge of art is so limited that there have been issues that have presented work that I thought should have been deleted.

However, over the years your magazine has challenged me, helped me to make decisions effecting involvement in Christian work and the social gospel, and at times comforted me.

In these crucial times in the history of the organized church when many ministers are "hard put" to answer the question, "what is the purpose of our existence?" *motive* is taking a major role in the formation of the type leadership necessary for the church to be a vital functioning organism and for it to witness the words and deeds of Christ.

RICHARD L. BOWERS
youth director, ymca
louisville, kentucky

It would be churlish indeed of me if I did not tell you, not this once but many times, how proud I, a Methodist layman, was of you when I read the story in *The Wall Street Journal* (Sept. 14, 1966). Your achievement is truly impressive.

MURRAH GATTIS
pico rivera, california

A new subscriber, I first became acquainted with *motive* several months ago when a friend passed along an article by Samuel H. Miller, "The Nurture of Faith by the Use of Books." I was so very impressed with that article that I read it the same day to one of my literature classes. It received a highly enthusiastic response. Since then, I have nearly worn out my copy reading it to individuals and classes and lending it.

I really cannot be generous enough in my praise for the ministry in which you are engaged and the high quality of the success you are having. Characteristically I "can't find time" to read even hurriedly many of the other magazines I subscribe to, but I find myself reading the articles in *motive* again and again.

CHARLES RALPH STEPHENS
department of english
harding college
searcy, arkansas

Since your October issue contains two uncomplimentary letters from Michigan, I must write this one. I consider *motive* and *Saturday Review* the two most perceptive magazines in the nation today. I teach a creative writing course and use examples from *motive* frequently.

FRANK J. LEAHEY
lansing, michigan

The Woman's Society of Christian Service of Metropolitan Methodist Church here in Detroit has been sending *motive* to the college young people in our church. A few months ago we decided to investigate some rumors about the magazine and I was named chairman of a committee for this purpose.

We collected about fifteen copies of the magazine, which were read by each member of the committee over a period of several weeks, and we have spent a great deal of time and thought about our evaluation of *motive*.

The final decision was to cancel our subscription, as we feel that while there is much that is good about the material, there is also much that instead of strengthening the faith of our young people is a very definite bad influence. Why, with all the wealth of good material there is, our church should stoop to the level of the morbid, "trashy," anti-Christian things we find elsewhere, is more than we can understand. As bad as it is to find this sort of writing anywhere else, it is *doubly* bad coming from the church.

I'm sure you have had sufficient criticism so that you are aware of the problem, but if you want specifics I'd be happy to go into the subject with detail.

In the meantime, I am subscribing to *motive* so we can keep in touch with what is being published.

I am reminded of a cartoon I saw of two people viewing a completely unintelligible modernistic painting. One of them said, "Somewhere, in some attic, *somebody* is awfully *sick*." My feeling is that someone is *spiritually* ill who is turning out this objectionable material.

I'm sure you have a tremendous job with endless work, but you have the responsibility and God will surely richly bless you if you are toiling for Him, as He wills.

MRS. STANLEY S. KRESGE
detroit, michigan

While at annual conference this summer, I talked with one of our campus ministers who directs a near-by Wesley Foundation. He reported to me that they (Wesley Foundation) have not been able to use *motive* for the last three years and have not even subscribed to a single copy for their library. They felt compelled to go to Association Press even for orientation materials. This in itself is an indictment which should not be ignored.

The reaction of these parents who are protesting is bringing serious repercussions upon the whole church. Four local churches in this community are at present directly affected and you may be sure more will be if plans materialize. Several families in three churches here say they are withdrawing their membership from The Methodist Church, and many more have withdrawn all or most of their financial support for fear that some of their money might make publication of *motive* possible. As illogical as this may be, they are not easily dissuaded.

I beg you to seriously evaluate what the church is, or should be saying to its young people in these confusing times. Have we nothing to offer them while they flounder in the seas of moral laxity and social upheaval? Can we not offer them something which is basic and at least would contrast that which they are able to get from most other sources? If it is true that every issue has two sides, it would then seem that we are responsible for presenting the side of moral responsibility and Christian integrity rather than re-echoing the side of worldly conformity.

G. KENNETH BRUN
st. paul methodist church
independence, missouri

The recent use of the word "defector" in reference to Father Koch by the national news media reflects and lays bare the not only startling reality of increased closedmindedness of current U.S. policy in Viet Nam but also the ever more acute tendency in recent years toward a narrowing unidirectional attempt to come to terms of peace and understanding with political systems different from our own.

The phrase "defector to" spells out the neurotically defensive myth that we are actually at war with Soviet Russia. "Defector from," in reference to Koch for his statement of reasons for *leaving* the U.S. because of difference with particular policies involving Viet Nam and domestic issues, bears witness to the fact that we refuse to recognize his and others criticisms of aspects of U.S. policy, and gives weight to the charge that Koch and other dissenters are being viewed by "good Americans" as something less than good—indeed as true enemies as implied in the word "defector."

Such an attitude has caused increased alienation, not only of domestic critics such as Koch and many honest C.O.'s now defensively labeled "cowards" or "draft dodgers," the more polite word used by the press, but of foreign critics as well, including one-time ally, France. Now again it is proposed that the U.S. refuse to recognize openly by admission to the U.N. the obvious existence of Red China because of her ideological and practical political differences with the U.S. This occurs to the end that Secretary General U Thant finds it necessary in part on that account and in part to U.S. (as well as Viet Cong) neglect to listen to his proposals for peace to leave our presence in the U.N., as do others here and abroad who have pleaded in vain to be heard in an atmosphere with any evidence of open honesty.

The number of friends the U.S. may lose on account of her policies is not here the issue as much as is the evidence of an increasing accumulation of wax in the ears of an ever poorer listener. In blatant rebuttal of present trends, our forefathers, in choosing democracy, witnessed to a faith for the stability of a nation that lay not in the strength of itself nor in its leaders' ability for unerring decision; rather the trust of democracy lay more deeply in the creative processes of a diversified and dissentious populace. Democracy is more union of spirit than unity of thought, and democracy lives in a nation whose actions are decided by leaders whose ears are intently open to opinions of their electorate.

Four score and seven years after the founding fathers had struggled to set forth such a dedicated democracy that faith was echoed by the great Lincoln insisting that the cause of humanity be greater than economic, social, or ideological difference, and that the Union should not be dissolved. But yet today a dissolution, more subtle but as very sure, is occurring because of blind intolerance of creatively different persons in the U.S. In our own century Wilson could have become a Lincoln for a warring world in seeking a community of all nations founded not ultimately in the strength of the allies but in the peace-giving participation of every nation in an ever smaller planet. Many of us are ashamed to admit the degree to which the nation which once fostered a Lincoln and a Wilson is now denying their spirit to the United Nations.

One indeed comes to question whether or not in these past few years that true democratic spirit can still find her champion in this nation. Often in the fervor of the race the goal is lost sight of and the heralded champion runner of the race sees not when she stumbles nor cares if she elbows. But her one sure sign is that the disheartened crowds who bear the spirit once living in the runner are beginning to leave the grand stands. And so it may be with our once great nation as it is with that runner; with the cheering and the booing of the crowd (that is her soul) growing fainter in deafening ears, so does the soul of a nation flee her. . . .

DAVID W. SWAN
drew university
madison, n.j.

THE IMAGE-MAKER

Walter Rogalski

In the Brooklyn Museum Collection

THE IMAGE-MAKER

Avid film-goers, unlike voracious students of literature, are highly suspect. Bookworms are well on their way to becoming scholars. The loyal moviegoer, on the other hand, often is portrayed, at best, as a time-killing escapist or, at worst, as some kind of kook. A similar sharp distinction frequently is made with the art forms. Literature, music, drama, and painting usually are identified with the arts. Movies are for enjoyment and relaxation and for the most part remain just movies.

The world of cinema is a child of this century. Its brief history is uneven, chaotic and in most instances unimpressive. As a commercial enterprise, film has failed miserably artistically. And yet, the point must be made: in spite of Hollywood, film *is* an art form. Capturing as it does the spirit and tempo of our age, film has been characterized as *the* distinctive art idiom of the 20th century.

Marshall McLuhan's axiomatic "the medium is the message" has forced us to consider and respect the importance of film as a different medium of expression. No longer is film to be ignored or feared; rather, it is to be respected and taken seriously as a crucial part of the "graphic revolution" of our time.

McLuhan's "medium-message" means, in the electronic age, that a totally new environment has been created. The electronic age jars us from a print-bound mentality into a mode of thought in which we experience life with the kind of totality which is both exhilarating and threatening, provocative and disturbing. We now perceive and organize reality around mosaics of experience (happenings) rather than along continuous linear patterns. Our age is as much the age of the vacuum tube as of the printing press. The result is pivotal: the image has come to supplant in large part the primacy of the written word. The free-wheeling world of film now plays the role of *image-maker.*

If we are to understand adequately the world and ourselves, it follows that we should use a language whose contours correspond to our physical structure. This radical reorientation means that in our thinking about film we have to alter (as we do with literary forms) our inclination for analyzing content as such and concentrate on the characteristic techniques of film itself. Technique is that distinctive aspect of film which sets it apart from other art forms. In practice, technique has to do with motion and images, cameras and cameramen, acting and actors, production and production managers, set designers and script writers, film-making and film-editing, and a horde of other mechanical and economic apparatus. Film has eyes, ears, fingers, and a mind. In the final analysis, technique becomes an open-ended frontier which is limited only by one's competence, creativity and imagination.

Yet there is a built-in danger here which should be noted. What McLuhan says is true: the medium is the message. The way film works does have effects apart from particular themes. But if we insist on separating technique from content we open ourselves to a form of idolatry which, in the end, prevents film from fulfilling its role as image-maker. When film merely pursues its own uniqueness, it ultimately runs the risk of becoming a captive of its medium. Authentic art transcends its medium, makes contact with life, and illuminates the human condition. Works of such men as Eisenstein, Pudovkin, Dreyer, Chaplin, Godard, Kurosawa, Fellini, and Antonioni can never be confined to a single medium or special technique. To be sure, these artists are film poets of the first rank, but their message is a universal one which rises above its medium to interpret and shape the world in which we live.

A final word: This issue, by necessity, will be limited in its impact. It is an attempt to acknowledge the emergence of a new, important and unique art form. It is not, however, a conclusive, systematic, all-encompassing summary of the pulsating world of cinema. A "special issue" on film, by its very nature, can never achieve such a desirable goal. Consequently, for the reader, a special issue can be misleading, even disappointing; and for the editor, it can be frustrating (it usually is!), even disastrous.

The contributors are artists in their own rights: film-makers, film critics, film teachers, film editors, film enthusiastists, and poets. The issues they deal with are as varying and as unique as the diversified and original viewpoints of the respective authors. The themes range from an appraisal of the aesthetics of film to the practical question of how to use film. There is no consensus on what makes film art—only that film is an art form which, by its very nature, can become a work of art revealing in the process the basic themes of human existence, and ultimately showing us the true transparency of film.

This issue then, with all its limitations, is for serious students of cinema, for film-makers, for critics, and for teachers of film. It is also for the casual moviegoer whose infatuation with Hollywoodian special effects and gimmicks may actually be related to a quest for deeper sources of satisfaction found in the art of film.

To cope with this issue is to receive seriously and joyously an important new development in contemporary civilization.

—RON HENDERSON

LOOKING AT FILM

DRAWING: H. J. BURGERT

AND ITS AESTHETICS

By ROBERT STEELE

Generalizations and platitudes characterize much talk and writing about art, and an analysis of what makes film art cannot escape some of them. When we probe deeply enough, we discover that standards which we hold are vulnerable, and there is an invisible and inexplicable something in art which is a mystery. Analysis sharpens and uncovers, but its limitation is built in. Our tastes and judgments become more sophisticated by its pursuit, but it never leads us to an absolute finding.

The nature of art and film are such that we should be wary of critics and aestheticians who are overcertain of their analysis and judgment. Beating a drum for a favorite director or film is suspect. To the extent that a film professional loses his detachment to his own work as well as that of others, he has lost dependability. We need to use more care in describing writers as reviewers or critics. The distance between them is great, and their responsibility to themselves and the objects they evaluate differ. Readers need to be able to discriminate between film reviews and critics. Until they become attuned to their different natures, they will be baffled or incensed by the critic whom they think of as a reviewer.

Critics are rare compared to reviewers. Their evaluation of film art is not put before the public on newsstands. Writers for dailies and weeklies are reviewers. They say with one voice *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* is a terrific film and its performances are smashing. The voice in the wilderness, on the other hand, that says the film is a fraud, and supports this conclusion with sound argument, may be the critic from whom one can learn. The film critic knows art *and* film. He is an aesthetician and has a scholarly stance. His subject matter—film—is so remote from science that it is difficult to think of him as a scientist; yet he is as responsible and conscientious as the scientist in using as much scientific method as he can muster for his investigation and analysis.

Popular writers about film usually have seen many films, identify with the form, and are thought to be critics. Frequently, less popular writers know less about film; i.e., they have not seen every film that was ever made or all the new films, but they know more about other things. Particularly, they know a great deal about the arts. Given their breadth of knowledge and interests, they may choose not to see a film that everyone is talking about, because they believe those critics who say it gushes with sentimentality and box-office formulae or because they prefer to attend a play, concert, or lecture.

We can never know what film art is or is not if we know film in a vacuum. The talented actor, writer, or director is a talented artist. Having become a human being whose mind and feelings respond and create as an artist makes him a special kind of person. He *is* a special kind of person and that is why his films are art objects. It is as difficult to say what a person or artist is as it is to say what film art is. All are recognizable; none are completely knowable.

An artist is the person who makes the film that is a work of art. Or, to put it another way, film art emerges from artists. Hordes of persons are active in film but the artist is rare. This makes film different from other arts and helps explain why film often bamboozles us. Artists among musicians, painters, and dancers are not as rare as they are among film-makers. There are scads of ways to work in film and make a living without having to be an artist or even a would-be artist. Many of our most successful film directors have learned a trade and have evolved some technique; but there is nothing in their make-up that would militate against their becoming successful executives in automobile or telephone industries. The same cannot be said about the present or past generations which have been devoted to other arts.

Most of our films are not made by artists, and, consequently, they are commodities which are as disposable as used paper cups. Because of their ignorance of art, their makers, in most instances, couldn't care less; usually, they are unaware of the triviality of their films. They are in a business and that business is not making art; however, the word "art" *is* tossed around, and professionals give each other awards which snow bumpkins who also know nothing of art. There is more in life than art, however, and art is not the most important ingredient in life. Therefore, all who go to movies need not demand that all films be art. It is the confusion willfully perpetrated by nonartists which strives to woo persons into thinking they are being given an experience of film art which is the occasion for castigation.

The nature of film-making itself has complicated the survival of artists who might choose to work with this form of expression. Had we never had an Industrial Revolution we wouldn't have to fret about film. Film is the only art form to be born since the prehistoric dawn of all arts. It is the art of the machine age, and its practice is dependent upon the mastery of machines made in factories by inventors, engineers, and technicians. Artists frequently are deficient in mechanical aptitudes. An achievement and a source of pride for the artist is his ability to change a tire on a car. A motor is more of a mystery than a wife to him. Some sculptors seem to be an exception to this plight of the artist, and sometimes their work shows it. Frequently, the sculptor, who is also a mechanic, produces work that looks like architecture—or as if it should be decor to be incorporated into a building.

Fellini, who I believe is a film artist, was so put off by the machinery that came between himself as a writer and the completed film, that he says for many years he never thought of becoming a director. He was pushed by Lattuada and Rossellini to change from being a writer to being a writer-director. He described the camera as a monster and admits he was intimidated by it. Like other film artists, he has made his way in film by getting a likeminded and formidable crew of technicians to pave the way for getting his thoughts and feelings on film. Many of the greats—Griffith, Eisenstein, Dreyer, Vigo, Murnau, Clair, Renoir, Cocteau, Bresson, and Bergman—might never have been heard of as great directors had they not had the boon of talented cameramen and loyal technicians.

Because it takes so much more than a man with a typewriter or a camera to make a good film, and because of the clash between artists and technicians, film history is littered with uncompleted films—films that have been disowned by their "creators," because of broken contracts, lawsuits, and failures. Many who have had the intention, dedication, and personna of the artist, have been defeated because they could not make their film alone, and they could not woo technicians to make their film the way they wanted it made. Thus, they fail. And justly they may blame the failure on technicians, the producer, the front office, the star, or the industry. Only recently in the United States have a few directors been given the authority and freedom, essential for the artist, to express themselves as artists by way of film.

The film artist selects raw material that is sensuous from which he creates his film. The raw material must be his material rather than someone else's. He may begin his work from someone else's novel or play, but he must have the freedom to handle it as his raw material. Either it emerges from his life or it is so deeply perceived by him that he can handle it with individuality and imagination. He can make a film only about what he knows and cares about. Best-sellers in fiction, award-winning plays, vehicles for stars, and fashionable modes (such as cinéma vérité) leave him cold. His raw material is similar to the raw material of all artists. This is not to imply that a film-maker does not get ideas from conversations with friends, newspapers, literature, or his dreams, so that his work will have a contemporary surface. But beneath the surface, there are strata that all artists everywhere may have used as points of departure for their creations.

Despite the film artist's inability to remember how to set and read an exposure meter, he must learn, if his films are to have sustained artistic merit, the mechanical and medial conventions of film. Always he wants to learn more, and takes great satisfaction in, whatever technical competence he has mastered; he knows enough of his medial conventions to direct, rather than be directed by, technicians. Film art has the chance of emerging when an artist conceives his raw material by way of the medial conventions of film. His knowledge of the medial conventions has rubbed off on his selection of raw material. He knows enough about film and other arts so that he does not select raw material that would work better on a stage or in a still-photography exhibition. He knows that cinema means *moving image*, and that moving images which tell a story, unfold a character, expose a problem, have the best chance of giving a viewer an aesthetic experience. He knows his medium sufficiently well to decide how he is to achieve image movement

by way of moving objects in front of the camera, maneuvering the camera, and by editing. He has a sense of playing close-ups against medium shots, panning and tracking against staticism, black or white against color, music and speech against silence. He knows all of our greatest films and has done his best to discover what made them great. After he has mastered, as best he can, the medial conventions of film, then he is ready to break conventions by supplanting them with his own experiments. If they succeed they will become his and others' conventions.

The artist who knows his raw material, physical properties of picture and sound, his subject matter, and who is adept at handling and making filmic conventions, is ready to create. A film that is an art object has a chance of emerging into being. What the film-maker does creatively determines whether a so-called documentary film, a stock genre of thriller, western, or horror fantasy, an arty addition to the short-lived cinéma vérité vogue, or a work of art is made. (The film-maker is not consciously determined to produce a work of art. That judgment will be made later by others. Rather, he is determined to do the best job he can by going as far and as deep as possible with his subject matter.) In the process of creating the film, the intuition, imagination, originality, empathy, and vision, of the film-maker will culminate into his artistic expression. Pictures hastily and expediently strung together—which for the majority would get by as a film—will not be acceptable to the film artist. He is in touch with a creative process telling him how his images should be linked together, so that they have movement and light rhythm which best reveal the dramatic substance of his subject matter.

It should be remembered that those American film-makers known as the underground or anarchist film movement are not motivated to give aesthetic experience to viewers by creating art objects. Either they don't know media conventions, or they flout them. Their following is not looking for or wanting art; rather they seem drawn to non-art or anti-art. Or they may prefer the new and shocking. These film-makers have dedication and sincerity in their commitment to express themselves, and because this is a film age, they have landed on film rather than on older art forms. They use film for their ego fulfillment. Despite their mutual adoration and *avant-garde* posings, they have not made a contribution to film art. Their works are unimpressive as artistic expressions. They lack the intention, discipline, and maturity to create art. They have little or no money, and to make a good film, one has to have some money. Escaping from the commercial and industrial systems of film-making is laudatory and necessary, but the failure of many of our short films that are at war with Hollywood is that they are fighting our film past with crooked pins rather than paving roadways for future films. Obsessive repetition of devices such as a handheld, gyrating camera, flash frames, and tasteless nudity make their films self-indulgent and boring.

The film that is worthy of being called an art object has *content*. This is what the artist, by way of the formation of his subject matter, requires of himself in his film. Films, plays, paintings—all art forms—over and over, use the same subject matter. It may have to do with love, war, murder, self-sacrifice, nonbelonging, etc.; but because the artist is an individual with unique past experience and artistic intentions, his content is also unique. What he gives to the work of his personal taste, values, and modes of expression results in a residue of content. It is content that makes the difference between Dreyer's, Bresson's, and Preminger's films about Joan of Arc. It is the presence of content in a Bergman film, and its absence in the films of most American directors, that makes the former art and the latter commodities.

Content embodies the style of a director. Content is the reason Japanese films have a sameness that distinguishes them from those of other nations; and it marks the difference between Japanese films (cf. those of Kurosawa, Ozu, Ichikawa, Gosho, Shindo, Teshigahara, and Mizoguchi.) When a number of films from the same director appears to give a full expression of his personality, when they are so stamped by him that they tell us how he feels, what he thinks, and who he is, then we say he is an author of his films. While his film may be drawn from a novel or a play, it has ceased to be that novel or play and becomes the work of a Buñuel, Welles or Bresson.

If a film is to have content, the director must have freedom to select and handle his material in the way he wishes; he must have the cast and collaborators of his choice. Because this is a privilege attained by only a few directors, we have only a few films, as contrasted to the thousands that have been made, which have the stature to enable them to endure as art objects. The content of a film takes the measure of a director, and by way of it he stands revealed nakedly as a shallow or serious artisan, a manipulator of tricks and gags or a creator of visions which have universal meanings.

The most destructive enemy of film art is imitation. An artist makes a film that is acclaimed as being original. Then he and others are prone to imitate it. Imitation suffocates originality. If a director succumbs to the pressure of a star, producer, or studio to "do it again," he exchanges hats with the hack. And when millions of dollars are at stake, we can't be too high and mighty by condemning the writers and directors who become victims of successful formulae. What began as their unique film content becomes sequels. Movement and change, along with the movement and change in life, gets frozen. The word for "old woman" among the Eskimos means "frozen meat." She is a drag on those who survive because her ability to produce has gone. Her parasitic presence makes her death become desirable; in the past, she would be eliminated violently. Think of how many of our "successful" directors are "frozen meat": David Lean, Carol Reed, Fred Zinneman, Vittorio De Sica, René Clement, Jules Dassin, Alfred Hitchcock, Vincente Minnelli, Elia Kazan, John Huston, Otto Preminger, William Wyler, George Stevens. Despite success or acclaim some have remained unfrozen: Chaplin, Dreyer, Cocayannis, Renoir, Welles, Ray, Olmi, Reisz, Truffaut.

An artist, by his nature, cannot mark time. He is alive because he is on the move, and the movement churning in him, which is the core of his creative process, prevents him from repeating himself. Jesse Lasky didn't know whom he was talking to when he asked Flaherty to bring back from Samoa another *Nanook*. Goebbels knew little of art and how artists work when he told assembled film-makers in Berlin that the Nazi "revolution" should be glorified by films like *Battleship Potemkin*. One would feel worse about the demise of Garbo's career had she proved herself to possess the stubbornness and passion of an artist rather than to let herself be used like a punching bag by a studio which sought vehicles for her. She is remembered for the artistry of her acting, her beauty,

and her personality, but not as a great artist. She had the opportunity to prove she had the guts of an artist when *Queen Christina* was slated to be her next film. She had frozen meat for a director (Rouben Mamoulian), so when she said she was going to make herself up to look like Christina, her director fought her. Garbo wished to appear with a large nose and massive, masculine eyebrows. She said that Swedes would expect a real portrayal of Christina. She was informed that the studio was not making a film for history professors of a country with six million inhabitants, but that Metro wanted a movie that would command a world audience. Garbo capsized and repeated herself, but until her last film, because she was Garbo, she succeeded in repeating herself to an advantage.

In his postscript to *Lolita,* Vladimir Nabokov described how we should feel after we have had an encounter with art: "For me a work of fiction exists"—had he not been thinking of the novel, he could have said a work of art—"only in so far as it affords me what I shall bluntly call aesthetic bliss, that is, a sense of being somehow, somewhere, connected with other states of being where art (curiosity, tenderness, kindness, ecstacy) is the norm." Emily Dickinson could have been speaking about film art when she attempted to define poetry: "If I read a book and it makes my whole body so cold no fire can ever warm me, I know it's poetry. If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know it is poetry. These are the only ways I know it."

When a viewer meets a film worthy of being called art, he participates in the creative experience of the artist who made the film. He is not a spectator observing from a balcony, but he is catapulted into the skin of the film-maker. He is in the film to such an extent that he is part of the film. The creative process at work in the film forces him into having a re-creative experience, so that *he lives the film.* When this happens, E. M. Forster says, ". . . a man is taken out of himself. He lets down as it were a bucket into his subconscious and draws up something which normally is beyond his reach. He mixes this thing with his normal experience, and out of the mixture comes the experience of a work of art."

A work of art that mixes with our normal experience changes our normal experience so that we walk out of the cinema as different persons. Every time we are nudged by a great film, our normal experience, at least a bit of it, is transformed. We get something that sends us, in Forster's words, "beyond our reach." Rudolf Arnheim observed that, "we find ourselves in the presence of a work of art when the actors, actions, and objects of the foreground appear transparent and lead our glance to the basic themes of human existence."

Film art begins with an artist who, by way of his raw material and knowledge of and skill in using and making medial conventions, who, by way of his creative process (which involves his vision, intuition, artistic expression, and empathic grasp), forms and shapes raw material into subject matter that becomes a physically real object which contains content. But that is not all. The creative process and the work of the artist miss completion until they involve somebody. Films in particular are not made to be kept in a can, just as poetry is not written to be stored in a trunk (Emily Dickinson wanted to publish her poetry but was intimidated by those who thought it was not poetry). An exponent of the so-called Japanese underground film, who wrote the following in a promotional announcement of the film, is spouting nonsense: "Japan is the country of the *haiku,* that terse and inner statement, the meaning of which must be inferred. Communication is less important than consideration. The Japanese experimental film is traditionally intended for no audience at all."

The dichotomy made between communication and consideration in this statement is false. If the films are not intended for any audience at all, why do their makers wish to distribute them and hunger for income from them? Similar statements by other film-makers (Robert Breer is one) reveal this half-true way of defending films. Film-makers are inclined to say they made their films for themselves when their films are being attacked. The implication of their statement is: I made it for myself; who is to say I shouldn't; if I like it that is all that matters; you are not ready for it; who are you? This rationale sometimes is pulled out when an experiment has been tried that failed and should not have been shown to an audience—at least a paying audience of nonprofessionals. The truth in the statement is obvious. We do things for ourselves. We had better try to please ourselves and like what we do and get satisfaction from it. This is paramount. But films, by their physical, artistic, and economic nature (even more than music, painting, and poetry), are an art form that subsumes an audience—preferably a contemporary audience. This defensive film-maker is saying that mass audiences and commercial exhibitions of his work do not interest him. Good. He is to be admired. He is engaging in art for the sake of art and is willing to sacrifice its tangible fruits. But his vocation will be fulfilled, and his artistic expression realized, only as he displays his work before, at least, some friends or an elite audience. The communication-noncommunication battle now being waged among some artists results from an excess of talk and a paucity of thinking. Does anyone know of a film-maker who has made a film of which he is unashamed and refuses to show it; and doesn't he want and need at least a modicum acceptance and appreciation for his work if he is to continue working?

A great film, one that is an art object, has significance that shakes us, at least a little, out of our normal experience and gives us a supra-experience. Because the artist has penetrated our beings with his being, it moves us beyond our past selves and opens us to new and changing selves. By way of a film, a film-maker communicates with himself, and if his self-communication does not become arrested, it emerges clearer, more direct, simpler, and certainly, more honest. To the extent he succeeds, he is on the move to greater achievements.

An artist cannot hate people and succeed as an artist. He has to harbor some hope that what he has to express may be communicated, at least partially, to someone else. Leonard Bernstein rightly observes: "Communication is a way of making love to people, or reaching them." He could substitute "conducting music" or "making a film" for the word "communication." He continues: "It's a most mysterious and deeply moving experience. Love and art are two ways of communicating. That's why art is so close to love." The great film artist is a great lover of himself and of other persons. The film that is an art object makes love to an audience by sharing aesthetic bliss with them. To be sure, this is a high ideal. But art is the metier of ideals. The high ideal, rather than being even somewhat irrelevant, is the alpha and omega of film art, because it shows us the way we wish to go.

PHOTOGRAPH: NELL COX

Some Observations on Cinéma Vérité

By WILLIAM JERSEY

A new school of film-making—variously called Realist Cinema, Direct Cinema or Cinéma Vérité—has emerged during the past years. This new method was made possible with the development of lightweight portable sound and camera equipment, and by film which required very little light. Film-makers now were free to capture events as they developed. Old techniques and equipment had made demands which inhibited people and almost eliminated the possibility of catching the spontaneous, unplanned action. Now without a massive array of lights, without bulky tripods or a tangle of wires, sound and picture can be recorded at any moment—as it happens. The cinema of the past which depended almost solely on controlling *all* aspects of image and sound now could be replaced by a cinema form which relied on skilled observation.

Some advantages were obvious. If one could film real people in real events, as they happened, the question of "could this have really happened?", which frequently arises in a fictionalized statement, would no longer be asked. The event, the reaction, *did* happen. We saw it.

The first American films (the French and the Canadians had used the technique in some form earlier) using the technique demonstrated the promise could be realized. We saw and heard, for instance, the candidates Humphrey and Kennedy campaigning in the Minnesota Primary as they rode in cars or spoke privately to individual voters. We heard their candid remarks and the voters' spontaneous reactions; we heard and saw the whole event *as it happened* (not just the newsreel's superficial look or the newsman's carefully organized lecture about it). We saw history in the making. The film *Primary* was revealing. And at least part of the reason was technique: new equipment and a new approach. The events and the people directed the action the film-maker selected but did not influence or coerce. That was 1960. Since then every television network has used the approach, or more accurately, their version of it. And programs which were good or bad—but mostly indifferent—emerged. In my early experience at NBC I discovered several reasons for the failure of the technique.

My job was to produce and direct a Dupont Show of the Week. I saw in the technique a potential for dealing with the real world and real people in a way that was more honest, more engaging, and more exciting. But many of the cameramen available at NBC, in spite of their newsreel experience, did not understand the demands of the technique. After weeks of filming one show a cameraman remarked, after he had missed getting a shot: "I don't see why we don't just set things up." The cameraman too often seemed concerned only with covering action; and after all why can't a young Puerto Rican repeat five times his walk into that big

sterile office looking for a job? The action he could repeat, but the first reaction would be caught or lost forever. And this is the substance for me of film truth—the human reaction. This is the gut response coming to the surface. We cannot get inside a man but often what's inside comes to the surface. It's subtle: a look, a gesture, a word—and you catch it the moment it happens, or you do without. So cameramen who were concerned with steady, well-composed, well-lit pictures had to learn to sacrifice a little. They had to learn to do without an assistant cameraman keeping the shot in focus. There was no time for that: they had to be willing to carry a 15-pound camera around for hours at a time. They had to begin to react to more subtle cues for we wanted to reveal the inside of people who didn't throw bricks or scream epithets. They had to know something about film editing. The establishing shot, the cutaway, the close-ups, all too often had to be gotten as the scene evolved or not at all. Not every cameraman, in fact very few, could or would become skilled in Cinéma Vérité.

As a director-producer, I had a lot to learn about the importance of selecting people who could and would externalize their feelings as well as their ideas and about the importance of finding a predictable event which would be catalytic, revealing some of these inner, disguised feelings. Many of the film-makers relied almost exclusively on these "found" events. Others like myself were not content solely with the truth we could capture by waiting or by chance. Yet I did not want to disturb the integrity of the situation or the integrity of the persons involved; to do this, I knew, would lessen the reaction and weaken the drama which was taking form.

I discovered that by understanding the people and their needs I could make suggestions which would benefit both them and the film. They were freed to react honestly because they were not acting for the film but for themselves. In *Manhattan Battleground,* for instance, I asked the social worker Dan Murrow if he was going to help a young friend, Chico, get a job. He indicated that he was, but he didn't know when. I suggested he do it then. He would have done it anyhow but we might not have been there. When the interview was filmed as it happened, without rehearsal or reenactment, the look on Chico's face revealed that he knew he wouldn't get the job. Dan and Chico left. As we walked out I asked Dan if he planned to talk to Chico. He would later. He could now. Why not under the trestle, I suggested? It didn't seem phony to Dan, so he did it. The scene, because it was played out at the moment when real emotion existed, had emotional content; because it unfolded in a visually dramatic setting, the impact was heightened. The integrity of the individuals and the situation, in my opinion, had been respected. And I had not been merely an uninvolved observer or recorder of a fortuitous event.

In a more recent film, *A Time for Burning,* I suggested to a white minister of an affluent all-white church that he see a particular Negro barber who could effectively articulate the frustration and anger within most Negroes. It was a shattering experience and one of the most moving sequences in the film (I knew it would be—my encounter with Ernie Chambers of Omaha, Nebraska, had been equally shattering and moving). The minister cared enough to hear this viewpoint but had not sought out this man. I was not concerned that the minister might not have ever gone to see Ernie. I was very concerned about what the sweat on his brow told me about the Reverend Youngdahl, and what the biting phrase, "your Jesus is contaminated . . . ," (expressed without surface feeling) told me about Ernie Chambers. In each case we might have gotten the "facts" through interviews in the manner of "CBS Reports" and illustrated them. But I would choose to be involved with the people; to bring them together in relationships which are catalytic. I'm not afraid to participate with them in their adventure. I ask them to participate in mine.

Obviously the film is not completed when it is photographed. It must be edited. And here is where even the so-called Cinéma Vérité film-makers cop out. The juxtaposition of images and sounds and the addition of narration provide an opportunity for the big lie, frequently a convincing lie, because the camera technique gives the illusion of reality.

Cesare Zavattini observed in commenting on the Italian Neo-Realistic approach that the artistic problem and the moral problem are the same. "We must observe reality and not extract fictions from it." So we have equipment and we have developed skill in using it but do we —film-maker, sponsor (TV, theater, church, industry, etc.) and audience —have the moral strength to pursue the truth through to the completion of the film? If you set out in film-making to prove the church does good, or business is concerned with people, or facts can be entertaining, you will, at best, prove your thesis, but you will not reveal the truth in any complexity or depth. There is pressure to be entertaining (that's what TV is for), or clever (you don't build a career without awards), or please a client (he's paying the bills), and few of us solve the final problem alone. Fortunately there are, or have been, network executive producers like Edward R. Murrow, and there are film sponsors like Lutheran Film Associates. The latter recently gave me and my co-film-maker, Barbara Connell, complete freedom to explore the truth about a church in Omaha. The completed film does not flatter. It offers no solutions (the minister resigns). There is hurt and fear and anger in the film. The people in the film are not the kind who appear in the average church paper. But they are the kind who attend the average church.

Not everyone likes this kind of film. A reviewer for a Philadelphia paper who saw one of my films admitted it was good, but added that it was disappointing for him because there were no heroes. I thanked him, pointing out that he had gotten the message.

In the reality I observe around me I see no heroes—just ordinary humans who can, on occasion, exhibit rather extraordinary, even heroic behavior. For those who wish to see or portray the world as it is with all its complexities, ambiguities, its terror and delights, what has happened to Cinéma Vérité is good. It has become something more than an excuse for a shapeless, technically inferior film. It has provided a frame of reference against which the superficial or artificial can be measured, and fictional (as well as other documentary) films will continue to be affected by this new standard!

We may find fewer heroes in films, but we may also find more insight into real people and therefore into ourselves. That's worth something.

CULTURE-INTERCOM

A PROPOSAL BY STAN VANDERBEEK

& EXPANDING-CINEMA.....

A Work of art is never finished, merely abandoned—PAUL VALWRY.

TEST PILOT UNDERGOING SEVERE GRAVITY EFFECTS

"Today in our cities most learning occurs outside of the classroom. The sheer quantity of information conveyed by the press, mass film, TV and radio far exceeds the quantity of information conveyed by school instruction and texts. This challenge has destroyed the monopoly of the book as a teaching aid, and cracked the very walls of the classroom so suddenly we were confused and baffled. . . . In this violently upsetting social situation many teachers naturally view the offerings of the new media as entertainment rather than education, but his view carries no conviction to the student."—MARSHALL MCLUHAN

TWA

"You will learn to look upon humanity as the staging of ideas on earth, our soul value is one of representation."—ANDRE GIDE, Journals

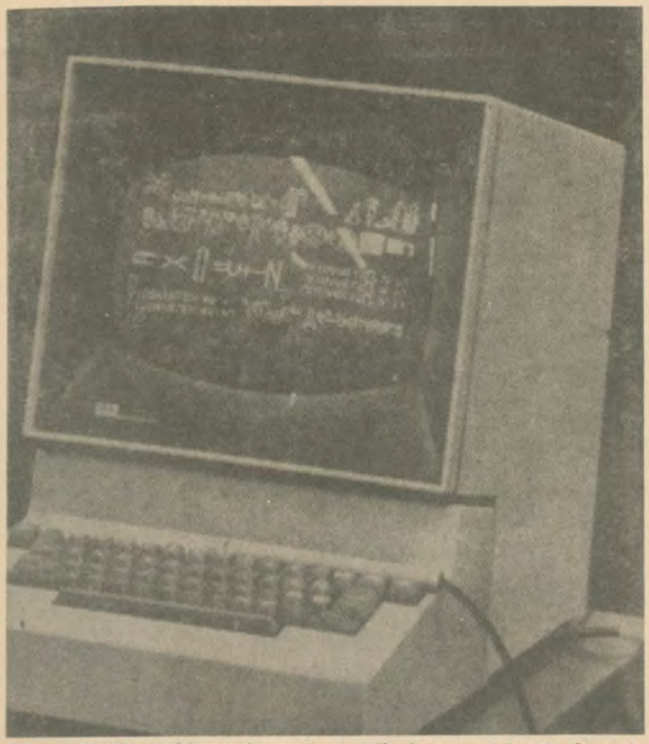
NASA Photo via AP wirephoto

"I believe that all forms—words, sounds, colors, volumes, movements—have a meaning; they do not possess it of themselves, it is men who give them meaning, different meanings, in fact in so far as the interests of human beings differ."—ALEXANDER ALEXIEFF

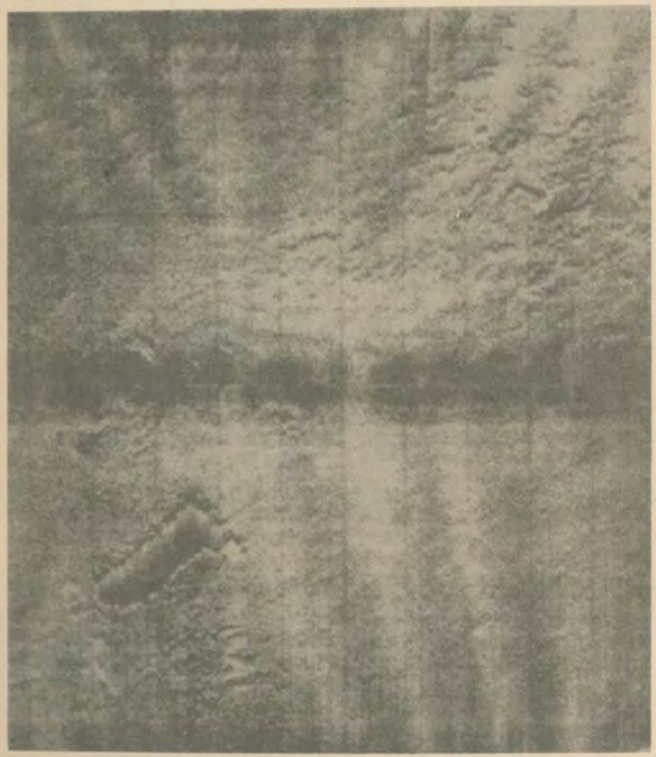
UPI telephoto

It is imperative that we quickly find some way for the entire level of
world understanding to rise to a new human scale.
This scale is the world . . .
The risks are the life or death of this world.
The technological explosion of this last half century, and the implied future,
are overwhelming; man is running the machines of his own invention . . .
while the machine that is man
runs the risk of running wild.
Technological research, development and involvement of the world community
has almost completely out-distanced the emotional-sociological (socio-"logical")
comprehension of this technology.
It is imperative that each and every member of the world community,
regardless of age and cultural background, join the 20th century as
quickly as possible.
The "technique-power" and "culture-over-reach" that are just beginning to
explode in many parts of the earth has put
the logical fulcrum of man's intelligence so far outside himself that he
cannot judge or estimate the results of his acts before he commits them.
The process of life as an experiment on earth has never been made clearer.
It is this danger . . . that man does not have time
to talk to himself . . .
that man does not have means to talk to other men . . .
the world hangs by a thread of verbs and nouns.
Language and cultural-semantics are as explosive
as nuclear energy.
It is imperative that we (the world's artists) invent a new world language,
I propose the following:
That immediate research begin on the possibility of an international
picture-language fundamentally using motion pictures.
That we immediately research existing audio-visual devices, to combine these

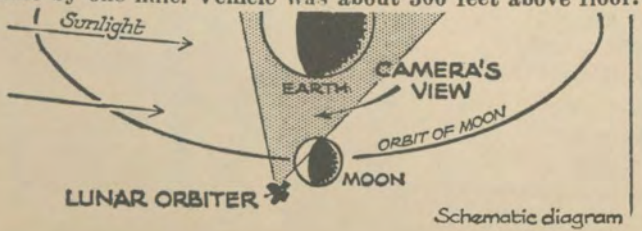
Computer to Teach First Grade



The I. B. M. 1500 system that will be used in California



Map of the ocean floor taken at a depth of 8,400 feet with sonar device. Area in photograph is about one-half mile by one mile. Vehicle was about 300 feet above floor.



Schematic diagram

Sony Shows a TV Playback Disk

The Translator measures 1-1/4 x 2-7/8 x 2-7/8 inches and weighs less than a pound. It is called the "world's smallest computer" because the Translator must differentiate between dots and dashes and determine the spaces between characters. In a space the size of a cigarette package, Regency has placed 350 diodes, 75 transistor circuits, a display panel that frames letters with 17 tiny incandescent lamps and four rechargeable nickel-cadmium penlight batteries.

— Translator showing an "A" on its "picture tube".

EARLY THEOREM, predating Pythagoras by some 500 years, was uncovered in Iraq in 1962.

Portable TV System Introduced

The Newschief, transistorized TV camera system produced by Sylvania Electric Products, Inc., gives cameraman increased mobility. It will be used at winter Olympics.

devices into an educational tool that I shall call an "experience machine" or a "culture-intercom" . . .
The establishment of audio-visual research centers, preferably on an international scale . . .
these centers to explore the existing audio-visual hardware . . .
The development of new image-making devices . . .
(the storage and transfer of image materials, motion pictures, television, computers, video-tape, etc.)
In short, a complete examination of all audio-visual devices and procedures, with the idea in mind to find the best combination of such machines for non-verbal interchange.
The training of artists on an international basis in the use of these image tools.
The immediate development of prototype theatres, hereafter called "Movie-Dromes" that incorporate the use of such projection hardware.
The immediate research and development of image-events and performances in the "Movie-Drome" . . .
I call these prototype presentations: "Movie Murals," "Ethos-Cinema," "Newsreel of Dreams," "Feedback," "Image Libraries" . . .

The "movie-drome" would operate as follows:
In a spherical dome, simultaneous images of all sorts would be projected on the entire dome-screen . . . the audience lies down at the outer edge of the dome with their feet towards the center, thus almost the complete field of view is the dome-screen. Thousands of images would be projected on this screen; this image-flow could be compared to the "collage" form of the newspaper or the three ring circus (both of which suffice the audience with an abundance of facts and data). The audience takes what it can or wants from the presentation and makes its own conclusions . . . each member of the audience will build his own references from the image-flow.

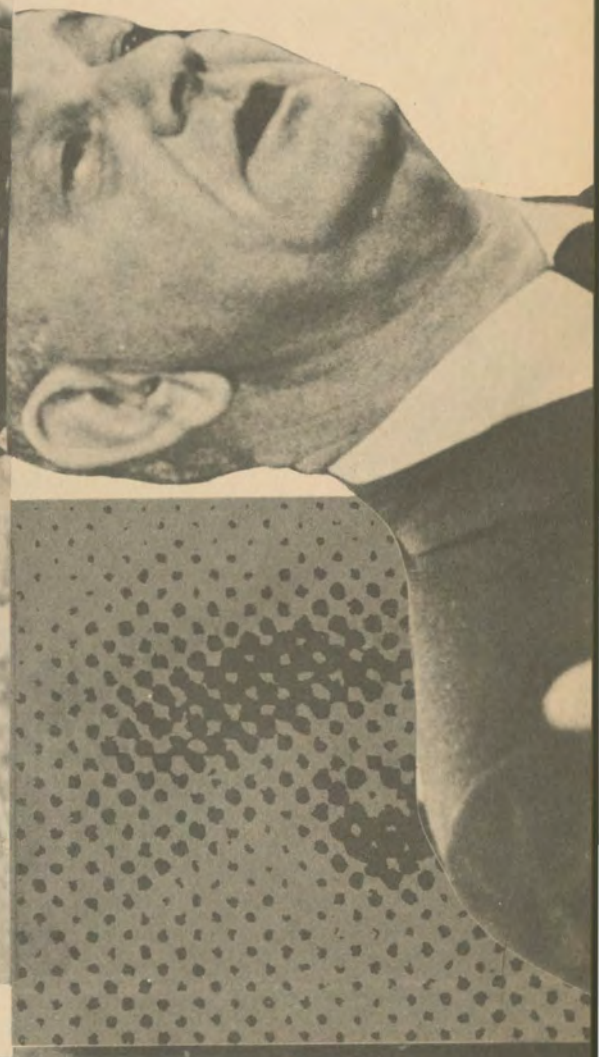
Life Magazine

INTELLIGENCE TEST USES LIGHT FLASH

Brain's Response Timed— Result Shows Correlation to I.Q. Measurements

ADVANTAGES ARE CITED

AP wirephoto



The visual material is to be presented and each
individual makes his own conclusions . . . or realizations.
A particular example:
an hour-long presentation in the "movie-drome" using all sorts
of multiplex images, depicting the course of Western civilization since
the time of the Egyptians to the present . . . a rapid panoply of graphics
and light calling upon thousands of images, both still and in motion
(with appropriate "sound-images"). It would be possible to compress the
last three thousand years of Western life into such an aspect ratio that
we, the audience, can grasp the flow of man, time and forms of life
that have lead us up to the very moment . . . details are not important; it
is the total scale of life that is . . . in other words . . . using the past and
the immediate present to help us understand the likely future.
Endless filmic variations of this idea are possible in each field of
man's endeavor . . . science, math, geography, art, poetry, dance,
biology . . .
endless variations of this idea by each culture group and nationality
that take it on as a project . . . to be presented in turn to each other
culture group . . .
The purpose and effect of such image-flow and image density (also to be
called "visual-velocity") is to penetrate to unconscious levels and to deal
with and logically understand those levels. The use of such "emotion-pictures"
would be to reach for
the "emotional denominator" of all men:
the basis of human life thought and understanding that is non-verbal.
These "emotion-pictures" would provide images that inspire basic intuitive instincts of self-
realization and inspire all men to good will and "inter and intro-
realization".
When I talk of the movie-dromes as image libraries, it is understood
that such "life-theatres" would use some of the coming techniques
(video tape and computer inter-play) and thus be real communication

Life Magazine, Paul Artian

and storage centers; that is, by satellite, each dome could receive its images from a world-wide library source, store them and program a feedback presentation to the local community that lived near the center. This newsreel feedback could authentically review the total world image "reality" in an hour-long show that gave each member of the audience a sense of the entire world picture . . . it would be the world's "work of the month" put into an hour.
"Intra-communitronics" or dialogues with other centers would be likely, and instant reference material via transmission television and telephone could be called for and received at 186,000 m.p.s., from anywhere in the world.
Thus I call this presentation a "newsreel of ideas, of dreams, a movie-mural" . . .
an image library, a culture decompression chamber, a "culture-intercom" . . .
My concept is in effect the maximum use of the maximum information devices that we now have at our disposal. . . .
Certain things might happen . . . if an individual is exposed to an overwhelming information experience . . .
It might be possible to reorder the levels of awareness of any person . . . it certainly will reorder the structure of motion pictures as we know them.
Cinema will become a "performing" art . . . and image-library.
I foresee that such centers will have their artist-in-residence who will orchestrate the image material he has at his disposal . . .
and will lead to a totally new international art form.
In probing for the "emotional denominator", it will be possible by the visual "power" of such a presentation to reach any age or culture group regardless of culture and background.
The "experience machine" could bring anyone on earth up to the 20th century.
As the current growth rate risk of explosives to human flesh continues, the risk of survival increases accordingly.

It now stands at 200 pounds of T.N.T. per human pound of flesh . . . per human on earth.
There are an estimated 700 million people who are unlettered in the world . . .
we have no time to lose
or miscalculate . . .
The world and self-education process must find a quick solution to reorder itself, a revision of itself, an awareness of itself . . .
that is, each man must somehow realize the enormous scale of human life and accomplishments on earth right now.
Man must find a way to measure himself, to grow simultaneously and keep in touch with himself . . .
Man must find a way to leap over his own prejudices and apprehensions.
The means are on hand . . . here and now . . .
in technology and the extension of the senses . . .
To summarize:
My concern is for a way for the over-developing technology of part of the world to help the under-developed emotional-sociology of all of the world to catch up to the 20th century . . . to counter-balance technique and logic—and to do it now, quickly . . .
My concern is for world peace and harmony . . .
the appreciation of individual minds . . .
the interlocking of good wills on an international exchange basis . . .
the interchange of images and ideas . . .
a realization of the process of "realization" of self-education
that now must occur before the "fact" of education . . .
In short: a way for all men to have fore-knowledge
by advantageous use of past and immediate knowledge . . .
mankind faces the immediate future with doubt on one hand
and molecular energy on the other . . .
he must move quickly and surely to preserve his future . . .
he must realize the present . . .
the here and the now . . . right now.
An international picture-language is a tool to build that future . . .

AVANTE-GARDE CINEMA: A muted fanfare

By MARTIN S. DWORKIN

A chronic irritation with the notion of an *avant-garde* in the arts develops out of congenital ambiguities in application. It is rarely clear whether the term truly denotes distinctions of artists at work, or operates primarily in forming audiences: gathering banners and sounding trumpets in one corner of the field or another, where the newly faithful may find each other, and, perhaps, themselves. The matter may be simpler, of course, when the artists at their work deliberately affect particular flags or fanfares. But these are by nature and definition followers, and their parades hardly outdistance the oncoming novelties. Yet, there are leaders who are always in the van, who do what they must do whether they are followed or not; and these may be the hardest to recognize—the more so amid the noise and glare that come to signify recognition in the age of Entertained Man.

The matter is more difficult in what we regard as newer arts, involved fundamentally in materials, instruments and processes of Cyclopean industry, providing occasions of experience for measureless masses. The notion that the artist is by nature leader, innovator or revolutionary has gained a resurgence that is characteristically modern. This understanding emerges out of the complex transformations of social orders and political structures that accompanied the explosive growth of industrial masses in recent centuries. Such a role calls upon the artist to personate and articulate Man, in his continuing, enlarging crisis of self-identification and fulfillment, amid the pulverizing; obliterating forces of mass society.

But the arts themselves may edge the attack, inspiriting each person with the presence of whatever gods are held up for worship, celebrating orthodoxies and managed enthusiasms or apathies of government and marketplace, serving rising tyrannies of unreason in the guise of emotional liberation. The drive towards total accessibility and experience of culture accompanies, at the least, the epochal vectors towards totalism in all forms and phases of the life of Man. And the formation of new orders of mass society punctually assimilate the revolutionary, technological arts of collective experience that project organizations of prepared imaginings so directly upon

DEMON OVER THE CITY HANS ORLOWSKI

inner tissues of spirit, so far beyond controls of consciousness as are the private dreams they resemble and even imitate.

Some of the unclarities of a notion of an *avant-garde* in the mass arts have been inherited, to be sure, from its original currency in scuffles among claques and critics over doctrines and departures in European painting and literature during the dwindling years of elegant decadence before the war of 1914-18. More clouds of meaning, however, arose out of post-war fervors of disillusionment, concurrent with an awakening temper of experiment, particularly with forms and techniques of cinema. Among artists, already traditional passions against bourgeois life and aspirations were reasserted as paradoxical commitments to forces inimical to individualism, whether as ideal or practice. Among audiences, distinctions of intentions and quality were blurred more easily than ever in vacillations between desires for sentient participation and unconscious absorption.

The arguments over relationships of art and artists to élite or popular audiences which strew the landscape of modern aesthetics with so much revered wreckage were carried from the bookstalls, galleries, and concert halls into the new theaters. Here, too, there could and would be aristocracies. But the patents of belonging would be different for the cinema—which had come in less than three decades from a peep-show novelty and side-show attraction—to project a new reality for entire populations, throughout the world. Almost from the beginning, the magic shadows had been made for, and sold to, the masses. Only later, in general, did the middle classes buy, especially as they were drawn to the stupefying, albeit respectable, vulgarity of the gilded plaster palaces springing up in chains and clusters during the brash years between war and depression.

Those who knew better, according to tradition and vocation, arrived last of all. Moralists and evangelists had seen the menace and power of the movies almost at once. Before the war, however, only a scattering of scholars and litterateurs—among the first anywhere were Hugo Munsterberg and Vachel Lindsay in the U.S.—took up the challenge to comprehend and criticize what was already apparent as a revolution in processes of imagination, as well as in forms of imagery. Wrote Lindsay in 1915: "It has come then, this new weapon of men, and the face of the whole earth changes." And what had

arrived was something that the artists —in the sense of practitioners in the traditional fine arts; and the experimentalists—in the sense of seekers after new modes of personal expression, found already in being and in power.

Hans Richter, in noting its first appearance in post-war Germany, defined the *avant-garde* film as "the film as an art experiment," carefully adding that as a branch of creative activity, ". . . its roots were in the international art movement called modern art, which had its centre in Paris rather than in Berlin." But *avant-garde* cinema, root and branch, presumed the ground of cinema itself, and all it manifested and signified, amalgamating technology, commerce and art as the quintessential expression of the popular culture of the modern industrial era. Before the *avant-garde* there had to be the pioneers, the innovators—especially those who had created a pictorial language to tell stories on screen: men such as Georges Méliés and Émile Cohl in France; G. S. Smith, James Williamson, Frank Mottershaw, and Cecil Hepworth in England; and Edwin S. Porter, Mack Sennett, Charles Chaplin, and D. W. Griffith in the United States. To denote an *avant-garde* in Richter's sense alone may be to properly indicate works of personal exploration, or edges of individual revolt—against the popular cinema, among other things, for the very faithfulness with which it incarnates the dominant culture. But it does not necessarily argue, and only rarely can specify what have been the most influential sources of origination along the main course of the medium.

In such perspective, to signify as *avant-garde* the personal, experimental films may say more for the wish than for the fact of their role in the history of cinema. Among them may be found several of the most profoundly original works ever put on film—as well as an immeasurable host of adolescent ebullitions, easy fakes, and pretentious obscurities. In seeking and reaching special audiences, however, usually outside established theatrical channels, and in most cases beyond access to currents of popular imagination, these films etched out distinctly different and often divergent lines of direction and influence. If an analogy is provisionally made to literary, printed works, it would appear that such films have exerted far less force in guiding the principal vectors of the cinema than have the ventures in experimental or unconventional writing in the serious, traditionally ephemeral, "little" magazines upon the procession of literature.

The point is not at all to disparage past, present or future efforts to create "the film as an art experiment," but to properly locate the definitively original influences in the development of cinema as a whole: cinema considered in the sense implicit in the notion of *avant-garde* itself—as what André Malraux called "the first world-wide art." And the problem of a terminology to denote the actual growing edges of cinema has not been eased by the persistence of a *priori* doctrinal factors. So much of the critical and historical discourse about *avant-garde* cinema has depended upon allegiances to particular aesthetic or ideological criteria, that may or may not bear upon the facts of influence within what is a unique complex of art, industry, and agency of social change. Such allegiances have waved all the flag words that have marched with one echelon or another of the *avant-garde*, at one time of another: "abstract," "experimental," "impressionist," "expressionist," "realist," "surrealist," "neo-realist," "pure," "documentary," "intrinsic," "integral," "poetic," "absolute," "total" —even the loudly unregimented "off-trail," "off-beat," "free," "independent," and, simply, "new." And, to be sure, these often have been unfurled with standards signifying, in appropriately negative modes, forms of presentation to the public, or logistics and techniques of production: "non-commercial" and "non-theatrical"—hardly indicating, with typical clarity, precisely whether particular films were made to earn money in some way, or whether they truly never were to be shown in theaters of any kind.

Most of the windstorms of doctrine that raged during the years between the wars have subsided, although much conceptual debris remains. The works themselves have taken on other meanings: some in building to stature as genuine classics; others, by far the larger number, achieving no more than the vindication of their initial topicality, in becoming artifacts of a bygone epoch, to be archaeologized by scholars or antiquarians in film societies and museums. In fact, the increasing availability of old films appears to quicken the processes of separation—not simply of the perishable from the preserved, but of the merely historical from the permanent.

In point, one of the most prestigious of all *avant-garde* films, *L'Age d'Or*, finally was shown in public in the U.S. at the 1964 New York Film Festival. The film, which Luis Buñuel made in 1930 from a script he created with Salvador Dali, had long been acknowledged as the archetype of surrealism on screen—and had long since ceased being a work that could simply be seen for the "first" time. Not only had every sequence, shot and detail been described, interpreted, reclaimed, and revisited in myriads of articles and books, footnotes and captions, to exemplary still photographs. The mode of imagery, and not a few of the images, had been so often followed and imitated that almost all the novelty of the original was now leached out and dissipated.

What remained to be seen of so unquestionably significant a work could hardly live up to its significance. For most of the anti-clerical, anti-bourgeois images and juxtapositions that had once been immediately shocking, there now could be little more than a critical reconstruction of what must have been their initial force. And, to be sure, post-war audiences had been exposed to much more explicit erotica, on screen and off, with and without intended meanings of love as the life principle, in protest against the respectable masquerades of Thanatos. What was least tolerable now, in trying to rehearse the original power of the film, was its slapdash cinematography. The remark of Jacques Brunius that "the violent impact of *L'Age d'Or* owes little or nothing to its technique . . . ," had

overlooked an element of tactical consistency, whereby the very faults of the film were proclaimed as integral with its attack upon conventional culture—including cinema. The assertion, in fact, has been part of *avant-garde* cant from the earliest talk of "pure," "poetic," and "experimental" film, and is heard again today among professional innocents and other protagonists of anti-technique, in the name of new, and ever newer waves—among them "New American Cinema," and cinéma vérité.

In all discourse about art, however, few arguments are more perishable than those for not taking pains, for eschewing the endless struggle for excellence—no matter how desperately worthy the immediate ends. The bad craftsmanship of a remembered work is a detail of a still developing judgment, and the early trials of any Bunuel may not argue for tactics of deliberate incompetence without compromising the standards whereby new Bunuels may be recognized, and whereby their works may come to be remembered. If *L'Age d'Or* is acknowledged as representing one column of an *avant-garde* at one time, its deficiencies prove no case for the unselected spontaneities of jet-age happy savages with cameras, or the unfocused metaphors of new acolytes of blind Homer with photoelectric psyches and lenses that zoom.

Such considerations, to be sure, imply a bearing of critical judgment upon the ideas and works of an *avant-garde*—with all the problems and paradoxes, essential as well as historical, of this relationship. Some proclamation by critics is a presumptive, if not cardinal factor, in the advent of an *avant-garde*. In the cinema, indeed, it is part of *avant-garde* tradition for critics to make films themselves—or, more as they might have it: for film makers to assert themselves, via critical writings, the founding of declamatory magazines, and the trumpeting of manifestoes, while awaiting or preparing opportunities for cinematic expression. But it is also part of *avant-garde* tradition to presume, once the films are made and presented, certain suspension, even outright remission of critical attitude. Along with some advanced arguments for untrammeled film experience, or for the encouragement of unlimited innovation, often go quite familiar, rear-guard resentments of audience unappreciation—and naïve expectations of mass response for inescapably particular works.

In a most revealing instance, the late Jean Cocteau (interviewed by Andre Fraigneau) deplored what he saw as a change in audience attitudes towards his films, between 1930 (when he finished *The Blood of a Poet*), and 1951 (a year after *Orpheus*):

> We have no public any more, we have only judges. An individualistic crowd, a crowd unfit for the collective hypnosis without which a spectacle becomes pointless. But this resistance ceases as soon as the mass audience pours in. They've paid for their seats and they are determined to enjoy the show. So it is not the mass audience that I accuse, but the false élite that has planted itself between the masses and ourselves. This false élite, which lives only by fashion, decrees that a work is out of fashion as soon as it deviates from what it considers fashionable. . . .

There is unwitting pathos in Cocteau's pretension that any of his films—even *The Eternal Return* (1943), and his most successful *Beauty and the Beast* (1946)—could be considered as inviting the "mass audience." And there is irony, as well as propriety, in the disaffiliation of one who was for so long a favorite of the "false élite," with its insatiable appetite for authorized enthusiasms. It is epicene logic, however, to characterize the resistant "élite" as being simultaneously "individualistic" and dominated by fashion. And more than complaint about the bad theater manners of particular Parisian audiences is involved in Cocteau's resentment of the "crowd unfit for the collective hypnosis . . ." demanded for his films.

A generation and more after the emergence of the first ideas and works of "film as an art experiment," Cocteau was rehearsing what have become plangent ambiguities of *avant-garde* cinema, concerning the relationship of film-makers, critics and audiences—and the nature of the film experience itself. All talk of films that advance beyond, or march apart from, the procession of manufacturers delivered in the theaters, must propose some experience of film different from that of mass consumption, with its addiction to narcotic unreason and uncriticized fantasy. If not, all the words, including *avant-garde*, are no more than commercials for competing parades of packaged imaginings—whether or not the film-makers are honest, dedicated men, or genuine eccentrics pursuing unique visions—or only poseurs, improvising esoteric entrees to commercial success.

In the same interview, it is pertinent to add, Cocteau properly denigrated mere technical innovation as defining serious, original works of cinema—what he chose to call "my conception of the cinematograph *versus* cinema." The point, to be sure, has classic validity. But it had never been more obvious than in the years following the transformation of the entertainment industries by the arrival of television, which devours and rewards novelty and technical virtuosity according to its nature—to ends of dubious nourishment. Since Cocteau spoke, there have occurred revolutionary alterations of habits of viewing films, and a world-wide disruption of industrial patterns of production and distribution. Abetted by punctual developments in cinema technology—particularly in cameras and lenses, film emulsions, and portable lighting and recording apparatus—these changes have encouraged an explosion of film-making by persons who, scarcely a decade ago, would have been unable to begin, or to show their beginnings to substantial audiences.

In this upsurge of cinema activity, proliferating works of infinitely varied style, format and content (as well as of every range of quality) it is more difficult than ever to speak with specificity and clarity of an *avant-garde*—and to be liberated from the deadly litanies of arbiters of modish immortality. And it is no easier than before to judge each work itself beyond the whirling sweeps of enthusiasm and assassination of those whom Igor Stravinsky once devastated as "*Les pompiers d'avant-garde.*" Wherever they go, blaring calls and slogans of belonging and exclusivism, something of each work of art and aesthetic experience must be held out of the way, and carried on to light new fires.

THE INDEPENDENT CINEMA

By ANDREW SARRIS

The Independent Cinema is a figment, if not an outright fiction, of the journalist's imagination. What makes a film independent? And independent of what? Hollywood? Commercialism? Plot? Production values? Entertainment? In short, how much independence can we bear? At what point does liberty degenerate into license?

Patrons of Lincoln Center's Fourth New York Film Festival were initiated recently into the rites and revels of the underground with a Special Events series entitled "The Independent Cinema" described as "a program of 27 events covering various aspects of independent film-making in the United States today." The events included lectures and discussions with filmmakers, screenings of new works and works-in-progress, and open interviews with visiting directors from abroad. As it turned out, most of the programs were well attended, but the series as a whole failed to generate much excitement. It was no one's fault, particularly, but the fact remains that the Special Events Program became a subdued sideshow to the Festival Proper. Festival Director Amos Vogel and Festival Coordinator John Brockman did their best to bring the underground to the surface. The advance publicity was astoundingly impres-

PHOTOGRAPH: NELL COX

sive. Tactful overtures were made to all the warring factions in the Independent Cinema, and Andy Warhol was pointedly excluded from the proceedings so as not to offend the regular reviewers. Brockman was particularly anxious to avoid the stigma of neo-dadaism by focusing attention on optically oriented spectacles which fall into the category of "intermedia" or "mixed media" or even "McLuhanist happenings." Marshall McLuhan's "the medium is the message" has replaced Sergei Eisenstein's montage collision credos of an earlier era.

At any rate, by opening night some of the independent filmmakers, unrepresented either in the Festival Proper or the Special Events, began picketing the proceedings. A black mass was threatened around the Revlon fountain in Lincoln Center's piazza, but the alleged protest eventually degenerated into personal publicity. Jonas Mekas, the official spokesman of the New American Cinema, criticized Vogel and Brockman in the *village voice,* but, far from boycotting the proceedings, Mekas actually participated in some of the Special Events' panels.

What galled Mekas and his followers most was the implication that Independent Films were not yet ready to charge admissions at Philharmonic Hall, but had to be shown free in Lincoln Center's Library Auditorium. Was it money or prestige at stake? Stan Brakhage flatly refused to allow his film to be shown for free. After all, Lincoln Center was loaded and he was living from hand to mouth, and why not give him a $75 rental fee? What Mekas and Brakhage failed to realize was that Lincoln Center itself was not all that generous to the Film Festival, and that if a precedent of paying rentals to Festival films were established, it would be difficult to get anything for free. Anyway money is always a more crucial issue with artists than with promoters, and one can recall the telegrams exchanged between Bernard Shaw and Sam Goldwyn in which the producer wired that he was more interested in art than in money, and the playwright wired back that he was more interested in money than in art. Although Brakhage announced his conditions in advance, Tony Conrad and Victor Grauer screened two flashing light films (*Flicker* and *Archangel* respectively) at a special event, and then, when the house lights went on, proceeded to attack the Festival for not paying rentals for their films. As for these new-styled, LSD-licensed flickers themselves, all I can say is that they represent an extreme form of passive experience. If you stare long enough, you begin to see colors emerging on the flickering screen, but you can get the same effect by staring at a blinking neon light. It is like the girl who wants to be seduced without having a meaningful relationship. The creator is replaced by the stimulator, and we find ourselves back in a can of Andy Warhol's Campbell Tomato Soup—at least as far as aesthetic distinctions are involved.

Aesthetic distinctions! That is usually what is most lacking in inquiries about the Independent Film. New, different, way-out: these are the adjectives of fashionable journalism. Good-bad: these are the relics of academe. What counts here is not what the scene is, but who is making it. That is why all the mumbo-jumbo of happenings fits so well into the promotion of resorts and night clubs. What is a night club, after all, but a happening with dim lights, loud music, perfumed odors, gleaming flesh, swirling incense and liquid LSD? This swing to the religious, the rapturous, the irrational, the oblivious, the orgasmic is not without social implications. One might say (though I do not) that this flight from coherence involves a complete rejection of conscious existence and the monstrous movement of history. There is possibly also a reaction against the systematic social consciousness of the Independent film-makers of the Thirties and Forties. Acceptance of one's environment, the corollary of Pop and Camp, would seem to be the most reactionary response possible to the ancient schools of documentary seeking to make films more "honest" than Hollywood's hallucinations, to borrow a phrase from Parker Tyler, one of the more skeptical lecturers at the Independent Film Series. In fact, a recent series of Independent Films at the Bleecker Street Cinema began with Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* of 1922, and concluded with Andy Warhol's *Story of Juanita Castro* of 1966, a forty-five-year trajectory of decadence and depravity. Yet this too is a facile generalization. In his way, Warhol is more socially conscious than Flaherty, less exotic and romantic. The perverts and prostitutes in Warhol's world are no less real and sensitive for improperly flaunting their fey fantasies. Besides, there is still a great deal of conventional propaganda pouring out of the underground. Shirley Clarke's concern with Negroes in *The Connection* and *The Cool World* may be politically advanced, but hardly formally fancy. The real tip-off is the selection of Nelson's *O Dem Watermelons* and Preston's *Son of Dada* as short subjects in the Festival Proper. Both films feature unconventional techniques, particularly dizzying montage and surreal collage of paper cut-outs; but their big pitch is politics: *Watermelons* against racial condescension, *Son of Dada* against LBJ. Unfortunately, even viewers who endorsed the film-makers' politics deplored their poetics. The point is that as much as we may talk about cinematic forms, most people are still obsessed by what a movie is actually about. Consequently, I think it was a mistake for the Festival to stress the relative respectability of the Independent Cinema by screening out the more outrageous film-makers. Outrage is not only one of the historic functions of the *avant-garde;* it is the only advantage the outsider possesses against the superior resources of the insider. Ultimately, the most insidious enemy of art is good taste.

In the realm of aesthetic distinctions, however, the Festival justified its special events section by presenting *Echoes of Silence* by Peter Goldman, a 26-year-old New York film-maker on a $1,500 shoestring. Goldman's intuitive talent is indisputable. Yet many members of the critical establishment walked out of his film because of a lack of technical finesse. The anguished lyricism of lonely sensualists in New York counted for nothing with those of whom production polish is a *sine qua non.* But what does one expect for $1,500? *Breathless* or *L'Avventura?* Apparently. And this is the pitiful absurdity of audience expectations from a penniless American *avant-garde.* The Independent Cinema is thus caught in a vicious circle by becoming the victim of its exaggerated publicity without which it would never attract any attention. It is simply sorrowful to watch Independent American film-makers confronting the "art film" directors

from abroad, not because the Americans are necessarily inferior in style and sensibility, but because the Godards, the Antonionis, the Resnais', the Pasolinis, are actually the Establishment with subtitles.

Therefore it is high time that the Independent Cinema be relegated to the limbo of journalistic jargon along with the "new wave." As Chabrol once remarked, "there are no waves; there is only the ocean." And in this ocean, there are good and bad directors, both above ground and under. Since facile generalizations thus are outlawed, the following observations are thrown out in no particularly set sequence.

• The Independent Film tends to subsist on its own rationales and exegeses. Peter Goldman one day may work in Hollywood. Stan Brakhage and Gregory Markopoulos probably never will. Goldman's film is embryonic fiction feature. Brakhage and Markopoulos are too subjective, too abstract, to concern themselves with standard conventions of movies. Does a film-maker have to be an entertainer? Goldman probably would say yes. Brakhage and Markopoulos, no. Who is right? This depends entirely on where the cinema goes from here.

• The cinéma vérité works of Ricky Leacock and the Maysles Brothers belong more to television than to the cinema, and live television, not taped or filmed television. The process of editing imposes a moral responsibility on the director to search for a personal truth beyond the factual reality of the footage. As Agnes Varda recently observed, "there is no such thing as objective cinema."

• A new generation of film-makers looks upon cinema as part of its cultural environment. Audiences and critics should be prepared for the cinema's new self-consciousness. Why should it be more disreputable for Jean-Luc Godard to quote old movies than for T. S. Eliot to quote old poems?

• As Independent Films become increasingly personal, audiences and critics should not be excessively disturbed that film-makers do not reveal the decorous life patterns of mythical middle-class morality. To put it more bluntly, the facts of perversion and hypersexuality will become increasingly explicit.

• If the *avant-garde* faces any threat at all, it is simply that the squares are becoming more hip than the hipsters, that commercial movies are more salacious than underground movies, and that suburbia is more audacious than bohemia.

• Relaxed censorship is depriving the *avant-garde* of its *raison d'etre*. So is the excessive gullibility of mass taste toward anything new. The bourgeois exploits the *avant-garde* artist simply to fulfill fantasy of a daring, adventurous society. Actually the realities of mechanization and conformity are so overwhelming that the most superficial noncomformities are subsidized in a spirit of desperation. That is to say that if Jonas Mekas did not exist, the Establishment would have had to invent him.

• Mekas and his followers have succeeded in demystifying the medium. They have exposed some of the quasi-criminal conspiracies which maintain movies as an industrial monopoly rather than as an individual art. By demonstrating that anyone can make a movie, they make it possible for gifted individuals without relatives in Hollywood or the craft unions to enter the cinema.

• Most Independent film-makers lack the humility to be great artists. Their own personalities loom larger than either their art or their audience. Many are still over-reacting against Hollywood.

• Academically and culturally speaking, the cinema is still the stepchild of the arts. The Ford Foundation gives millions to ballet companies and piddling amounts to film-makers. The academic community still resists cinema in the curriculum. Consequently, there is a shortage of academic positions to provide some economic sanctuary for film poets.

• Many of the arguments of the *avant-garde* seem to presuppose either an unconditional subsidy or a commercially feasible captive audience. If to please an audience is invariably to compromise the artist's convictions, then art can never be either popular nor accessible. But what possible motivation can society have to subsidize that which is denied it by definition? Again, without aesthetic distinctions or determinations of degrees, we are caught up in a Faustian fallacy of our time. Compromise and communication are not interchangeable terms, and self-expression is not sacred.

• The Independent Cinema serves a scholarly function simply by trying to be different. The outrageousness of Independent Films confirms the validity of some conventions and the arbitrariness of others. Independent Films serve a useful purpose through their parody, mockery and general iconoclasm. Where the mystique of Independent Films was once realistic in seeking the reality beyond conventional movies, Independent Films are now more fanciful in tracing the fantasies of a culture oriented toward conventional movies.

• Independent Films overwhelmingly are Left-Oriented though not as sacrilegious as the *avant-garde* blasphemies of the Bunuel-Dali era. Unfortunately, there is little shock mileage left in being Left in New York.

• Independent Films are developing a new breed of independent film critics of great sophistication and erudition, but there is little meaningful debate within the movement because skeptics seldom see enough Independent Films to qualify as experts.

• It is as fallacious to think that if you have seen three or four Independent Films, you have seen them all, as to think that if you have seen three or four commercial movies you have seen them all. Yet people keep asking me to show them "underground cinema" as if a few samples will suffice to define hundreds of separate spasms of creativity.

• Finally, the collectivity of Independent Cinema is not worth writing about. Only individual films. I have liked Kenneth Anger's *Scorpio Rising*, Andy Warhol's and Ronny Tavel's *The Life of Juanita Castro*, Adolfas Mekas' *Hallelujah the Hills*, Peter Goldman's *Echoes of Silence*, several works by Stan Vanderbeek, Carmen Davino, and Robert Breer in the more abstract categories. Martin Scorsese' short films reveal a wit capable of talking features. Robert Downey has his moments of hilarious satire. Shirley Clarke and Lionel Rogosin have given us some candid moments in the more depressed areas.

Add it all up and you have an interesting footnote to the history of world cinema. Much ado about nothing? Hardly. Someone has to man the outposts of culture, and the Independent Film is uniquely qualified to express the chaos and confusion of our time.

LA STRADA

PHOTOGRAPH: DWORKIN

Fellini has called *La Strada* his favorite film. Released in 1954, it was the fourth of his corpus of 9½ films and the one which first brought him world acclaim. It contains a number of themes and treatments to which he returns in later films. And, in the judgment of many, it is the film in which Fellini seems to be most at home with himself and his subject matter. All of the pieces fall into place to form an integral work.

The French love to forage around in what they call *"l'univers fellinien"*—the ambiance created by Fellini within his films. Some of their minute foraging has scared off others who would like to study films closely and in-depth but without destroying their enjoyment in the process. Alfred North Whitehead's rhythm of education serves well here, There should be a stage of romance in which the film is enjoyed for itself, in which as director Sidney Lumet puts it: "You let the film wash over you." The next stage is that of precision or analysis in which all the things implicit or hinted at initially are developed. The final stage is that of generalization in which both the intuitive values and the analytical values are coordinated.

A close analysis of beautiful things, however, can kill beautiful things if it gets too far away from the immediate experience of what is under analysis. (The reader will have to pardon this protesting about the task of analysis because the writer has to rationalize for himself a process whose dangers, delights, and repugnance are clearer to him than he would like them to be.) Literature may never recover from its desiccated stage of precision. And analyzing a film in print makes the process even more antiseptic. The real medium for film analysis is a free-flow discussion on the day following the screening of the film. It is the results of some thirty such discussions which will be inadequately catalogued in this investigation of *La Strada*. The groups included all ages and beliefs; they ranged from patients at a mental hospital to graduate students at Harvard; they included high school students, religious retreatants, nuns, Job Corps personnel, and just ordinary citizens. My winters are warmed with the memory of how we talked together about some very basic things.

La Strada evokes this kind of person-to-person com-

A THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION

By JOHN M. CULKIN, S.J.

munication. My own prejudices on the psychology of film viewing and film discussions will have to be sought elsewhere. (Cf. *Saturday Review*, July 16, 1966). Film is a sensory medium. It works around the surfaces of reality to hint at what lies beneath the surface. Much of Fellini's impact derives from the fact that he and his films incarnate a visceral, tactile, and emotional approach to questions which in our culture are treated in a rational style which is uninvolved and antiseptic. Some rainy afternoon Marshall McLuhan can explain why all this came to pass. But for the present Fellini can help dredge up some of the repressed questions about loneliness, purpose, and love and can treat them with competence, relevance and humanity while we attempt to develop a vocabulary for handling such hot issues in a cool world.

What follows is a spiral approach to an analysis of *La Strada*. Some data on the characters is followed by a look at the structure of the film and the interaction between the characters. Then there is an analysis of the theological premises of the film. Most of the investigation focuses on the film itself, with little reference to Fellini's other films or to biographical data from Fellini's life.

The Characters

La Strada is a people picture. Three people dominate it: Zampano, Gelsomina and the Fool. A few words about each of them.

Zampano is the man of the road. He lives the homeless, rootless, and lonely life of those on their way but going nowhere. He is tattooed with the sign of the serpent and bound with the links of a chain. He walks in circles repeating formulas. His vocabulary is shot through with references to animals. He is not secure unless he is in complete control. He protests that he doesn't need anybody; yet he constantly uses people. He is the strong man who is not strong. His name means "heavy boot." He is humorless, empty, closed. The film is called *La Strada*, "the road." It is about him.

Gelsomina is the girl of the sea. She lives by the sea; she loves the sea; she dies by the sea. In her own naive

and innocent fashion she is attuned to the primal and enduring elements of life. In the film she is often surrounded by children. She responds to nature in her dialogue with the fire, her imitation of the tree, her planting of the tomatoes. She has no defense against music. She intuitively empathizes with the suffering of Oswaldo, the macrocephalic child. She has an at-homeness with things religious in the procession and in her encounter with the nun. She is open and responsive to reality, just as Zampano is closed to it. Her name means "little flower" or "jasmine." She has the spirit of St. Francis about her.

The Fool (*Il Matto*) is the man of the sky. He wears wings and we first discover him on the high wire. He is constantly surrounded by the signs of the spirit—fire and wind. He is a man of humor, of music, of intelligence, of vitality. And like all the fools in literary and dramatic tradition, he is no fool.

But there is something more to *Il Matto*. A close look at his death starts a new line of thought. When he is killed by Zampano, he is dragged away with his arms outstretched, cruciform. His body is placed in a stone culvert. This clue invites a closer look at how he died. He was struck three times. His watch stopped. He died clutching the earth in front of three trees. In fact he died in front of the middle one. An interesting death. A death which—by the way—he predicted.

His death leads the investigation back into his life. He first appears at the religious festival. Gelsomina has been led to him by the three musicians. The camera follows the procession into the church and then sweeps upward from the altar to the tightrope. The winged Fool stands above the crowd on a wire stretched between the church and the bar. He informs the crowd that he has two appetites and he invites the people to join him for supper. Gelsomina is in awe of him. The first glance they exchange is almost a recognition scene.

They next meet in Rome where Gelsomina is awakened by a donkey, an animal used in the Fool's circus act. The Fool appears in the billowing tent playing the song which Gelsomina already knows. He taunts Zampano and the battle is on. Or better, the battle continues—the perduring tension between two styles of life: the open and thou-oriented life of the spirit versus the closed and egocentric existence of the brute. It will lead to the death of the Fool and the birth of Zampano.

The Fool is also the revealer. It is his discussion with Gelsomina which gives her insight into the meaning and purpose of her life with Zampano. The choice of a pebble as the reminder of this new understanding has an interesting parallel in the Book of the Apocalypse or Revelations. "I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone which no one knows except him who receives it." (Apoc. 2, 17). Zampano describes the Fool as "the bastard son of a gypsy." The Fool describes himself as one alone and "without a roof over my head." Fellini describes him as "the most intelligent of the three, but with an intelligence that is not merely rational. . . . He is an adventurous spirit, a vagabond; he loves to move about and to travel." In commenting on the Fool's teasing of Zampano, Fellini says: "He is amused by the brutishness of Zampano. He understands things more quickly than Zampano, but he doesn't act out of malice. The mentality of a man like Z. seems too closed and immobile to him."

In the last meeting between the Fool and Gelsomina outside the jail, he sings her name and places his locket around her neck as "a souvenir." Her whole attitude is that of a communicant. The name of the Fool incidentally is "Nazzareno"—"the Nazarene."

The Structure

La Strada begins and ends by the sea. Fellini has said that for him the sea is "a comforting mystery, conveying the idea of permanence, of eternity, of the primal element." The sea appears in all his films except *Il Bidone*. The sea in both psychology and literature also connotes openness, life, cleansing. Gelsomina is the girl of the sea and all of these values of the sea are part of her world. Zampano is the man of the road and he understands none of these values. Midway through the film both G. and Z. stop by the seashore. She runs to the sea like a liberated bird. He uses it as a washroom. Zampano finally abandons Gelsomina by a seawall and we are told later that she eventually dies by the sea. And the road on which Zampano travels begins and eventually ends by the sea.

The ending of *La Strada* is the place to begin the discussion of the film. After learning of the death of Gelsomina, Zampano returns to the circus and once more goes through the dull routine of his act. That night he gets drunk and in the ensuing fight keeps repeating that he wants to be alone, that he doesn't need anybody. He walks to the sea and there is a moment at which it appears that he may be considering killing himself. Instead he throws water on his face and returns to shore. On the beach he looks at the water, the sky, the stars, the earth. He begins to weep. He now knows what it means to be alone, but he also knows what it is to be human. Fellini calls them "sobs of desperation, but also of liberation." Zampano clutches the earth with the same gesture used by the Fool as he died. The film ends with the music of the song associated with Gelsomina and the Fool. The road has led back to where it started.

The ending of the film and the change in Zampano are the result of a process begun with the appearance of the Fool and precipitated by his death. The Fool is the catalytic agent in the film. The Fool's incessant and very incisive teasing is the first thing to start breaking through Zampano's defenses. The Fool's death sends Gelsomina into the whining depression which annoys, infuriates, and haunts Zampano. "The Fool is hurt. The Fool is hurt." Zampano finally abandons her by the seawall ten days after the death of the Fool. But something new has been set in motion. Zampano feeds Gelsomina. He sleeps outside the motorcycle. He responds, rationalizes, notices. And in the very act of leaving her, he is already showing signs of humanity. He covers her with blankets, he gives her some money, and, in a gesture both tender and unexpected, he leaves the trumpet with her. It is the instrument which the Fool had taught her to play with a delicacy in strong contrast to Zampano's cruelty in teaching her to play the drum. It is the instrument on which she played the song identified with her and the Fool, the spiritual theme of the film. Before she goes to sleep her last words are: "The Fool is dead. Everything is all right." As Zampano leaves along the road, the music of the theme song accompanies him for the first time in the film.

Gelsomina's role in the humanization of Zampano was shaped through her encounter with the Fool. He put some meaning into what she was doing. "If you don't stay with him, who will?" He could have talked her into coming with him, but he understood Zampano's need and Gelsomina's unique role. "Poor fellow. He's like a dog who wants to talk, but he can only bark." The message of the Fool is reinforced by the nun at the convent who told her that Gelsomina's vocation was to follow Zampano just as she herself followed Christ. And in a scene cut from the final version of the film the parallel between the nun and Gelsomina is underscored when the nun tells how she

thought of running away from the convent until a voice said to her: "Leave, if you wish, but where will you go?" The Fool converts her innocence and naïveté into an aware and active goodness.

The Theology

There is more to the theology of the film than the uncovering of an apparent Christ-figure or the presence of a religious procession. There is a way of looking at the world which suffuses the whole picture. It is a vision which runs through all of Fellini's work and which can most completely be analyzed with material from all his films. The theology of *La Strada* is manifest in the character of the Fool, the attitude of the film toward organized religion, and the basic view of man presented in the film.

The Fool. The data on the Fool has already been elaborated. The interpretation of the data is left to the individual. Any one of the items which touch on his role as a Christ-symbol seems casual in itself, but the cumulative effect seems strong in support of such an interpretation. Film-making is a highly selective process and all the things in the film were thus selected. Whether it was a conscious or unconscious process of selection is another question. They are *in* the film. We discover them there; we do not put them there. Literary scholars label these two opposite approaches with the fancy titles of "exegesis" and "eisegesis."

It is true of course that each person sees his own film and that selective perception based on background, belief, and bias will incline each person to see or not see certain things which are in the film. In addition, repeated screenings and discussions of the film will reveal many things which no one could be expected to arrive at after one screening. The best test of any such theorizing about the meaning of a film is the film itself. The film can obviously be seen and understood without the interpretation of the Fool as a Christ-figure, but once discovered the interpretation is both a useful insight and a generous cinematic lagniappe or bonus.

Organized Religion. Formal religion gets its come-uppance in all of Fellini's films. The main encounter in *La Strada* occurs in the religious procession. The film records an actual procession. The Bishop is a rather hard-bitten, cold man who dispenses tired and mechanical blessings to people who seem to have more faith and warmth than he does. The music is heavy and lugubrious in contrast to the bouncy version of the same melody played by the three musicians who led Gelsomina to the festival. There is a stress on external trappings with strong elements of superstition. Gelsomina is both fascinated and awed by the whole thing. The later episode in the convent conveys a feeling of simplicity and innocence, but there is an undertone of naïveté and repression.

Fellini is hardly an anti-religious man. His films reveal a strong intuitive faith. They also manifest a love-hate relationship with the Church. His attitude might be described as religious rather than ecclesiastical. But at the same time, he is completely enamored of Pope John who also saw beyond the ecclesiastical to the religious.

Because he is both religious and a critic of religion, Fellini has been caught in a critical crossfire. He is frequently too religious for the secularists and too secular for the religionists. The secular mind stands by cheering when he takes on the clerical establishment, but it hardly relishes his basic theological premises. The churchmen, on the other hand, can do without the criticism and occasional eroticism. What both would do well to understand is that Fellini is probing, in a very personal way, tensions which he finds in his own life and in his own culture. He is not propounding a package theory. He, like his characters, is with a circus traveling along a road.

View of Man. Fellini might be described as an idealistic realist. He says: "I am not a pessimist. I believe there is a slow conquest toward the divine state of man." His films document his own tortuous journey along that route. He is working toward the state of innocence after knowledge. Three basic attitudes toward man emerge from his films:

Worth of the Individual. People are important to Fellini. He delights in finding them in their own environment just being themselves. He accepts them for what they are. All the characters in *La Strada* footnote this thesis beautifully—the three protagonists, Giraffa and the circus family, the nuns, the children, the prostitute, the members of the wedding. Because of this basic respect for and love of people, Fellini is desperately concerned with the need for communication between people. The theme recurs in all his films, as indeed it does in most serious films today. He tells us that "*La Strada* is the history of a closed person who would like to communicate with others, of a woman who would like to speak to a man who doesn't want to understand."

Redeemability of Man. Fellini's films always end on a note of hope. It's not the fraudulent, giddy optimism of the naïve. It's the hope that blooms on the brink of despair, the hope that has lived through and understands the alternatives to itself. To be alive is to have a chance. The world of Fellini abounds in grace—people, places, actions calculated to remind the individual of his worth. The setting and tone are thoroughly Christian. God is the silent protagonist in the world of Fellini.

Unity with the Universe. The print-oriented man delights in his antiseptic categories. Neither Fellini nor his films lend themselves to such easy division and compartmentalization. All of the elements of reality are intertwined in a marvelous and mysterious skein. Each man is closely connected with every other man in a great family which is frequently pictured as a traveling circus. Man is closely tied to nature—to the enduring qualities of the sea, to the cycles of days and seasons which reflect his moods, to the trees, flowers, and animals which always delight and remind. And man's past and present are always with him in his own culture whose history and beliefs are the air he breathes. This is why Fellini will never make a film outside Italy. He would be out of communication with "the spirits of the place." Since he is a "man of the provinces," it may also explain why he is still not quite at home in dealing with the city. This incarnational view of the universe which sees the connectedness of things and which sees all of reality as charged with meaning is almost unique with Fellini among contemporary film-makers. Alienation from man, nature, religion, and oneself are the order of the day. Fellini also probes these themes but within a basic framework which promises some redeeming insight and hope. His films could have been made only by a man working within and reacting to a Christian tradition, more specifically, that of Italian Catholicism.

La Strada is but one of the 9½ films made by Fellini. Any definitive judgment on his theology would have to include an analysis of all his films. Of his three most recent films, *La Dolce Vita* seems to offer the richest material for future investigation. Everyone has to be his own final arbiter in deciding on the aptness or appropriateness of such attempts to interpret films. We are giving Fellini a chance to comment on the above investigation of *La Strada*. Who knows? It may be true.

INGMAR BERGMAN ON

By WILLIAM HAMILTON

THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY

THE SILENCE OF GOD

Actors, painters, choreographers, and musicians often are liars, ironists, or just plain untrustworthy when they talk about their art. This may well be true of film directors too. Ingmar Bergman has talked a great deal about his work, and it is hard to know, on the face of what he does, whether to trust what he says. Recently, for example, he made this statement about his trilogy, *Through a Glass Darkly*, *Winter Light* and *The Silence:* These three films

> stand together. My basic concern in making them was to dramatize the all-importance of communication, of the capacity for feeling.
> They are not concerned—as many critics have theorized with God or His absence, but with the saving force of love. Each film, you see, has its moment of contact, of human communication. A tiny moment in each film—but the crucial one. What matters most of all in life is being able to make that contact with another human. Otherwise you are dead, as so many people today are dead. But if you can take that first step toward communication, toward understanding, toward love, then no matter how difficult the future may be—and have no illusions, even with all the love in the world, living can be hellishly difficult—then you are saved. That is all that matters.

This sermon may contain the one great truth of the twentieth century, or it may be embarrassingly banal and obvious (as I would say). The point is that we should not automatically assume that it is the best possible interpretation of the three films.

Bergman, for the most part, is the author of his own scripts, so it is quite appropriate to speak of the films as *his* work. He is not a political writer, not "engaged" in the existentialist sense, and not much dominated by twentieth-century questions. He has something of the neutrality of his native Sweden, a land in which Protestantism has rather fully lost its power to persuade, but in which there are still vestiges of Protestant middle-class values. It is possible to find these vestiges in Bergman himself, in his longing for some kind of moral stability, for God, for a strong family structure. More psychological than political, more Buber than Marx, Bergman seems most interested in those human problems that remain after a welfare state has achieved tolerable solutions to the questions of justice and equality.

Over this whole trilogy lies an atmosphere of threat and defeat. *Through a Glass Darkly* portrays a few isolated people on an island cut off from everything. The mood of *Winter Light* is cold and lonely, while in *The Silence* the leading characters are in a foreign land, in a deserted hotel, unable to communicate to each other or to anyone else. Unlike some of Bergman's earlier films, these three are quite free of symbolism, free even of those necessary images that distinguish a film from a sermon or a tract. He is playing the ascetic here, peeling away everything that might be considered ornament. What is he intending to say to us?

Through a Glass Darkly

The biblical title should be noted, and the context of the phrase in Paul's meditation on love. We should note also the distinction, in I Corinthians 13, between the inadequate seeing we now have and the full knowledge that is promised. Thus we should not be surprised to discover that this film is about love, about some inadequate present forms of it, and about the promise of something better in the future.

The action takes place at a summer house on an island in the Baltic Sea over a 24-hour period. The characters are Karin, a girl recently discharged from a mental hospital where, we discover, she had been treated for schizophrenia; her husband, a good and somewhat helpless doctor (when they are in bed that night Karin says to him, "You always do the right thing, and it is never any good"); her father, a troubled and fashionable novelist; and her adolescent brother.

The film has two themes, and it may be that they are never quite brought together. It is partly about the novelist, his fears, his failures, his remorse at his inability to love. He is caught in a crisis of sorts, a middle-aged crisis of morale, and no one offers to help. At the beginning of the film, after supper, he leaves the table to look for his tobacco in his room, and there he breaks down, weeping, with his body stretched in the form of a cross. He knows his own lovelessness, he is honest with himself, and we cannot but sympathize. But he is also portrayed as cold, more interested in his work than his family, even willing to use his daughter's illness as material for his new novel. Bergman leaves us ambivalent about the loveless father, but he returns to the same problem again in the character of the pastor in *Winter Light*.

The second theme has to do with Karin, and her mental deterioration. This deterioration is accentuated by her accidental discovery that both her father and her husband know her case to be hopeless, and it is symbolized by her incestuous attack on her brother.

The opening half-hour of this film shows Bergman at his best, portraying the deep tensions and yet well-meaning affection binding this family together. After their picnic supper, Karin and her brother put on an original play about how a poet (the father?) promises and then breaks his promise to love a princess forever. This play may be a rather clumsy attempt to offer a causal explanation for Karin's mental condition.

The next morning, the men leave the island, and the brother and sister are left alone. She becomes distracted,

growing more and more sensitive to sights and sounds. She finally hides in the wreck of an old ship on the shore, and in her growing fear commits incest with her young brother.

The father and husband return to the island, observe Karin's deterioration, and summon the helicopter-ambulance from the mainland. Karin has been visiting a mysterious upstairs room several times during the day, and in this room she awaits the ambulance. (The working title for this film was "The Wallpaper" and this refers to the bizarre and patterned paper on the walls of this room.) Just as we see the helicopter flash by the window of this room, from top to bottom, as it lands, spider-like—a sort of *deus ex machina* Karin receives a visitation from God in her upper room, and her God turns out to be a spider who sexually attacks her. She becomes hysterical, and after being tranquillized, she describes her vision:

> He came to me and I saw his face. It was a loathsome evil face. And he climbed up on me and tried to penetrate me. But I warded him off. And all the time I saw his eyes. They were cold and calm. When he could not enter into me he quickly climbed up on my breast and my face and then on to the wall. . . . I have seen God.

What does this all mean? Who is this God she has seen? Is God the name for her madness? Can one see God only when one is mad? Is faith the same as foolishness or madness? Schizophrenia, we know, is the inability to distinguish between the self and the world. Is this the true breakdown of the subject-object relation, the mystical oneness that men have sought?

This climax of the Karin theme is beautifully carried off in the film, and it is Bergman at his haunting best. In contrast, the final few minutes of the film are a terrible let-down. After Karin is taken away, no doubt permanently, to the hospital, Bergman turns to the theme of the father, and to his inability to love. The father is so shaken by Karin's breakdown, that he is at last able to break through to his son with a true message, the message that God is love. This really doesn't convince us, for we want to know how the father found this out. Nobody loved anybody else very effectively in the film; all the human love we saw was either ineffectual or destructive. So there really isn't any preparation for the final sermon which, without preparation, becomes just a banal triviality.

Are we really meant at the end to see the father redeemed by tragedy from the prison of his lovelessness? Has Karin's death-madness, and resurrection in the helicopter, really started not only a psychological but a theological process in the loveless father? According to one published statement, it appears that Bergman wants us to see something theological going on here. It is reported that he remarked that this film, along with *Wild Strawberries* and *The Virgin Spring* are about atonement and the problem of God. Did he mean it? In any case, at the close of the film, the Karin theme (the relation of madness and God) and the father-theme ("Daddy spoke to me" and God is love) are not brought together in a satisfactory way. Here is an interesting comment by Dwight MacDonald on Bergman's theological interpretation of his own work:

> These problems are in general meaningless to me. I don't feel guilty, I don't believe in God and am not much interested in whether I'm right or not. They sometimes become meaningful when someone like Dorothy Day, in her life, or T.S. Eliot, in his poetry, fills them with a personal, and so an original and interesting content. This Mr. Bergman has never been able to do for me. "God is love" indeed! I was told that at compulsory chapel in Phillips Exeter Academy. What does it **mean,** exactly? When Mr. Bergman can be explicit, in cinematic terms, I shall take his Message seriously. Meanwhile, I shall continue to enjoy the secular portions of his movies (**Esquire,** August, 1962).

You may feel, as I do, that MacDonald is a bit shrill here; not quite relaxed enough to be wholly convincing. But the ending of *Through a Glass Darkly* is weak; not because it is theological, but because Bergman has not brought the two themes of the plot together—God as a spider and God as love. (Unless we are supposed to conclude that the final message is that God is a loving spider.)

Winter Light

There are some obvious connections between the first and second films of this trilogy. God the spider and God is love appear in the second as well as the first. Gunnar Björnstrand plays the novelist in spiritual trouble in the first film, and the pastor in spiritual trouble in the second.

The Swedish title of *Winter Light* is literally translated as "The Communicants," meaning both the literal communicants at the sacrament at the beginning and the end of the film, and those in general who are trying to communicate to one another—and fail.

In many ways this is a better and clearer film. There is a "faultless and almost intolerable harmony here between the major theme—God is silent—and the environment" which is itself silent and non-communicative. And the religious substance is, in certain ways, different. In *Through a Glass Darkly* God is not dead or silent or absent. He is love for the father and son, and sexually aggressive spider for Karin as she goes mad. In *Winter Light,* he has disappeared. The atmosphere is doom-laden and deathly. The action takes place on a cold Sunday between the morning and evening services, and the subject is a man's crisis of faith: "how, what, whether to believe," as Stanley Kauffman puts it. The answer: "You can't believe anything." You can talk to neither God nor man. *Through a Glass Darkly* seemed at the end to suggest that love was a way to God; at least, that if God was inaccessible, the other person was not. Hence the young boy's cry of delight, "Daddy spoke to me!" All this has gone in *Winter Light.* There is no divine society; no human community. Only isolated individuals and dead worship services.

> Bergman seems to be saying that if life was once lived in expectation of answers, now it is lived in continuity of questions. Crisis no longer leads to resolution. For him the special agony is the tearing of the bond between God and man. Unlike Antonioni, whose work also concentrates on this matter, he does not believe that man invented God and must now be manly enough to admit it and to destroy him. Bergman is concerned to find a way of living with—at the very least—the memory of God (Stanley Kauffmann, **The New Republic,** May 11, 1963).

This is interesting, however accurate it may be as a comparison of the work of two great directors. It suggests that there are two kinds of reaction to the experience of the death of God. They can go together, and they can be found separately. In one mode man feels free and strong, and takes full responsibility for his own life, his own actions, his own world. In the other, there is a pathos, a sense of loss or a memory, and there is a need to keep the space that has been vacated intact, to remember it. *Winter Light* is about the death of God in the second sense, while *Through a Glass Darkly* is not yet at that point. It still lives in the world of anguished, existential, and conventional Protestantism: God is the suffering enemy, only the fool can see him.

In any case, the action of *Winter Light* is easily described. We open on a painful service of communion with a congregation of nine. After the service, the pastor is asked by a distracted wife to comfort her husband, a fisherman suffering from suicidal melancholy based on fear of nuclear destruction. (This is one of the rare concessions Bergman makes to the twentieth century.) Depressed by a cold, the pastor asks the fisherman to return

for a talk later in the day. The pastor becomes afflicted by his own impotence, and when the fisherman does return he embarrasses the poor man by a recital of his own theological woes.

The fisherman leaves, hardly reassured, and the pastor's mistress, the local school teacher, presses him for marriage. The man confesses he can love no one but the memory of his dead wife. She gives him a long letter which he reads after she has left. In the scene depicting his reading of this letter Bergman has a long close-up of Ingrid Thulin speaking the words as the pastor himself reads them. This painful and simple close-up is a beautiful scene, and one of the few places in this film where our emotions are fully engaged. After a brutal scene in which the pastor decisively rejects the teacher's love, word comes that the fisherman has shot himself. The pastor and the teacher go to view the body, curiously unmoved, and the pastor ineptly informs the fisherman's wife. Then together they make their way to a near-by village for the evening service, where there turns out to be but one "communicant," the teacher herself, apart from the organist and the sexton.

On the way to the second service there is a fascinating touch. The pastor is speaking to his mistress about his desire to become a minister, and how he made the decision largely to please his parents. He continues to describe his call, but a passing train makes whatever he does say inaudible to us, as if such words on such a subject are rarely worth speaking or worth hearing any more.

Just before the second service, the crippled sexton questions the pastor about the crucifixion, and especially about the relation of Jesus' physical suffering to his spiritual sense of desolation. He wonders if his inability to convince the disciples and his own acute sense of God's withdrawal wasn't worse than the actual pain. This is a striking and mysterious scene. Is the sexton perhaps the devil tempting the pastor, as he tempts most of us, to confuse himself with Jesus and his suffering? So the pastor, succumbing to the temptation, accepts his suffering as participation in that of Jesus, and goes forward to conduct the service for one, godless, just like Jesus on the cross.

This is not a difficult picture to interpret or understand, for it is free of the symbolic touches Bergman liked to use in his earlier work. But some questions and problems remain to haunt us. Is the pastor supposed to achieve a true self-understanding at the end? Is his decision to continue the second service, with but one communicant, the rejected mistress, an act of heroism, a moment of "communion" (perhaps even an affirmation of the objective character of the priesthood, valid apart from man's feelings)?

The pastor has apparently become a minister, like so many unhappy men before him and since, out of consideration for his parents. He had longed for a God who would give him security, but now, it seems, he has no God and no security. Perhaps it doesn't matter to Bergman whether one has a god or not, as long as one tries to communicate, to be "a communicant." One really doubts that the pastor and his mistress will manage to speak either to God or to each other. (It should be noted, since we have been forced to see connections between the first and second members of this trilogy, that the third film is called *The Silence* and has as its main theme our friend, the problem of non-communication.)

Do you feel, as I do, that the pastor's loss of God doesn't move us, the way a really good loss of God should? Why is this? Is it Bergman's intention or is there something inherent in the idea of the loss or the death

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of God that is anti-emotional and therefore unmoving? The fisherman's despair and the teacher's hopeless love, less important in the film as a whole, are far more moving. Perhaps related to this is the fact that the suicide of the fisherman affects the pastor and teacher so little. How calmly the pastor contemplates the dead man's body!

What is the correct description of the pastor's relation to God? Is God absent, dead, momentarily withdrawn? What is the role of the love of God in this film, as compared to *Through a Glass Darkly*? There we had both God and love and some attempt, rather unclear, to unite the two. Here we clearly have a permanent withdrawal of God, from everyone and everything except the words of the prayerbook, and an equally permanent withdrawal of love, except the helpless, rejected love of the teacher.

The Silence

In *The Silence* one is tempted to say that Bergman's concern about the silence of God has disappeared, and that what is left is only the problem of human communication. Yet, in the printed Swedish version of the script Bergman has referred to the theme of the film as "the silence of God." We do hear, in the beginning, that the two sisters' father, a commanding figure of authority, has died. Are we to make something of that?

Again in this film Bergman has matched his physical setting to his theme with great skill. Two sisters, Anna and Ester, are on their way to Sweden, and have stopped in an unidentified foreign country, mainly because of Ester's illness. They are staying in a virtually deserted hotel. The city's location is unspecified, and the sisters cannot speak the language. The name of the city is Timoka or Timokas (related to the dative form of the Estonian word for "executioner.") We get the impression of somewhere in central Europe, either just before or just after a war; the two sisters and the child seem to be refugees.

On their arrival at the hotel, Ester, the intellectual, takes to her bed. Anna is the sensual sister, restless and bored. We sense at once an unexplained hostility between the sisters, and perhaps even a trace of a former or present lesbian relationship between them.

The contrast between the two sisters is sharply drawn from the start: Anna enjoying her own body and that of her son in a natural, almost pagan way; Ester, the bored intellectual, ill and alone. The portrait of Ester's loneliness is brilliant: the cigarette put out in the overflowing ashtray, wandering nervously about the room, looking out the window, ringing for a bottle, falling back on the bed, all of this coming to a climax in the astonishing masturbation scene. This whole scene, so beautifully portrayed by Ingrid Thulin, is an example of how Bergman builds a character by piling one particular observation on another.

Anna is just as bored and restless, just as unable to communicate her plight. As Ester is the intellectual fleeing from the physical side of life, Anna is fleeing from intelligence and consciousness into the void of sensuality. We see her go out into the street, picking up a young waiter, seducing him without joy, and we see slowly growing in her "the terror of drifting into the wash of incomprehensible sensuality."

Perhaps we are to see the two antagonistic sisters as the two elements in every woman: intelligence and consciousness rebelling against the physical limitations imposed by the woman's sexual role, and the enjoyment of the physical element in life always obscured and limited by reflection or analysis of it. What is appropriate when joined—sensuality and consciousness—becomes destructive when separated. Jack Richardson has tried to interpret *The Silence* along these lines, and has thus related Bergman to one of the basic themes of modern European art: "that the Spirit, the mind, and all they aspired to by way of order and peace, have been irreparably crippled by the knowledge that there is in life no principle but an unyielding sightless rhythm of sensuality."

Seeing Anna and Ester as one woman in two parts means that one can take the chief theme of the film as the nature of woman, and thus closer to *Wild Strawberries* and *The Virgin Spring* than to the first two parts of this trilogy, which are not really about woman at all. But to focus too exclusively on this theme, more subtle and more interesting as it may be, is to forget the strong emphasis on that old friend of Bergman, the problem of communication, carried in this film by the discussion of language and words.

The character of Anna's son brings us back to the theme of communication and words. He dallies briefly with some sort of sexual perversion (perhaps transvestitism, as in the scene with the dwarves), which is meant to parallel Anna's seduction of the waiter and Ester's self-abuse. And at the end, he goes away with his mother, presumably leaving Ester alone to die. Anna leaves her nephew a list of the foreign words she has compiled. He has seen too much ever to be innocent again, and his legacy is a list of words he cannot understand. But the end, as in the

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two earlier films, is not without hope. Just as father and son briefly spoke together at the end of *Through a Glass Darkly*, just as the pastor continued to use the ancient religious words to a congregation composed wholly of the mistress whose love he had crushingly rejected, so there is not only the dying woman left alone, the broken child and sensuous mother falling into the abyss, there is the love of that mother for her child, the fruit of her body, part of the love she still has for her own body.

* * *

In an interview about this trilogy, Bergman remarked that while he used to worry about the deep questions like "who is God?" and "what is a woman?" he had more recently begun to see life more simply. For him now, he stated, the issue was the simple one between suicide and accepting life as it is, and he had decided to choose the latter.

But I do not think we should take Bergman too seriously as a critic of his own work. These three films are in fact obsessed by the God-question. The protagonists are all unable to answer it, and so they destroy themselves in madness (*Through a Glass Darkly*), despair over their inability to love God or man (*Winter Light*), or spiritual and physical death (*The Silence*). Nor does this trilogy give us a very strong sense of acceptance and affirmation of life. As MacDonald has written: "If this trilogy is Bergman's idea of accepting life, one wonders what he would give us if he rejected it."

But we must not be put off by the contrast between what Bergman as a writer-director has shown us and what he has told us, perhaps in irony or contempt, in articles and interviews. He does in fact show us the world in which we live, he faces the problems we have to face. In these three films, there is neither laughter nor delight, and thus there is not the whole of life. But Bergman knows that there are angels and he also knows that when you meet an angel the thing to do is to wrestle with it, even though there is never a clear battle, a decisive decision, a victory.

RESUMÉ: for Charles Gounod
Faust forms a malediction forbidding morning:
The 3/4 petticoats in swirl;
The buckets fat with cream.

The doctor calls a specialist,
A gentleman of pentagrams
And paregoric prose.

Mephisto moves sweet Marguerite
To elemental elegance
Determined by a lust.

The brother, boastful blunderbuss,
Makes crosses with his cutlasses,
And Satan laughs a way.

Walpurgisnacht and no entr'acte.
The Norns boil nuns and skew Walloons.
The devil laughs away.

The cell is colder than a cube.
A flying band clasps at her hand.
Faust hides his face from burning day.
Mephisto screams. Away.

—Girouard

The Tender Guardian

Our camera pinned the hut
of broad-looped wood
below the glaring Ducor Hotel
on Mamba Point;
we took the scene as it was.
Who'd have thought
he would have cared so much?

Da ting, **he yelled,**
it lie too much:
old man hobbling
on swollen legs;
around that cane he waved,
scaled black knuckles
tanned from tightening rage.

The photo might as well
have been a plate,
soft, and near to wetness
for all the tenderness
it touched.

We took a chance
exposing man's soft
armadillo belly;
they say a man who poor
alway fix his clothes so-so.
They say.

Overlapping scales
grow fast, but incomplete;
some start, some die,
some wait for each.

You couldn't blame him:
punched pride loses
its wind, leaving
anger where space was,
the sucking sound
of breath, fighting to fill
the caved-in bag
of man's old dreams.

—William Holland

FOUR WALLS, WITH PICTURES

I But in his room,
narrow as all despair
and tight as his dreamless eyes,
are pictures that draw inward
from the walls,
taking their thin horizons
beyond his stiff unleaning.

II There is his desert
and his sea,
his unclimbed mountain,
simplified to paper-flat
dimension.

III There is no portrait anywhere,
only the copied world
pulling at what survives
in places known as rooms,
only the vertigo
of his declension.

IV Image-caught for meaning,
a grudging mirror
mocks within its frame
all that it faces
and pulls his inward stares
outward
and into such shallows of itself
as his mind dares.

—JOYCE ODAM

IN PRAISE OF SOUP CANS

We know them by their fruits, their ripe perfection
Bottled in art: the kouroi stepping forward for the prize
Smiling acknowledgment; the worldly-wise
Romans as is, all wrinkled gravitas, sunk in reflection
On viaducts or drains; the Gothic saints
Built in the holy fabric of the church, immensely tall,
Mere increments in the heaven-aspiring wall;
Here Colleoni rides the human plane, there Raphael paints
Divine Madonnas happy in the flesh—
And all the while the bison charge in Altamira's dark,
And two by two the archetypes trot from the universal ark,
Old as the ages, as the instant fresh—

All in their time ideal, the mot juste of the Word. And what
Shall we say? How package us, sour product
Of wars and crimes? How crate the incubus? Better we ducked
Beneath the surface, howled, or junked the lot,
Made mazes for the mind, or hid the horror with rough nets
Of camouflage; better hide what we feel
In the familiar Campbell's can with its blind, sweat-soldered seal
So they will know we want them to forget.

—JOHN V. BRAIN

THERE GETS ONE

It was a confession box all right
looking at the ant looking at the elephant
snuggling right in there, having
one's inning and hymn with all objects.
Can you get away with it? and he
ran off with the universe. Don't forget
that it takes a lot of listening to invent
a poem; mysteriously confessed to the priest's
holy laughter; a mermaid very very wet
gave the box a push, it became an airplane.

—JOHN TAGLIABUE

CAMPING AT THE MOVIES

By AL CARMINES

There are different ways of appreciating films. This is a simple fact that many critics and viewers often forget. The metaphysical riches of *8 1/2* or *Wild Strawberries* might produce indigestion if they and their counterparts were seen consistently. While there are some films we indisputably would call great, the experiences films give us do differ—and rightly so. *Lawrence of Arabia* in no sense is as "profound" a movie as *La Dolce Vita* or *Breathless* or *The Magician,* yet in its sheer visual sweep and in the excitement of its subject, it provides its own aesthetic enjoyment and one which is not diminished by its lack of "depth." Now, in "camp," we have a new tag to put upon the way we appreciate certain films.

"Camp," of course, is not a term applying primarily to films but rather to a whole sensibility which, once named by critic Susan Sontag, has mushroomed into a tropical luxuriance in the forest of cultural enjoyment. As a term it had lurked in the corridors of English cafe society, homosexual terminology, and precious aesthetic understandings for many years before being dragged coyly screaming into the open by Miss Sontag. I remember several years ago, before the term was used generally, someone describing the Queen Mother Elizabeth of England as "high camp." When I asked for an explanation, I was told: "She does everything with a shade too much extravagance. It makes sophisticates laugh and everyone else simply feels their pulses heighten with excitement." Camp, as an objective phenomenon in any artistic medium then, carries the connotation of an extravagance of treatment not matched by the quality of the subject treated. But I am concerned with another aspect of camp: subjective camp—or a way of appreciating things which might be called a camp reaction.

Camp as a way of reacting is a curious blend of cynicism and nostalgia. When we appreciate something in a camp way it is as if we say to our minds, "Now look, I know this isn't really good according to strict artistic judgments. But for some reason I like it and it excites me and makes me want to laugh or cry so you will just have to be suspended for a while and let me enjoy it." Camp appreciation of movies is most usually built around certain actors such as Humphrey Bogart, Mae West, Kitty Carlisle, Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., and the like, but also appended to other factors. Buzbee Berkley musicals, 1930 melodramas, Shirley Temple movies from the early days; and soon, I have no doubt, the Betty Grable and Jack Oakie movies of the war years will join the list. Some of these movies are camp classics. The interesting factor to note is that when they were contemporary none of them would have been considered a classic in any sense. It is their renaissance as camp phenomena that have made them

classics. Some ideas that follow this realization:

• Camp appreciation brings into play extra-aesthetic considerations in our reactions. Humphrey Bogart is the hero of camp not primarily because he was a brilliant actor; though he was a talented craftsman, he could not compare with Lawrence Olivier or Lester Howard in sheer acting ability. He is a camp hero because he evokes an era of American life so clearly and so poignantly that we are profoundly and even sometimes unwillingly emotionally moved.

• When we tag something "camp" and then appreciate it fully we do not have to deal with those puzzling artistic questions of how something may fall short of being serious art and yet give us as much pleasure as a "classic" does. There are people who watch television with the shades down for fear neighbors will think they are low brow. Camp lets us do it respectably!

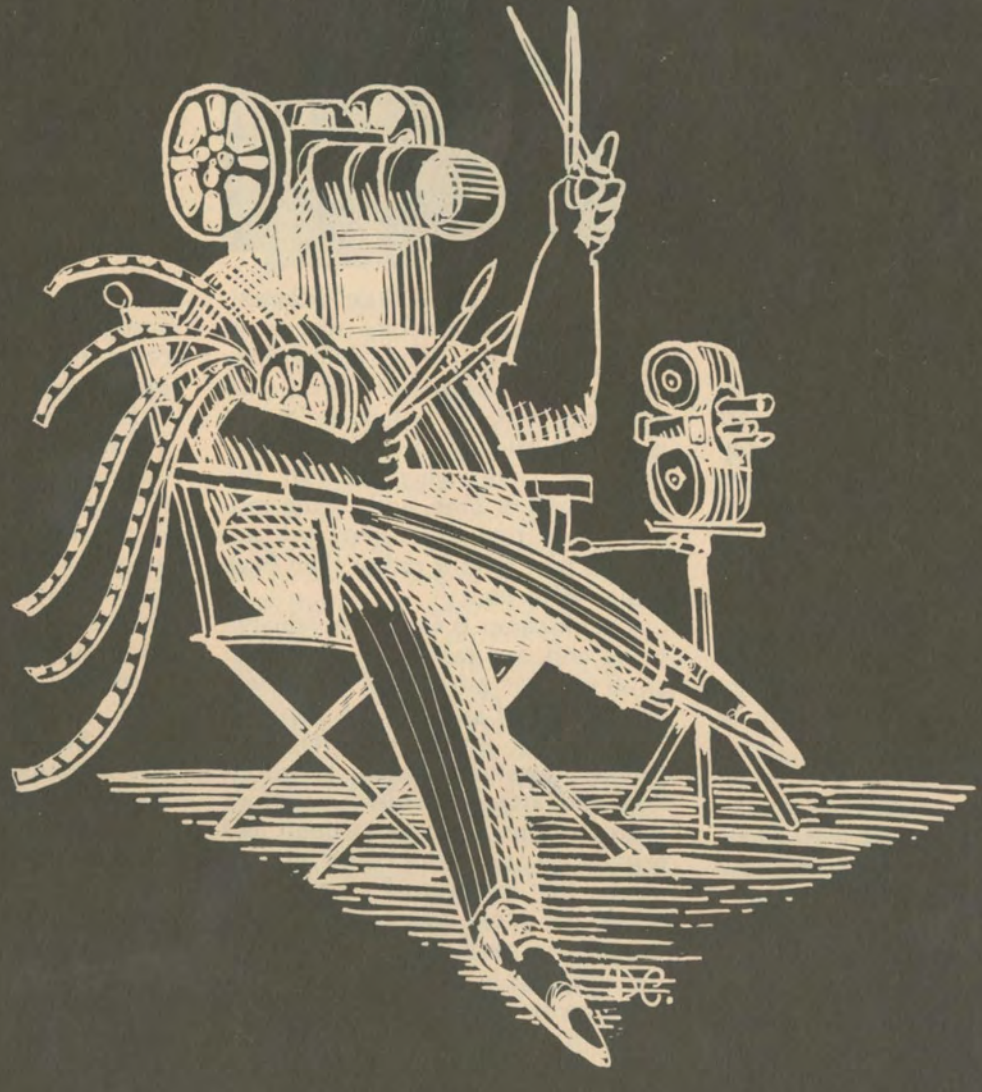
• Camp *can* be (not always is) a way of indulging a sentimentality in ourselves and in the artist which we would never allow otherwise. For that reason contemporary camp in legitimate theater is dangerous. It is as if a playwright, by calling his work camp, seduces us into soft-headedness through our soft-heartedness, and we end up having participated in something essentially shoddy and aesthetically flimsy and false. In films it is a little different. The few self-conscious efforts at camp (that is, films deliberately made to be camp) have been such egregious box-office failures that it is seldom attempted. A film usually becomes camp only through the soft growth of time, and by the moment it is ripe as "camp" we are able to play with it rather than have it play with us.

I think camp is far more valuable to us and our tastes however than as an esoteric movement which will go the way of all fads. It is valuable because all unwittingly it raises serious questions about appreciation and artistic quality—questions rooted in our actual enjoyment and experience, instead of being brought up in the intellectual manner reserved for most college philosophy courses on aesthetics.

Playfulness in art is a quality we all know exists on some level, but in camp it is brought out into the open absolutely. This is important as a reminder to us that on some level all art is "playful." The most profound novel, painting or drama *is* art precisely because it is not real life. It is "play." We have so denigrated the meaning of "play" in our society that we almost think we are insulting art by attaching this aspect to it. Brecht, among others, understood how important it is that the audience be aware of this element of the *not actual*, the "play" in art, if it is to be actually moved rather than falsely so. Only when the convention of "play" is totally accepted can what is real in a work of art really exist for us. Camp brings playfulness into open vision and thus reminds us of what is true.

Camp also reminds us that no work of art exists within a vacuum, separated from the social and political environs of its life. We have seen that camp evokes for us an era of American consciousness. All art has this evocative quality. Great art moves subtly and deeply, beyond the obvious conventions of a time, into its structures and hidden roots. But there is no art that does not participate in its time, despite the troubling questions which this raises about the relationship of art to real life; camp reminds us of this.

Finally, in an odd way, by its very extravagance and final superficiality, camp is a refiner of taste. When we are able to identify the "camp" quality in a work or in ourselves, we learn to perceive "overdone" extravagance as opposed to brilliant style, we winnow out reactions based on cynicism and nostalgia from those based on deeper and more enduring emotions. It enables us to understand how we can enjoy movies which are even badly made or badly acted, without calling into question our excitement about serious and profound films. And the more various ways we have of appreciating movies, the more movies, strangely enough, we are able to appreciate.



DRAWING: DILL COLE

FILM:

AN INDUSTRY AND AN ART. CAN IT BE TAUGHT?

By GORDON HITCHENS

Assessments about American film students and the schools they come from vary from extravagant praise to pessimism. David C. Stewart of the American Council on Education writes in *Harpers* (October, 1965) that ". . . teachers and college administrators have begun to discover that student-made films say as much, or more, about students—their present frustrations and aspirations—as about film-making itself." Offsetting Stewart's optimism is John Thomas' evaluation of National Student Film Festival winners: ". . . the films lacked not gadgets and skill, but mind and heart. I saw not a single film that had anything very important to say. The more 'serious' the film-maker, almost inevitably the more disastrous his film" (*Film Society Review*, November, 1965).

Despite disagreement about the *quality* of American student films, there is general acknowledgment about its *quality:* about one thousand per year. In the 12 years ending in 1965, there was a 50 per cent increase in the number of film courses taught in colleges and universities. Today, there are approximately one thousand courses in film history, appreciation, criticism and production. Many non-film courses, like sociology and psychology, increasingly use films already made and make films to order that meet their particular needs. In addition, there are the campus film societies (about one thousand) that feature series of classics or contemporary art films. Thus there is a considerable film movement on the typical American campus, both within the curriculum and in the school's general cultural environment.

A survey reported by The Rev. John M. Culkin, Director of Fordham University's Center of Communications in New York City illustrates the degree to which American youth is addicted to the screen image. Father Culkin finds that the average 18-year-old has seen 500 feature films and 15,000 hours of television, figures contrasting with this typical youngster's 10,800 hours of total school time from kindergarten through high school. Only sleep-time surpasses television-viewing time as a prime activity. And among the college-age group, the ratio of films to novels is 20 to 1.

Recognizing the modern relevance of the electronic media, Fordham is about to acquire a huge Communications Arts Center, to be located in the heart of Manhattan's film-television industry. A *New York Times* newsstory reports that the new complex would offer "... no semester, credits or textbooks; instead, it would accept students for all degrees including the doctorate, and also conduct what amounts to a running seminar

for people actually employed in the communications arts."

If, in Fordham's plan, there appears an implied distrust of the academician, then this reflects a pervasive fear among many film scholars, professionals and critics that the acceptance of film within an institution's curriculum can presage its stultification by professional fuddy-duddies.

Father Culkin, a liberal in such matters, is determined that Fordham's new center keeps close to the realities. The movies, after all, are the most public, the most popular, of the art forms: born in the penny-arcade nickelodeons, its appeal universal, its heroes and heroines known around the world, its appeal most exciting and immediate and enveloping. And so it is apt that such a modern art be kept free of the deadening hand of classifiers and academic embalmers. Thus many film lovers dread its full acceptance within the institutions.

But generally, film is still far from acceptance in the curriculum. In most schools, film courses are incongruously imbedded within the English department, or public relations and speech, or journalism, as a curriculum orphan. Too often, if the administration belatedly recognizes film at all, it will assign a Fine Arts professor carrying a light load to handle the film course, without regard to his aptitude. Or, the course will be taught by a film industry drop-out who failed to make the grade in the cruel commercial world. Or, still worse, it is taught by a conscientious, but over-worked, instructor who lacks a print-rental budget or projection/production equipment. Sometimes—and we must salute such heroes—an instructor accepts the extra assignment of initiating a film course in order to pioneer within his school. Recognizing the relevance of film to students, their special rapport with the screen as the medium of their time, the teacher seeks to enrich their taste and give them an instrument of self-expression.

By and large, film teaching is a mixed bag. There are as many methodologies as there are teachers. Perhaps this is to be encouraged, for if a young art becomes formalized and rigid, then student film experimentation would suffer.

A look at some of the schools reveals the reasons for the mixed successes and failures of American film education. A few giant universities are able to attract star-teachers of the first magnitude—including international film celebrities—for a semester or two. Some film departments are solidly established, like the University of Southern California, with 28 production courses, and the University of California at Los Angeles, with 34 production courses. Each produces up to 100 student films in any year. Columbia and New York University, with 15 production courses each, turn out fewer student films. Northwestern's film work is admired, and film enrollees in recent years have doubled. At the University of Pennsylvania, the Documentary Film Workshop produces student films that search for the elusive psychological reality behind the journalistic facts of a filmed event. Annenberg recently sent a team to Arizona to teach film-making to Navajos. The National Science Foundation sponsored the project, which sought to give the Indians (who have no written language) a new mode of communication. In Harlem, film-making is being taught to Negro high-school drop outs as self-expression and as job training under a HarYouAct program, sponsored by federal money. Boys of wealthy families can learn film at the Horace Mann School in New York; student films have won various festival honors, but other (films, such as single-concept instructional shorts,) are solely for internal use within the school's science and math classes. At the Free School in New York, film courses emphasize the art's relationship to society. The school frankly claims "to redress the intellectual bankruptcy and spiritual emptiness of the American educational establishment." In recent months, Free School public screenings have included Viet Cong films. In contrast, the little-known Harding College in Searcy, Arkansas, has produced a huge volume of technically proficient films stressing "the advantages of the free enterprise system and the dangers of socialism and communism." Harding has a $6 million endowment fund from industrial donors. Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina, has an enormous film school offering 30 production courses—as many as Columbia and New York universities combined. In addition, the separate Radio and Television Department offers 20 courses. President Bob Jones, Jr., states that his fundamentalist supporters at first feared that film courses might influence the school toward Modernism. "But that wasn't it," declares Jones, "we just decided that the Devil had been granted a monopoly on drama long enough."

Other schools with important work in film include Ohio State, Stanford, Boston, Harvard, and the new School of Visual Arts in New York. There are many more schools which have, or are establishing, film courses. And the future is encouraging, although schools understandably hesitate when confronted with equipment budgets and plant expenses. An active turnover among film teachers, especially on the production level, also inhibits schools from making plans. There is no tradition here for teaching film, and good craftsmen who can easily command $100 or more per day in industry excusably will be reluctant to take on long-term teaching assignments. Just as a film degree *per se* is practically valueless once a graduate has approached the industry, so there are no objective credentials that one can use to measure the worth of a film teacher.

I have saved to the last a discussion of the three best film schools in America: NYU, USC and UCLA. NYU has 390 graduates and undergraduates who produce 20 films annually. The School of the Arts opened its Film and Television Institute this fall with full 35mm equipment and facilities. Emphasis is being placed on professionality, management training and experimentation. Lecturers to date have included such guest specialists of renown as Shirley Clarke and Willard Van Dyke. The student films are among the best in America and have won numerous festival honors. It is nothing less than a crime that many excellent NYU films, and films from other schools, cannot find distribution and wide audiences. At the very least, the best of these works should be in constant circulation among the campuses.

Following are the synopses of some typical NYU films: *It's About This Carpenter* concerns the misadventures of a man who unfortunately resembles Christ; *Plato in Amerika* is an hilarious account of how puritanical American morality tames an erotic young Greek immigrant; *Fowl Is Fare* shows simply and gruesomely how lovely ducks become delicious dinners; *City of Fire* treats a Pennsylvania coal-mine fire; *Arrivederci,*

Darling, That's My Advice to You is another satyr-study, a common NYU theme; *Now, Do You See How We Play* documents the strange Harlem slum world of violence where youngsters "play" at homicide to ventilate aggression; *Where the Dog Is Buried,* by an Israeli girl-student, has a warmth and gentle humor rather uncommon among these typically racy and frenetic student films; *Last Thursday Night* has the French *Nouvelle Vague* influence in showing us young lovers in mutual adoration against New York skylines; *Fugue for a City,* in the words of its student-director, "describes the inevitable loneliness of city dwellers, their lack of communication."

The star-director of NYU recently has been Martin Scorsese, whose satiric sense is illustrated by his titles —*What's a Nice Girl Like You Doing in a Place Like This; It's Not Just You, Murray;* and *Bring on the Dancing Girls,* the last a full-length 35mm student feature costing $7,000, mostly from Scorsese.

Like students in other arts, Scorsese likes to parody the gods—in this case Fellini. His ambition is nothing less than the Big Time in Hollywood, and with his talent he will probably make it. Despite his student accomplishments, Scorsese is somewhat critical of NYU and sees little social relevance in much of the student work. "The kids have absolutely no idea of what goes on in the professional world," he says. "They're too wrapped up in themselves; they're not aware of the social atmosphere." Scorsese deplores the patronizing attitudes that audiences bring to a screening of student films, and he suggests, in order to get the audience's genuine reaction, that only the end-titles identify the film as a student production.

At UCLA, a major change introduced this fall requires applicants to the film department to turn out a film completely on their own (sufficiently good to impress the faculty) *prior* to being formally enrolled. Rated by some film scholars as almost equalling the famous film academies of Moscow, Prague, Lodz, and Poland, UCLA has 218 film students and 35 faculty members. By May, 1967, UCLA will have a vast new production complex, including three sound stages of advanced design, two television stages, 34 editing rooms for film and video tape, five screening rooms, a complete animation studio, facilities for scoring, recording, dubbing, special effects, negative handling and storage. Elaborate lighting equipment will provide full color capability. The world's first theater designed for all types of motion pictures, from 8mm to 70mm Cinerama, is included in the $2½ million plan, budgeted by the State. An additional $400,000 is earmarked for equipment. The new structure surely will have a profound, sudden impact on industry events.

Nearby, USC offers 62 film courses, half of them in production (not counting acting) which fall within the Drama Department. Some 45 full and part-time teachers work with 300 film students, more than half on the graduate level. Among the famous alumni are winners of many festival prizes, a fact that reflects the school's intention to place graduates on the threshold of their profession. To this end, USC is negotiating a work-study deal with the major studios by which students can get salary and professional experience while studying. In this regard, Miss Joyce Geller, 23, a Phi Beta Kappa film student, is now employed as a feature-film writer after having won the Sam Warner Award and a hitch at Warner Brothers. "Her scripting deal," writes *Variety,* the trade newspaper, "is a rare incidence of the industry making room for production-hungry youth."

The film schools of America want to take that word "rare" out of the *Variety* dispatch. Obstacles involve unions, inadequate training, and an overcrowded and competitive industry. But progress is being made toward absorption of film students into actual production. A national awards program to honor student films has been established by the Motion Picture Association of America, the Lincoln Center for The Performing Arts, and the U. S. National Student Association. On November 25, at New York's Lincoln Center, a program of the best student films in four categories—dramatic, documentary, animated, and experimental—will be screened before a VIP audience. Several hundred student entries are being featured. Runners-up will be shown at Hunter College on earlier nights. Jack Valenti, President of the MPAA and the industry's chief spokesman, hails the gifted student directors "as part of a community of young minds whose development is an asset to creativity in this nation." Pointing out that campus film study and film production are "among the fastest growing and most exciting developments in American education," Valenti offers the collaboration of the industry in finding places for qualified students.

It is well to keep in mind, however, that the powerful MPAA, in authenticating and blessing student films, is acting from self-interest. American youngsters, especially those in college, have transferred their box-office loyalties to the foreign art film to an alarming extent (at least, it is alarming to MPAA). How better to woo the bored young American movie-goers than by finding their tastes and anxieties and longings, and by getting young film-makers to serve them? "Young people comprise the restless, eager, larger part of our audience," admits Valenti—in short, admits Hollywood. "We need rapport with them—to know what they believe, what they hope for and, most of all, to enliven their taste for our creative product."

Especially since such an energetic and imaginative distributor as Brandon Films is showcasing art classics and noted contemporary films on adult themes in "concert" bookings on campuses across the country, conventional exhibitors showing Hollywood "products" (that is the trade term) are fearful that American youngsters, with forty or fifty years of movie-going ahead of them, may become even more habituated to foreign films.

But far from damaging Hollywood, the foreign art film is having a therapeutic effect by liberalizing and maturing American films and their audiences. In this process, the educated, cultured environment of the campus, abetted by courses in film aesthetics, plays its part, and the altered tastes and heightened sensitivity of students reverberate out to the public at large. In time, the vast output of student films (now at one thousand annually and growing) will be incorporated into popular movie-going—or at least the best of them will. For the student, after all, is part of society and reflective of it and relating to it as a person, citizen and worker. The establishment of the forthcoming American Film Institute, the plans for which are just being formulated, undoubtedly will provide impetus to the entire film student movement. The future is encouraging.

WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?

Time and Place for a Critical Engagement?

By CLIFFORD EDWARDS

The film based upon Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* is likely to capture the most coveted of the 1966 Academy Awards. At the same moment the film has the potential for precipitating a major crisis in the relationship of the Church to modern drama. The resolution of such a crisis could be a movement toward the reconciliation of the Church and drama after long years of separation. On the other hand, it is possible that the crisis provoked by this film could drive Church and drama to an out-and-out divorce. If the outcome is divorce, it might well be that the lost children of this broken-home will be those intellectuals who have found prophetic voices in much modern literature and drama and yet have sought to remain within a Church often openly antagonistic to those voices.

Is Albee's drama of a 2 a.m. to dawn orgy of drink, sex and vicious insults suitable terrain on which to fight the battle of the relationship of modern drama to the Church? Dare those who find crucial insights in modern drama speak to the wider body of "church-folk" on behalf of the rights of this film to be received by rank and file church members with eyes willing to look for more than "lewd" posturing and ears willing to listen for more than "shocking" profanity?

Yes. In many ways *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* provides the perfect point in time and place for a thoughtful, yet aggressive, strategy by those who are convinced of the Church's need to open itself with seriousness and maturity to the voices of modern literature. The tyranny of the conservatives who will dismiss Albee's drama as filth at its first profane "Jesus!", the first glass of alcohol poured, and certainly at the first recognized lewd gesture, must not be allowed to cancel the contest. Many have become so addicted to the shadows on the wall of which Plato spoke (whether shadows conjured by Walt Disney, *The Sound of Music*, or *Reader's Digest*), that a glimpse of reality must be forced. Albee not only can provide the necessary shock of reality, but the Taylor-Burton names on the movie marquee have excited wide enough publicity to allow this drama to become more than one more local skirmish soon to be forgotten. Neither pulpit nor pew will be able to avoid the questions this drama raises concerning the Christian's attitude toward the modern writer and his work—or toward the world, for that matter. Further, all the symbols of the profane world that shock many church-folk are present and obvious: "filthy" language, excessive drinking and sex. The battle lines therefore are clearly drawn for a contest, the results of which could signal a new day, or at least a new honesty, in the relationship of the Church to modern literature.

Those who would encourage a new openness among church-folk to the revelatory possibilities in modern literature would be foolish to miss the present strategic moment, for not only is the time and terrain propitious, but a surprising and formidable ally also has appeared. This surprising ally carries the authority of Roman Catholic officialdom.

The National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures, which carefully screens and grades films, has already engaged the conservatives in battle with its announcement that *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* deserves an A-4 rating (for adults, with reservations). In contrast, *Kiss Me, Stupid* was condemned (rated C), and other cute seduction films and bedroom farces aimed at the teenage market have suffered similar fates. Monsignor Thomas F. Little, in justifying the A-4 rating, provides what might well be the beginning points of any mature discussion of the controversial movie:

> In the context of this film, the elements have a dramatic vitality. I've never heard those words on a screen before, but I've heard them at Coney Island. It is all right to use erotic elements when everything jells in artistic integrity.

The courageous decision of the NCOMP has already provoked serious counter-attacks. After an article in *Life* magazine (June 10, 1966) telling of the Office's decision, embattled Msgr. Little felt it necessary to write a letter to *Life*'s editor (July 1, 1966). It is noteworthy that Msgr. Little does not give an inch in the battle, but presses the claim of the film-drama even further against the conservative lines:

> Since your article has occasioned a deluge of protest against the A-4 classification given **Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?** . . . may we present additional text from our critical appraisal: ". . . In depicting the anguish and bitterness experienced by a married couple as they confront the illusions which have poisoned their life together [the film] dramatizes man's need to face the challenge of reality in order, by achieving self-knowledge, to build a capacity for love."

Taken together, the above two quotations provide the guide lines for any effective strategy on behalf of a fair hearing in the Church for the Albee drama in particular and modern literature in general: (1) The necessity of judging the dramatic vitality and intent of a work in its integrity (rather than damning by proof-texting from isolated objectionable excerpts) is asserted. (2) The recognition of honest language and postures reflecting life as it actually is (whether on Coney Island or next door) is encouraged. (3) A critical concern is expressed for the basic message intended by the author (interpreted above as a confrontation with illusions which have poisoned life and a movement toward reality, self-knowledge, and love).

It is these same concerns for the integrity of a work, its honesty, and its message that alone save the Biblical account of David's affair with Bathsheba, Ammon's rape of his half-sister Tamar, or Lot's incestuous relationship with his daughters, from being merely lewd tales to excite prurient interests. Likewise, one might argue that it is only the seriousness of Ezekiel's intent that saves his Oholah and Oholibah stories (Ezekiel 23) from being mere exercises in lewdity and sex (far more sex than Albee has written into all his dramas taken together).

But if one is to engage in active polemic on behalf of a serious Church audience for *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, what, more specifically, might one focus upon as its illuminating themes which contribute to modern man's search for meaning?

Certainly one theme that emerges is the miracle of love's ability to exist in what might seem the most impossible circumstances. Neither vicious, personal insults, repeated adulteries, nor dashed hopes have been able to extinguish the spark of love which occasionally makes its flickering presence known in the relationship between Professor George and his wife Martha. In spite of the crushing blows the two have raised upon each other throughout the 2 a.m. to dawn orgy, as the sun rises the exhausted combatants, wearily speakin monosyllables, seek to give and receive comfort and compassion, finding strength in each other for facing the new day without the escape provided hitherto by a favorite illusion. One might even argue that George has embodied for his wife something of the suffering love of Christ, and so has won the possibility of her return to reality. The drunken soliloquy of Martha, after her seduction of their male guest, might well serve as a text on the revelatory power of suffering love in a fallen world:

> George who is out somewhere there in the dark . . . George who is good to me, and whom I revile, who understands me, and whom I push off; who can make me laugh, and I choke it back in my throat; who can hold me at night, so that it's warm, and whom I will bite so there's blood; who keeps learning the games we play as quickly as I can change the rules; who can make me happy and I do not wish to be happy . . . who has made the hideous, the hurting, the insulting mistake of loving me and must be punished for it . . . who tolerates, which is intolerable; who is kind, which is cruel; who understands, which is beyond comprehension. . . .

Modern man's distortions in both his means of expressing and of receiving love are not only opened to view in the above speech, but also in the speech placed by the film outside a roadhouse, where Martha insists that she suffers in her vicious attacks upon George, but that George has in fact craved just such beatings; and so she has felt compelled to administer them. Those who know Albee's *The Zoo Story* will recall the "dog story" told by Jerry in which he confusedly admits the possibility that the dog's attacks upon him and his attempt on the dog's life might have been distorted and misunderstood attempts to love in our fragmented world.

The very title of the film introduces a theme which should be readily understood by those acquainted with the biblical concept of the Fall. The comic ditty, "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?", sung first at the faculty party and then on several occasions throughout the evening, is an intellectual twist on the song sung by the three pigs as they build their houses against the threatening wolf. It is the twist which allows the ditty to be introduced as an intellectually acceptable joke, but it is the original nursery story context that seems to give the ditty its meaning.

In fearful and precarious situations, the characters in the drama seek to convince themselves by their song that they do not fear the lurking wolf whose destructive breath can collapse the straw and twig dwellings they have raised. It is when he is most vulnerable to his wife's murderous slashing that George seeks to drown her out by singing the ditty of security. Not only has Albee provided a parable of modern man's refusal to face honestly the precariousness of his little straw world, but he seeks to identify for us the beast that threatens, the point at which the consequences of man's fall from grace enter and infect human life. Who is the fearsome wolf threatening our attempts to construct order and meaning? Baudelaire located the threat within himself: "I am the vampire of my heart." Sartre located the threat in the neighbor: "Hell is other people." For Albee, the wolf is both the self and the neighbor. George can describe how Martha would "howl and claw at the turf," and speaks of her slashing paws and mouth filled with blood, and his cry, as he lunges to choke her is: "You Satanic Bitch!" But George himself can threaten, "I'll rip you to pieces," and in his pain his cry is "part growl, part howl" as he leaves the house to go out under the moon. Identifying fallen man as a wolf should come as no surprise to those who have read the New Testament, particularly the words attributed to Jesus (Mt. 7:15, 10:16; cf. Acts 20:29).

Albee, however, locates the wolf's threat even more precisely for modern man. He finds that the wolf, in search of helpless prey, has found his chief opportunity in modern man's compulsive need to open his innermost thoughts and insecurities to another. The modern-day wolf lives on the intimacies we seek to share and communicate with others; the wolf feeds on the disclosed secrets that make one member of a relationship most defenseless before another. George and Martha can draw so much blood only because they have offered and received one another's intimate secrets. It is those who seek to communicate, to give and receive compassion, who are the chief prey of the wolf. Compassion, then, must mean sacrifice, must be willing to give its blood to the wolf's mouth and claw. This truth, expressed in the flesh and blood of our generation by Albee, can hardly be unfamiliar to those acquainted with the Judeo-Christian tradition.

Finally, we might focus upon the imaginary child motif in Albee's drama. It is, in fact, the final game of the night-long orgy, "Bringing up Baby," that goes deeper than the skin, the organs, and even the bones. In George's words "There's something inside the bone . . . the marrow . . . and that's what you gotta get at." To get at the marrow of the story of George and Martha one needs to come to some understanding of the identity and role of their imaginary baby. Here Albee's

understanding of the complexities of our illusions is expressed.

Beginning perhaps as a simple creation of Martha's imagination to satisfy her longing for a child she couldn't have, "Baby" becomes entangled in the complexities of a living relationship. On the one hand, "Baby" separates Martha and George, becoming an abyss into which Martha hurls all the attentions, compassion, and hopes which might have given strength and growth to her living relationship with George. But on the other hand, Martha needs George for this one remaining purpose, to share her illusion and make it appear real, and the illusory "Baby" thus holds Martha and George together: "He walked evenly between us . . . a hand out to each of us for what we could offer. . . ." But as can happen with any illusion, the complex of forces called "Baby" has grown to a critical age. The drama takes place at his twenty-first birthday (altered to his sixteenth birthday in the film). Having grown to the age of discernment, "Baby" has become a two-edged sword in Martha's hand. She had hoped to use him for her satisfaction against her husband's weaknesses, but in order to preserve "Baby's" credibility as a real person, Martha must see that "Baby" would have to come to the realization of his own mother's drunken viciousness. In a speech unfortunately omitted in the film version, Martha panics while reciting "Baby's" history for her guests, and ends by attempting to place him off at a safe distance: "No! . . . he is away at school, college. He is fine, everything is fine."

Albee, in cutting to the marrow, has illuminated the tangled complexity our illusions become, the tremendous toll an illusory relationship exacts from life's relationships with the living, and finally dramatizes the power of an illusion to demand its own independence and even to sit in judgment on its creators. In a society beset by illusions which serve as escapes from living relationships, Albee's focus could hardly be more appropriate. For those who know Albee's other works, the history of this illusion might take on added dimension if one sees "Baby" as a return of the emasculated illusion earlier named *The American Dream*. Albee then leads one through the purging encounter of *Zoo Story* which exposes the animal-like ferocity necessary to tear away such civilized illusions, and finally reveals the preying wolf and the painful sacrifice necessary if a living relationship is to move with compassion beyond its comfortable illusions. Having completed the painful sacrifice of their illusory son, George stands with Martha to face as best they can in truth the reality of a new day.

It is appalling that the illuminating insights available in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* may be lost to a Church in need of just such insights expressed in modern idiom. It is all the more appalling if these insights are lost because of a conservative proof-texting which, if administered in the same manner to the Bible, would reject the Canon as pornographic literature. The strategic moment to press for a new maturity in the attitude of "church-folks" at large toward the modern writer and his work seems to have arrived, and an opening engagement has already taken place. If those in the pulpit and pew who realize the prophetic possibilities in modern literature do not responsibly rise to the occasion, the further deterioration in the relationship of Church to modern literature may well be counted their own doing.

LES SUGGESTIONES POUR L'EGLISE ET LA CINEMA PRACTICALE

-or-

and now, the basics.

By FRANCHARD TCOFST*

* It has been suggested that Franchard Tcofst is the pen name of Stanford Summers, director of the St. Clement's Film Association; a suggestion which Summers vehemently denied when queried.

The invitation to contribute to this film issue was accompanied by that ancient American (and Protestant?) maxim: "Give 'em something they can use." So, we hereby append some practical information for the committee chairmen, attendance recruiters, and other seekers after non-philosophical truths.

Prior to delivering the goods however, I find it appropriate to reconnoiter the ancillary literature of the film phenomena. The following, gleaned from depth research and revelatory recall, sheds some light on the malaise which confronts the cinematic convert.

Item: Statistic from *The Aesthetics of Church Budgeteering* by Charles P. Jones, B.A., D.D. ". . . According to the Colfaxx report of last year, the average honorarium accorded to guest speakers was $37.51 (exclusive of transportation and incidental expenses). This exceeds by $14.20 the average cost per film of more than fifty films selected at random from five major film catalogues." Author Jones also quotes Fred Oerstler's penetrating observation in *Structuring Success into Church Programming:* "There is absolutely no guarantee that your guest speaker will be interesting. Therefore, we are compelled to describe the current trend in church programming in this manner: 'Guest speakers are going out. Films are coming **IN.**' "

Item: The following is a taped transcription taken by a hidden microphone in the social room of the Santha Gronch Dormitory on the campus of the University of Illinois:

She: Where we goin' tonight, Fred?
He: I dunno.
She: I know what we could do.
He: (Silence) What?
She: My roommate, Cynthia . . .
He: (Interrupting) You mean the tall blonde?
She: Yes.
He: How is she these days? Keeping busy, and everything . . . I mean . . . yeah, what about her?
She: Well, she says that down at the Uniwesleytarian Foundation where she goes . . .
He: That's that church outfit, isn't it?
She: Well, not exactly, but sort of . . . Anyway, they

have these real groovy flicks and I thought we could, well, sort of . . . Besides, they're free. You just pay what you feel . . .

He: Free, eh?

She: And maybe later we could stop by . . .

He: Cynthia goes to those . . . sort of . . . all the time?

She: Sure. She wouldn't miss them.

He: Well, I suppose . . .

Item: The following excerpt is from Miss Sophie Klutt, corresponding secretary for the University Christian Movement at Idaho Wesleyan University:

"After considerable experimenting with film showings, we feel that we are moving on from them in the direction of television. The Greater Religious American Foundation supplies us with guides for good TV programs. We view them on portable sets brought to our meetings, and during the commercials we have discussions instead. This way, by the end of the program, we are all ready for refreshments. However, I personally think it would help if the commercials were a little longer because everyone wants to talk and there isn't enough time. So, the question I'm asking is: 'Can you influence our Congressmen to pass laws which would give us longer commercials?' "

Item: Professor Rene Douchamps, San Germaine, Paris, writes: "L'eglise ecrire du cinema nationale etat Professeur Arnheim dit on l'art pour l'art faut 'il pouvais avignon non brevis l'images contra Bresson et Truffaut, Godard et Hitchcock faut des Etats Unis a sept ou fouvais etudient retardu le Wesleyan etablisement."

Item: A report from Dr. Marshall McClunahan, the Department of Communications at the University of Toronto: "I will be happy to contribute to your assessment of the Student Religious Life movement in North America. I have been on one program recently, where I was invited to make concluding comments on the subject matter of a particular film. I was both surprised and impressed by the manner in which the project was conceived and executed. I was first impressed when I was told that I was not to speak until after the discussion by the students. Such a procedure definitely indicated that my 'machine-more-important-than-the-message' theory has been widely adopted. The committee chairman said they wanted the students 'to go as far as they could on their own.' I was asked to wander around at large as a critical auditor, and finally to make some comments on the subject matter as the film related to it.

"The film which had been selected was *Sundays and Cybele,* a beautiful French film which makes a powerful statement in the area of Relationship and Communication Between Individuals—a topic which certainly interests me as head of the Communications Department.

"After the film showing, there was a refreshment period when those could leave who wished to do so. Over half remained and they were then arbitrarily divided into groups of eight, each group being assigned to an individual room. I was told that the discussion leaders had previewed the film the day before, and that they were asked to explore the possibilities of real depth encounter through discussion.

"The leaders had agreed upon the primary questions and procedure. First, each member of the group was encouraged to respond to the first question asked: 'What scenes in this film do you most vividly recall?' Second,

questions were then to be posed which would require reflection, and after each question was raised, the leaders were instructed to say, 'We'll take a minute or two to think about this and then see what we come up with.' The intention here seemed to be to encourage each person to think for himself rather than to take at face value whatever the leader might say. Third, the leaders agreed to hold back their own opinions and insights or those of the film guide—which they had each carefully read before seeing the film—until the feeling-reactions of the group had been exhausted.

"I was very much impressed with the manner in which the reticent students were being drawn out and the way the whole atmosphere discouraged artificiality. I have seen so many academic situations which enable—perhaps even encourage—the glib to tyrannize and frustrate those who are usually more mentally perceptive but not as verbally adept. (This correlates with my initial observations published in *The Gutenberg Phenomena.)* I sensed an atmosphere of openness. People talked *with* each other. There occurred what is frequently sought, but seldom achieved: genuine dialogue. And an excellent film had provided the occasion and the focus for it all!

"The experience was exhilarating, and gave me new respect for what the Student Religious Committee is doing on that campus."

Item: A comment from an article by Professor William Hamilton of Colgate Rochester Divinity School: "It seems to me that on nine out of ten campuses, the film series is replacing Religious Emphasis Week" (which certainly may suggest that God isn't dead after all).

Item: An excerpt from a letter sent to Mr. Thompson Blandon, head of Blandon Films, Inc. in New York City. The letter is from the program chairman of the United Sectarian Foundation at State College, Mississippi.

"Last Friday evening we showed the film *The Quiet One* at our weekly meeting. We decided to show this film about a Negro boy growing up in a Northern ghetto because we realize that in a Southern school such as ours there are a number of students who are narrow in their outlook on 'race.' We weren't sure what the results would be, but we hoped.

"Most of us found the film engrossing. (We wondered whether you could tell us if the boy, Donald Peter, is an actor? He was so natural!) Afterwards over coffee, the discussion centered around the situation the boy faced in being brought up in Harlem. And then, in the midst of this discussion, one boy from Florida said that the film was obviously left-wing propaganda and that he'd heard a radio broadcaster say that funds from Moscow had actually financed the production, and therefore he objected to our seeing or discussing it at a religious meeting. Despite the fact that he and four others walked out of the meeting, we continued to talk about the terrible problems in Harlem and Chicago and Los Angeles. There was so much interest that we're going to meet again next Friday to hear another report on the 'Northern problem' and see what we can do about it. I just wanted you to know that none of this would have happened as effectively as it did had we not benefitted from the indirect approach your film enabled us to make. We appreciate your distribution of such fine films as *The Quiet One.*"

Item: Overheard at the Union coffee shop: ". . . and it was a great film . . . really great! And then this gal came on, and before you knew it, here we all were, locked up in this little room talking about the film. And then they unlocked the doors and we came staggering out and all I could see was this poor film lying there all over the floor, gooey and slimy with verbs and adjectives written all across the celluloid. . . ."

Which all makes an interesting documentary, but doesn't help anyone get next month's program planned or next spring's films ordered. So herewith are helpful hints to bigger and better cinematic seances:

FILM DISTRIBUTORS

There are more than twenty important distributors of 16mm feature films. These are among the largest of the quality distributors. They all have branches across the country.

BRANDON FILMS. 221 W. 57 St., New York, New York. Has large catalogue of quality American and foreign films.

CONTEMPORARY FILMS. 267 W. 25 St., New York, New York. Specializes in short films of quality.

IDEAL PICTURES. 1010 Church St., Evanston, Ill.

CONTINENTAL 16. 241 E. 34 St., New York, New York. Has a small quality selection.

AUDIO FILM CLASSICS. 10 Fiske Place, Mount Vernon, New York.

JANUS FILMS. 871 Seventh Ave., New York, New York. Has the Bergman films.

FILMS, INC. 1150 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, Ill. Large American collection. No foreign films.

UNITED WORLD FILMS. 221 Park Ave., South, New York, New York.

BOOKS

A sizeable library of books on film is accumulating. Several we have found to be of particular value to the film layman, giving special attention to those available in paperback, include:

THE MOVIES, Lewis Jacobs, ed. A Noonday paperback. An excellent collection of general essays on film.

THE CONTEMPORARY CINEMA, Penelope Houston. Penguin Books. This English critic looks at contemporary films with insight.

AGEE ON FILM, James Agee. McDowell, Obelensky. Paper. An excellent work giving an in-depth view of an astute critic and film lover.

NOVELS INTO FILM, George Bluestone. University of California Press. Paper. Excellent for the English teacher as six films are compared with their novels.

THE SCREEN ARTS, Edward Fisher. Sheed and Ward. A basic introduction.

THE IMAGE INDUSTRIES, William Lynch. Sheed and Ward. A very valuable book in delineating some basic areas of consideration with respect to film/television criticism.

A CINEMATIC CARE PACKAGE has been prepared at Fordham University. It consists of important paperbacks and reprints of articles on film. It is available for $10 from Fordham Film Study Center, Fordham University, Bronx, New York.

ORGANIZATIONS

Making a selection from film catalogues often can be a very frustrating experience. Several organizations select films of particular quality and also assist in the fullest understanding and utilization of them.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF FILM SOCIETIES, 144 Bleeker St., New York, New York. Especially helpful in supplying program notes for film appreciation. Also, sends out occasional publications. Membership is $10 a year.

FILMS, INC., 1150 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, Ill. Has developed a series of brief discussion guides on some American films.

CENTER FOR FILM STUDY, 1307 Wabash Ave., Chicago, Ill. The educational affiliate of the Catholic Office for Motion Pictures. Has excellent film appreciation guides for film study groups available at 15¢ each. Also publishes a bi-weekly newsletter on current films. $5 a year.

THE SAINT CLEMENTS FILM ASSOCIATION, 423 W. 46 St., New York, New York. Supplies discussion guides for selected films and television programs. Also, publishes a monthly bulletin with news of film, TV and the arts in general. Membership: $10 per year.

CONTRIBUTORS

ROBERT STEELE is film professor at Boston University. He has written and directed films, written film criticism, and is completing books on Federico Fellini and Maya Deren.

WILLIAM JERSEY is a noted New York film-maker who utilizes the cinéma vérité technique. His recent film (for Lutheran Film Associates), *A Time for Burning*, premiered on the National Educational Television network last month. He is president of Quest Productions, New York City.

STAN VANDERBEEK is a controversial independent film-maker from New York. An animator, he is experimenting with "expanded" uses of cinema, utilizing multiple projected images such as intermedia shows. He recently completed construction of a movie-drome in Stonypoint, New York.

MARTIN S. DWORKIN, well-known to *motive* readers for his striking photographs, continues to share his many talents with his essay on *avant-garde* cinema. He is a professional writer and photographer living in New York City.

ANDREW SARRIS is the regular movie critic for the *village voice* and editor of the U.S. edition of *Cahiers du Cinema,* the distinctive French film publication. He served on the program committee of the recent Fourth New York Film Festival.

FATHER JOHN CULKIN is director of the Center for Communications at Fordham University. His books include *Julius Caesar as a Play and as a Film* and *Film Study in the High School.*

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ARTISTS in this issue: **WALTER ROGALSKI** is on the faculty of Pratt Institute, Brooklyn. His intaglio print is in the Brooklyn Museum collection. **H. J. BURGERT** is a well-known German

printmaker. His drawing is reprinted by permission from *Spectrum*, a distinctive graphics magazine published in Zurich. **NELL COX** is a film-maker and free-lance photographer living in New York City. **HANS ORLOWSKI** is a Berlin wood engraver and painter. **MARTIN S. DWORKIN** currently is exhibiting 16 photomural-size photographs at the International Book Fair in Frankfurt. **DILL COLE** is an artist and designer from Baltimore. **ROBERT OSBORN** is a widely published cartoonist. His drawing is in New York City's Downtown Gallery. **JACK BARRETT** teaches at the Ivy School of Art in Pittsburgh. This is his first contribution to *motive*.

THE POETRY in this special issue was selected for the diverse cinematic ways in which the poets use images to re-shape our experience of history. Cinema may be the new international mode of communication, making print obsolete—but the quality of imagination borne by contemporary poets redeems language both from obsolesence and from triviality. (It was, after all, no mystical convert to *McLuhanisme* who first spoke for the "International Style.") The **POETS** are, in linear order, **FRANK KUENSTLER,** Brooklyn, N.Y.; **GIROUARD,** who finds his given name superfluous, Brown University; **WILLIAM HOLLAND,** Washington, D.C., just back from a Peace Corps term in Liberia; **JOYCE ODAM,** Sacramento, California; **JOHN V. BRAIN,** Princeton University; **JOHN TAGLIABUE,** Bates College; and **CHARLOTTE RAINES,** an image-maker *extraordinaire*—she contributes both an excellent poem and the dry-point etching which, in counterpoint, "carries the mood" of the poem. Given a sound-on-film camera, such rare correspondence of vision would be formidable!

ETCHING: CHARLOTTE RAINES

Imprint

Let
the season flare away in the sky:
rose madder; geranium lake; vermillion; scarlet;
splashed out wide
between the bare hills, hunched down over.

So burns October, lower, lower:
hatched across with the straight lines of leafless trunks,
shooting lines of wild branches,
etched needles of the dark pines,
and the slower ebony curves of winding vines.

See through the mesh where
the flame shines:
higher scarlet; alizarin; warm-rose; flesh.

Then, curled in the hollow of its valley,
the fire of day cools.
Behind the horizon net the bright colors pale and die.
Ah, the black lace stretched tight across the pink thigh.

—CHARLOTTE RAINES

motive

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DRAWING: OSBORN

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DRAWING: OSBORN

THE IMAGE BEHIND THE IMAGE

Drawing: Jack Barrett

In the Yucatan village of Chichen Itza, the Conquistadores tore down the Temple of Tlaloc atop the tallest pyramid, and erected in its stead the small but magnificent Chapel of the Holy Virgin. When Father Anselmo finally arrived in the strange, steaming jungles, he found a touch of home in the familiar surroundings of altar, nave and chancel—and in the beautiful image of the Holy Virgin affixed to the wall behind the altar. He was well-pleased to celebrate the Mass in the little chapel day by day before the small group of faithful soldiers, some of whom were always present. However, when the garrison was off on a combat mission far to the South, Father Anselmo soon grew tired of celebrating the Mass in an empty chapel, so he went among the natives to invite them to come and worship with him. He found them a recalcitrant lot, however, who preferred to continue worshiping Tlaloc, even though his image had been smashed by the soldiers. Father Anselmo explained that the Holy Virgin would make their crops grow even better than had Tlaloc, since she was real and Tlaloc was only an image fashioned by men's minds and hands. But still the natives refused to enter the chapel.

Seeing the priest's untiring efforts to fill his chapel, the old cacique (or headman) of the village said to him one day: "I know how you can fill your temple to overflowing with my people."

"How?" asked the priest, eagerly.

"I have noticed, in my secret visits to your place of worship, that the image of your Holy One is flat on the back, where it touches the wall. In my house, I have a fine image of Tlaloc, which is also flat on the back. If you would pull your image out from the wall just a bit, and if we were to put the the image of Tlaloc there—the images back to back—then my people would come."

"But, that would be unfitting!" protested Father Anselmo.

"Why?" asked the old cacique, "when your image will entirely hide the smaller image of Tlaloc from view? And only my people will know it is there at all. To outward appearances, nothing will have changed—except that your empty chapel will be full of reverent worshipers."

Moved by the vision of the chapel full of reverent worshipers, Father Anselmo consented.

Now, with a full chapel every time he celebrates the Mass, Father Anselmo was happy. The old cacique was happy. And the throng of natives, flocking to the chapel daily with their offerings of maize, fruit and chickens, were happy, too.

In fact, it would take a strange and cynical man indeed not to be happy over such a pleasant situation as that!

—G. WILLIAM JONES