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THE COVER: From Lindsay Anderson's *This Sporting Life* (to be reviewed in next issue).

Editor's Notebook

Critic ——→ Film-Maker?

The critic who, like Shaw or Truffaut, aims to batter his way into production, may be harsh or even sometimes vindictive: "he would not hate the old so much, if he loved not the new still more." Yet his criticism usually benefits from the concreteness and detail of his concern, as well as from his passion; and his readers, especially those who are practicing artists, take his strictures in better grace if they know his ambitions than if he seems to be only a captious or truculent outsider.

The percolation of critics into the film industry is always erratic; and of course a talent for criticism does not always indicate a talent for creation. Many among the present generation of active critics are already more or less active in production (including a good many writers for this journal).

Some of us, partly because of the economically precarious position of the modestly budgeted film, and partly because of lack of talent, will not make it. But we salute and are inspired by the achievement of Truffaut, Godard, and the other *Cahiers* critics; we note gleefully that Antonioni began as a critic; we applaud Karel Reisz, Lindsay Anderson, Tony Richardson, and Gavin Lambert for getting the vision of their *Sequence* generation onto the screen; we are glad to see that the editors of *Movie* are determined to put their critical doctrines into practice; we rejoice that the work of the *Film Culture* group—though we consider *Guns of the Trees* a failure—is continuing.

Some critics-become-directors take the ex-

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treme view of Chabrol, who has declared that he will say nothing about the works of his colleagues who are still alive. (One hopes this is the undeclared position of Hollywood directors who decline to give reactions to films by saying they haven't seen them.) But one sign of a healthy state of the critic/film-maker relationship would be an easier exchange of opinions, as well as a more frequent mingling of roles. (The fact that the change never seems to occur in the other direction deprives us of the enrichment which can happen through coping with the problems of production.) A beginning is suggested by Vladimir Nizhny's *Lessons with Eisenstein* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1962. $5.00). None of the American schools of cinema use experienced directors in the Russian manner—continuously and systematically, rather than as classroom spectaculars. Many directors are pleased to go, upon suitable invitation, to give a special lecture at a museum or university; and such occasions are, unquestionably, of immense value. Some will go back several times, or undertake special short courses. But nowhere in the West do we find established film-makers devoting substantial periods of time to the education of younger men. The chief responsibility of the artist is to his work, but it is not his only responsibility; and where the generations have no continuity, the flow of talent into the industry becomes still more constricted and erratic. Almost all the talented directors in Hollywood today were nurtured by the studio system, with its relatively stable requirements; today the only rough equivalent, and it is a *very* rough one, is television. In this situation the beginners, both those who start as critics and those who try to apprentice themselves more directly, need all the help they can get.

Kenneth Macgowan

Kenneth Macgowan died in Los Angeles on April 27, at the age of 74. He was a man who hated ceremony and sentiment, but we insist on recalling in print some of his contributions to theater and film in the United States. He began as a stage and movie critic, in Boston, Philadelphia, and New York. He was long associated with Eugene O'Neill and Robert Edmond Jones in the production of plays both off-Broadway and on; the triumvirate, as William Melnitz has noted, changed the image of the American theater. He also wrote several theater books. In the mid-'thirties, he moved to Hollywood. There, in the course of a long career as a producer, he made the first Technicolor film (*Becky Sharp*); and there he turned to teaching, becoming chairman of the Theater Arts Department at UCLA during its crucial formative years. (The new building for that department now bears his name.) His work as editor of the *Quarterly of Film, Radio, and Television*, bringing it into closer touch with films and criticism of films, helped move in the direction of its later revival as *Film Quarterly*. On the side, he found time to pursue anthropological interests, and wrote a book called *Early Man in America*. Luckily and happily, he had just finished reading proofs on his new book, *Behind the Screen: History and Techniques of the Motion Picture*, when he died.

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Periodicals

Cinéma 63 (which is edited by Pierre Billard, husband of our new Paris Editor, Ginette Billard) devoted a long section of its March issue to a survey of the new generation of French short-film makers who have sprung up in the wake of the departed New Wave directors. The issue also contains a somber analysis of the economic situation of the French cinema, which has its troubles too. 27 F for a year's subscription; 7, rue Darboy, Paris XIe. (Journal of the Fédération Française des Ciné-Clubs.)

Cine Forum, San Marco, 337, Venice, Italy. 400 lire per copy.

Indian Film Culture, published by the Federation of Film Societies of India (B-5, Bharat Bhavan, 3, Chittaranjan Avenue, Calcutta 13) is a glossy and well written journal whose first issue contains articles on both Indian and foreign film-making. It should help to bring to Western readers badly needed information about the gigantic yet virtually unknown Indian film world. Quarterly; $2.00 per year, 50¢ per issue.

Montage is published by Anandam Film Society, 8, Aidun Building, Girgaum Road, Bombay 2; no price given. Entirely in English, it contains some intelligent discussion of Indian film problems and many reviews of films, both Indian and foreign, which vary widely in quality.

Premier Plan, edited by Bernard Chardère, may be obtained from B. P. 3, Lyon-Préfecture, France, for 5.50 NF per issue, 44 NF per year. Number 18 is devoted to Alain Resnais; number 19 to Jean Vigo; previous ones have dealt with Grémillon, Huston, Hitchcock, Gérard Philipe, jazz in the cinema, Fellini, and the Nouvelle Vague (these are still available for 10 NF the lot).

The Seventh Art, published at 311 East 50th St., New York, N. Y., is a new journal attempting to popularize the gospel of film in Gotham. It is somewhat jejune on occasion but avoids the wildness of the *New York Film Bulletin* and the occupational paranoia of *Film Culture*. It has brought forward a group of new writers who are excited about films and have a broad scope of interests, and we wish them well. Subscriptions $2.00 per year; 50 cents per copy.

Temas de Cine, published by Ediciones Film Ideal, General Goded, 42, Madrid-4, Spain, is a series of monographs on important directors, comprising critical essays, full credits, and scripts or script excerpts. 60 pesetas.

Tiempo del Cine is a publication of the Cineclub Núcleo de Buenos Aires, Avenida Gaona 2907, Buenos Aires, Argentina. A general magazine, whose issue 10/11 features a guide to the new Argentine generation. $1.00 per issue.

The Canyon Cinema News

The *News*, a mimeographed bulletin designed to facilitate the circulation of news among independent film-makers, film societies, museums, universities, art-theaters, critics, and others seriously interested in film work which doesn't get into the trade papers, began publication in January and is thriving. *Film Quarterly* readers who wish to keep up with such matters may write for a sample copy, or send $2.00 for a year's subscription, to 1308 Bonita, Berkeley 9, California.

CHARLES BARR

CinemaScope: Before and After

"Imagine Lauren Bacall on a couch—and 64 feet long!" a producer was reported to have crowed, upon the introduction of CinemaScope. Since then, CinemaScope and its widescreen relatives have received an almost uniformly bad press, from critics, directors, and cameramen alike. Yet year by year more films are made in wide screen. It has seemed time, therefore, for a considerable reassessment. One of the valuable contributions of the new generation of English critics (in "Movie" and in "Motion," where an early version of this article appeared) has been their recognition of the special potentialities of the larger formats. No one, however, has previously related these to questions of playing and cutting style, and to general questions of film conception and method, with the thoroughness, precision, and suggestiveness demanded by the important issues at stake.

CinemaScope was introduced by 20th Century-Fox in 1953. It confused a lot of people, and has continued to do so. It was assumed that its value was purely a sensational one, that it was self-evidently "inartistic," and that once the novelty wore off the companies would be forced to drop it as abruptly as they had dropped 3-D, Hollywood's previous answer to the Television Menace. A decade later, however, the CinemaScope revolution is a fait accompli. Not only are a large proportion of Hollywood films in CinemaScope or similar processes, but other countries too make Scope films in increasing numbers. Most theaters have been adapted for Scope projection without changing the old pattern of exhibition, as it had been forecast they would have to. CinemaScope scarcely makes an impact any longer for its own sake: most of the really big pictures today are made on 70mm film or in Cinerama. It is even possible now to be disappointed when a blockbuster (*The Guns of Navarone*, *The Longest Day*) is "only" in CinemaScope.

I will assume that the technical details are familiar.* Since Fox hold the rights to CinemaScope itself, other companies have preferred to develop their own variants, some of which use different methods, and are arguably superior, but which are similar in essentials, with an aspect ratio (height to width) of 1:2.35. All of these can be classed together, as indeed they usually are, as "CinemaScope" or just as "Scope."

CinemaScope has had a more general, indirect influence: although non-Scope productions still use 35mm nonanamorphic film, very few of them are still designed for projection in the old 1:1.33 ratio. Instead, the top and bottom are masked off, and the image thrown

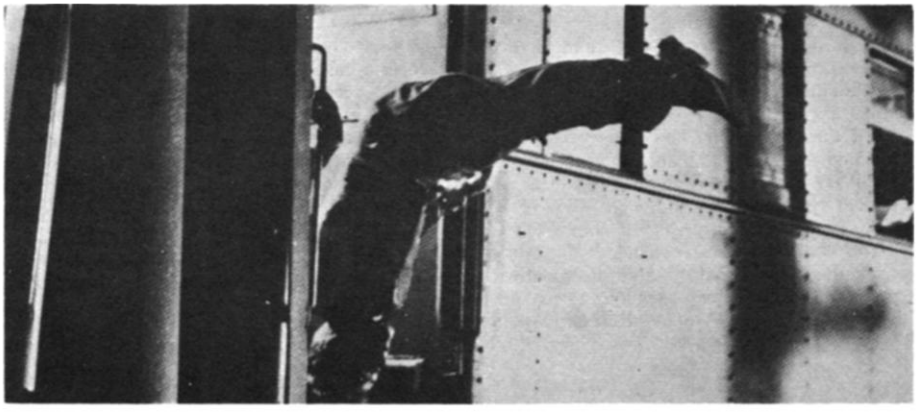
* The best historical survey is that given by Kenneth Macgowan in the earlier incarnation of this magazine, *The Quarterly of Film, Radio and Television*, Winter, 1956.

over a wider area. This ratio is, it seems, becoming settled at 1:1.85. Thus all films, with the occasional foreign-language exception, are now widescreen films; this format will clearly share, in a minor way, some of the characteristics of CinemaScope, and normally when I talk of the effects of the "CinemaScope" ratio this can be taken to mean something like "Scope; and even more so the 70mm systems; and to a lesser extent the wide screen."

The commercial survival of CinemaScope has disconcerted critics, especially English-speaking ones. So far as I can see, all of them had condemned it from the start as a medium for anything other than the spectacular and the trivial. Its shape was apparently wrong for "serious" or "intimate" drama, for the kind of film and the kind of effects which a sensitive director aims at. Now CinemaScope was, obviously, a commercial innovation designed purely to save the finances of Fox, whose executives were evasive and hypocritical in their pretense that they were doing this for Art's sake. Most of the early Scope films were indeed crude. Fox was enlightened neither in choice of subjects nor of directors: among those who made the first of these films were Koster, Dunne, Johnson, Dmytryk, and Negulesco. However, since then a great number of serious and/or intimate films have been made in Scope, too many to catalogue, and too many for it to be worth remarking on any longer, when each comes out. The early ones included *A Star Is Born* (Cukor), *East of Eden* (Kazan) and *River of No Return* (Preminger); then, among others, all Truffaut's features; *La Dolce Vita, The Island, Trials of Oscar Wilde, Lola, Lola Montes, Rebel Without a Cause, Bitter Victory, Tarnished Angels, Man of the West, The Tall Men, Some Came Running, The Courtship of Eddie's Father* . . . not forgetting *L'Année Dernière à Marienbad* and, on 70mm film, *Lawrence of Arabia* and *Exodus.*

The cycle of events has been very close to that which followed the introduction of sound. That too was a commercial move, designed to save Warner Brothers, and it led to a comparable, temporary chaos. Most commentators were misled into thinking that sound must be in itself inartistic, and a betrayal of "pure" cinema, but gradually it became accepted as a useful development, and one could say that Scope too is coming, tacitly, to be accepted, because there is really no alternative. In *Sight and Sound,* Autumn, 1961, editor Penelope Houston confesses in a coy parenthesis, "How many of us, for instance, would hold to the views we first expressed about CinemaScope?" The fact remains that few critics have made more than a token change of view, or show any sign of having

Early CinemaScope: EAST OF EDEN. *(The still is printed in full CinemaScope proportions.)*



learnt from their miscalculation; it is this after all that matters, and not the result of a counting of heads, which might perhaps reveal that CinemaScope, after being outlawed for ten years like a nationalist leader in Africa, has finally been recognized at Headquarters.

The point is this: the rejection of CinemaScope was, and is, based on certain familiar, but in fact highly disputable, assumptions, the fundamental one being that the film image consists of a *frame* into which a number of things are successively *fitted*, and that a film is made by sticking such images together in a creative way. The old 1:1.33 ratio screen was compatible with this aesthetic, and the CinemaScope screen is not, but instead of considering afresh whether these preconceptions were valid the critics simply used them to make an a priori condemnation of a format which is, one admits, manifestly unsuitable for "framing" things.

One can call this the "traditional" aesthetic: it is the one which is found in books. It puts the emphasis on framing, the close-up, camera angles, and montage. Montage is only the French word for editing, and is clearly indispensable to any director; the difference is that here this stage is made into the crucial one in a process which consists of selecting details and "showing them one by one" (Pudovkin in *Film Technique*).

I believe this aesthetic was always misguided, at least in the dogmatic form in which it was applied, and that the most valuable and forward-looking films at any time have been made to some extent outside it. Ideally, Scope could have been the occasion for its ceremonial abandonment. It was no longer workable, but then it was no longer necessary. It is a hangover from the silent cinema, but people still try to muddle through using it as an implicit basis for their judgment even of Scope films: it is not surprising if they can't cope. You still get films evaluated according to whether the "set-ups" are "imaginative" or not, and a film which uses long takes and few close-ups is liable to be dismissed automatically as unfilmic or as visually dull. Any summary of the development of style is bound to be schematic, but if one bears in mind that there can be no clear-cut division between sound and silent, and between post- and pre-Scope, I think it is useful to go back and estimate how this "traditional" aesthetic was established, and became ingrained.

There were four main factors:

(1) The image was narrow and unaccompanied by sound; it was therefore difficult to make a full impact within a single shot, and without cutting. Naturally, this objection applies less and less after the introduction of, in turn, the moving camera, sound, composition in depth, and CinemaScope.

The film was a new and bewildering medium; this aesthetic made it easy to assimilate to the pattern of other arts, notably painting and literature:

(2) It played down the film's basis in "reality," which was felt to be incompatible with art.

(3) It took the shot as a "unit," like the ideogram or the word: this made it more easily manageable and gave it the prestige of a "language" of its own.*

Finally, (4) it was formulated and applied chiefly by certain Russian directors; theirs is one kind of film, and of temperament, which it really suits.

These points merge into one another, and need to be elaborated more fully.

The first films were straightforward records of everyday reality. As such, they gave audiences a big thrill. Lumière set up his camera to take a scene in a single, static shot: workers leaving a factory, a train entering a station, a family eating out of doors, etc. The spectators' first instinct was to scramble out of the way of the approaching train, and in the background of the shot of the family eating (*Bébé Mange*

* "In the silent cinema, montage had a precise meaning, because it represented language. From the silent cinema we have inherited this myth of montage, though it has lost most of its meaning." —Roberto Rossellini.

sa Soupe) they noticed the detail of leaves blowing in the wind, and called out excitedly.

However, once the novelty of such shots wore off, it became apparent that the impact of a single image was limited. You do not, in fact, get a very strong sense of actuality from a narrow, silent image; it is too much of an abstraction, the picture too remote. For the same reason, there is not much scope for the integration of background detail. It was difficult to cover a scene of any complexity, as film-makers discovered when they began to extend their range and to tell stories. Few of them thought to move the camera, or to move and group people with any precision, within the frame. The usual solution would be to photograph the action in long shot, in order to get it all in, or to huddle actors and décor unrealistically close together. Then came montage, and the close-up, and this was of course a great advance. But although Griffith is associated with their development, he was already very skillful in controlling, when appropriate, all the elements of a scene within the same shot; indeed, the most striking thing today about *Birth of a Nation* is the number of scenes which are played in a remarkably modern, integral style (for instance: the scenes in the hospital; at the Camerons' home; in Lincoln's office). To judge from the few films of his that I have seen, and particularly *The Coward* (1915), Thomas Ince was working in the same way.

Meanwhile, however, pundits had decided that the film could not be art if it confined itself to recording "reality," and they extended this to mean that an uncut piece of film was nothing, that montage was all. Now "reality" is a word which has to be handled carefully. Nabokov nicely describes it as "one of the few words which mean nothing without quotes."

Both the still and the movie camera make a record of "reality" in the sense that they record, objectively, what is put in front of them. As Helmut Gernsheim (*Creative Photography,* 1960) expresses it: "The camera intercepts images, the paintbrush reconstructs them." This

The old format: an isolated close-up filling the entire screen.

worried theorists from the start. No other art presented this problem, and no other art, furthermore, had ever been suddenly invented like this, rootless, instead of evolving slowly, and evolving a function as it did so. A decision had to be made. One interpretation was this: the camera records reality, but reality is not art, therefore photography cannot be art. And later: the cinema cannot be art. The second interpretation arises from this and is complementary to it: agreed, reality is not art, but we improve upon it by treating it in a creative way. In practice, this meant getting as far away as possible from objectivity, and it produced, in the first decades of photography, some quite ludicrous results, prints being posed and processed and stuck together in a form of "montage" in such a way as to be indistinguishable from painting. The "masterpieces" of this art look grotesque today, and I think warn us against dismissing as irrelevant the objective basis of the cinema. Gernsheim (*op. cit.*) puts this phase into perspective: "The mistaken ambition to compete with painting drove a minority to artificial picture-making alien to the nature of photography . . . to appreciate photography requires above all understanding of the qualities and limitations peculiar to it."

This is what André Bazin—the Gernsheim of the cinema—means when he says "Les virtuali-

tés esthétiques de la photographie résident dans la révélation du réel." In this essay* Bazin makes a far more useful analysis of the nature of film and its implications for film style, than Kracauer does in the whole of his book.

The film image is taken direct from "reality" and the spectator perceives and "recognizes" it direct; there is no intermediate process as there is when the writer "translates" his material into words which are in turn translated back by the imagination of the reader. This is a major difference which conditions the whole of the respective media, and the attempt to draw literal analogies between the two (for instance between the word and the shot) is as much of a dead end as the attempt to assimilate photography to the rules of painting.

However, to say that the camera records "reality" is not to advocate that the cinema should remain at the level of Lumière. The experience of seeing even a film like *Exodus*, which is about the furthest the cinema has gone in the direction of "reality"—70mm film, long static takes, complete surface authenticity—is not something we get each day when we go out into the street. It is *a* reality, organized by the director; and in any case a record of reality is not the same thing as reality itself. The director selects or stages his "reality," and photographs it; we perceive the image, on the screen, in the course of the film. This process *in itself* means that the experience belongs to the "imaginative" as opposed to the "actual" life to use the categories distinguished by the art critic Roger Fry (*An Essay in Aesthetics*, 1909). Fry was talking about differences in our perception of life and of paintings, but the distinction applies equally to film, and he did in fact cite the examples of the elementary newsreel-type films of his time to illustrate how even a "transparent" recording of an everyday scene was perceived in a radically different way from actuality. This distinction, which is basic to our responses to any art, is summed up thus by I. A. Richards (*Principles of Literary Criticism*): "In ordinary life a thousand considerations prohibit for most of us any complete working-out of our response; the range and complexity of the impulse-systems involved is less; the need for action, the comparative uncertainty and vagueness of the situation, the intrusion of accidental irrelevancies, inconvenient temporal spacing—the action being too slow or too fast—all these obscure the issue and prevent the full development of the experience. But in the "imaginative experience" these obstacles are removed. . . . As a chemist's balance to a grocer's scales, so is the mind in the imaginative moment to the mind engaged in ordinary intercourse or in practical affairs."

The crucial point is that in the cinema this distinction operates *before* the montage stage, and independently of it.

Art does indeed involve organization, but this is just as possible within a complex image as in a montage sequence: it can in many ways be more subtle. I will analyze these possibilities more specifically later on. For a number of reasons, as I say, they had not been explored very fully in the early days of the cinema. The cutting together of separate shots is a more obviously "creative" method, and a more straightforward one.

Even if it's true, as I think it is, that those who first imagined and developed the cinematograph thought in terms of a *total* illusion, with sound, color and depth† and that the restricted form it temporarily took was in this sense accidental, it is still possible to see the history of the cinema as a nicely arranged series of advances, each one coming when directors, and audiences, were ready for it. First they learned to cope with the camera alone, then gradually with more and more of the ingredients of reality: they could hardly have controlled all

* *Ontology of the Photographic Image*, translated by Hugh Gray in *Film Quarterly*, Summer, 1960.

† Cf. Basin's essay "The Myth of Total Cinema," also published in the first volume of *Qu'est-ce que le Cinéma?*

of them at once, from the start, without practice or precedent, any more than primitive musicians would have been able to cope immediately with a symphony orchestra—or audiences to respond to it. The greater density of the sound-Scope-color image requires a more precise control than the simple "unit" image does. One has to ascend by stages. The idea of predetermined advance should not be applied too rigidly, for the immediate instrument of each advance has after all been financial pressure, and Warners' crisis, and therefore their introduction of the sound film, could have come a few years earlier or later; similarly with Fox and the introduction of CinemaScope. But this does not make the whole thing fortuitous, as Macgowan seems to imply when he says that we might easily have had Todd-AO thirty years ago, at the same time as sound, only support was withheld. The cinema evolves by a form of Natural Selection: technicians and financiers provide the "mutations," and their survival depends upon whether they can be usefully assimilated at the time.

Often when "use of CinemaScope" is picked out by a critic it indicates an obtrusive style, with the director striving to "compensate" for the openness of the frame, or indulging in flashy compositional effects—as in, say, Kurosawa's *The Hidden Fortress*, or *Vera-Cruz*, the first half-hour of which Robert Aldrich makes into an absolute orgy of formalism, composing frames within frames, and blocking up the sides of the image with rocks, trees, etc. In general, what they say about the camera makes a good working rule for Scope: if you notice it, it's bad. Or, more reasonably: you don't-have to notice it for it to be good. This is not to forbid the critic the phrase "use of Scope," which may be useful to avoid periphrasis, provided that it's not made into a criterion in itself, unrelated to the work as a whole.

In their book *Hitchcock*, Chabrol and Rohmer mention that in CinemaScope "the extreme edges of the screen are virtually unusable": that the edges are by no means useless, but they that they will not be used for the placing of details meaningful for their own sake.

While the chief advantage of Scope is, as they maintain, its opening-up of the frame, the greater sense it gives us of a continuous space—and this is where it relates to the film they are discussing here, namely *Rope*—this is a slight over-simplification. Sometimes people can be placed at the extreme edges for perfectly legitimate effect: as in *The Tall Men* (Walsh, 1955): Jane Russell and Clark Gable play a long, intimate scene together; it ends in a fight, and they retire sulking to opposite corners of the room—and of the Scope frame, leaving a great gulf between them. A different effect: near the end of *The True Story of Jesse James* (Nicholas Ray, 1957) Jesse decides to retire: he goes out into the garden to play with his children: a green and white image, Jesse on the right: a man walks past, glimpsed on the extreme left of the frame, and calls out a greeting: the strong "horizontal" effect here reinforces the feeling of a new freedom. In *Spartacus* Kubrick uses a similar technique for the shots of Crassus and his entourage visiting the training camp; the contrast between this openness and the cooped-up images showing the gladiators' existence helps express the general contrast between luxury and oppression.

But it is not only the horizontal line which is emphasized in CinemaScope (this was implied by critics who concentrated on the *shape* of the frame qua shape—as though it were the frame of a painting—and concluded that the format was suitable only for showing/framing horizontal things like crocodiles and processions). The more open the frame, the greater the impression of depth: the image is more vivid, and involves us more directly. The most striking effect in Cinerama is the roller-coaster shot, which gives us a very strong sensation of movement forward. Even though at the crucial moment we may be focussing only on the very center of the image, i.e., the area of track directly in front of the roller-coaster—an area, in fact, no larger than the standard frame—the

Relationships within the CinemaScope image: a scene from Kazan's WILD RIVER.

rest of the image is not useless. We may not be conscious of what exactly is there, but we are marginally aware of the objects and the space on either side. It is this peripheral vision which orients us and makes the experience so vivid. Similar effects were tried in the early films in Todd-AO (roller-coaster; train ride) and CinemaScope (the shots from the nose of the plane in *How to Marry a Millionaire*). In Scope the involvement is less strong, but it is still considerable: so are its implications. Although the shots quoted aim at nothing more than a circus effect, *physical* sensation of this kind can be dramatically useful (elementary form-and-content). This power was there even in the 1:1.33 image, but for the most part (after Lumière's train) remained latent. But there are classic examples of movement in this plane in Renoir's *Partie de Campagne*: the long-held shot at the end, taken from the stern of the boat being rowed home; rain on the water: an overwhelming sense of nostalgia conveyed by the movement. And in Wyler's *The Best Years of Our Lives*, the shots from the nose of the plane in which the three servicemen are returning home. The movement gives us a direct insight into their sensations and through this into "what it is like" generally for them.

Scope automatically gives images like these more "weight," and it also of course enhances the effect of lateral movement.

In *Rebel Without a Cause* (Ray, 1956) a shot of extraordinary beauty comes after the first twenty minutes of the film, during which the surroundings have been uniformly cramped and depressing, the images physically cluttered-up and dominated by blacks and browns. Now, James Dean is about to set out for school; he looks out of the window. He recognizes a girl (Natalie Wood) walking past in the distance. Cut to the first day/exterior shot, the first bright one, the first "horizontal" one. A close shot of Natalie Wood, in a light-green cardigan, against a background of green bushes. As she walks the camera moves laterally with her. This makes a direct, sensual impression which gives us an insight into Dean's experience, while at the same time re-

maining completely natural and unforced. On the small screen, such an image could not conceivably have had a comparable weight.

One of the climaxes of *Jesse James* is Jesse's revenge killing of a farmer. This is important to the story because it ruins Jesse's chance of an amnesty, and it is equally important to the understanding of his character in that it illustrates his pride, and his thoughtlessness. The crucial shot here has the farmer ploughing his land. Jesse rides up behind him, stops, and lifts his rifle. The man starts to run but Jesse keeps with him. The camera tracks back with them, holding this composition—the farmer in the foreground, running into camera, Jesse inexorably behind, aiming—until finally Jesse shoots him dead. This is over in a moment but has a hypnotic, almost a slow-motion impact, which again is the result of the greater physical involvement achieved by Scope, its more vivid sense of space. The impact is direct, and there is no need to emphasize it by putting it into literal slow-motion, or making a significant "pattern."

Rudolf Arnheim, in *Film as Art*, claims that any such sensation of depth will be undesirable: compositional patterns which in the more abstract image would come across as being deliberate will, if the image is more vivid, seem natural, even accidental, so that the spectator may fail to note their symbolic force.*

From this point of view, an even more relevant Scope scene is this one from *River of No Return*, analyzed by V. F. Perkins in *Movie* 2. I think the narrative is clear enough from his description:

"As Harry lifts Kay from the raft, she drops the bundle which contains most of her 'things' into the water. Kay's gradual loss of the physical tokens of her way of life has great symbolic significance. But Preminger is not overimpressed. The bundle simply floats away offscreen while Harry brings Kay ashore. It would be wrong to describe this as understatement. The symbolism is in the event, not in the visual pattern, so the director presents the action clearly and leaves the interpretation to the spectator."

Arnheim would no doubt regard this as a reductio ad absurdum. His attitude, which is shared, deep down, by most critics, is based on his phobia of using the camera as a "recording machine" (reality is not art). It further reflects an unwillingness to leave the spectator any freedom to interpret action or behavior, or, to make connections. This concept of "freedom" has been distorted as much as that of "reality." It's taken to be absurd that a director should allow a viewer any freedom of interpretation, for he may then notice things that he isn't meant to, or fail to notice things that he should; he may get the wrong point altogether. This is in line with the idea that the test of a good film is whether it "makes statements."

Now in this scene from *River of No Return*, the spectator is "free" to notice the bundle, and, when he does so, free to interpret it as significant. But there is nothing random about the shot. The detail is placed in the background of the shot, and integrated naturally, so that we have to make a positive act of interpreting, of "reading," the shot. The act of interpreting the visual field—and through that the action—is in itself valuable. The significance of the detail is not announced, it is allowed to speak for itself. An alert spectator will notice the bundle, and "follow" it as it floats off screen.

The traditional method would be to make its significance unmistakable by cutting in close-ups. In this case we would gather that the bundle is meaningful *because* it is picked out for us. In Preminger's film, the process is reversed: we pick it out *because* it is meaningful.

* Arnheim also wrote, and I am not making it up: "Silent laughter is often more effective than if the sound is actually heard. The gaping of the open mouth gives a vivid, highly artistic interpretation of the phenomenon 'laughter.' If, however, the sound is also heard, the opening of the mouth appears obvious and its value as a means of expression is almost entirely lost." But I don't know that this argument against sound is any more unconvincing than that against Scope—the logic is identical.

The emphasis arises organically out of the whole action; it is not imposed.

"The symbolism is in the event, not in the visual pattern." Before Scope, it was difficult to show the "event" lucidly, with each detail given its appropriate weight. It wasn't impossible: many Renoir films, as well as Mizoguchi's *Ugetsu Monogatari*, are superlative examples of the "opening-up" of the 1:1.33 frame to achieve this kind of fluidity. But on the whole the tendency was to split up the event into its component parts, and to impose, whether deliberately or not, a "visual pattern," a pattern of montage and/or of obtrusively "composed" images. And a *visual* pattern involves a pattern of motivation, a pattern of significance, which in certain films is appropriate, but is more often damagingly crude.

At this stage one can hardly avoid talking of "participation," which is another much-abused word. Everyone agrees, in principle, that art should not so much state as reveal, and that we should not just register its meaning but understand it. Our experience of a work should involve active participation more than passive assimilation.

The Russians, in their theoretical work, appropriated this idea, and applied it in a somewhat outrageous way; but critics, even intelligent ones, have continued to accept what they said. The confusion rests on a misunderstanding of the relation between film and the other arts, notably literature. Eisenstein said that "participation" took place in the association of successive images (as in the association of juxtaposed images in poetry)—that it depended purely on montage. In *October* he had intercut shots of Kerensky with ironic titles, and then with shots of a peacock preening itself. These images in themselves are fairly neutral, but the spectator fuses them together freely, he "participates," and arrives at an "intellectual decision" at the expense of Kerensky. In *Strike* we are shown, alternately, shots of workmen being massacred and of bulls being slaughtered: again, the two sets of images are independent of each other and we have to make the imaginative link between the two. Commenting recently on passages like these, an English critic said, "Thus Eisenstein's 'intellectual cinema' proves itself a superior means of communication by demanding the co-operation of the spectator in consideration of the conflicting ideologies that Eisenstein chose to convey."

This seems to me so much solemn nonsense. The whole is more than the sum of its parts; but then the whole is *always* more than the sum of its parts. The spectator "interprets" but there is no genuine freedom of association. A montage link of this kind reminds one of the children's puzzle which consists of a series of numbered dots: when they are joined together correctly, the outline of an animal appears. We participate in solving these, but only in a mechanical way, and there is only one correct solution. The very last thing Eisenstein really wants us to do is to evaluate for ourselves, or even experience for ourselves, what we are shown. He does not show us heroic actions—which we can recognize or judge to be heroic—he shows actions (not even that, but only *bits* of actions) and tells us that they are heroic (or alternatively brutal). Vakoulintchouk, in *Potemkin*, is "defined" by the shots which are intercut with shots of his dead body: close-ups of weeping women, sympathetic titles. Similarly we are *told* how to react to Kerensky and to the killing of the workmen —told obliquely, it is true, by a form of visual code, but still told; nothing is in any useful sense communicated. It is revealing that the whole meaning of these films can be reversed, as happened apparently in places with *Potemkin*, by merely re-arranging certain shots and titles, just as one can reverse the meaning of a slogan by replacing one name with another. (This would be inconceivable with *Birth of a Nation.*)

What is in question is not Eisenstein's artistry, within his chosen field, but rather the way his technique has been rationalized, by him and by others, and a universal validity claimed for it. The style is appropriate to what

he was aiming to do, namely to make propaganda. He was not interested (in the silent films) in characterization or in shades of meaning, nor did he want to leave the spectator any freedom of response. The struggle of authority against revolution, and of Old against New, is one of Black and White. Andrew Sarris, in an excellent article on Rossellini in the *New York Film Bulletin,* contrasts this extreme montage style—"Eisenstein's conceptual editing extracts a truth from the collision of two mechanistic forces in history"—with "Rossellini's visual conception of a unified cosmos undivided by the conceptual detail of montage," and he implies one should accept each on its own terms. I think it's legitimate to say that, even if the style reflects the vision accurately, the vision is crude, and the style, although powerful, crude likewise. The words Eisenstein and his contemporaries use in describing it are significant: impact, collision, clash, the juxtaposition of "concepts"; the approach is essentially a rhetorical one. What is obvious anyway from this is that Eisenstein is a special case, that few directors see things his way, and that few subjects are amenable to this treatment. Drama is not normally reducible to concepts, clashes and collisions. (This is quite apart from the implications of the change to the sound film, after which the technique becomes still less relevant.)

People complain sometimes that Eisenstein's methods of intellectual and ideological montage have been forgotten, as have the associative techniques of Pudovkin's *Mother,* and imply that directors today must be deficient in imagination: but insofar as they reject these techniques they are more subtle. And a field where they do notably survive is that of the filmed commercial. The product may not in itself look very special (a "dead object") but it takes on associations when intercut with a smiling mother holding a smiling baby. The montage-unit style no doubt sells products, and puts over propaganda, more effectively than would a more fluid one, and there are other films too for which it is perfectly appropriate:

The management of action in the wide open spaces: Sam Peckinpah's RIDE THE HIGH COUNTRY.

educational work, certain documentaries, anything which aims to put over a message concisely. One would not advocate CinemaScope for these.

Jean Mitry, in his interesting book *Eisenstein* criticizes him for at times indulging in arbitrary symbolism (the slaughterhouse in *Strike*), but he accepts Eisenstein's analogies between the interpretation of film and poetic images: the film-maker juxtaposing unrelated images by montage is like the poet juxtaposing words. But the reader genuinely "participates" in the associations he makes from the words, in building them up into a fused whole: words are allusive whereas the film image is concrete. Film images follow each other in rigid sequence, which we cannot vary; the interaction of words is much more flexible. The more one goes into the differences between word and shot, and between the literary and filmic sequences of description, the more shaky do all the analogies made by the Russians seem.

There is no literary equivalent for "getting things in the same shot." This seems never to have struck them. Both Eisenstein and Pudovkin made laborious comparisons between the word or ideogram and the individual shot, and between the sentence and the montage-sequence. This seems fantastically naïve. How else can you translate "the cat sat on the mat" into film except in a single shot? Disciples tend to admit that these theories went a bit far—after all, they never went quite so far in their films—but without realizing that the rest of their aesthetic, which sounds more plausible, is in fact equally shaky, and for similar reasons.

For instance: a writer has to describe details successively, even though they may exist together. In this case he will aim, by his description, to evoke a "total" simultaneous reality in the reader's mind. Because of the indirect, allusive quality of language this is not really a handicap. Thackeray, in his *Irish Sketchbook*, gives a description of a mountain scene, evoking it by a series of details and of comparisons; he adds, "Printer's ink cannot give these wonderful hues, and *the reader will make his picture at his leisure*" (my italics). But the film image is direct, it *shows* things.

In *Lolita* (the book) there is a scene which, had it been presented without comment, might have seemed a perfect vindication of the rules laid down by Pudovkin in *Film Technique*, in that it consists of a series of details, which Nabokov describes successively, and which Pudovkin would have filmed successively ("showing them one by one, just as we would describe them in separate sequence in literary work"). It is the scene of the death of Humbert's wife: "I rushed out. The far side of our steep little street presented a peculiar sight. . . . *I have to put the impact of an instantaneous vision into a sequence of words; their physical accumulation on the page impairs the actual flash, the sharp unity of impression.* Rug-heap, old-man doll, Miss O's nurse running with a rustle back to the screened porch . . ." (my italics).

It's naïve to suppose that even the most fragmented lines—"ships, towers, domes, theatres and temples lie/open unto the fields and to the sky"—can be given an exact cinematic equivalent by a montage of ships, towers, domes, and so on. Eisenstein makes much of the fragmentary narrative of Dickens; this is fair enough in that a change of scene would correspond to a cut in film, but it does not hold for the *texture* of a narrative. Thomas Hardy makes a useful reference here, and at the risk of seeming repetitive I'd like to consider some passages from his novels.

Often he will introduce a character by, as it were, discovering him within a landscape. Being a writer, he describes things one by one, but they all contribute to the creation of a broad, total environment. His protagonists emerge from this, and are in turn absorbed into it; they are never detached; we retain a mental picture of them as a part of it. The film equivalent is to *show* them as a part of it, to engulf them in it. Boetticher's *Ride Lonesome* and Ray's *The Savage Innocents* are two films which portray people dominated by, almost

From Ray's BITTER VICTORY

defined by, their natural environment, and this connection is perfectly conveyed in their first images. In *Ride Lonesome,* the camera is held on a shot of a vast plain, stretching away to mountains in the distance; then it tilts down slowly and we become aware of a rider coming toward us from deep among the rocks below. *The Savage Innocents* has a long, empty snowscape: the camera is still: a sledge enters frame left, deep within the shot, and is drawn gradually toward us. One can contrast this with the opening of *Scott of the Antarctic*: a montage of snow vistas, evocative music. We look *at* the scene instead of being involved in it, as we are in *The Savage Innocents*; and we accept, intellectually, for the purposes of the narrative, that the characters are there, instead of genuinely feeling it. Both Boetticher's and Ray's films are in Scope, and this helps enormously: it increases the involvement of the spectator and the physical integration of the characters.

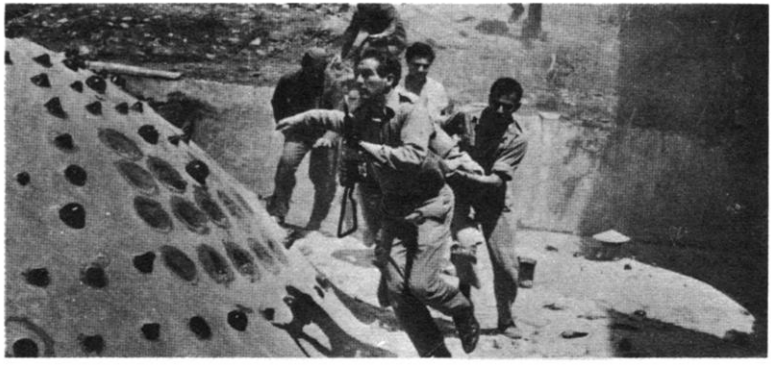
It might be said that these are "landscape" films, that Scope is suitable for them but not for more confined drama. But the same principles hold; the dichotomy often expressed between interior and exterior drama is a false one.

Consider this passage from *Tess of the d'Urbervilles.* On her wedding night, Tess confesses to her husband about the child she had by Alec:

"Her narrative had ended; even its reassertions and secondary explanations were done. Tess's voice throughout had hardly risen higher than its opening tone; there had been no exculpatory phrase of any kind, and she had not wept.

"But the complexion even of external things seemed to suffer transmutation as her announcement proceeded. The fire in the grate looked impish—demoniacally funny, as if it did not care in the least about her strait. The fender grinned idly, as if it too did not care. The light from the water-bottle was merely engaged in a chromatic problem. All material objects around announced their irresponsibility with terrible iteration. And yet nothing had changed since the moments when he had been kissing her; or rather, nothing in the substance of things. But the essence of things had changed."

The Russians, again, might interpret this their own way: fragmentation, subjectivity, justifying a similar technique for film. But in film everything is concrete. Film shows the substance, it cannot *show* the essence, but it can *suggest* the essence by *showing* the substance. It suggests inner reality by showing outer reality with the greatest possible intensity. The writer has to build up a scene by description and allusion: images and metaphors, however fanciful, can help to strengthen



The open image: Preminger's EXODUS.

our *objective* picture of the scene, whereas if transposed to film they would distract, and distort (imagine a close-up of the fender, grinning idly). For filming this passage from *Tess* I can't imagine a better method than to keep both of them in the frame the whole time, with the "material objects" around and between them, and to have her explanation, and then his silence, and reactions, in a single take, without any overt emphasis from the camera. Ideally, in CinemaScope, which makes the surroundings more palpable, and enables you to get close to one or both of the characters without shutting out the rest of the scene. The more precisely the camera charts the substance of things, the external movement of words, expressions, gestures, the more subtly can it express the internal movement: the essence of things.

Such a sequence would be condemned a priori by Arnheim ("immobile recording machine") and by Eisenstein, who laid down that *any* scene where a transition in feeling was observed, without a cut, was "theatrical." Need one point out that you can get a far greater control, on film, of all the elements of the scene, and of how each spectator sees them? And that the division of change into before and after can often be crudely mechanical? There could be no more eloquent illustration of this danger than the scene which Eisenstein holds up as an example of how to handle such a change in feeling: the cream-separator episode from the *The General Line*.

A great comfort to upholders of the "traditional" aesthetic has always been the Kuleshov/Pudovkin experiment (three neutral CUs of an actor, Mosjoukine, intercut with three different shots, to give the impression of three different emotions). This was felt to define the cinema for all time, and to establish that its essence was montage. If the same effect was difficult to achieve with sound, and then CinemaScope, that must prove that they were a bad thing. I do not honestly think that the effect on spectators of these sequences, presented as Pudovkin relates, can have been quite so overwhelming as he claims (is there any evidence, I wonder, that the experiment was done, and does not represent wishful thinking?), but one can accept that they do, up to a point, work: we understand what is being depicted, we complete the equations. Later experiments by psychologists have confirmed that one expression abstracted from its context looks very much like another. But this can far more reasonably be seen, I think, as an argument for not abstracting it in the first place.

The experiment illustrates that each act of perception automatically conditions succeeding ones; this is something which applies continuously, to life as well as to art, and which any intelligent artist will have taken into account in working out a style—not, however, to the extent of making it the cornerstone of his method. Pudovkin here reminds one of the bakers who first extract the nourishing parts of

the flour, process it, and then put some back as "extra goodness": the result may be eatable, but it is hardly the only way to make bread, and one can criticize it for being unnecessary and "synthetic." Indeed one could extend the culinary analogy and say that the experience put over by the traditional aesthetic is essentially a *predigested* one. These two epithets have in ordinary usage a literal meaning and, by extension, a metaphorical one, applied pejoratively; the same correlation is valid here.

Writers like Manvell, Reisz, and Lindgren (all of whom base their aesthetic more or less closely on the Russians') advocate a method which gives us a *digest* of what we might see, in real life, if we were experiencing a given scene. Lindgren, in *The Art of the Film*, goes into this in most detail. He makes the usual comparisons with literary fragmentation, and then between what we see in life and in films. Sometimes we consciously see things as a whole, in their interrelationship (general shot). Sometimes we look round (pan) or walk (tracking shot). Normally we focus on one thing at a time (close-up or close-shot) and we look from one thing to another (cutting). Now it should be clear that the correspondence is by no means exact. In a film we sit facing the same direction all the time, looking at a screen which is set at a finite distance. In life we are oriented in our surroundings and our perception of them is continuous —continuous in time and space. But Lindgren claims that "in so far as the film is photographic and reproduces movement, it can give us a lifelike semblance of what we see; in so far as it employs editing, it can exactly [sic] reproduce the *manner* in which we see it."

At any time we see "central" things and "marginal" things; of the latter we may be aware, or half-aware, or they may serve merely to orient us. The traditional aesthetic separates out the central things: the marginal ones it either omits as inessential and distracting, or intercuts in close shot—in which case they are no longer marginal but central.

So an alternative method, a more strictly realistic one, which Lindgren and company pass over, is to present a complex image organized in such a way that we are induced to interpret it for ourselves. This is where genuine participation comes in, as in the sequence quoted from *River of No Return*.

Manvell (*The Film and the Public*) writes that "the comparatively narrow bounds of the normal screen shape sharpen perception by closing it in, giving the director full control of every detail which the audience should perceive." Conversely in CinemaScope "the sharpened perception of the normal film will be lost." In his aesthetic, we either see a thing or we don't. If a detail is important, the director singles it out for us; if there is a symbol or a meaningful connection to be noted, the director again does it for us, emphasizing it by close-ups. (Cf. Eisenstein's criticism of Dovshenko's *Earth*, on the grounds that he had not made the symbolism explicit enough—i.e., he had not brought the symbolic detail into close-up but had left it integrated, so that it might appear accidental.) We do not have to bother about noticing it for ourselves, or estimating whether it is significant. On the other hand when the image is complex we *have* to be alert to interpret it and the details within it. The difference between the Preminger method cited from *River of No Return* and the explicit close-up/montage style which he could have used, but didn't, corresponds to the difference between reading the meaning for ourselves and having it spelled out for us.*

"I don't think CinemaScope is a good medium. It's good only for showing great masses of movement. For other things, it's distracting, it's hard to focus attention, and it's very difficult to cut. Some people just go ahead

* Cf. also in *Citizen Kane* Welles's extremely subtle handling of the Rosebud/snowglass paperweight imagery, which he often leaves naturally in the background of the shot for us to notice, and to make the connections. Pages could be written on this.

and cut it and let people's eyes jump around and find what they want to find. It's very hard for an audience to focus—they have too much to look at—they can't see the whole thing." (Howard Hawks in an interview with Peter Bogdanovich.)

This is the danger; it was more worrying at the introduction of Scope, when audiences did apparently have to get used to "exploring" the more open image, but this I think was temporary. If a Scope image is decently organized the eyes will not just "jump around and find what they want to find," purely at random—they can be led to focus on detail, and to look from one thing to another within the frame with the emphasis which the director intends: that is, if the spectator is alert. Hawks may not like Scope (he had an apparently traumatic experience using it for *Land of the Pharaohs*, perhaps his worst film), but he approves of the 1:1.85 screen, and his style has always been one which allows the spectator freedom; in this sense he does not need Scope. One of the best of all examples of the alternative style to Lindgren's is from his *Hatari!* (wide screen). General shot of a bedroom: right of frame, in bed, waiting for her supper, Elsa Martinelli (back to camera); on the bed, John Wayne. Centre of frame, background, a tame cheetah. Left of frame, enter Red Buttons, carrying a tray; he trips over the cheetah's tail and the supper lands on Wayne, Martinelli, and the floor. Typically, Hawks takes this (exceedingly funny) scene in one static shot. It is done with a beautiful directness and lucidity, and without any of the usual look-this-is-funny comedy emphasis. The scene exists autonomously, action and reaction being integrated: Martinelli suddenly collapses with the giggles but we can only just see her at the edge of the frame. The nicest thing of all is the cheetah's reaction. He is obviously quite bewildered by the whole episode. We can see him in the background, looking up in pained manner at Red Buttons, and Hawks leaves him there, fading out the scene after a brief moment. Contrast the almost invariable procedure in other films for handling animal performers: that of extracting a certain laugh by cutting in their cute reactions in close-up. We are left "free" to interpret the scene visually, and this means we are free to respond. Our responses are not "signposted" by successive close-ups —foot tripping over tail, result, various reactions. No single reading of the scene is imposed. One could put it another way: the scene, as directed, is at once more subtle and more *authentic*. The reason why animals' reactions are normally cut in separately is not only that they thus get a surer laugh but that it's difficult to direct an animal so that it genuinely does what it is represented to be doing. It is sometimes held to be the chief glory of the cinema that you can, by montage, "create" an event like this which never happened. But the result (leaving aside certain kinds of film where the convention obviously allows this) is mechanical.*

The same applies in a less obvious way to other details of action and acting. It is much easier to put together a complex scene synthetically out of separate details—especially when you have an incompetent actor, or a child—than to organize and film the scene in its integrity. But you sacrifice the possibility of real conviction, of real subtlety.

The advantage of Scope over even the wide screen of *Hatari!* is that it enables complex scenes to be covered even more naturally: detail can be integrated, and therefore perceived, in a still more realistic way. If I had to sum up its implications I would say that it gives a greater range for *gradation of emphasis*. George Kaplan wrote in *Scene* that "there is no room for subtlety on 70mm film"; on the contrary, there is twice as much room, as is clear both from arithmetic and from *Exodus*. The 1:1.33 screen is too much of an abstraction, compared with the way we normally see

* Bazin analyzed this issue—the existence of which no one before him seems to have realized —in another definitive essay, *"Montage Interdit"* (op. cit.).

things, to admit easily the detail which can only be really effective if it is perceived *qua* casual detail. There are innumerable applications of this (the whole question of significant imagery is affected by it): one quite common one is the scene where two people talk, and a third watches, or just appears in the background unobtrusively—he might be a person who is relevant to the others in some way, or who is affected by what they say, and it useful for us to be "reminded" of his presence. The simple cutaway shot coarsens the effect by being too obvious a directorial aside (Look who's watching) and on the smaller screen it's difficult to play off foreground and background within the frame: the detail tends to look too obviously planted. The frame is so closed-in that any detail which is placed there *must* be deliberate—at some level we both feel this and know it intellectually.* Greater flexibility was achieved long before Scope by certain directors using depth of focus and the moving camera (one of whose main advantages, as Dai Vaughan pointed out in *Definition* 1, is that it allows points to be made literally "in passing"). Scope as always does not create a new method, it encourages, and refines, an old one. The most beautiful example of this "gradation of emphasis" point is I think *The Courtship of Eddie's Father*; others include *The True Story of Jesse James, Ride the High Country* (all Scope) and *Exodus* (70mm). This is not something which can be isolated from the excellence of the films as a whole, nor can it be satisfactorily documented—one just has to sit in front of the films and see how space and décor and relationships are organized, and the eye led from one point to another within the image; how connections are made, and characters introduced, not being "added on" to the rest of the context but developing *out of* it.

Few of the films like these which I'd regard as being the richest of all are liked by critics; to praise Ray, Preminger, Hawks, or Minnelli makes one liable to the charge of subscribing to a "cult," a common defense mechanism which enables critics to avoid any challenge to their preconceptions. While it's possible, of course, to reject any of these films in the last analysis, I think the disagreement is more basic than this. Mainstream critics have been conditioned to recognize only a style based on montage and the close-up, and on "signposting" of effects, as valid, and may be in effect physically unable to respond to a film which requires an active interpretation on every level. I mean by this that, as we become more sophisticated and get more familiar with ideas and concepts, we tend to interpret films in literary terms, and our visual acuteness atrophies. Norman Fruchter, conducting a Film Appreciation course for unsophisticated teenagers, found that "the cadets' visual responses were far more acute than anyone might have given them credit for. I had to watch a film at least three times to see as much as they caught in a single viewing. They rarely missed detail. . . ." (*Sight and Sound*, Autumn, 1962). Now the traditional aesthetic allows for, and encourages, our more sophisticated tendencies by, as I described, "predigesting" a scene and serving it up in separate units, each one of which we can read like a sign. Critics who are conditioned by this will keep on (consciously or subconsciously) trying to separate out the "subject" of each shot, the "content" of each sequence, even when the film is made in a

* In Antonioni's *Il Grido* there is a shot taken from inside a house: a woman goes out of the door and walks away. The door stays slightly ajar and through this very narrow aperture we continue to see her walking, in a dead straight line away from the camera. This is a far too neat continued effect, and audiences groan. It is too good to be true that she should have walked along exactly the one line which would have kept her visible. On the other hand if the aperture had been wider, she would have been "free" to deviate, and even if she had in fact taken precisely the same path the shot would have been more acceptable—not in spite of but *because* of the "frame" of the door "fitting" her less well. I don't think it is fanciful to compare the door that frames her with the frame of the film image in general.

denser and more fluid style which does not admit this kind of treatment. They resent, or more commonly fail to understand, directors who give them too much work to do, and they naturally resent CinemaScope, which automatically makes for a more open, complex image.

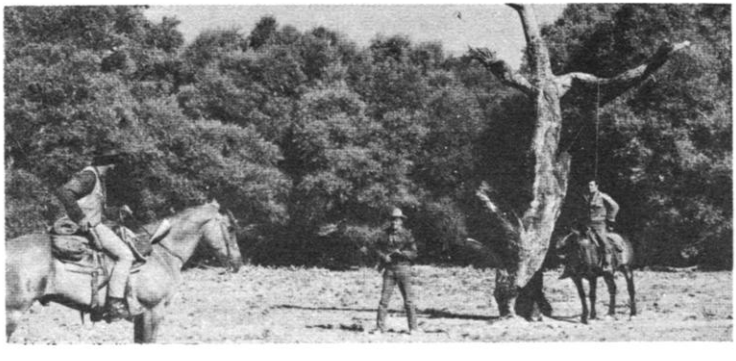
The specific objections made to CinemaScope now, I hope, fall into place: they are really no objections at all. Sidney Lumet in an interview (*Film Quarterly,* Winter, 1960) was asked about the new screen processes and answered "I think they're ridiculous, I think they're pointless, I think they're typical Hollywood products. And typical Hollywood mentality, because the essence of any dramatic piece is people, and it is symptomatic that Hollywood finds a way of photographing people directly opposite to the way they are built. CinemaScope makes no sense until people are fatter than they are taller."

This is about as logical as to say that a book should be the shape of what it's about. If the screen is to correspond exactly to the human build then we should have vertical CinemaScope. If to the human face, it should be square (if not oval), and the most common criticism of Scope was, indeed, that it made the close-up impossible: it no longer "fits" the screen. As Gavin Lambert said, "A face squashed across a concave screen is clearly an unedifying prospect." (In CinemaScope, unlike Cinerama, the screen is seldom noticeably curved, and clearly the objective is more to the dimensions than to the curvature itself.)

The argument is effectively a circular one. I think one can sum up the development of the close-up roughly like this: the natural subject for the film is man-in-a-situation. But the frame was too narrow for this to be shown comfortably: also, it was difficult to organize from scratch, without some experience of the cinema and what could be done with it. So man-in-situation came to be conveyed by man + situation: close-up of a face, intercut with shots defining his experience and/or surroundings.

Certain film-makers welcomed this because it was more manageable and also more clearly "creative." At the same time, the process was rejected by others as being mechanical. One can look at this first from the point of view of actor and director. There is a loss of spontaneity, which is reflected in the film. "If you isolate a detail, that means that you have to take it up again from cold, to resuscitate the emotion" (Vincente Minnelli). "The close-up in the cinema is essentially a reconstruction, something pre-fabricated, carefully worked up" (Jean Renoir).

This in turn affects the spectator, who has to take on trust the connection between the close-up and the rest of the scene; man + situation tends to become a formula, a cruder digest of a reality which is continuous and complex. "If I were to throw in ten more details, everything in my films would suddenly become extremely clear. But those ten details are just what I don't want to add. Nothing could be



From Boetticher's RIDE LONESOME.

easier than to take a close-up; I don't take any, lest I be tempted to use them" (Roberto Rossellini).

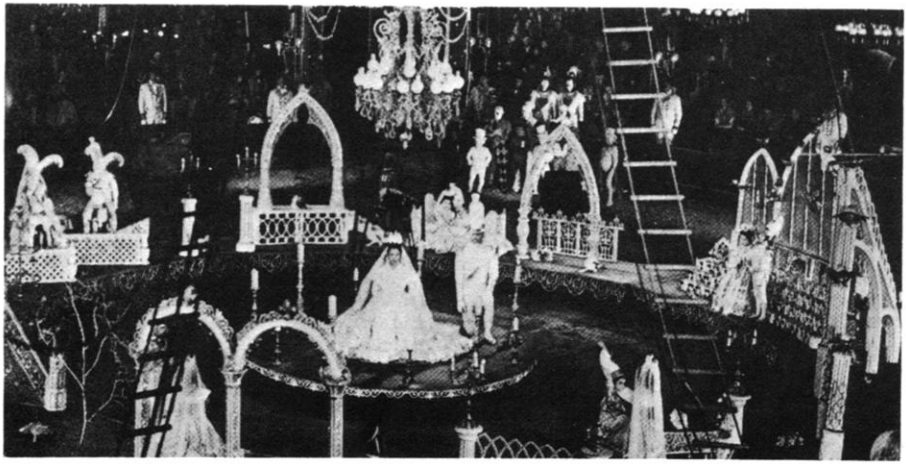
Directors like these worked out a more integral style presenting man-*in*-situation. This involved compensating for the narrowness of the frame by moving the camera laterally and composing the scene in depth. If the actors were brought close to the camera they would fill the screen, and blot out the background; therefore they were seldom brought close. This style is associated mainly with Renoir, who in 1938 wrote: "The more I advance in my craft, the more I feel it necessary to have the scene set in depth in relation to the screen; and the less can I stand actors placed carefully before the camera, as if they were posing for their photograph. It suits me rather to set my actors freely at different distances from the camera, to make them move about." This can be traced back to *Boudu Sauvé des Eaux* (1932) and even to his silent films; and there are others in the 'thirties like Hawks and Ophuls who, while not applying any formal principle of composition in depth, concentrate on the organization of the space within the image, and avoid the detached close-up—see especially *The Criminal Code* and *Liebelei*. These, together with *Boudu*, make up a marvelous trio of early sound films, which if one relied upon historians one would scarcely know existed, for according to most theories they oughtn't to.

The most spectacular application of these ideas is undoubtedly Antonioni's *Le Amiche* (made in 1955 but in the 1:1.33 ratio), of which he said: "I wanted to show my characters in their context, not to separate them, by montage, from their daily environment. You will find no cross-cutting whatever in *Le Amiche*: this technique expresses nothing." There are no close-ups in this film, and the average length of shot is 30 seconds, which is a lot. Antonioni realizes, and demonstrates, that the interaction of people with each other and with their surroundings is much more subtly expressed by showing them simultaneously. To dissociate them by montage tends to dissociate them altogether. The difference is not one of degree but of kind.

How does this relate to CinemaScope? Many of the directors who thus "anticipate" it do not in fact use it; partly this is chance, partly that they can get along without. But while I would not quite agree with the magazine *Présence du Cinéma*, which states that everything is automatically better in Scope, I think that, other things being equal, Scope refines this style. The director can now afford to bring a character closer to the lens without shutting out the context, and this flexibility is useful. He can have two faces in close shot together, instead of having to cut from one to the other, or to squeeze them in unnaturally close together. (Antonioni, although he has not worked in Scope, has taken advantage of the 1:1.85 screen in this way. Ian Cameron discusses this apropos of *L'Avventura* in *Film Quarterly*, Fall, 1962).

In CinemaScope the close-up, so far from being impossible, is for the first time fully acceptable: it *cannot* be a mechanical, all-purpose CU like the one of Mosjoukine, and it cannot be detached, it must include a genuine and not just a token background. I say "cannot": at least, if it is done this way, it is patently absurd. The image is too open, its space too palpable, to accommodate the "dead object" and give it spurious life. A lifeless film is twice as lifeless in Scope, as certain directors continue to demonstrate by building up scenes in the cutting-room out of the most perfunctory of component-shots. The most grotesque example is *The Lion*, but *The Left Hand of God*, *The Barbarian and the Geisha*, *Bus Stop*, and *The Deep Blue Sea* are also instructively inept. (I don't suggest that Scope *makes* them bad; they would have been anyway, but Scope shows them up more clearly. Over-all, and with certain clear exceptions like the didactic and the animated film, Scope makes the bad film worse and the good film better: it should gradually separate the sheep among directors from the goats.)

Look at the Scope close-up, as before, from



The circus in Ophuls' LOLA MONTÈS
(see review in this issue).

both angles, how it is shot, and how we see it. If it is to pass, it must be analytic rather than synthetic: instead of taking an insert CU, then, against a neutral background, the director will have to recreate the ambience of the whole, and this helps the actor. The actor at the same time is freer to move within the frame, and thus within his surroundings, instead of being "placed carefully before the camera". Mariette Hartley, the girl in *Ride the High Country*, stands at the window of her house, talking to a boy: Scope close-up: she moves around nervously while she talks, and the director (Sam Peckinpah) doesn't have to worry about keeping her fixed to any chalk-marks because there is room enough within the frame; the effect is marvelously spontaneous.

Kazan's *Wild River* (about the evacuation of a remote community by the Tennessee Valley Authority) is a film where environment, and its effect on different people, is as significant as in *Le Amiche* and *The Magnificent Ambersons*. Because it is in Scope it doesn't matter that it is full of close-ups and crosscut sequences. Antonioni's reservations no longer apply; Kazan can concentrate on a single face without dissociating it from its context and "dislocating" the spectator.

Finally, a not unusual CinemaScope scene (from Ray's *Bitter Victory*) which contradicts most of the facile generalizations about Scope, made alike by those against and those in favor. The three main characters sit around a table, talking. The atmosphere is important—a military club in Africa, during the war, a nervous, falsely cheerful environment. The scene is taken in a series of full or medium close-ups, each of the three in turn, as they talk, sometimes two together. The normal theoretical attitude is that this would be fine on the old-ratio screen but clumsy if not impossible in Scope. If anything, the reverse is true, and it works brilliantly *because* it is in Scope: the cutting does not disorient us, the close-ups do not wholly isolate the characters, we know where we are all through. At the edges of the frame there is décor and space and perhaps some casual detail; thus when the camera is on one of the men, Richard Burton, we can see a couple dancing, and an Arab guard, and a general background of the room; we are completely situated at each moment, and accept the scene as real, while getting the full concentration on each face which Ray intends. So far from distracting this awareness of environment and of the characters' relation in space is necessary.

In talking about the close-ups in *Bitter Victory* I am talking about the montage. The two

have always been lumped together, by people condemning Scope ("the close-up and montage become impossible") and by those welcoming it ("but montage and the close-up are not essential anyway"); the implications of Scope are identical for both. Montage is at once less necessary and more acceptable. Bazin and Roger Leenhardt, two of the few who approved of Scope from the start, imagined it would come to eliminate cutting within a sequence, and that this was no bad thing, but fortunately the medium is more flexible: some directors cut more in Scope, some less. There is no need to fragment reality, but there is less harm in fragmenting it because the different bits can be fitted together more satisfactorily.

If one likes Scope and the 70mm systems it would at first sight seem natural to welcome Cinerama unreservedly on aesthetic grounds, though not on economic.

It is still at a fairly primitive stage. The old distraction of the three-panel effect is still with us, but no doubt this and other flaws will be eliminated just as certain early flaws in the CinemaScope process (poor color reproduction, lack of clarity, horizon-bending) have been. There is even talk of a new single-camera process.

All the formal necessities of Scope apply, only more so. A detached CU is not just ugly, it is impossible. Bill Daniels, one of the cameramen on *How the West Was Won,* said of it: "It's a magnificent process, but frightening. You have three cameras grouped together, embracing 143 degrees. Your lens has an extremely wide angle. In a close-up, the camera is right up against the subject, only three feet away, and even that gets him to the hips."

Because of this width, synthetic montage is almost impossible too. A given shot will be covering so much of the action that the only cuts can be to a reverse angle, or to another view of the same scene (though for obvious reasons multicamera shooting is impossible) or to a different scene altogether. An actor finds it difficult to move out of frame, but has instead to move to an inconspicuous corner and continue acting.

So Cinerama guarantees an integral style. My reservations about it may, I suppose, be caused by imperfections which will in time be sorted out, or by the same form of timidity which I condemned in earlier critics' reactions to sound and CinemaScope. But it seems to me that the admirable dreams of the film pioneers who saw, in their imagination, "a total, integral representation of reality . . . a perfect illusion of the outside world, with sound, color and depth" (Bazin's summary) are not going to be fulfilled simply by continuing to extend the Cinerama method.

Cinerama does not project its image onto the squared-off wall opposite the audience, as other wide-screen systems do (only in certain Todd-AO theatres is the screen significantly curved); instead, it wraps the image around in front of them. If one sits in a front seat and looks at the center of the image, one can't see anything but screen, and one can turn almost full left and full right and still be *facing* the screen. The bigger and more "realistic" screens get, the more will this be true, and it is confusing because it is too close to our perception of life: it demands an equivalent control over distances, which is impossible as yet. There is no problem, in principle or in practice, over giving the impression of a confined space in CinemaScope (think of *Les Amants, Bitter Victory, Les 400 Coups*); but to fill the curved Cinerama screen with a group of people does not give the impression of being hemmed in by people, the effect is rather of being surrounded by people at some distance away. The space within the scene automatically becomes expanded (again, if one sits close) to at least the dimensions of the front arc of the auditorium itself. The cameras, being at the center of an arc, instead of remaining outside the scene, can "interrupt" it. This means that a character can't look, or move, straight across from one side of the scene to the other, because this would entail going "across" the cam-

HOW THE WEST WAS WON—*proportions of Cinerama.*

era, and thus "across" the audience. Daniels explains that "an actor on the right or left cannot look directly at an actor at the center (if that's what the script calls for); if he does, he will look, on the screen, as if he is looking out front. This is because he is, of course, being photographed by a different camera at a different angle."

Cinerama is halfway between the traditional flat screen and an "all-around" cinema where the spectators are enclosed in a hemisphere of image. It is often assumed that this would be the ultimate in realism, but in fact there would still be this incongruous volume of space within the auditorium, a no-man's-land where the director and crew stood, surrounded by outward-looking cameras, and where, in turn, the audience now sit and look out from. I haven't any experience of this, not having been at the Brussels Fair, nor at the 1900 exhibition in Paris of Cinéorama,* which surrounded the audience with views taken from a balloon, projected onto a circular screen of circumference 333 feet. But the problem would seem to be: how to show the balloon itself, and the people in it. It's like a planetarium, where you can reproduce perfectly the distant view, the night sky and the horizon all round, but could hardly put the audience *in* a house, or project close objects like over-hanging trees. The audience is too completely oriented to adjust to the distortion inherent in the means of projection.

No one could deny that planetaria, the various encircling 'Ramas, and Cinerama itself, achieve their spectacular effects admirably, but it seems doubtful whether even the relatively modest Cinerama is a good medium for story-telling. Todd-AO and the other 70mm systems can be almost as stunning in physical impact, they eliminate distortions, are easier to control and more natural to look at. This seems the nearest we will get, under present technology, to a "total cinema."

It seems a pity to abandon the question here, and one can take it that theorists, and businessmen, will continue the quest for total cinema.

The problem is to devise some way of surrounding each individual in the audience with a *total* visual world, in the same way that it's possible to surround him with a total aural one. A radio play can give a satisfactory total representation of what we would hear in reality. Our visual perceptions are more complex than our aural ones, and are more closely bound up with the other factors in our experience. We can *imagine* a total visual reality, in reading a book or hearing a play, but even in a Circlorama-type cinema we are still at the center of our *own* reality—the people next to us, the ground beneath us, the space between us and the screen . . . so it's impossible to "submit" ourselves entirely to total cinema as we can to total radio.

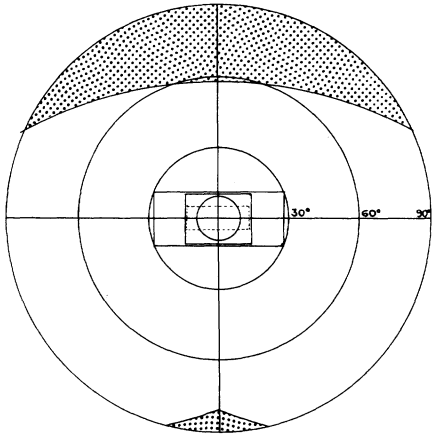
This would need an entirely revolutionary technique, one which could engulf each spectator in a total new world substituted for his "real" one. A form of controlled, waking dream. It is what René Barjavel, in a fascinating book written in 1945, *Le Cinéma Total*, seems to envisage. He talks of a cinema transmitted by "waves" or "impulses." He gives no technical explanation, taking it for granted that They will invent it. More recently Arthur C. Clarke (in *Profiles of the Future*, pp. 191-192) seems also to take into account the possibility of some such process. I have not the faintest idea whether, or when, or how, this would be feasible, but possibly the increasing power of mind over matter, and mind over mind, could culminate in this.

* A Russian all-round cinema, the Circlorama, is due to open in London during May.

Optometrical Criticism

One argument about wide screens deserves special attention because it is false: the contention that the CinemaScope screen and its relatives have proportions which resemble the proportions of the human field of vision more closely than those of the old screen, and hence are superior to it. This view is usually espoused, like most views in film criticism, without any pretense at evidence, and it must have been questioned many times by anyone in the habit of looking out of his own eyes. But it has never been definitively put down.

Let us, then, settle this optometrical criticism once and for all. The diagram below (based on Thomas G. Atkinson, *Visual Field Charting* [Chicago, 1941]) represents the binocular (two-eyed) field of human vision. It shows that the eyes take in a far greater angle of vision than any standard photographic lens, anamorphic or not, and that the human field of vision is circular except for the odd-shaped obstructions, at top and bottom, of the eyebrow ridge and the nose.



Now the angle subtended by motion picture screens varies with the distance at which one sits. Some people like to sit very close—within a screen width of the screen—so that the screen appears extremely large. Most people, it was found with the old screen shape, prefer a distance between twice and five times the screen width. Imagining oneself in a seat distant from the screen by twice the width of an old-format screen (and this is closer than most people now seem to sit) the image of the old format occupies a space represented by the inner so'id rectangle on the diagram—subtending a horizontal arc of about 30°. If the screen is expanded to CinemaScope dimensions at the same close distance, it will occupy a space represented by the outer rectangle, with an arc of about 60°. Both screens, obviously, occupy a minute fraction of the total visual field. Even Cinerama does not do much better in this respect for most of its spectators, only a lucky few who sit relatively far forward.

And for many CinemaScope spectators the situation is much less favorable; if one is seated four old-screen widths from a CinemaScope screen the effect is like that of the tiny inner dotted rectangle. Many theater seats *are* that far from the screen (especially those in balconies) and this is indeed a "tank-driver-slit" effect. Far from increasing the seeming spaciousness of the image, it constricts it.

An unfortunate side-effect of the wider screens is that exhibitors often mask their projectors to make films shot in the old ratio look like widescreen films. This cuts off the heads and feet of actors and makes hash of the composition.

If for some reason the screen *were* really to be analogous in proportions to the human field of vision, it should be roundish, or failing that, squarish (as people sometimes remember the old-format screen). But this does not, of course, come near the real critical and creative questions of screen shape, which are aesthetic and not physiological.—Ernest Callenbach

ANDREW SARRIS

The Auteur Theory And The Perils Of Pauline

Pauline Kael's article "Circles and Squares," in our last issue, was a blistering attack on the "auteur" school of criticism as it has been seen in the work of Andrew Sarris and such journals as "Movie" and the "New York Film Bulletin." Mr. Sarris has sent us the following article as his reply. Since Miss Kael's views held the floor for a quarter, we will allow Mr. Sarris the same time; in the subsequent issue they may both wish to make some brief closing comments, as will the editor.

"Be sure that you go to the author to get at *his* meaning, not to find yours."

—JOHN RUSKIN, *Sesame and Lilies*

"I call these sketches Shadowgraphs, partly by the designation to remind you at once that they derive from the darker side of life, partly because like other shadowgraphs they are not directly visible. When I take a shadowgraph in my hand, it makes no impression on me, and gives me no clear conception of it. Only when I hold it up opposite the wall, and now look not directly at it, but at that which appears on the wall, am I able to see it. So also with the picture which I wish to show here, an inward picture which does not become perceptible until I see it through the external. This external is perhaps quite unobtrusive but not until I look through it, do I discover that inner picture which I desire to show you, an inner picture too delicately drawn to be outwardly visible, woven as it is of the tenderest moods of the soul."

—SOREN KIERKEGAARD, *Either/Or*

I. THE AUTEUR THEORY

Certain misconceptions about the auteur theory which have crept into the pages of *Film Quarterly* now seem to be treated as gospel by critics West of the Rockies. In the Spring, 1963, issue, for example, Ernest Callenbach sums up the critical ferment of a decade: "In 1957, in the Paris monthly *Cahiers du Cinéma,* François Truffaut proposed for the magazine a 'politique des auteurs'—a policy of focusing criticism primarily upon directors and specifically upon chosen directors whose individuality of style qualified them, in the eyes of the Cahiers team, as 'auteurs'—creators in the personal sense we accept for the other arts." Thus far, I would criticize only one minor chronological discrepancy. François Truffaut first promulgated the "politique des auteurs," not in 1957, but in the January, 1954, issue of *Cahiers* with an article entitled: *"Une certaine tendance du cinéma français," "Du cinèma français,"* it might be noted, not *du cinèma américan.* Consequently, Callenbach is guilty of a grave distortion when he makes the patronizing statement: "In its homeland the politique has led to many peculiar judgments, especially of American film-makers: it is Samuel Fuller, Nicholas Ray, and Otto Preminger who figure as the gods of this new pantheon." A pantheon with only three pillars is an idiot's pantheon, indeed. In his quick Cook's tour, or shall we say Roud's romp, through the pages of *Cahiers du Cinéma,* Mr. Callenbach has overlooked such pantheon gods as Robert Bresson, Luis Buñuel, Charles Chaplin, Jean Cocteau, Alexander Dovjenko, Carl Dreyer, Sergei Eisenstein, Robert

Flaherty, D. W. Griffith, Howard Hawks, Alfred Hitchcock, Fritz Lang, Kenji Mizoguchi, F. W. Murnau, Max Ophuls, Jean Renoir, Roberto Rossellini, Josef von Sternberg, Erich Von Stroheim, Jean Vigo, and Orson Welles.

Here are some hard facts for the bemused critics and the possibly misled readers of *Film Quarterly:* In 1958, the *Cahiers* critics listed the twelve greatest films of all time in terms of their pantheon of directors—Murnau's *Sunrise,* Renoir's *Rules of the Game,* Rossellini's *Strangers,* Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible,* Griffith's *Birth of a Nation,* Welles' *Arkadin,* Dreyer's *Ordet,* Mizoguchi's *Ugetsu,* Vigo's *L'Atalante,* Von Stroheim's *The Wedding March,* Hitchcock's *Under Capricorn,* Chaplin's *Monsieur Verdoux.* That same year, Truffaut listed the ten greatest living directors as: Chaplin, Renoir, Dreyer, Rossellini, Hitchcock, Sternberg, Buñuel, Bresson, Gance, Lang. It seems strange that Callenbach's pantheon gods—Fuller, Ray, Preminger—fail to appear in these lists. I am certainly not arguing that these three directors have not been favorably reviewed in *Cahiers.* They have, and with good reason. What I find intolerable in *Film Quarterly* is the persistent distortion of opposing critical viewpoints. It is too easy to dismiss a system of critical values involving hundreds of directors by harping on the two or three you happen to find "peculiar." It is also irresponsible for a magazine ostensibly devoted to "film scholarship" to create the impression that every critic and contributor to *Cahiers, Movie, Film Culture,* and *The New York Film Bulletin* follows the same "line" and shares the same aesthetic theory. I am now writing for *Film Quarterly.* Do I therefore follow the *Film Quarterly* "line"? I should hope not.

Perhaps, taste is a function of scale. To take a specific example, the Spring 1962, *Film Quarterly* was designated "A SPECIAL ISSUE ON HOLLYWOOD." The cover consists of a rear-view still from Kent Mackenzie's *Exiles,* complete with garbage cans. After this unappetizing beginning, the magazine gets rolling with a holier-than-thou editorial: "Turn on! Turn On!"—a West Coast sequel to Lindsay Anderson's "Stand Up!" Next we are treated to a "discussion" entitled with suitable pomposity: "Personal Creation in Hollywood—Is It Possible?" The panel consists of those renowned authorities on personal creation: Fred Zinnemann, John Houseman, Gavin Lambert, Irvin Kershner, Kent Mackenzie, Pauline Kael, and Colin Young. Arthur Knight pops up with a puff on "The New Hollywood Museum," an institution designed to be less useful than comparable institutions in New York, London, and Paris. Albert Johnson interviews Hubert Cornfield and Paul Wendkos, and manages to provide his readers with some new information, a rare event in *Film Quarterly.* William Pechter's analysis of Abraham Polonsky's career is similarly constructive. Joseph Anderson rounds out the article section with a comparison of Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* and John Sturges' *The Magnificent Seven,* an ambivalent comparison to say the least. Anderson on Kurosawa and imitator John Sturges: "In this instance many significant changes stem from traditional Hollywood ways of seeing things, and comparing *The Magnificent Seven* with Kurosawa's film reveals some of the fixed ideas which inhibit American film-making." Anderson on John Ford and imitator Kurosawa: "Yet Kurosawa's self-acknowledged debt to the American Western, particularly John Ford's, helped to determine the shape of *The Seven Samurai.* This foreign influence has nourished him. Without the American cinema, there would be no Kurosawa." In the pages of *Film Quarterly,* that is about all the American cinema is good for: to nourish Kurosawa and the other gods of the espresso pantheon. Notice that Kurosawa's debt to Ford is "self-acknowledged." If Kurosawa had not given the show away, would Ford's influence be mentioned at all in *Film Quarterly?* I doubt it. The remainder of this pathetic "Hollywood Issue" is devoted to the usual quota of film reviews (three) and "entertainments" reviews (ten). No filmographies. No research articles. Not even the kind of fun pieces which a subject like Hollywood might

be expected to inspire in the dreariest academicians. Nothing, in fact, but faith, hope, and exhortation.

By contrast, the December, 1955, American issue of *Cahiers du Cinéma* contains articles by Max Ophuls *(Hollywood, petite île)*, Eric Rohmer *(Redécouvrir l' Amérique)*, Jacques Rivette *(Notes sur une révolution)*, André Bazin *(Evolution du Western)*, Claude Chabrol *(Evolution du film policier)*, Jean Domarchi *(Evolution du film musical)*, Pierre Kast *(Thousand and Three)*, Henri Mercillon *(Où en est l'économie du cinema américain?)*, Aldrian Scott (History of the Black List), Harry Purvis *(Memento du dialoguiste hollywoodien)*. The issue's *pièce de résistance* is a dictionary of (then) contemporary American directors—sixty in detail, one hundred and fifty in all, with photographs, biographical and filmographical data, and critical judgments of their careers. The sixty are: Robert Aldrich, Laslo Benedek, John Berry, John Brahm, Richard Brooks, Frank Capra, Charles Chaplin, George Cukor, Michael Curtiz, Jules Dassin, Cecil B. DeMille, Edward Dmytryk, Allan Dwan, Richard Fleischer, John Ford, Samuel Fuller, Tay Garnett, Edmund Goulding, Henry Hathaway, Howard Hawks, Stuart Heisler, Alfred Hitchcock, John Huston, Elia Kazan, Gene Kelly, Henry King, Henry Koster, Fritz Lang, Mitchell Leisen, Joseph Losey, Leo McCarey, Joseph L. Mankiewicz, Anthony Mann, Lewis Milestone, Vincente Minnelli, Robert Montgomery, Arch Oboler, Joseph Pevney, Otto Preminger, Richard Quine, Nicholas Ray, Mark Robson, Robert Rossen, Robert Siodmak, Douglas Sirk, Josef von Sternberg, George Stevens, John Sturges, Preston Sturges, Jacques Tourneur, Edgar G. Ulmer, King Vidor, Raoul Walsh, Charles Walters, Orson Welles, William Wellman, Billy Wilder, Robert Wise, William Wyler, and Fred Zinnemann. There are more directors in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in *Film Quarterly's* philosophy. Oh yes, the cover—a front view of Marilyn Monroe, no less, in the skirt-blowing sequence from *The Seven Year Itch*. Looking at these two Hollywood issues side by side, front to rear, the disinterested observer would have to concede every advantage of taste, scholarship, and perception to *Cahiers du Cinéma*. The difference between *Film Quarterly's* view of Hollywood and *Cahiers'* is the difference between plain subtraction and differential calculus. If the editors and critics of *Film Quarterly* want to cut the cinema down to size, even midget size, that is their privilege, but then there is no reason for a debate. People who think that only ten films a year are worth seeing will hardly be interested in value judgments concerning hundreds.

My defense of the *auteur* theory is therefore a defense in depth. What I have argued in one context after another for the past two years is simply that the *auteur* theory is the most efficient method of classifying the cinema: past, present and future. However, the *auteur* theory was never intended as an occult ritual. As I stated in my "Notes on the Auteur Theory in 1962" *(Film Culture,* Winter 1962/3): "Unfortunatly, some critics have embraced the *auteur* theory as a short-cut to film scholarship. With a 'you-see-it-or-you-don't' attitude toward the reader, the particularly lazy *auteur* critic can save himself the drudgery of communication and explanation. Indeed, at their worst, *auteur* critiques are less meaningful than the straightforward plot reviews which pass for criticism in America. Without the necessary research and analysis, the *auteur* theory can degenerate into the kind of snobbish racket which is associated with the merchandising of paintings."

Research and analysis are indispensable for sound *auteur* criticism. Whether you are committed to Ray, Nicholas, or Ray, Satyajit, you have to see all their work before you can be authoritative on any one of their films. After a given number of films, a pattern is established, and we can speak of the Rays, of Ophuls, Renoir, Mizoguchi, Hitchcock, Chaplin, Ford, Welles, Dreyer, Rossellini, Murnau, Griffith, Sternberg, Eisenstein, Stroheim, Buñuel, Bresson, Hawks, Lang, Flaherty, Vigo, as we speak of artists and authors in other media. Because the *auteur* theory itself is a pattern theory in

constant flux, I would never endorse a Ptolemaic constellation of directors in a fixed orbit. Only after thousands of films have been revaluated, will any personal pantheon have a reasonably objective validity. The task of validating the *auteur* theory is an enormous one, and the end will never be in sight. Meanwhile, the *auteur* habit of collecting random films in directorial bundles will serve posterity with at least a tentative classification.

A debate over the *auteur* theory should be concerned with nuances rather than extremes. There is nothing new or revolutionary about studying the cinema through its directors. Even the socially conscious film histories of the Rotha - Griffith - Lindgren - Jacobs - Kracauer-Sadoul-Aristarco-Knight syndicate manage to recognize the role of the director in certain periods and locales, mainly long ago and far away. Where I part company with these eminent gentlemen is in my conception of film history in terms of the career spans of directors.

I made my position clear in the Spring, 1962, issue of *Film Culture:*

"The chronological division of the cinema into historical periods tends to perpetuate what may be called the pyramid fallacy of many film historians. This fallacy consists of viewing the history of cinema as a process by which approved artisans have deposited their slabs of celluloid on a single pyramid rising ultimately to a single apex, be it Realism, Humanism, Marxism, Journalism, Abstractionism, or even Eroticism. Directors are valued primarily for their 'contributions' to the evolution of a Utopian cinema efficiently adjusted to a Utopian society. Once a formal contribution has been made, subsequent refinements are downgraded. If Murnau disposed of camera movement, why should we honor Ophuls? Since most of the technical vocabulary, the zoom notwithstanding, was established by the end of the silent era, there has been a tendency to honor sound films almost exclusively for social content. The 1958 Brussels poll, which may have been the last gasp of the pyramid critics, cited only three sound films out of the top twelve, and of these three, *La Grande Illusion* and *The Bicycle Thief* were clearly content selections while *Citizen Kane* probably received mixed support from its formal and political partisans. (It might be noted that the recent *Sight and Sound* poll reflected the rising influence of the new French critics and film-makers.)

"The patent system of the pyramid generally holds that silent directors invented forms while sound directors perfected styles, and in the pyramid histories, particularly those oriented to realism, stylists are the drones of the cinema. It might be charitable to suggest that stylists are harder to analyze than inventors, and that it at least seems easier to define Eisenstein than to define Hitchcock. Actually, critics who are superficial about Hitchcock are usually superficial about Eisenstein as well.

"One problem with the pyramid approach is that the base becomes rigid, and silent classics, especially, become encrusted with reverential moss. It is then almost as difficult to dislodge Pudovkin without disturbing Eisenstein as it is to move Stalin without compromising Lenin. Since new criticism is inevitably revolutionary, new critics may find it useful to smash the pyramid altogether and start with what they know firsthand. Another hazard with the pyramid is that deviations from the apex are rejected even when acknowledged masters are involved. Indeed, what is most striking about pyramid histories is the number of directors who have allegedly declined, compromised, sold out, retreated from reality, evaded responsibility, and otherwise gone astray. Some directors, of course, decline by any standards. It cannot be reasonably argued that René Clair in 1962 is equal to René Clair in 1932. What is tiresome about pyramid critics is their tone of moral outrage. In his *Sequence* attack on Hitchcock's Hollywood films, Lindsay Anderson seemed irritated even by the posh hotel Hitchcock patronized on his London visit. Perhaps the most remarkable pyramid denunciation of all time is Kracauer's criticism of German directors for being too esoteric for the masses.

"What then is the alternative to the pyra-

mid? I would suggest an inverted pyramid opening outward to accommodate the unpredictable range and diversity of individual directors. The time span of the cinema can then be divided into the career spans of its directors, each of whom is granted the option of a personal mystique apart from any collective mystique of the cinema as a whole. The inverted pyramid does not require a new manifesto. Critics and film-makers have been moving in that direction for the past decade. History as biography is reflected in the increasing frequency of director retrospectives and in the popularization of director cults."

There are many problems and paradoxes to be considered with respect to the *auteur* theory. At the very least, the *auteur* theory serves as a convenient figure of speech. "Aimez-vous Brahms?" asks the Saganesque seducer. "I don't like Bach, but I respect him," observes the Helen Hokinson woman in the *New Yorker* record shop. For centuries, the Elizabethan *politique* has decreed the reading of every Shakespearean play before any encounter with the Jonsonian repertory. In Jacques Rivette's *Paris nous appartient*, Jean-Claude Brialy asks Betty Schneider if she would still admire *Pericles* if it were not signed by Shakespeare. Giant computers are now working overtime to determine if *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* were written by the same person. If not, our conception of each work would change. This is the *auteur* tradition of Western Civilization, and its application to the cinema tends to legitimize the cinema's cultural aspirations.

Susanne Langer has challenged this entire tradition in her antipersonal tract on aesthetics, *Feeling and Form*. For Miss Langer, the work of an artist is transformed into an "art symbol," and this art symbol cannot be correlated with the distinctive personality of the artist. Certainly, there is no immutable law in art which decrees that the artist sign his work, or accept responsibility for it. Japanese painters often changed their names every five years or so when they changed their styles. Much of the art of antiquity cannot be traced to individual artists, but it is art just the same. What difference does it make then? To the artist none. To the critic a great deal. The *auteur* theory is ultimately a critical theory, and not a creative theory. The artist does not worry about technical competence, personality, or interior meaning, nor about imitating nature or the objective correlative, nor about form and content. These are all critical terms which enable critics to interpret the works of artists for the benefit of the (critics') readers. The point of view of the critic is always different from the point of view of the creator. In the cinema, the critic sits before the screen, and seeks to communicate the glories of mise-en-scène which appear before him. The director has no concern with mise-en-scène, as such, because his point of view takes him behind the screen to the various technical stages of preparation. The director must combine the elements of the illusion into the illusion itself, and the critic must then analyze the illusion for its constitutent elements, but this reciprocal process is never completely realized. A residue of manner and meaning defies analysis. A barrier between creator and critic will always remain as one of the mysteries of art, and criticism can only attempt an approximation of accuracy to inaccuracy. There are exceptions to the *auteur* theory, of course. The late André Bazin, Richard Roud, Ian Cameron, Manny Farber, and other critics have probed some of the weaknesses in the theory. I would say at this point only that the *auteur* theory comes closer than any any other to providing sufficient information on the meaning and style of the cinema.

Rather than continue an abstract argument I would like to reprint here an article—"Italy's Big Four"—which I wrote in the summer of 1961 for *Showbill* as a practical application of the *auteur* theory. Although the piece suffers from compression and facility, it should suggest the potential range of the *auteur* theory:

Of the one hundred and eighteen directors now involved in the industrial renaissance of Italian film-making, only four—Luchino Visconti, Roberto Rossellini, Michelangelo Antonioni, and Federico Fellini—seem destined for more than the immortality of a footnote. Vis-

conti and Rossellini have been directing feature films for twenty years, Antonioni and Fellini for ten, and the significant history of the Italian cinema can be encompassed within these career spans even though Italian filmmakers were producing ambitious spectacles before Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* in 1915.

Because of freakish distribution problems, Visconti's *Ossessione* (1942) and Rossellini's *Open City* (1946) have been separately honored as the midwives of neorealism, an overdefined movement which in its time and place simply marked the rejection of the sanctimonious conventions of Fascism. The Italian cinema before *Ossessione* is a mountain of spaghetti, some of it reasonably tasteful, but most of it too starchy for anything but home consumption. Mussolini came to power more than a decade before Hitler, and the crucially formative years of the 'twenties found Murnau, Lang, Pabst and Lesser German directors evolving their techniques under the relatively protective aegis of the Weimar Republic while their Italian colleagues were marking time under Il Duce's balcony.

Visconti at 64, Rossellini at 54, Antonioni at 48, and Fellini at 41 seem reasonably safe from the creeping standardization which has afflicted so many of their once promising colleagues. One might except the late Curzio Malaparte, whose one film, *The Strange Deception*, lent the Italian cinema intellectual prestige at a crucial point in its postwar development, and on another level of deception, a special note must be devoted to the inflated reputation of Vittorio De Sica in the early 'fifties.

If Visconti and Rossellini invented neorealism in *Ossessione* and *Open City*, and then invested it with the ultimate profundity of *La Terra Trema* and *Paisan*, De Sica milked it dry with *Shoe-Shine* and *The Bicycle Thief*. Lacking an insight into the real world, De Sica relied instead on tricks of pathos which he had learned too well as an actor. It is unlikely that any of the Big Four would have made the *Bicycle Thief* in the De Sica-Zavattini manner. Visconti would have catapulted his victim into the Roman underworld where social corruption and a sense of personal destiny would transform the wronged laborer into a professional bicycle thief. Rossellini's character, heroically transformed by God during the search, would return home with the awareness that his integrity as a human being was more important than any material object. Antonioni's hero, realizing the futility of his isolated existence in an impersonal society, would ride the recovered bicycle off an embankment in a quasisuicidal gesture. After some bizarre experiences, Fellini's protagonist would find his bicycle only to have it stolen again the next day, but the hapless victim would come up smiling at the hope radiated by a little girl playing a harmonica.

All four directors have diverged from the literal path of neorealism which was never anything more than the Stalinallee of social realism. In Visconti's work there has always been an unreconciled tension between a Marxian vision of society and an operatic conception of character. *Rocco and His Brothers* is comparable in its contradictions to what might have come out of a Verdi-Brecht adaptation of *The Brothers Karamazov*. The unity of the family in *Rocco* is destroyed partly because of the urban pressures of Milan on the rural mystique of the South, partly because of the inhumanly Christlike sanctity of Rocco, partly because of the destructive intervention of a wilful prostitute, and partly because of the fratricidal destiny of the brothers. The disturbing homosexual overtones of *Rocco* (and *Ossessione*) reflect additional conflicts with which the director must cope.

Throughout his career Visconti has been haunted by the image of the destructive woman. In the sublime cinema of Mizoguchi and Ophuls, most notably in *Ugetsu* and *Lola Montès*, woman is presented as the Redeemer of men, but for Visconti, she is man's nemesis. The females in *Ossessione*, *Senso*, *White Nights*, *Bellissima*, and *Rocco* wreak their havoc not through spidery machinations but through a psychic force which the male can neither resist nor overcome. It follows almost logically that Visconti is the best director of actresses in the world, and the performances of Clara Calamai

(Ossessione), Anna Magnani *(Bellissima)*, Alida Valli *(Senso)*, Maria Schell *(White Nights)*, and Annie Girardot *(Rocco)* are among the most memorable creations of the cinema.

Roberto Rossellini had directed three obscure wartime films—*La Nave Bianca, Un Pilote Ritorna, L'Uomo Della Croce*—before he emerged on the world scene with his neorealistic classics, *Open City, Paisan*, and *Germany Year Zero*. Then he went into a Magnani-Cocteau period with *The Miracle, The Human Voice*, and *The Infernal Machine* before the advent of Ingrid Bergman in *Stromboli, Europa 51 (No Greater Love), Strangers, Joan at the Stake*, and *Fear*. During his Bergman period, he also directed *Flowers of St. Francis, Dov'é La Liberta*, an episode in *The Seven Deadly Sins (Envy)*, and *We Are the Women* (with Bergman). Except for the brilliant, scandal-provoking documentary, *India*, Rossellini was off the screen for five years before making his comeback with *General Della Rovere*, a patriotic success followed by *Era Notte a Roma*, Stendhal's *Vanina Vanini*, and *Viva Italia!*

The most Catholic of all directors, Rossellini has always been obsessed by the inner miracles of human personality. In his oddly stylized treatment of the Honneger-Claudel *Joan at the Stake*, Rossellini sends Ingrid Bergman awkwardly soaring into Heaven, a fitting climax to his cinematic conversion of the acrress into a saint. Rossellini has confronted death as a metaphysical experience with none of the histrionics of Visconti, the despair of Antonioni, the emotional causality of Fellini. The final death-images of Magnani in *Open City*, the partisans in *Paisan*, the prostitute in *Europa 51*, and De Sica in *General Della Rovere* possess a formal dignity unique in world cinema. However, like most mystics, Rossellini sacrifies fact for truth, and the ambiguities of the human condition often elude him. With Chaplin and Buñuel, he stands apart from the other artists of his time, irritating, inimitable and indispensable.

Next to Resnais, Antonioni is the most abstract film-maker in the world today. The director envisages the world as a chessboard on which the kings and queens, the knights and bishops of old have been replaced by pawns whose moves are hopelessly confused by the application of obsolete rules. His first film, *Cronaca di un Amore*, focuses on two lovers who are parted by the accidental deaths of a friend and a husband, deaths willed but not executed by the couple. Ever since, Antonioni has been preoccupied with the shadow of guilt which hovers over human relationships before the police arrive. No director in history has been as fascinated by the moral permutations of suicides and fatal accidents. Hitchcock and Buñuel have derived dark humor from this casuistic problem which apparently torments Antonioni.

However, Antonioni's films before *L'Avventura—Cronaca di un Amore, La Signora Senza Camelia, Le Amiche, I Vinti, Il Grido*—were concerned also with problems arising from class distinctions and economic calculations. (The key to the director's treatment of the relationship between men and women is stated by a character in *Le Amiche:* "Every woman who lives with a man to whom she is superior is unhappy.") *L'Avventura* and *La Notte* derive their maddening rhythm from the idea that the duration of time drains away human emotions, and their distinctive visual shape from the suggestion that spatial forms create psychological barriers. The unique aesthetic developed by Antonioni has led him to abandon the lower and middle classes where lives are constricted by necessity, and to concentrate on the idle rich who have the time to torture each other.

Fellini is the only one of the Four with a flair for comedy, amply projected in his first two films, *Luci del Varieta* (co-directed with Lattuada) and *The White Sheik*. In a more somber vein, *I Vitelloni, La Strada, Il Bidone*, and *Cabiria* are all bathed in a tragicomic lyricism which is intensely personal and reflects Fellini's compassion for the rejects of the modern world. After this impressive tetralogy, Fellini undertook in *La Dolce Vita* to provide

a Dantean vision of the modern world as viewed from the top instead of the bottom. Unfortunately, there is more to a great film than a great conception, and Fellini has enlarged his material without expanding his ideas. Consequently, the film is as bloated as the fish which terminates the orgy sequence.

However, it can be argued that in terms of social impact, *La Dolce Vita* is the most important film ever made. This does not imply a correlation with artistic merit since by the standard of impact, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is superior to *Moby Dick*. The fantastic popularity of *La Dolce Vita* can be summed up in the beggar's comment in Buñuel's *Viridiana:* "One must sin before one can repent." Without being consciously hypocritical, Fellini has dramatized the fundamental injustices of social morality. The poor creatures abandoned by Antonioni to their lives of necessity flock to *La Dolce Vita* to share Fellini's disgust with the sweet life, but the spectacle of corruption fills them with envy for the options of the hero. Confident of their ultimate righteousness, many spectators would like to slide along the infernal surfaces of fur and chrome before regaining their moral footing. If *La Dolce Vita* contributes to an awareness of the hypocrisy of so-called social morality which denies to the peasants and the proles the sweet Faustian decisions of the Kennedys and the Rockefellers, the film can be forgiven for its intellectual and formal failures.

Although their aspiration often exceeds their sensibility, the Big Four act as the conscience of the Italian film industry. As a national bloc, their most serious challengers active today are the French Big Five of Renoir, Bresson, Resnais, Truffaut, and Godard. It would be difficult to find more than ten active directors from the rest of the world on the same artistic plane. At this moment, the Big Four are critically fashionable, but just a few years ago their films were being hissed and booed on three continents, and a few years from now, they will probably be downgraded again. This absurd oscillation of critical judgments is caused largely by the haphazard system of distribution and revival in practice today. If there is such a thing as ultimate judgment, only time will tell if the Big Four are the wave of the future or the last gasp of the past.

Films of the Quarter

Pauline Kael

Lawrence of Arabia is the most literate and intelligent and tasteful and the most beautiful of the modern expensive spectacle films that I have seen, and I wish it had never been made. There is a story that Greta Garbo, at a screening of Cocteau's *Beauty and the Beast,* watched the transformation of the Beast into Prince Charming, and cried out "Give me back my Beast." I want my T. E. Lawrence back.

The treatment is on an exquisitely high level, but the method and perhaps the intentions of those who made the film are not so different from the exploitation of historical and legendary heroes in cruder epics. The trap they set for the audience, baiting it with a figure already famous, is, unfortunately, a trap we can't get out of. We can't cut the film off from the interests and associations that have made us go to see it. It is not the story of Joe Doakes that has lured us into the theater, it is the story of T. E. Lawrence. That's what the producers were counting on. But perhaps they didn't plan on some of the consequences. Inevitably, in a film of this kind, a film that attempts to justify its scale by biographical and historical pretensions, we use standards of historical truth, as well as standards of dramatic content, coherence, structure. *Lawrence of Arabia* not

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only fails to give an acceptable interpretation of Lawrence, but fails to hold together, to keep its action clear and intelligible.

It is not merely that we can't judge *Lawrence of Arabia* just as "a movie," but that it doesn't even make sense just as a movie. Without knowledge of Lawrence and his writing and his period and some sense of the compromises involved in the re-creation of this material the movie is all but incomprehensible. The pretensions have involved the film-makers in too much action, too many incidents that can make sense only in relation to the historical Lawrence, the man who has been replaced here by a glamorous narcissist with a Christ complex. Lawrence, too complex a hero for the spectacle form, becomes a series of gestures and literary flourishes. Robert Bolt's "fine writing" is counted on to provide "truths" more true than the facts of what Lawrence said and did. But these flourishes make Lawrence unnecessarily strange and mysterious, and so unusual he is scarcely human. He is turned into such a poetic enigma that, ironically, he is displaced in the film by a simpler hero—Ali, a handsome sheik with liquid brown eyes and conventionally sympathetic lines to speak. The warm-hearted Ali is more at home in this spectacle than the peculiarly-made Lawrence the film-makers have constructed. Just as facts are sacrificed to old-fashioned movie effects (like the absurd, invented episode of the boy being sucked into the quicksand), Lawrence himself, one of the great heroes of history, is sacrificed to an old-fashioned kind of movie-hero—as meaningless as any you'll find in a two-bit Western.

Those who know Lawrence's life and work are likely to be outraged by the movie; those for whom Lawrence is merely a famous name are bored. Can a complex hero function in an expensive spectacle? I think perhaps the whole theory of spectacles about heroes and history and mass movements needs some rethinking. From the audience remarks I overheard I would judge a good many people hadn't the remotest idea how the Arabs and Turks figured in World War I, or which was which, or why the English cared. About all that came across in the conventional movie-cues by which audiences get their bearings was that the Turks were supposed to be more cruel than the Arabs and that Lawrence, too, became cruel. (In spectacles featuring blood and battles it's beginning to seem damned hypocritical to try to make the less bloody men the heroes; if Lawrence's character is stained by the blood on his hands, what about the men who made the movie?

Critics and friends had prepared me to be appalled by *The Trial;* I found myself, rather perversely, enjoying it. I agree it's not very good, and the whole range of Kafka's meanings is confused, and structurally it's a mess, and the sound is atrocious. (If, for economic or other reasons, Welles found it necessary to use players who speak in a variety of languages and accents, couldn't he have stylized the sound? As the images are stylized, why not the sound also—instead of this maddening dubbing and postsynchronization which doesn't seem "natural" anyway.) But as a loose series of sophisticated, comic nightmares, and a mixture of effects from several generations of experimental movies, it's fairly entertaining.

I wanted to see more in *The Elusive Corporal* than I did—a good-natured, naive, rather banal set of responses to war and survival, static in presentation, with an all-too-obvious use of technique (like the sequence in which a soldier's death is reflected in the faces of his comrades—a textbook reprise of Anna Magnani's reactions to the bullfight in *The Golden Coach.*)

To Kill a Mockingbird has pleasant moments (the children's scenes) but is tastefully dull. Cacoyannis' *Electra,* tiresome and often ludicrous, seemed almost a travesty on tragedy (I much preferred the Tzavellas *Antigone*). *The Birds* is stupid: the external menace and the ugly, dreary, psychologized characters are unrelated to each other; the plot doesn't provide acceptable excuses for the incidents strung on it; the dialogue is witless. I think it is a bad picture at every level.

Not a good quarter in the San Francisco

area. But elsewhere I have seen two beautiful films—de Seta's *Bandits of Orgosolo,* and Ray's *Two Daughters*—of which the first section, *The Postmaster,* is a work of such purity of emotion and simplicity of method that I think it ranks with *A Day in the Country* as a masterpiece of the short-story film.

Stanley Kauffmann

The quarter ending April 30th brought a new Bergman, an old Antonioni, a new and old Kurosawa. *Winter Light,* a further Bergman inquiry into the present-day viability of religion, depicts the dilemma of a spiritually bankrupt clergyman. The tone is set by the title: thin sun, brightness without heat. The film is made with a marvelous economy and a sureness that are in themselves more affecting than the central thesis, which is stated, not fully dramatized. The residual effect is literary, an idea worked out on paper, and then filmed, rather than a fulfillment in film.

Dan Talbot continues his laudable work in importing neglected films for his New Yorker Theatre. He must be thanked for the chance to see Antonioni's *Le Amiche,* which preceded the trilogy and is much more than a rough draft for it. In its seriousness and dexterity, the film would be a peak for many a director; in sheer beauty and individualized style, however, it is not Antonioni's full flowering.

Talbot also brought us Kurosawa's uncut two-and-three-quarter hour modern version of *The Idiot.* Equal thanks but not equal praise. It is hard to believe that this mere series of illustrated scenes from a novel was made after *Rashomon.* Kurosawa's recent *Sanjuro,* a sequel to *Yojimbo,* is rich in skill, poor in content: an action picture with even less texture than the first chapter of the itinerant samurai's adventures. Not a frame of film in it can be faulted, not a gesture of Toshiro Mifune's that is ineffective, but I hope that soon this director and star will again bite off at least as much as they can chew.

Other foreign films: Lindsay Anderson's first feature, *This Sporting Life,* has sequences of fierce character collision like cars smashing headlong, with fine performances by Richard Harris and Rachel Roberts; but the script is unsteady, and Anderson's control ranges from the confident to the somewhat confused. Parts are so good that they make the weaker sections seem worse. Joan Littlewood's *Sparrows Can't Sing* is a chipper cockney folk-comedy, whose vital material is somewhat debilitated by the chromium-plated "musical" feel of the film. Satyajit Ray's *Two Daughters,* based on two Tagore stories, is delicate, indigenous, finally tedious; honesty and (to us) novel settings cannot entirely redeem predictable material.

American films: *Hud,* about contemporary Texas ranch life, is easily the best of the quarter. Paul Newman's and Patricia Neal's performances, Martin Ritt's lithe, evocative direction are of high quality; the dialogue by Irving Ravetch and Harriet Frank, Jr. is quick and salty. But the roots of Hud's solipsism are not convincingly drawn. The result is a well-made structure on a flimsy foundation; fundamentally, the picture seems pointless. *The Balcony,* from Genet's play, is like a neat cardboard cut-out imposed on a large, less tidy canvas, but it has some graphic images and Lee Grant's subtle performance. Minimally, one can be glad that it was made—and in this country. Which is more than can be said of Hitchcock's *The Birds.*

Gavin Lambert

Question of the quarter: do most movie critics really dislike creative artists? And if they don't, why do they enjoy demolition work so much? (As a spectator, the only kind of demolition work I enjoy is when critics turn on other critics, like the monsters in Disney's version of *The Rite of Spring* when they start snapping at and devouring each other.) Nothing is really more disgusting than the critic's hypocritical claim that it's his duty to expose "bad" work. As Auden remarked, it is not

because of Macaulay's famous broadside that we don't consider Robert Montgomery a great poet today.

A case in point is Orson Welles. Artists who lack personal equilibrium, and whose output is therefore uneven or elusive, who offer as many disappointments as excitements, are usually favorite critical victims. Not only the work but the man himself is jeered at. For years, Welles has been taunted for being played out, or irresponsible; hardly any critic fails to remark how long it's been since he last made a good film—unaware, apparently, that it's not so long since *Touch of Evil,* when you remember similar gaps in the careers of, say, Eisenstein or Renoir.

If any generalization about Welles is valid at all, it's that he loses something when he deserts the American scene. His best work is rooted in this country, and draws its peculiar intensity from it. Thus *The Trail* is closer to his Shakespeare adaptations: erratic, offkey, full of extraordinary accomplishments. It lacks, basically, Kafka's quality of anxiety—Welles is not an introverted artist—and substitutes baroque melodrama. For the first half, a kind or sardonic, grotesque nightmare, not Kafka but pure Welles, comes excitingly through. The scene of K.'s dialogue with a crippled woman dragging a trunk across an enormous vacant lot at night, of his courtroom speech interrupted by a weird erotic scuffle (reminiscent of a moment in *L'Age d'Or*), bears the director's unmistakable signature, and the performances of Romy Schneider and Akim Tamiroff show him at the top of his form in creating mysterious, obstinate characters. The second half is less successful. With the anxiety missing, the lack of K.'s dreadful developing doubt as to whether he's really innocent or guilty, the melodrama becomes repetitious and sometimes overstated. All the same, a minor work by Welles is an event. When something eludes him, he still grapples brilliantly.

A worthwhile curiosity is the film of *No Exit,* made on an obviously low budget in South America by a director called Ted Danielevski. I don't think Sartre's play is to be taken seriously, and the script's use of flashbacks—into the lives of the three characters before they arrive in hell—only emphasizes that the action is basically rigged. The writing, though, has a strong, momentary theatrical effectiveness, and the direction—a series of strange, improvised stabs—realizes it most effectively. There's a ragged, instant quality of human behavior in the whole film; you really wonder what's going to happen next. Also, Viveca Lindfors' performance as the lesbian Inez is no less than hypnotic. She is remorseless and obsessive; her outbursts of laughter have a chilling lack of humor; she seems marvelously and rightly damned.

Dwight Macdonald

Now is the winter of our discontent, and a bleak season it has been. No major successes and few minor ones. Truffaut and Wajda were as good as usual, which is very, in the episodes they did for that wildly uneven anthology, *Love at Twenty;* Wajda's was especially impressive, combining the cinematic brio of the silent Russian school with the sensibility of the *nouvelle vague.* The parodic skill of Vittorio Gassman plus a good cast and director (Risi) made *Love and Larceny* an enjoyable comedy though in a superficial, manufactured mode as compared to Ponti's equally enjoyable *Divorce—Italian Style,* which added social comment and some depth of characterization: Mastroanni, whom I've deplored as a serious hero, proves to be, like John Barrymore, a masterly comedian, while Daniella Rocca as his uxorious mate was able to be at once funny and pathetic. (The unenjoyable opposite number of these Italian crime comedies was the latest Peter Sellers fiasco—he's gone in for mass production of late but not as successfully as Henry Ford—a freewheeling British item in the *Hellzapoppin* style called *The Wrong Arm of the Law.*) In *Lawrence of Arabia,* David Lean has given us our first adult spectacular, aided by Robert Bolt's script, a strong cast, and Fred A. Young's photography (the

Arabian desert is really the star—the first one adequate to that wide screen). It is good as a spectacular can be without being really good—no *Potemkin* or *Intolerance* but a professionally well-made movie. At the other extreme was the Perrys' *David and Lisa*, which was amateurish technically (except for Keir Dullea as David) but which, as against *its* opposite number, the elegant but empty and contrived *Sundays and Cybele*, moved me by its purity of intention and by the fact that it had a serious subject which it rendered seriously.

The most striking aspect of this discontenting winter was the procession of bad films by good directors. Antonioni's *The Eclipse* was a self-indulgent display of his weaknesses: unmotivated *Angst*, pretentious (and obvious) symbolism, a message about alienation, noncommunication, the impossibility of love, etc., which is true but by now rather familiar, and innumerable close-ups of the stolid Monica Vitti, whose mimetic range is no less than that of our own Doris Day but no more either. Renoir's *The Elusive Corporal* was a retake of *Grand Illusion* in a feebly comic mode that lacked both the humanity and the formal beauty of the original. Bergman's *Winter Light* was a talky exercise in religiosity with none of the cinematic invention of his better films; its only virtue was brevity. As for Welles' overblown travesty of Kafka's *The Trial*, with Anthony Perkins of all inappropriate actors as the lead, all I can say is that Cecil B. DeMille might have made it: he could not have less understood the meaning nor tried more blatantly to conceal this ignorance by mere expansion of scale.

Truffaut is a great director but a bad critic —there may be a connection—and his *politique des auteurs* is a foolish notion, especially when it gets into the hands of Anglo-American enthusiasts, as Pauline Kael demonstrated in your last issue. I offer the above as supporting evidence to her thesis; the *p.d.a.* boys doubtless have their rationalizations ready but I think they will be put on their mettle by this past season's crop. Finally it occurs to me, as an ironic afterthought, that one of the few directors today for whom M. Truffaut's theory works is himself: everything of his I've seen up to now has been on a consistently high level. Could it be that, in 1957, before he had made any films, he was far-sighted enough (second-sighted would be more accurate) to have devised a theory which he alone could later live up to?

Andrew Sarris

The Birds finds Hitchcock at the summit of his artistic powers. His is the only contemporary style which unites the divergent classical traditions of Murnau (camera movement) and Eisenstein (montage). (Welles, for example, owes more to Murnau, while Resnais is closer to Eisenstein.) There is a sequence where the heroine is in an outdoor motor boat churning across the bay while the hero's car is racing around the shore road to intercept her on the other side. This race, in itself pure cinema, is seen entirely from the girl's point of view. We see only what she can see from the rowboat. Suddenly, near shore, the camera picks up a sea gull swooping down on our heroine. For just a second, the point of view is shifted, and we are permitted to see the bird before its victim does. The director has apparently broken an aesthetic rule for the sake of a shock effect—gull pecks girl. Yet this momentary incursion of the objective on the subjective is remarkably consistent with the meaning of the film.

In *Psycho*, if you recall, there is a moment after Tony Perkins has run Janet Leigh's car into a swamp when the car stops sinking. One could almost hear the audience holding its breath until the car resumed its descent below the surface. At that first intake of breath, the audience became implicated in the fantasy of the perfect crime. In *The Birds*, the audience is similarly implicated in the fantasy of annihilation. The point Hitchcock seems to be making is that morality is not a function of sympathy, but a rigorous test of principles. If we can become momentarily indifferent to

the fate of a promiscuous blonde (Janet Leigh) in *Psycho* or a spoiled playgirl (Tippi Hedren) in *The Birds*, we have clearly failed the test.

Claude Chabrol's treatment of *Landru* is so stylized that suspension of disbelief and moral judgment is encouraged in every scene, particularly toward the end, when Landru's downfall suggests Jack the Ripper being apprehended by the Keystone Kops, convicted in a Gilbert & Sullivan courtroom, and guillotined in a Stendhalian courtyard. Chabrol's most seductive effects bear the imprint of directors he admires. One can discern Renoir's sensuousness, Hitchcock's vertiginous camera movements, and Stroheim's preoccupation with bric-a-brac. When Landru takes on a faithful mistress who sings operatic arias off-key, the parallel with *Citizen Kane* is unmistakable. Even Chabrol's actresses, who all act badly, reflect his attitudes toward the cinema. Michele Morgan and Danielle Darrieux, two mainstays of the Old Guard French cinema, are cruelly photographed in bright sunlight which emphasizes every wrinkle and coarsening feature. Curiously, Chabrol is slightly kinder to Catherine Rouvel, Renoir's discovery in *Picnic on the Grass*, than to Juliette Mayniel, his own find for *The Cousins*. There is something brutal about Chabrol's relentless satire of human behavior, but after eight films, it is doubtful that the director can ever change his pattern. Like Gogol, who abandoned an affirmative sequel to *Dead Souls* when he realized he could not relax his satiric gaze, Chabrol will probably continue to explore the infinite stupidity of humanity. Yet, if Chabrol is never kind, he is always honest.

Film Reviews

ZAZIE DANS LE METRO

Director: Louis Malle. Script: Louis Malle and Jean-Paul Rappenau, from the novel by Raymond Queneau. Photography: Henri Raichi. Music: Fiorenzo Carpi. With Catherine Demongeot, Philippe Noiret, Vittorio Caprioli.

It is not a picture to ponder as a serious menace to man. But, for all that, it does betray symptoms of . . . [a] poisonous sterility. . . . Too many foreign directors are nullifying their skills with aimless and esoteric doodling. They had better beware.—The New York Times, 11/26/61.

Reading that, one suspected another great film had arrived. Perhaps and perhaps not, but at least we can say of *Zazie Dans le Metro* that it *is* a menace, and that in certain ways none of the other French films shown here has been more unsettling. For this reason it assumes, I think, an immediate place among the best of them—even though it has nothing like the lyricism, at once exhilarating and almost too much to endure, of *The 400 Blows*, and doesn't provide, like the unspeakably charismatic *Breathless*, a rhythm in which we can see our hurts, and forget them. The substance of Louis Malle's film is that a company of not really terribly distinctive people—chief among them Zazie, a small girl with a face as demonic as a Bruckner scherzo—are chasing one another around Paris. Malle's extraordinary inventiveness has largely to do with a thoroughly uninhibited use of camera and editing tricks. The color is kaleidoscopic and in places startling; the film is indeed very funny; there is even a brief parody of Malle's previous film, *The Lovers*. But *Zazie Dans le Metro* is something more than a slapstick fantasy; it is unconscionably disturbing, and it stirs in the spectator an uneasiness which begins as vague, unsatisfied anxiety and ends by approaching the domain of terror. This it does by exploiting with outrageous suggestiveness the language of dreams, particularly bad dreams, and one comes from it possessed by images which, even if they did not seem very subversive while they were hap-

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pening, now cling to the inner reaches of one's mind like figures from a presumably long-forgotten nightmare. A man slams a woman against a wall, and she lies there, immobile, as he makes off: one tries not to notice that this is happening in the background of an early shot because, in relation to the foreground action, it is so poorly calculated, so irrelevant, so *wrong*. Malle cuts away, and never reminds us of it again. Yet now, thinking of the film, I am suddenly astonished by the fact that that woman is still lying against the wall, even as I sit here —and there comes the kind of shudder which some would not think it in the reach of film to provoke.

As in dreams, the people here share a troubling groundlessness: they are apt to vanish at any moment, to reappear elsewhere, to assume a different existence, color, or set of secondary sex characteristics. At the end people who haven't known one another sit united at the same table, and their behavior continuously upsets and redefines their relationships, each to each. Backgrounds are always shifting. Places are endlessly confused: with a logic that is not that of the conscious mind, the top of the Eiffel Tower becomes the deck of a seafaring ship. Characters are often discovered running compulsively, with no end in view—as when Zazie and Charles are chasing each other down the endless spirals of the Eiffel Tower, and making no apparent progress. The breathtaking tracking shots we've come to expect from modern French cinema are used here to create dreamlike, often frankly erotic states of continued penetration and continued withdrawal, while elsewhere they accentuate mere aimlessness and drift. The amazing thing about all of this is that it is taken so much for granted; there *are* none of the emphatic whooshes one would expect to accompany fantastic transformations. The sustained throb of *malaise* that results is enough to give the viewer the feeling, in places, that he's going to wake up and find he's wet his bed. The film's nervous ache of pervasive cultural disorganization is a corollary: when three actors sit down on a bench and launch a discussion, it ought to have the sap and vigor of an old Pagnol movie, but doesn't, because, for one thing, the background (a fake, pastel-colored street, dissolving away into chrome and tinsel) is so little to the point, so little belonged to. It's as if *Marius* were to be played on Fifth Avenue, or on the moon.

Malle takes much from the great American slapstick films, but he always changes the emphasis, so that what one misses is the fun and gaiety that result from pursuing potentially comic situations to their full comic consequence. One is left with something half-stated, sinister and lethal. As in Keaton, frustration is a key device in *Zazie;* but rather than being led up to, celebrated, and canonized, the frustration is always displaced, the balance shifted so that something else *seems* to be the point. Although the instance of frustration is passed over, rendered incidental by Malle, it is still there; and it works its way into our consciousness so underhandedly that *we* feel it more than *they* do. The texture of the film is conceived in terms of so continuous a series of unsuccessful acts —a cue hits the billiard table instead of the ball, a woman pours wine not into the glass but onto the floor—that we come to take their occurrence for granted as a necessary condition of Malle's world—and finally of our own. Zazie's uncle, trying to telephone, is repeatedly hung up on, and each time he has to dial anew he reaches out for something—a coin, presumably —in a tray a waitress is bearing. But each of the half dozen or so times he reaches for it, Malle cuts away before the uncle removes it—so that we never find out just what it is he's getting (let alone why it should be there at all). The next time around, we vow, we'll notice what he's pulling from the tray; but we never do, because Malle always cuts away again. I don't know how to describe the extent of the threat which is inherent in a device like this, or the anxiousness which results from it. Malle is using the medium to bug us, more than Hitchcock ever could; so that the introduction of the Fascist police at the climax of the terrifying, nihilistic, and at last wholly unfunny food-

throwing orgy in which the film not surprisingly culminates, is anything but accidental. How little joy, after all, there has been in this "comedy" all along. The wonderful virtuosity of the Zazie–Uncle chase sequence, for example, is punctuated by brief, bouncing close-ups of Zazie laughing fiendishly in her flight and triumph–and the laugh is not something out of *Songs of Innocence*. Its truculent cackle is only one premonition of what will come; the destruction-orgy at the end actually could not be more strategic, for it orchestrates and brings out into the open the countless little hints of violence and hatred that have accumulated so bothersomely throughout the film.

Zazie seems strange coming from the oddly floundering stylist of *Ascenseur Pour L'Echafaud* (or *Frantic*). It seems more logical as the sequel of Malle's second film, *The Lovers*, the well-known ode to sexual love, with its ease of social observation, urbane wit, and caressive sensibility. *The Lovers* had a purity which inspired ridicule; night after night people sat in crowded theatres and snickered before its great tenderness, evidently embarrassed by it and upset. The story of a woman who, after an all-night idyll with an overnight guest, left husband, child, and home to drive off with him in the morning constituted the sort of thing we accept, indeed need, in fairy-tales; but its naturalistic proportions, including the protracted and reasonably explicit account of sexual love, made it clear from the start that *The Lovers* was no fairy-tale, and many viewers could only laugh at the high purity and freedom of Malle's vision. It was extreme, but in the way that Lawrence and Norman O. Brown are extreme, because they are dealing with a problem that engages us at the very roots of our being. Some of us, who worried that it was because of some failure of sophistication in ourselves that we could not understand why it was necessary to snicker at *The Lovers*, may find our vindication in *Zazie*, for it proves that Malle is the kind of artist who is bound by nature to disturb, to provoke, and to implant the most basic uneasiness. People do not want, of course, to see the menace, and the easiest way for them to deny it is to refuse, in one way or another, to take it seriously. So that, with regard to *Zazie Dans le Metro*, Mr. Crowther's condemnation ("it is foolish to pay any serious mind to such a thing") and Mr. Gill's qualified benediction in *The New Yorker* ("an exceedingly funny picture," though the destruction-orgy is out of tune with the rest of it) are, oddly, evidences of the same failure of vision.

More must, and will, be said of Malle's film. But to remark that it is brilliant, that it is dangerous, and that it offers fearful insights into the still largely unsuspected manipulative possibilities of cinema is a fair beginning.

—JAMES STOLLER

THE TRIAL

Written, directed, and produced by Orson Welles. Camera: E. Richard. Editor: Yvonne Martin.

Rare is the critic who can manage to look at a film like this except through a kind of screen set up by the original work. No amount of consciousness about problems of adaptation, and all that, can gainsay this tendency–only ignorance is a real safeguard. Luckily, however, I have not read Kafka's novel for many years. Consequently, looking at Welles' *Trial*, I find it an interesting film, rather than a disappointing derivative. It is, of course, in many ways not only unKafka-like but positively anti-Kafka. Let us then dispense with Kafka and attend to Welles.

The film is an attempt to create a nightmare world, rather like that of *1984*. It is vaguely European in decor, with a melange of nineteenth-century monumentalism, now decayed, and some twentieth-century counterparts which at first seem to give the film an unfortunate dislocation; gradually one realizes that this *is* the landscape of a totalitarian nightmare. Though a few elements are discordant because of an unduly specific modernity (especially the fake computer with flashing lights) like certain

throwing orgy in which the film not surprisingly culminates, is anything but accidental. How little joy, after all, there has been in this "comedy" all along. The wonderful virtuosity of the Zazie–Uncle chase sequence, for example, is punctuated by brief, bouncing close-ups of Zazie laughing fiendishly in her flight and triumph–and the laugh is not something out of *Songs of Innocence*. Its truculent cackle is only one premonition of what will come; the destruction-orgy at the end actually could not be more strategic, for it orchestrates and brings out into the open the countless little hints of violence and hatred that have accumulated so bothersomely throughout the film.

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mental hospitals, it mixes the antique and modern in everything. Some of the settings might have been chosen with an eye to those ghastly Piranesi drawings of dungeons: but the ancient, crumbling buildings are inhabited by men who have erected, or perhaps only seized from prior uses, temporary partitions, makeshifts. It is, we soon learn, a world of sudden violence, avid sexuality, and inexplicable happenings generally.

In this world lives a young man, named K, a vaguely disconnected and gangly person. K is himself a petty bureaucrat, assistant chief of his division—the work of the division is, of course, never specified—who gleefully boasts that on some occasions he has made petitioners wait weeks to see him. (Yet he is in his own mind innocent of any crimes.) When the police appear in his ill-furnished room, he insists on knowing the charge against him; his private-individuality rationalism is intact, he is still the sane person confronted with puzzling or outrageous acts by others. (The police reply that they couldn't possibly discuss *that,* only the higher-ups. The dialogue is mostly quite successful in conveying a sense of sinister schizophrenia—making sounds which sound reasonable, yet also steadily dissolving the distinctions between what is reality and what is individual or collective fantasy.) Little by little, as K is drawn into an obsession with his possible guilt, he and we learn more about the weirdly hierarchical world of the film. From his initial disbelief he quickly slides to anxiety and defense; he enters a courtroom and delivers an impassioned speech to an audience which may have been sympathetic to him (or *was* it sympathetic?) only as a trap. He begins to notice that unreason prevails in everyone's discourse. And what is that over by the wall? A man violently embracing a girl, who turns out to be the guard's wife. K's search for help leads us, in the manner of those modern films which are in their fashion picaresque and open-ended, to know the details of this world like the implacable details of dreams: the painter's careful distinctions between the agonies of the tentative acquittal and the indefinite deferment, the baroque bed in which Hassler and Lena repose, the various levels of judges, and so on and on. The film has the close texture of madness: if *Marienbad* is a fantasy of obsession, *The Trial* is a fantasy of an infinite asylum.

There is of course no love in this universe (that is not at all what Lena has in mind when she asks K to "like her a little"). It is a world of bursts of ferocity, of murderous hates, mysterious beatings: a world of mutually brutalized slaves. Like certain mental hospitals, and the modern urban scene generally, it system-

THE TRIAL.

atically makes it hard to distinguish reality from fantasy. There is terrible power afoot, but vague and ill-limited. Side by side with the obscure politics and its sudden brutality exists a sullen and avid sexuality. (Welles alone understands Romy Schneider: he makes her edge of nastiness sharper where previous directors have softened it—the result is a Lena hungry, opaque, plain, compelling.) Women proposition K with startling suddenness. While the men display a psychopathically inconsistent cruelty, the women are possessed of an all too constant, indeed almost ravenous, sexuality—to which K, concerned with his "case," is comically unable to respond. (Toward the end his advocate Hassler remarks, with vicious irony, "You expected too much of women.") This despite the guile of Jeanne Moreau as a sloven, who seems at first earthy and sensible, but then goes out of contact and reviles K because she fears his crime is political. (There is even a transmutation of woman into machine—the computer is referred to by its keepers as "she.") It is of course especially peculiar that the women should throw themselves at Perkins, who belies all Hassler says about the attractiveness of accused men. Does he have some quality of which I'm not aware, so that he keeps getting cast opposite tiger-women like Sophia Loren and Melina Mercouri? Or is it just that he is tall enough?

The Trial abounds in comic scenes, and would be obviously quite a cut-up movie if audiences did not come prepared for High Culture—prepared, that is, for polite despair. What they find is K and Lena distractedly cuddling on an ocean of bureaucratic records, the grotesque "Uncle Max," Bloch's derrière sticking up absurdly as he kisses Hassler's hand, etc. It is *not* a downbeat film, of course, but nobody can believe this because of the book. K catches on, he thinks, to what is happening; he expounds a coherent view of his situation—and declares that against the collective attempt to destroy sanity, to insinuate that all is meaningless, chaotic, he will resist. Weak and witless as Perkins often makes him seem, Welles' K is surely intended as a positive hero. (No doubt the novel was also, in one sense, an act of resistance?) Moreover, he may succeed —he throws back the bomb, after refusing to stab himself, and it explodes amid his laughter, evidently killing his would-be assassins. (The ending is very ambiguous visually and there are at least three interpretations of what happens in these shots.)

Before this, however, we have passed through the great ugly close-ups of K and Bloch, as they conspiratorially discuss Hassler and end in senseless glee; this leads into the confrontation with Hassler and the abasement of Bloch. Welles makes this the nadir of the film; and it is the point at which K begins to defend himself, by dismissing Hassler and leaving. He has a few further adventures, but soon, when he proclaims that he is onto the "dirty game," he is arrested.

The Trial also abounds with virtuoso visuals, most of them stunningly successful; this is a movie in unabashed high style, with none of your realistic widescreen coolness. We must write off the homage to Alexeyeff's famous shadow-pins method in the opening parable of the gate to the law, which later reappears as a magic-lantern show to little better effect. But there is much magic elsewhere: the stunning stripiness of the scene with the artist—with the appalling female children's eyes leering through the cracks; the crowd faces with their sullen, cunning eyes; the oppressive low ceilings in K's room; the mirrors, door-slits, and so on of Hassler's abode.

Welles, as usual, plays a demonic man of power (he appears first wreathed in steam, like something from the underworld) and his magnificent voice manages to give an electric tension between its sonorous, sensible sound and the outrageousness of what it says. Once Welles is on the screen, the powers of darkness become compelling and one has a vision of the film that might have been—

Even the present one, however, is surely a remarkable work. Like most Italian and some French directors, Welles has chosen to post-

synchronize his dialogue, and this has not worked entirely happily, for there are lapses, including one very bad one in the scene on the pile of papers. There is a report that Welles, ventriloquist-creator, dubbed eleven of the voices himself, which might account for some of the difficulty one has in distinguishing some of them.

It remains to note, as an interesting aside, that much of the film was shot in Yugoslavia, and that it has an office-workers-acreage scene which surpasses that in *The Apartment* in every respect except sound.—ERNEST CALLENBACH

Keir Dullea and Janet Margolin: DAVID AND LISA.

DAVID AND LISA

Director: Frank Perry. Producer: Paul M. Heller. Screenplay by Eleanor Perry, based on a book by Dr. Theodore I. Rubin. Photography: Leonard Hirschfield. Music: Mark Lawrence. Continental.

David and Lisa proves once and for all that a small, independent producer, freed of Hollywood's big budget worries and commercial trammels, working without stars or high-priced technical personnel, can still turn out an old-fashioned, sure-fire tear-jerker. Despite its various festival awards, *David and Lisa* has almost nothing to recommend it: the photography is conventional and repetitious, the editing ordinary, the script banal. The film (based on the novel *Lisa and David,* by Theodore I. Rubin) describes the mutual redemption-through-love of two seriously disturbed young people who meet in a private psychiatric institution. David (Keir Dullea) fears that he will die if anyone touches him, while Lisa (Janet Margolin) is a compulsive rhymer. Under the kindly eye of as kindly a shrinker ever to suck wisely on a briar pipe (Howard da Silva), David makes some small progress. He, in turn, manages to make contact with Lisa, who has resisted all psychiatric overtures. Neurotic David, however, is not quite capable of handling the responsibility he has assumed in becoming Lisa's friend. Selfishly and childishly, he hurts her. Terrified, bewildered Lisa flees the home. Attendants search fruitlessly, but then David remembers Lisa's pathetic reaction to a museum statue of "Motherhood." He and the doctor drive at dawn to the museum, where they find Lisa huddled at the door, whimpering for the stone breasts of "Motherhood." David approaches her, reassures her, and in a courageous renunciation of his own neurotic terrors, gives her his hand.

Keir Dullea is attractive and unmistakably a talented young actor; Miss Margolin's role asks only that she be appealingly pathetic, and this she does; Howard da Silva is unexceptionably professional. Neither acting nor directing seems to have anything to do with the film's awards and its art-house success.

The only unusual element in the film is its horrendous sentimentality. The transmutation of Freud's gloomy doctrines into a popular cult of all-conquering love is one of the most remarkable achievements of twentieth-century America, and in *David and Lisa* the whole shabby business is shamelessly exploited: David's mother is selfish and is bad to him and hurts him so much that he rejects Love, but with the help of One-who-understands David is able to accept Love. As David looks into Lisa's tear-streaked face and stretches forth his trembling hand, a lump the size of a walnut comes into your throat—and you loathe yourself for it.

The film is the first effort of the husband-wife team of Frank (director) and Eleanor

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DAVID AND LISA

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David and Lisa proves once and for all that a small, independent producer, freed of Hollywood's big budget worries and commercial trammels, working without stars or high-priced technical personnel, can still turn out an old-fashioned, sure-fire tear-jerker. Despite its various festival awards, *David and Lisa* has almost nothing to recommend it: the photography is conventional and repetitious, the editing ordinary, the script banal. The film (based on the novel *Lisa and David,* by Theodore I. Rubin) describes the mutual redemption-through-love of two seriously disturbed young people who meet in a private psychiatric institution. David (Keir Dullea) fears that he will die if anyone touches him, while Lisa (Janet Margolin) is a compulsive rhymer. Under the kindly eye of as kindly a shrinker ever to suck wisely on a briar pipe (Howard da Silva), David makes some small progress. He, in turn, manages to make contact with Lisa, who has resisted all psychiatric overtures. Neurotic David, however, is not quite capable of handling the responsibility he has assumed in becoming Lisa's friend. Selfishly and childishly, he hurts her. Terrified, bewildered Lisa flees the home. Attendants search fruitlessly, but then David remembers Lisa's pathetic reaction to a museum statue of "Motherhood." He and the doctor drive at dawn to the museum, where they find Lisa huddled at the door, whimpering for the stone breasts of "Motherhood." David approaches her, reassures her, and in a courageous renunciation of his own neurotic terrors, gives her his hand.

Keir Dullea is attractive and unmistakably a talented young actor; Miss Margolin's role asks only that she be appealingly pathetic, and this she does; Howard da Silva is unexceptionably professional. Neither acting nor directing seems to have anything to do with the film's awards and its art-house success.

The only unusual element in the film is its horrendous sentimentality. The transmutation of Freud's gloomy doctrines into a popular cult of all-conquering love is one of the most remarkable achievements of twentieth-century America, and in *David and Lisa* the whole shabby business is shamelessly exploited: David's mother is selfish and is bad to him and hurts him so much that he rejects Love, but with the help of One-who-understands David is able to accept Love. As David looks into Lisa's tear-streaked face and stretches forth his trembling hand, a lump the size of a walnut comes into your throat—and you loathe yourself for it.

The film is the first effort of the husband-wife team of Frank (director) and Eleanor

(writer) Perry. If the tear-ducts of the festival juries hold up, the Perrys have a brilliant future. The festivals, on the other hand, have not.—JACKSON BURGESS

THE BIRDS

Director: Alfred Hitchcock. Producer: Alfred Hitchcock. Screenplay: Evan Hunter, based on the novella by Daphne du Maurier. Photography: Robert Burks. With Rod Taylor, Tippi Hedren, Jessica Tandy. Universal.

"The Birds is coming!" says Hitchcock on the posters, and we enter the theater with a pleasant chortle of anticipated horror. Ah that phallic symbolism!

The result is disappointing. The film has been made, it seems to me, on two mistaken assumptions. One is that a frightening film can be made in naturalistic color, and the other is that an attack by birds carries the emotional impact of a really horrific situation. There are other mistakes too—Tippi Hedren, an atrocious and atrociously directed child, and Hitchcock's usual inability to dramatize affectionate relationships. But some of these might have been remedied.

No doubt Hitchcock's reasoning was that the pastoral loveliness of Bodega Bay, rendered in soft color, would make us feel more attachment to the scene when it is abruptly threatened by thousands of attacking gulls and crows: so beautiful a little town, to have such a thing happen in it! Yet the effect is precisely the reverse: it reduces the scene to postcard dimensions, so that we care less rather than more, because it is only picturesque. The ratty motel in *Psycho,* by contrast, was a setting apt for the most extreme horrors; in itself it was a ratty motel only, yet quickly—through the lighting, the hole in the wall, the excellent playing of Janet Leigh and Tony Perkins—the film slid into an area of real emotional impact. *The Birds* never does. The trick work tries hard—with, reportedly, as many as five simultaneous superimpositions of various birds attacking. But the film has too many obvious loopholes. Above all, why does Rod Taylor, presented as an intelligent and experienced man, not devise with the townsmen—who are largely fishermen and obviously very competent about mechanical matters—any reasonable attempted defense? Who ventured to imagine that seagull beaks could pierce heavy planks? Such nagging mundane questions arise, obviously, because the film is unable to tap in, as a skillful thriller does, on unconscious fears. (Some women seem to be frightened by *The Birds,* but the general report is that it isn't very scary; *Psycho,* on the other hand, terrified almost everybody, though its pseudopsychiatric ending relieved the tension by being inadvertently comic.) A flock of attacking birds may be surprising, since we all have a somewhat rosy picture of the gentleness of birds, but they remain just a lot of attacking birds; they are natural, external forces to be combatted somehow or other, or fled from; they do not share the potentially supernatural mysteries and terrors of those things which are human or inhuman. Hence when Hitchcock makes Tippi walk slowly up the stairs and enter the bird-infested room, it is not at all the obsessive action of Janet Leigh going down the stairs to Mrs. Bates in *Psycho;* her action leads not toward a psychic resolution of fears, but only to a bloody fight. (The discovery of the body of the feed-dealer, at the end of another corridor, is much more effective.)

Now Hitchcock reportedly concedes that the picture is somewhat allegorically intended. Certainly the McCarthyite grotesque of the mother who accuses Tippi of witchcraft has too many overtones to be neglected. The ending without an end title also, presumably, is intended to make one reflect upon fatal perils seemingly averted—when will the next wave of birds strike? (It is worth remembering that the military slang for missiles is "birds.") Yet most such aspects of the film would have to be interpreted as cynical triviality if we took this seriously—the lovebirds as a token at the end? —the cops as the bumblers of Civil Defense? — or even the birds is irrational evil or dionysiac forces? No, it must be merely more of Master

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Alfred's jokes, perhaps thrown in to insure respectful treatment in *Cahiers du Cinéma.*

The trick work deserves special scrutiny in itself, since the picture is largely a tour de force on this level. Here too Hitchcock falls short. It is not easy to make us believe that birds, normally cautious and timid creatures, might attack men—who after all, even if they were armed with nothing but ball-bats or old 2x4's, are among the earth's most dangerous inhabitants. We therefore scrutinize the trick shots with great care: how exactly would birds behave in such a situation? And of course they don't behave at all in the crucially necessary sense. They seem to fly by at more or less the correct angles to be attacking; they glide in a way almost lifelike enough to convince us; their beaks are made to slash (like the knife in *Psycho*) against Tippi's outstretched stigmata-ready hands; their bodies bang into the glass of the telephone booth. Another Hitchcock gargoyle, a hermaphroditic bird-watcher, and skeptic, spells out for us the gigantic number of birds in the world—in which might lie real danger. But in fact, of course, we never actually *see* any single live bird unambiguously committing a hostile action, like standing there and visibly pecking at somebody's eyeball. If we had, the effect would have been electric and genuinely horrible, for it would have clearly contradicted our stereotyped feelings about birds, and it is upon such unsettlements of our usual control reactions that the maker of horrific films must play. But since Hitchcock cannot accomplish this, he cannot really touch us, and we are left sitting there amused at good old Alfred's ingenious but old-fashioned cutting tricks.

These tricks are deployed without the ease and verve of *Psycho,* moreover. Whereas *Psycho* is a sickening slide into ever more terrifying events, until the ridiculous psychiatry sets in at the end, *The Birds* uses up its excitement early, then tries to rise to what is only an anticlimax—the escape of the four individuals in the sports car. One expects, as they inch their way out of the house surrounded by thousands of quietly clucking gulls, that Tippi will yell in terror, or the child going back for the lovebirds will disturb the gulls, and that they will attack again, in a kind of doomsday fantasy which has been rather common in fiction lately. However, the four do get away—at least for now. It is hard to care much; one wonders idly what has been happening elsewhere, if anything. The radio has said that apparently the plague is only local. But nothing follows; the curtains close.

Visually the film is far from Hitchcock at his best. Some of it—like the boat ride Tippi takes across Bodega Bay—is downright clumsy; some is merely tedious, like the protracted conversation in the schoolteacher's living room. There are inexplicably shaky tracking shots, and on the whole the film has the feel of being skimped both in the shooting and in the shot-planning. Tippi Hedren is a pretty blonde of very modest abilities, working here slightly below the Grace-Kelly class level the film tries to ascribe to her. Rod Taylor is a large but emotionally featureless object, and the rest are routine characterizations signifying nothing.

As often in Hitchcock, there are a lot of irrelevant characters and details—a former lover of the hero's, who is firmly established only to get her eyes pecked out while the child is watching; TV-level "sophisticated" dialogue between hero and heroine; widowed anxious castrating mother, etc.

Worse still, the dialogue has a way of undermining the film. Somebody reports a past plague of gulls in a nearby city—or were they just lost in the fog? (At any rate, they flew away peacefully next day.) The radio reports, later in the film, seem to imply that the outbreak of bird attacks is a local matter—dreadful for the handful of people involved, no doubt, but not some great upheaval of nature. The police of the nearby county-seat are skeptical and rather make light of the whole thing. This accentuates our concern for the safety of the principals, but it detracts from the over-all sense of danger. A really skillful film frightener takes pains to make his dangers open-ended—

there is *no telling* how bad things might get!—and suggestive of ultimate horrors and revelations; he avoids elements in the film which will narrow things down to even possibly controllable dimensions. Orson Welles's Martian broadcast is still a model in these matters—it scared some 40,000 people into leaving New York City—and makers of films about Menaces would do well to study it. Hitchcock tries to play in this league and fails—predictably so, perhaps, for his forte is the projection of the personally murderous impulse. *Psycho,* in its own sick way, was a small masterpiece, despite its dénouement. But a mess of inconclusive phallic symbolism like Hitchcock's new film is —let's say it once again—for the birds.

—Ernest Callenbach

LONELY ARE THE BRAVE

Director: David Miller. Producer: Edward Lewis. Screenplay: Dalton Trumbo, from the novel "Brave Cowboy," by Edward Abbey. Photography: Philip Lathrop. Music: Jerrald Goldsmith. Universal-International. With Kirk Douglas, Walter Matthau, Gena Rowlands.

Along with silent comedy, the western has been America's special contribution to film; and so strong does enthusiasm for the form still run that an entire issue of the French journal *Cinema '62* was recently devoted to a round-up of westerns. From Ince through the sombre West of William S. Hart to the romantic westerns of Tom Mix, the tradition has been a fruitful one; and that the tradition is far from dead may be seen from the fact that *Ride the High Country,* a western in the high-style mythic line but of considerable subtlety and great beauty, is quite possibly the best American film of the past year. Even the "modern" westerns with aspirations toward psychological or social profundity, such as *Shane, The Gunfighter, High Noon,* used much of the standard heritage. It is therefore of considerable interest that a western should attempt to confront the contemporary scene directly rather than by some mythic strategy.

Lonely Are the Brave is a traditional western in tone, but not in theme. It is the story of one man, perhaps the last of the breed (the picture was originally titled *The Last Hero*), who has no cows to poke, no range to ride, and continually finds himself fenced in by the encroachments of "civilization"—that mode of life named for its chief manifestation, the city.

The opening shot sets the symbolic tone of the film: a static long shot of an empty range, emphasizing the immenseness of nature. Slowly the camera pans, revealing a horse grazing next to a dwindling camp fire and the reclining figure of a cowboy. Off-camera, a dull roar, possibly a river, or a waterfall, punctuates the silence. The roar grows louder, the cowboy gets up, begins to saddle his horse; then a quick cut to an empty sky bisected by two jet planes leaving long white vapor trails behind them. The question of whether the free, untamed spirit can abide by the rules of the modern world, or whether it is an anachronism, is suddenly and forcibly established.

The story line is spare: A cowboy, John W. Burns (Kirk Douglas), comes to visit his friend Michael Kane, who happens to be serving a two-year sentence for aiding wetbacks. Determined to see Kane, Burns gets into a fight with a one-armed psychopath (Burns fights with one arm behind his back), is booked, and then released because the jail is too crowded. Thus frustrated in his attempt, he releases his whiskey-soured emotions by taking on the two policemen who booked him. Successful at least in getting inside, he succeeds in contacting his friend. Burns, who has smuggled a hacksaw into the prison, tries to get Kane to break jail, but Kane, having assumed the responsibilities of a wife and child, refuses; Burns therefore goes alone. The rest of the film is devoted to a chase sequence high in the Sandia Mountains of New Mexico—not far from the site of the first atomic explosion. The fugitive cajoles, coaxes, and curses his horse Whiskey through the mountainous terrain, the ominous hunters of law and order always on his heels. The

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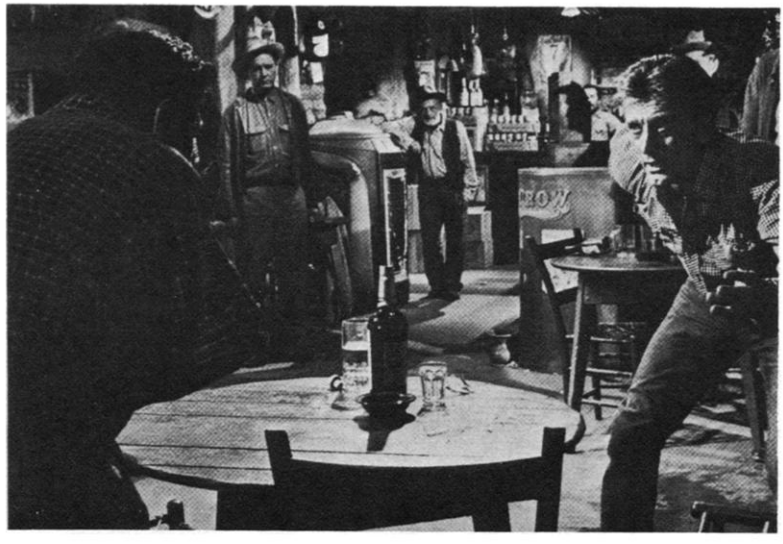


LONELY ARE THE BRAVE.

hunters, aided by the modern conveniences at their disposal—a helicopter, short wave radios, even the air force—are still handicapped by the ruggedness of nature, an environment which is Burns's familiar habitat. But the forces of society are too overpowering: Burns, and his highstrung horse, are killed on the highway by a huge diesel truck, which is carrying a load of toilets.

While *Lonely Are the Brave* does succeed in partially shattering the confining traditions of the Western as a cinematic genre, the simplicity of the portraits painted, and of its underlying allegory, nullifies any attempt at making it a work of genuine social significance, or as *Time* called it, "a film of distinction." Instead, it calls to mind a literary device known as the oxymoron where the adjective destroys the noun by nullifying its connotation: "cruel mercy." The one-dimensional characters cancel the importance of the theme. On the one hand, John W. Burns, the rugged individualist, tenaciously clinging to his basic privilege of "doing what you want to do, and to hell with everyone else"; on the other hand, the social representatives of law and order, the sheriff and his deputies, who are rendered as incompetent nincompoops. With such clear-cut delineations of black and white, the film becomes saturated with sentimentality, and the sympathies of the audience, forcibly focused on Burns, cannot help being false.

A related weakness of the film is that everything merely happens; this is an aspiring morality play, and we are given no motivations, no glances within the characters to let us see why they act as they do. When the prison guard decides to bludgeon Burns into submission with his blackjack, we are forced to guess at particular reasons behind the act. In the same way, when the one-armed psychopath begins his fight with Burns, there is no reason for the action, except to lead Burns from event A to event B.

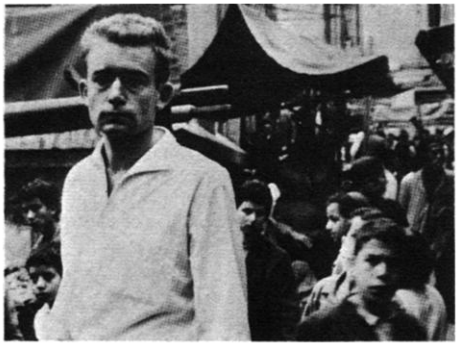
The naturalistic ending of the film tries to impose itself on our credulity, but it is a devious way to make a point. By parallel editing, we follow a truck driver who is delivering a shipment of toilets to San Francisco. Who is this individual, we ask ourselves. The obvious shift in sequence seems to indicate some significance, but what is it? Finally, of course, he

is revealed to be the social executioner, the deus ex machina, sent by the fates to exterminate Burns. But this deterministic ending is actually the decoy by which Mr. Trumbo sets up his symbolic meaning—society boils down to nothing more than a truckload of you know what. Many of us may share this feeling, but we like to wield our own shovels.

Lonely Are the Brave is not a complete failure. It has its moments, albeit few, of genuine sincerity and wit. When Douglas, dying on the highway, the rain mercilessly falling like angry pellets of accusation, hears the gunshot which kills his horse Whiskey; or the almost Kafkaesque scene in the prison as the guard's cry, "John W. Burns" pierces the silent darkness.

David Miller's direction, while lacking imagination, has moments of polished technique: an extreme long shot, taken from the mountains, as the jeep approaches in a cloud of smoke; the hunter begins the ruthless pursuit of the hunted. Silence. Then a close shot of Burns's face silhouetted against an empty sky, which is followed by a reverse angled long shot as the camera cranes back and up, placing the pursued and pursuer in a broad panorama with the foreground of the mountains juxtaposed to the background of the desert. In silence the chase begins.

The label of "off-beat" which has been tacked onto this film really seems to be begging the question. No matter how hard Dalton Trumbo and David Miller tried, the film's present-day setting cannot lift it from the category of the sentimental, cliché-marred Western.



Trumbo's vision of heroics comes nowhere near heroism, and the encirclements of the industrialized, civilized world were better symbolized by Arthur Miller, in *The Misfits*, by the demand for dog-food.—SYDNEY FIELD

LES OLIVIERS DE LA JUSTICE

Director: James Blue. Dialogue: Jean Pelegri. Scenario: Blue, Pelegri, Sylvain Dhomme, from the novel by Pelegri. Camera: Julius Rascheff. Music: Maurice Jarre. Producer: Georges Derocles.

Political censorship, plus the danger of assassination from either European or Moslem terrorists, prevented all but the scrappiest pieces of newsreel on the Algerian conflict from reaching the French film-going public for more than seven years. The fact that a feature film on Algeria has now been released and is playing simultaneously at three select first-run houses in Paris is significant. The fact that it is an excellent, expert picture of a broad compassionate humanism is remarkable. The fact that, although French in language and financing, it was directed by a 31-year-old Oklahoma-born, Oregon-bred American is so heteroclite as to be hard to assimilate.

Les Oliviers de la Justice (The Olive Trees of Justice), quiet and simple in tone but with an unfailingly high level of taste and artistic discernment, is a fictional film, based on Jean Pelegri's novel, itself a winner of France's weighty Catholic Grand Prize for Literature. The story, although perfectly apt and proper to the screen, is less typical of the commercial cinema than of a certain kind of French intellectual novel, its "memory" passages being a direct and legitimate descendant of the madeleine-released *recherche du temps perdu* in Proust.

The streets of Algiers are thick with soldiers under arms. Plastic bombs explode. Men lie wounded. Both Moslems and Europeans wander in vague, mistrustful apprehension. Patrols make their rounds. The sirocco blows.

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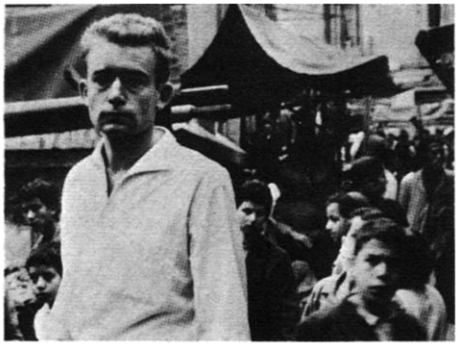

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Against this background, a moving human story of a return to the Algerian homeland is enacted. A young Frenchman, born and bred in Algeria, but who has studied, married, and made his home in France, returns to Algiers to take his place at his dying father's bedside. For three days, while he alternately stands vigil and visits relatives and childhood friends, and finally attends his father's funeral in a strangely Moorish-looking country church, luminous memories of his Algerian youth pass through his mind. His father's farm in the Mididja plain, sold 20 years before to cover business failures in Algiers. The vineyards. The olive trees. Listening to an early radio broadcast from Paris on the 14th of July. His boyhood companion Saïd, now in the mountains with the FLN.

The protagonist responds with pathetic decency to his anguishing situation. He grieves for the Moslems, their poverty and suffering—but also for the French settlers, now fearing exile from the land their grandparents first ploughed and irrigated. Finally, following a small Moslem boy's injury in an ordinary automobile accident—completely unconnected with the raging terrorism—the hero decides to remain in the Algeria to which he had earlier felt there was nothing more he could contribute.

"I don't even have the consolation of hatred," he says.

When James Blue set to work on *Les Oliviers* he had available none of the comfortable melodramatic techniques which were of such service to fellow expatriate director Jules Dassin in *Rififi*. Dassin, after all, was merely making a familiar American gangster story in foreign dress. Blue was required by the natural, intensely realistic nature of his film to have a deep and detailed understanding of both the Europeans and Moslems of Algeria.

His task might have been impossible without the active partnership of Pélegri himself, an Algerian "black foot" whose family had been established in Algeria since its conquest by the French in the second quarter of the 19th century. In addition to writing the original novel, Pelegri—the temper of whose work is similar to that of another Algerian native son, Albert Camus—adapted it (with Blue), served as assistant director, and played one of the leading roles, the hero's father. (He had already played another major screen role, that of the police inspector in Robert Bresson's *Pickpocket*, largely drawn from the pages of *Crime and Punishment*.) Nonetheless, Pelegri insists that the film, although he's proud of it, is overwhelmingly Blue's work.

Undeterred by the succeeding waves of brutal terrorism—right-wing OAS terrorists were soon to frighten numerous foreign pressmen and even French television crews out of the country with death threats—the two men set to work shooting in September, 1961. Throughout the film they used nonprofessional actors, casting Moslem nationalists for Moslem nationalists and OAS supporters for OAS supporters. Most of the interiors were shot in Blue's own apartment in famed Bab-el-Oued, a chief battleground of Algiers' interracial warfare. A few weeks later, and after five plastic bomb attacks against the offices of their film studio, the picture was completed.

Perhaps the most curious and touching thing about *Les Oliviers* is that despite the slaughter going on in the streets of the Algerian capital while it was being made—and which could have been exploited with infinite ease for purposes of cheap excitement—the film set out to be, and remains, a work of peace and human gentleness. Technically, the most striking thing about it is that Blue, actively coaching his actors himself in his excellent Algiers-accented French, coaxed them into the kind of intimate, immediate, unaffected performance that nonprofessionals are ideally supposed to give, but somehow almost never do. "I wouldn't let them look at their lines written down," said Blue. "That way they were much more natural."

In terms of camera work, *Les Oliviers*,

though conservative, is highly competent. "Most directors use all kinds of fancy shots in their first film to show they can use a camera," Blue explained. "But they wouldn't have been right for the story we had to tell." In the streets, for the "wild" shots of his hero's wanderings, and of such things as a genuine French Army explosives crew in action during a plastic bomb scare, Blue used a hand-held Camiflex, elsewhere a standard large camera.

In Paris, "the story we had to tell" won Blue eulogies from the whole political gamut of the French press, as it had from assembled critics and directors at Cannes. But two days before the Paris opening, the "American of Bab-el-Oued" had left France to see his younger brother graduate from Oregon State University.

During the Cannes festival Blue and Pelegri had meandered, solitary and uncommercial, on the far fringes of the trade-dominated, publicity-crazed, starlet-ridden spectacle, neither comprehending it nor seeming to desire to.

"C'est un pur" (He's pure), a producer said of the American. The truth may have been larger than the speaker intended.

—RICHARD GRENIER

FREUD

Director: John Huston. Producer: Wolfgang Reinhardt. Screenplay: Charles Kaufman and Wolfgang Reinhardt. Music: Jerry Goldsmith. Universal-International.

It is impossible, I would think, for any educated person to sit through *Freud* without bursting into laughter at least once, and to some people it will seem excruciatingly funny. There are dozens of scenes where one seems to have strayed into a Mike Nichols-Elaine May parody: *"Try and remember, child:* What happened on that day of your sister's wedding?" Yet this grotesque side of the film, lamentable as it may be in a film devoted to one of our greatest men, was probably unavoidable, for it stems precisely from the widespread diffusion of Freudian ideas and their vulgarizations. An elementary explanation of a doctrine which is now so accepted as to offer material for night-club comedy can hardly help seeming risible. And what John Huston has produced is a feature-length classroom film, even down to arty "think" titles, an intoning narrator, and the awkward mouthing of lines which clearly can never be properly spoken because they were written to be read. As it happened, I had spent an afternoon, a week before I saw the film, with a physicist who turned out to be a banjo-player and co-author of the song, "O Doctor Freud, O Doctor Freud, how I wish you had been differently employed. . . ." So I was peculiarly sensitive to the ridiculous aspects of the movie, no doubt. And there must be millions of people who know little or nothing of Freudian doctrine, much less its latter-day manifestations and counter-manifestations, who could be duly impressed and enlightened by the movie. The financers of the film must have had ample evidence to this effect, and if the people who go to see the film are drawn from the uninitiate, it may all be a Good Thing. But this doesn't seem to be happening; the big audiences aren't going to *Freud;* and the small audiences appear to be composed of exactly the wrong people—those who might have been impressed by a less elementary treatment. In other words, by one of those phase-lags that afflict cultures, the movie comes at a time when nobody who knows anything about the literature or thought of the past sixty years can possibly take it seriously.

The script tries, by fanatic compression, to outline the fundamentals of Freud's discovery of the unconscious and of infantile sexuality; it combines a number of cases into one—that of "Cecily," a delicately lovely blonde hysteric, played fairly well by Susanna York against Montgomery Clift's dark, bearded, goggle-eyed Freud. It sketches in Freud's conflicts with his medical colleagues, and indeed ends with him speaking against their uproar, and Breuer breaking with him. There are the obligatory scenes with parents, and similarly obligatory dream sequences. Freud's dreams are mostly

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of descending into caverns, all high-contrast and flickering shadows; Cecily's are gauzy, in line with her hysteria-induced blindness. They are all good textbook dreams—without the shocks that Buñuel's induce, but satisfactory.

The acting, with the exception of Susanna York, is pretty awful, and after *The Misfits* it is tempting to conclude that Huston now simply lets the cast go their merry way and to hell with it. Larry Parks as Breuer *looks* all right (he has some of the nineteenth-century air which Clift painfully lacks) but cannot get round half his lines. Susan Kohner as Freud's wife Martha is called upon mainly to be dutiful, sympathetic, and faintly suspicious of Freud's involvement with such a beautiful lady patient—but surely her living counterpart sometimes called the learned doctor by some name other than "Siggie?"

It's easy to poke fun at the inevitable thinness of the film; after all, Ernest Jones devoted three large biographical volumes to Freud, and there will be much more said of him; even his refuters have forged their weapons in the intellectual flames he set alight. And there are other relevant comparisons than those with the life of the man, which could never be encompassed in a film with much success. (Indeed it is more likely that the ramifications of a single analytic session provide about the right scope for a film.) When, for instance, one turns to popularizations of psychiatry such as *Suddenly Last Summer* or *Spellbound, Freud* begins to look much better: in place of psychiatric sensationalism, a reasonably straightforward account; in place of dramatic mystification, a logical series of discoveries. Huston even manages, in the two "trauma" scenes, to produce a world with some of the overwhelming quality of infantile experiences. And though there are, it is true, long expository passages in the dialogue, much that is important is thrown away smoothly and effectively, as in Freud's dialogue with his mother ("There are no accidents—," his eyes brushing aside).

What the film lacks most grievously is a satisfactory embodiment of the quality of

FREUD (*reportedly to be retitled* SECRET PASSION).

Freud's mind. The figure on the screen sometimes speaks the words of Freud and voices abbreviatedly the arguments of Freud. We even get, from Clift's performance, a coherent grasp of the neurosis of Freud. What we cannot grasp is the aspect of *discovery.* Perhaps Clift is too much the victim of neurosis, too little its emerging master. At any rate, when Clift's Freud jubilantly asks Cecily, "Do you know what we've done here this afternoon?" the scene rings entirely false; there is none of the dark pride that should have gone with such a moment (supposing, as a dramatist must, that such a moment might have occurred).

Freud is thus not a very satisfactory film. Will it raise the level of psychological sophistication among audiences at large? Perhaps a little—for such sophistication grows out of various and repeated experiences (especially reading, of course) and not out of traumas. Every little bit helps, presumably, and the film ought to be at least as effective as an elementary psychology course. It has, for instance, one brief moment of genuinely magical psychiatry: when Cecily makes her two verbal slips, and across her face flash embarrassment, confusion, and then the glimpse of connections previously unseen. It is the film's best moment, and in a sense its crucial one: with the implications of this scene we have passed the great Freudian divide into the vexed mind of modern man.

—ERNEST CALLENBACH

L'ASSASSINO

(The Murderer) Director: Elio Petri. Script: Petri, P. Festa Campanile, Antonino Guerra, Massimo Franciosa. Producer: Franco Castaldi. Camera: Carlo di Palma. Decor: Renzo Vespignani. With Marcello Mastroianni, Micheline Presle, Salvo Randone, Cristina Gajoni. Titanus-Vides.

Italian film producers seldom try to catch the public eye by a title of this sort. Our newspapers, too, are filled with crime stories, but the cinema rarely occupies itself with such episodes. Elio Petri, the 32-year-old director of *L'Assassino,* has chosen the device of a murder to focus attention on the protagonist's mistaken self-identity. The police interrogation, accusation, and temporary imprisonment, are means to involve both protagonist and spectator in the search.

Alfredo Martello (Marcello Mastroianni), an honest, intelligent, sensitive, stylish-looking antique dealer in his thirties, is accused of having murdered his mistress (Micheline Presle), who has been found stabbed in her villa outside Rome after he has spent the night with her. Alfredo is held by the police; the cross-examination and the investigation on the spot are against him, and though he proclaims his innocence over and over again he is thrown into a cell.

Frightened and anguished by all this (he had recently become engaged to the young daughter of a wealthy industrialist), Alfredo reexamines his life—intentions and actions—and is forced to recognize the ugliness and falseness of it. Even when his active self has not committed evil, he has not avoided it actively, and he has often contributed to negative, sometimes tragic, individual events. His lies, moral laziness, and a boisterous smartness have enveloped and choked most of the people he has met. The self-analysis and presentation of facts as they truly were is achieved by a rapid series of flash-backs, inserted in the story through thought and word associations: almost always convincing and not too distracting. At last the real murderer is found, Alfredo is set free, and his successful life begins once more, though forever maimed by his self-discovery.

The end of the film is especially crisp. We have seen Alfredo, shortly after he has left the jail, walking toward the Tiber at dawn; he is emptied and desolate. We hardly ever see his face. He stops at a coffee stand for an espresso: in the dim light we can only see the faces of the waitress and that of another customer; we understand that they recognize Alfredo from the pictures published in the papers days before. Alfredo leaves his coffee on the counter and walks away. Then we see him close from the shoulders, leaning on the parapet of a *Lungotevere,* and we hear him cry. Immediately after, the camera enters a motel room where he has been making love with his former fiancée (Cristina Gajoni) now (a year later) married to another man. It's now time for her to leave their rendez-vous; he seems serious, concerned, dubious, tormented; she goes; he picks up the telephone and with his old *savoir faire* arranges to buy a very expensive car, at some sort of bargain, from an exclusive auto salon. At the attempted remonstrations of the salesman he replies, laughing and winking: "Why, my dear, don't you know whom you're dealing with? This is 'the murderer,' remember?" He laughs charmingly, and the film ends.

Marcello Mastroianni's performance is excellent, diversified, and never theatrical; he is now, without a doubt, Italy's most versatile and attractive star. Micheline Presle is agreeably capable in her now usual role of elegant woman of "easy costumes," as the Italian phrase has it.

L'Assassino is Elio Petri's first film and in its imagination and its clear force, establishes him as a most promising director. Petri began his cinema career as script and scenario writer; his first task as such was *Roma, Ore 11,* for Giuseppe De Santis. Petri was then twenty years old. His new film, *No Time Left* (*I Giorni Contati*) which he wrote with Antonino Guerra, one of the writers of *The Murderer,* is the story of a man who has reached the age of fifty and decides to quit working.—LETIZIA CIOTTI MILLER.

HEMINGWAY'S ADVENTURES OF A YOUNG MAN

Director: Martin Ritt. Producer: Jerry Wald. Screenplay: A. E. Hitchner, based on stories by Ernest Hemingway. Photography: Lee Garmes. Score: Franz Waxman. With Richard Beymer and Arthur Kennedy.

I don't want to waste space discussing this film, which is rather like a Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man as Norman Rockwell might have conceived it for a *Saturday Evening Post* cover—the dreariest kind of Americana, with all the full-bodied flavor of a can of Campbell's cream of chicken soup served cold, right from the tin. It's the movie-makers' mixture as before of Freudianism and anti-Momism in which the young man is torn between the castrating mother and the castrated father, and must free himself in order to become a man. *Adventures of a Young Man,* one of the thickest servings of this formula, fails to take into consideration what makes the young man in the film an artist: I suggest it didn't come out of that all-American manly hunting and fishing with Papa—it probably had something to do with the cultural aspirations of that nagging castrating mom, the villainness of the story. But the film is hardly worth talking about—heavy and dull and clearly marked with moral signposts—each episode a lesson in growing up. Even the high spots—the sequences with Dan Dailey and Paul Newman and the romantic cynicism of the Ricardo Montalban scenes—lack rhythm and structure. I want to discuss a basic moral issue that the film raises.

I think it is a disgrace and a moral offense to take short stories by Hemingway and a piece of a novel and combine them with incidents from his life in a sentimental pastiche which is then presented as some sort of biographical film about Ernest Hemingway. It's a violation of his life as well as of his work—the integrity of neither is respected in this kind of treatment. And I fear that this kind of opportunistic screenwriting will soon leave only obscure writers with lives they can call their own. It's so easy to do—and it has the superficial justification that most writers' early work *is* partly autobiographical. But, in destroying the boundaries between a man's life and his art, the meanings are all homogenized. The problem is not merely that the writer has drawn *all* of his characters out of himself, and the film reduces him to the one that most resembles him, but that his particular qualities as a writer—the shape and form he gave to his experiences—are destroyed. His art is turned back into an imitation of the raw material out of which he made his art. And it's part of the personality cult of modern life that the movies are more interested in exploiting Hemingway himself than in trying to find some way of making a movie that would do anything like justice to his style and method. There has rarely been even an approximation of the particular qualities of Hemingway's work in the films based on his novels—the closest was perhaps the first ten minutes of Robert Siodmak's *The Killers,* and the next closest, the first two-thirds of *The Macomber Affair. Adventures of a Young Man* follows the direction set in *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*—in which the hero, played by Gregory Peck, seemed already to be drawn more from Hemingway's life and legend than from the story on which the film was based. From a film like *Adventures of a Young Man* you would never be able to guess what kind of a writer Hemingway was trying to be, nor anything of the qualities of his style. He cleaned out the stuffy upholstery of "fine" writing; this movie brings it right back again, padding out the clean lines. Even when his dialogue is retained, it is set in a context of CinemaScope and De Luxe-colored calendar art—and paced in such an old-fashioned way that you may want to cry out that this is the film equivalent of everything Hemingway was trying to eliminate from his writing.

The movie is neither about his life nor is it truly drawn from his work. *Time* says "Time has given Hemingway's life an aura of the magical. Hence this is an enchanted movie in the same way that forests and

sleeping beauties and Prince Charmings in children's storybooks are enchanted." But Hemingway was a true writer, not a false magician, and in order to turn him into the Prince Charming of a movie, the film violates what he was as a man also. He has been turned into the most commonplace and generalized public idea of a struggling artist, and I suppose we can look forward to the same kind of sugar-coated sanctification of D. H. Lawrence, James Joyce, Thomas Wolfe, and just about anybody else you can think of—all turned into the same figure of the artist—all endowed "with an aura of the magical" (I wonder where *Time* gets all its nimbuses?). Movies have been doing it to painters and singers and actors and dancers—I suppose writers are next. Thus everyone who pulled himself out of the mediocrity of his surroundings is brought back to it, and glorified for having been just like everyone else. The movie-makers who claim to be watering the flowers on the graves of the great seem to use their own water.

—PAULINE KAEL

THE SAND CASTLE

Written, produced, and directed by Jerome Hill. Music: Alec Wilder. Camera: Lloyd Ahern. Sound: C. Robert Fine. Special effects consultant: Francis Thompson. 70 min. Distributor: Louis de Rochemont.

This independently produced film is the first attempt at a feature-length picture by Jerome Hill, who previously made shorts on Albert Schweitzer and Grandma Moses, plus several ski shorts.

It has the structure one might expect of a short: a boy, left to play on a beach with his sister and repulsed by a gang of boys, builds an ornate sand castle. Various people on the beach become involved with his project. Finally it rains, and the boy and girl, left alone at the castle, fall asleep. The film then goes to color as the boy dreams of the interior of the castle. This dream sequence is animated with cut-out figures moving in settings painted by Hill in a manner resembling nineteenth-century "penny plain, tuppence colored" cut-out theaters. The figures, who attend a ball, are costumed variants on the people who had been on the beach, and to whom the boy was apparently oblivious.

This basic conceit (the original sense is exact, here) is on the whole satisfactorily implemented, although the pace of the film drags somewhat and the sound, which was entirely post-recorded, has some awkwardness and a closed-in ring unfortunate in a film that takes place entirely outdoors.

Hill contends that there are Jungian overtones in the film. There is certainly a good deal of humor in it, though one is not clear whether its basic intention is comic. The people on the beach include a woman rather like the fat fairy in Broughton's *Pleasure Garden*, a painter whose work is constantly being interfered with in wry ways, a fisherman who performs an odd deranged dance with some girls tangled in his line, a frogman who scares the little sister out of her wits, a fat man who rolls about appallingly, and a group of nuns who play baseball. Much of this is charming—real but half grotesque, the way life can be—though it does not have the drive and energy we demand of the highest comedy, or indeed the soft but implacable insinuation we are given by Tati. In the end, therefore, it is amusing but not moving.

The animation sequence is an interesting attempt to escape the industrial complications of ordinary cell animation; other film-makers may find it suggestive. The rigidity of the figures is sometimes cleverly used (their shapes can change when, as they rotate, they are momentarily edge-on to the camera) but one wonders if a less detailed and realistic style of

sleeping beauties and Prince Charmings in children's storybooks are enchanted." But Hemingway was a true writer, not a false magician, and in order to turn him into the Prince Charming of a movie, the film violates what he was as a man also. He has been turned into the most commonplace and generalized public idea of a struggling artist, and I suppose we can look forward to the same kind of sugar-coated sanctification of D. H. Lawrence, James Joyce, Thomas Wolfe, and just about anybody else you can think of—all turned into the same figure of the artist—all endowed "with an aura of the magical" (I wonder where *Time* gets all its nimbuses?). Movies have been doing it to painters and singers and actors and dancers—I suppose writers are next. Thus everyone who pulled himself out of the mediocrity of his surroundings is brought back to it, and glorified for having been just like everyone else. The movie-makers who claim to be watering the flowers on the graves of the great seem to use their own water.

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Offhand comedy: THE SAND CASTLE.

drawing is not needed to use this technique to full advantage.

In both technique and tone, thus, *The Sand Castle* is an experiment that does not quite make it. But one looks forward with interest to Hill's next film.—ERNEST CALLENBACH

LOVE AT AGE TWENTY

Directors: Francois Truffaut (France), Renzo Rossellini (Italy), Shintaro Ishihara (Japan), Marcel Ophuls (Germany), and Andrzej Wajda (Poland). Producer: Pierre Roustang.

The multi-director omnibus film is no blessing to the directors involved, and it is all too likely to be a curse to the public. In this instance, the difficulties of the form are practically all illustrated, and while the total is worth looking at, or at least more worth looking at than *Boccaccio '70*, it is still a frustrating situation.

None of the directors, since the time open for each is something like a half-hour, has the opportunity to open his story out very much; the problem is to provide suitably interesting vignettes—for we are past the days of *Quartet*, when a clutch of neat little plots would serve. The wisest of the directors here, Truffaut and Wajda, have turned in spare, simple pictures with only a couple of characters and a simple emotional focus. In Truffaut's, a boy falls in love with a girl student he picks up at a concert; she does not take him seriously, and little by little he faces this. It begins clumsily, with the camera touristically establishing the Paris streets and buildings, introducing the boy and his buddy, showing him at work in the record-factory, setting the concert scene, etc.; later, when it closes in on the relationship with the girl, it takes on some of the qualities we remember from *Les Mistons* and *400 Blows*: a directness and simplicity that one is tempted to assume autobiographical, a magical sense of the girl's family scene.

Wajda's film is the most complex yet subtly controlled of the lot, and it is worth enduring the others to see it. One of those delicious little Polish blondes is at the zoo with her photographer boyfriend; a child falls into the polarbear pit trying to retrieve a doll. The photographer refuses to go to the rescue, but Cybulski, looking surprisingly middle-aged in steelrimmed spectacles, jumps in and saves the child. The girl, rejecting the photographer —who just kept shooting during the episode— takes the hero home with her. In spite of some brandy and her taking off her sweater, she doesn't manage to seduce him. (This scene, like the whole film, is shot with a discreet and yet lyrical camera, which moves fluidly but does not push or lead.) When her young friends come in for the evening the film unobtrusively makes clear how great is the gulf between them and the hero; they put him on to tell them about the war, and he being a

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Wajda's film is the most complex yet subtly controlled of the lot, and it is worth enduring the others to see it. One of those delicious little Polish blondes is at the zoo with her photographer boyfriend; a child falls into the polarbear pit trying to retrieve a doll. The photographer refuses to go to the rescue, but Cybulski, looking surprisingly middle-aged in steelrimmed spectacles, jumps in and saves the child. The girl, rejecting the photographer —who just kept shooting during the episode— takes the hero home with her. In spite of some brandy and her taking off her sweater, she doesn't manage to seduce him. (This scene, like the whole film, is shot with a discreet and yet lyrical camera, which moves fluidly but does not push or lead.) When her young friends come in for the evening the film unobtrusively makes clear how great is the gulf between them and the hero; they put him on to tell them about the war, and he being a

LOVE AT AGE 20: *Wajda's episode.*

serious and solitary person does tell them a few things. The two worlds are confronted, neatly and quietly, in words and looks; they touch nowhere. The friends rush off suddenly to look over the girl's shoulder at a geometry problem; Cybulski is left totally alone in the other room. Pretty drunk by now, in a game of blind man's buff he has a kind of reminiscence-seizure, in which he relives an execution scene from the war; we see this as he sees it, but all the young people see is a drunken man rolling about embarrassingly in the corner. After a while he sobers up enough to leave, dismissing the photographer who accosts him outside. At dawn the photographer makes his reentrance — the pictures are stunning — and goes off with the girl to romp outside.

The film is tight, ironic, and *felt*, and is much more than the tract which it doubtless seemed to the script committees; for beyond the appeal to the lack of conscience of the new, selfish, decadent Polish young is a wealth of perception and a supple use of point-of-view. The film has a curious purity of style; it is visually simple, yet full of ramifications, and its irony, though strong, is never bitter or satirical.

Love at Age Twenty will doubtless fall into speedy oblivion, and the Wajda fragment will be lost to view unless it can be extracted for separate later distribution and preservation. It should be available along with *Ashes and Diamonds*, and I hope some astute distributor will be able to acquire it. —ERNEST CALLENBACH

FILM REVIEWS

ELECTRA

Directed, produced, and written by Michael Cacoyannis, based on the play by Euripides. Photography: Walter Lassally. Music: Mikis Theodorakis.

The matter of Electra and Orestes and their vengeance on their mother Clytemnestra and her lover Aegisthus for the murder of their father Agamemnon is treated, with some variations, by all three major tragic Greek poets. The film version of the legend, directed by Michael Cacoyannis, is based on Euripides' text and came to Hollywood by way of Salonika, Venice, Edinburgh, and Cannes.

At the Salonika festival it was selected as the best picture. Its director and principal actress Irene Pappas were likewise honored and it received six other awards. Shown *hors concours* at Venice it was given a standing ovation. Edinburgh gave it a diploma of merit as a film of outstanding distinction. It received a special jury award at Cannes and was declared the best adaptation shown. It likewise achieved the Grand Prix for superior technical achievement.

The reception at Cannes was anticipated by the special representative there of *Le Figaro*, who welcomed it as one of the "cinematographic events of the festival," emphasizing the word *cinematographic* and insisting that though it was an adapted play it was far removed from "filmed theater" such as had been offered, to the writer's boredom, a little earlier by Mr. Lumet—a reference to *Long Day's Journey Into Night*.

Here it was passed over by the members of the Academy in favor of *Sundays and Cybele*—a film of very considerable merit but of a kind the pattern for which had already been set, and which raised a puzzling question of structure and dramatic irony. As a member of the nominating committee for foreign films I placed *Electra* ahead of *Cybele* on several grounds, not the least being my belief that films honored by the Academy should be so honored for some new contribution they make to the skills of cinema—some significant use of film. This

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was what, in my opinion, *Electra* managed to achieve.

It raises again and in an interesting way two perennial problems, namely the basic problem of adapting a play for the screen and the special problem of adapting a Greek tragedy.

The first has been a matter of discussion from the days of the *film d'art*. The latter is not only a special case of this problem, it also raises special problems attaching to the Greek tragedy which, with its centralization of place and concentration of action, with so much happening "off," appears at first sight to put burdensome restrictions on the film adaptor who would be faithful to his text.

Among the rare statements by English-speaking film-makers on this subject of stage into screen is one from Hitchcock: "It is a temptation for the screen writer to use the wider resources of the cinema, that is to say, to go outside, to follow the actor off-stage. On Broadway, the action of the play may take place in one room. The scenarist however feels free to open up the set, to go outside more often than not. This is wrong. It is better to stay with the play. The action was structurally related by the playwright to three walls and a proscenium arch. It may well be, for example, that much of his drama depends on the question, 'who is at the door?' This effect is ruined if the camera goes outside the room. It dissipates the dramatic tension. . . ." He also adds that with the triumph of dialogue, the motion picture has been stabilized as theater. "The mobility of the camera does nothing to alter this fact. Even though the camera may move along the sidewalk, it is still theater. The characters sit in taxis and talk, they sit in automobiles and make love, and talk continuously. One result of this is a loss of cinematic style. . . ."

André Bazin in his essay "Theater and Cinema" (*Qu'est-ce que le Cinéma?* Vol. 2) seems to share these views of Hitchcock while emphasizing, for his part, the inviolability of the text, in adapting theater to screen. "Whatever one's angle of approach, the play whether a classic or a contemporary piece is unassailably protected by the text. You cannot adapt the text itself without renouncing the original work and substituting something else for it which may be better, but is no longer the play.

"This operation is inevitably limited either to second-rate or living authors, the masterpieces, owned by time, demanding our respect as a matter of principle. The experience of the past ten years confirms this. If the problem of filmed theater has once more become a definite aesthetic reality, this is because of such films as *Hamlet*, *Henry V*, and *Macbeth*, on the classical side, and on the other to films like *The Children's Hour* of Hellman and Wyler, to *Les Parents Terribles*, *Occupe toi d'Amélie*. . . . Before the war Cocteau had prepared an adaptation of his *Parents Terribles*. On taking up the project again in 1946 he put the script aside and decided to keep the original stage text . . . virtually preserving intact the stage decor. Whether American, English, or French, the development of filmed theater, both classical and modern is the same. Formerly the chief preoccupation of the film-maker seemed to be to camouflage its theatrical origins, to adapt it and dissolve into cinema. Nowadays, not only does he seem to reject this approach, but usually, he emphasizes the theatrical character of the piece. It cannot be otherwise once you respect the very text itself. Conceived in terms of its theatrical potentialities, these are already carried in its very essence. The text determines the mode and style of presentation. It is already potentially theater. One cannot, at one and the same time, decide both to be faithful to the text and to turn it aside from the direction in which it is headed."

Cacoyannis would seem to have managed to have the best of both worlds.

For the moment however, let us look at what I have referred to above as the special problems relating to the adaptation of Greek tragedy, which are rooted in one even more basic, namely how do you present a classical tragedy in the first place? The question is particularly acute for the Greeks themselves, or for anyone elsewhere wishing to stage a play in Greek.

There is no general agreement and no reliable information on the most basic thing of all, the speaking of the lines. For this and for many other reasons, most of them problems of production, such as the use of masks, the absence of authentic music or choreography, it is not easy to obtain any kind of common agreement on what might be termed authentic classical productions.

The Greeks however have attempted a solution, by no means unanimously accepted either among themselves or by classicists elsewhere, and this by way of their National Theater, sufficiently widely accepted and long enough in being to have affected most classical Greek production; its influence is also to be seen in *Electra*.

Founded in 1900 as the Royal Theater, what is now the National Theater faced many difficulties. "The problem before it was deep and complex. It was not simply a matter of inviting a present-day audience to watch the performance of classical plays in a spirit of formal reverence befitting the treasures of the past. What was needed was that the classical drama should really come to life again and spark off a living interest in the spectator of today. The tragedy must become part of him, a part of the Greek people and later a part of the international public too." (This is the position stated in the official brochure of the National Theater.) At first the performances were given indoors. It was gradually realized however that the plays should be presented in their natural and historical environment. In 1936, under the direction of Dimitri Rondiris (whose company toured the US in 1961) *Electra* was offered as the first open-air production. By now too, Rondiris had given shape to the movements of the chorus "in a plastic manner," based on research obtained from dancing figurines and figures on vases together with an exhaustive study of surviving traditional dances. Thus was the National Festival of Epidaurus founded.

I have dwelt on these facts not only because they may help to explain something of the new traditions of Greek drama, spoken from a text adapted from ancient into modern Greek—as we might transpose Chaucer into contemporary English—but also because they help to explain the point of theatrical departure of Cacoyannis' adaptation of a modernized classic into a still more modern medium—a difficulty he has solved, unlike some other Greek directors, with a remarkable degree of artistic and technical success.

In conformity with Bazin's principle, he has retained the text in a very large measure, pruning rather than adding. The major addition is the prologue, the return of Agamemnon through the actual Lion Gate of Mycenae, his murder, the escape of Orestes, and the marrying off of Electra to a peasant so that she may not bear sons to be rivals to Aegisthus and to claim the throne. All this is played without dialogue.

It is in choosing the text of Euripides that Cacoyannis seems to have been most cinematographically wise. This would absolve him from the stricture of Hitchcock, since Euripides himself takes him away from the palace and allows him to retain a chorus that has as its reason both for being and for cohesion the fact that it now is the group of the women of the village.

The major excision was the elimination of the *deus ex machina*, the appearance at the end of the *heavenly twins*, the dioscuri, who order the resolution, sending (in the original) Orestes to Athens where he must have this murder tried, and ordering Pylades, the companion of Orestes, to take Electra to wife and to "bear her to his home in Achaea." But in the film the twins would have been an embarrassment and the effect is obtained without them and the solution understood filmically. One touch Cacoyannis adds to the celebration at which Aegisthus is slain. He makes it a festival of Dionysos rather than just of "the Nymphs," as Euripides has it.

Some have felt that the movement of the chorus of village women was too stylized. I did not find it so. It convinces me as being a kind of corporate grace that sits well on such women. It is all part of the "reality" that is

here presented by every means, by the sound effects so excellently used and by the music; the enlisting by Lassally of the magic of the landscape, all giving to the drama and to the things seen a quality that makes the progress of Clytemnestra in her Mycenean robes and chariot seem totally natural and in place. The same quality I felt about the movement of the figures in the palace. They seemed to belong there, even if only as ghosts haunting the scene of the past and endlessly rehearsing it. Not since *Pather Panchali* have I heard a cry of grief such as that torn from Electra as her world turned upside down.

Past and present seem joined in a wonderful way in this film that speak to those who know her as does Greece herself, simultaneously of past and present. And this is perhaps precisely because of that touch of "formality," present in the behavior of the people today. I saw not long ago a version of *Antigone* that was made, in contrast, with complete "naturalness." It was formless and a failure, seeming just an under-budgeted "spectacular." Formality would have saved it.

So, faithful to the text of Euripides, who in turn has allowed him to escape the "unity of place," Cacoyannis has reaped all the advantages of stage and screen without losing what Hitchcock calls "dramatic tension."

The formality again has given us that tragic pleasure of which Aristotle speaks and which is the effect of art allowing us to look without pain on painful objects.

"What," a friend who is also a most distinguished classical scholar, wondered to me after the picture, "would Euripides have thought of the film?" My own feeling is that he would have been very happy (if one can ever think of Euripides, "the most tragic of the poets," as happy) and would immediately have offered to adapt for Michael Cacoyannis his most challenging and remarkable play, *The Bacchae*, which seems so far to have challenged the talent of the National Greek Theater.

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LOLA MONTÈS

Montez, Lola. 1818-1861. Irish dancer and adventuress whose real name was Gilbert. Her sensational success was due to beauty rather than artistry. She became official mistress of Ludwig I of Bavaria, who made her a countess, and virtually ruled Bavaria until her banishment in 1848. She died in poverty in the U.S.—Columbia Viking Encyclopedia

The film opens with a gigantic chandelier being lowered from the top of a circus tent. The arena is lit.

With all the hue and cry, pro and con, about the wide screen, this is one of the few films so far made expressly *for* the wide screen! It could not be shown any other way. Even Cinerama, with all its experiments and innovations, has neglected the one locale one would have thought ideal for the wide screen—the circus.

From the first exhilarating shots of the fantastic, brilliantly lighted chandeliers (in quick cutting) being lowered from opposite sides of the screen, one knows one is in for a feast for the eyes, and a feast it is.

There are two versions to be seen—one is the butchered version shown in New York three years ago, turned inside out to "make coherent sense," the distributor thought, out of its complex flashback sequences, and the full two-hour one, shown at the Montreal Film Festival in 1961. To give some idea of what Ophuls originally intended, the full-length version should be pinpointed.*

It is a United States of prosperity and tough, brawling arrogance that Ophuls has created around Lola Montez in her extraordinary circus, at once combining Americana not seen since *The Magnificent Ambersons* and a circus never seen on this earth. (This is literally true, also, because Lola was never in a circus—which makes it the more remarkable that Ophuls could have conceived such an idea and then made his invention come off so well.) A twelve-foot-high Uncle Sam on stilts, little imps in red, green, and yellow, running from one

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here presented by every means, by the sound effects so excellently used and by the music; the enlisting by Lassally of the magic of the landscape, all giving to the drama and to the things seen a quality that makes the progress of Clytemnestra in her Mycenean robes and chariot seem totally natural and in place. The same quality I felt about the movement of the figures in the palace. They seemed to belong there, even if only as ghosts haunting the scene of the past and endlessly rehearsing it. Not since *Pather Panchali* have I heard a cry of grief such as that torn from Electra as her world turned upside down.

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side of the screen to the other past audience boxes draped in American flags, doors flashing open and tumblers bouncing out (which results on the screen in a kind of musical counterpoint of tumblers, juggled balls, and flying hoops, seemingly controlled in mid-air, all to a jazzy musical accompaniment), the whole encircling Peter Ustinov as the ringmaster in red jacket, white pants, black top-hat and boots, cracking his whip as he circles Lola on her mock golden throne in the middle of the arena, entoning: "Ask the most indiscreet questions, ladies and gentlemen!" (Crack!) "Lola will answer anything!" (Crack!) The questions are asked. Lola, numb and half-conscious, glared at by a thousand eyes, answers the raucous crowd. Then someone shouts: "Does the Countess remember her past? Does she remember?" "Do I remember? I remember everything."

And we begin. Ophuls has created a color film that for once does not use color because every second film made must be in color, but because he felt he could do things with it that had either been overlooked or seldom done. The result is like a frenzied painting: colors massed for their startling effect or bizarre quality. This balance is also observed in the film's construction, for not only is the circus used as a kickoff point for Lola's past, but as a parallel, for after each of her amorous adventures is depicted (a Scottish nobleman, a captain of the guards, Franz Liszt), as she rises higher up the social scale, she literally rises from the sawdust floor of the arena; from platform to platform, hoisted by ropes, to the accompaniment of the ringmaster's insistent: "Higher, Lola! Lola, higher!" At last she reaches the top . . . Ludwig of Bavaria. For the first and only time in her life she finds true love. But it will not last. The Bavarians, incensed at this woman's domination over Ludwig, revolt and threaten his throne. She must leave, and as she drives away from the turbulent city, she is not aware that from then on her life will be a gradual decline, until . . .

"The Greatest Show on Earth," which mocks anyone fallen, especially from so great a height. To mark the end of her meteoric career, Lola in tights, dizzy and sick, plunges headfirst from the top of the tent into a tank. Life is over. Oh yes, we see her afterwards sitting in a cage like some exotic animal, her hands protruding through the bars for the men to kiss for a dollar.

The crowded closeness of the baroque age, seen in *Le Plaisir*, is observed here too, as in the Paris apartment of Lola when the ringmaster comes to see her for the first time. We see him gradually emerging through innumerable doors, behind endless panes of glass, moving through this opulent fragility like a bear, with his "theme" played in the background, an ominous galumphing march. Any artist, whether working with film, pen and paper, or brush, makes his work take on the characteristics of the period in which he is working. This should be obvious enough, but when we see the actors of most period films, in which they look as if they had stuck their heads through holes from in back of cardboard cutouts in a photographer's studio, we can welcome a film that makes a graceful bow both to reality and imagination. Like all films by masters, the actors almost cannot really be said to be giving performances; they are not only in a film, they are in a creation, and every flourish of the ringmaster's whip, every turn of the camera around the sets, is Ophuls and only Ophuls.

When Ophuls heard what they had done to his film, he took to his bed. Already ill, this is supposed to have killed him.

If the circus crowd seems brutal, the general audience reaction to *Lola Montès* has been pretty much the same. Perhaps that is why Ophuls made it. —GRETCHEN WEINBERG

Book Reviews

THE BEST REMAINING SEATS

The Story of the Golden Age of the Movie Palace

By Ben M. Hall. (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Publishers, 1961. $15.00)

Just as our last issue went to press, with its sumptuous cover photograph of the lobby of the Fox Theater in San Francisco, the Fox was demolished. Such is frequently the fate of the temples of our art, these days: the great movie houses are no longer economically viable, and their ornate charms are disappearing forever. Luckily, however, Ben Hall has collected a vast mass of photographs, plans, handbills, and other memorabilia, which have been on the whole well reproduced in this book; and he has accompanied them by a text which gives a running and reasonably systematic account of the development of the big theaters. They were, of course, fantastic monuments to extravagance, phony "glamor," and astounding bad taste; but they had a gilded-plaster vulgar strength to match the hordes of people they accommodated. The vast sea of seats that was the uppermost balcony of the Fox is now rubble, and in recent decades it was always ghostlike. To be sure, such matters are Details; but it is worth wondering sometimes whether we are any better off now, with our little steel-and-glass boxes, whose bad taste is only chilly instead of flamboyant, or our drive-ins, which are monuments only to our slavery to the automobile. (It is fitting, no doubt, that the office-building which will rise in place of the Fox will have three floors for the parking of cars.)

However, for those who nourish either a sneaking or an open liking for the colossal pretensions of the past, Mr. Hall's book is fascinating, amusing, and saddening. As one of his captions notes: "When you entered the Roxy Rotunda you knew you were *somewhere.*" The movies, though it may be forgotten by those critics who see their films in private screening-rooms with a handful of other people, are still a public spectacle: a "hot" medium, not a "cool" one, to use MacLuhan's terms. Exhibitors and their architects, whatever their particular stylistic vagaries, forget this at their peril.—E.C.

THE AMERICAN MOVIE

By William K. Everson. (New York: Atheneum, 1963. $4.95)

A serviceable short introduction to the movies, which will bring no surprises to the initiated but ought to be read by all who have begun to take an interest in films—especially those upon which Everson draws for his "Silents Please" television programs. A sensible book, comparing favorably with most of its popular French counterparts in everything but price; however, it is handsomely printed.

NOUVELLE VAGUE: THE FIRST DECADE

By Raymond Durgnat. (London: Motion Publications, 1963. $1.50. U.S. agent: Cinema House, 3139 Arnow Place, New York 61, N. Y.)

A 90-page summary of the films produced by the New Wave directors, from Albicocco to Zaphiratos—a broad definition of "Nouvelle Vague," but one which is followed through with detailed and highly personal comments on the films. Durgnat should not be identified only with the writer of rambling "Eroticism in the Cinema" articles for *Films and Filming;* he is also a perceptive and knowledgeable critic who, perhaps because of his Swiss parentage, has an unusually good feel for French culture. One may quarrel with Durgnat occasionally—for instance on his estimate of deBroca, which seems to miss his peculiar blend of farce and melancholy—but the monograph as a whole is sympathetic, acute, stimulating: in short, prob-

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Book Reviews

THE BEST REMAINING SEATS

The Story of the Golden Age of the Movie Palace

By Ben M. Hall. (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Publishers, 1961. $15.00)

Just as our last issue went to press, with its sumptuous cover photograph of the lobby of the Fox Theater in San Francisco, the Fox was demolished. Such is frequently the fate of the temples of our art, these days: the great movie houses are no longer economically viable, and their ornate charms are disappearing forever. Luckily, however, Ben Hall has collected a vast mass of photographs, plans, handbills, and other memorabilia, which have been on the whole well reproduced in this book; and he has accompanied them by a text which gives a running and reasonably systematic account of the development of the big theaters. They were, of course, fantastic monuments to extravagance, phony "glamor," and astounding bad taste; but they had a gilded-plaster vulgar strength to match the hordes of people they accommodated. The vast sea of seats that was the uppermost balcony of the Fox is now rubble, and in recent decades it was always ghostlike. To be sure, such matters are Details; but it is worth wondering sometimes whether we are any better off now, with our little steel-and-glass boxes, whose bad taste is only chilly instead of flamboyant, or our drive-ins, which are monuments only to our slavery to the automobile. (It is fitting, no doubt, that the office-building which will rise in place of the Fox will have three floors for the parking of cars.)

However, for those who nourish either a sneaking or an open liking for the colossal pretensions of the past, Mr. Hall's book is fascinating, amusing, and saddening. As one of his captions notes: "When you entered the Roxy Rotunda you knew you were *somewhere.*" The movies, though it may be forgotten by those critics who see their films in private screening-rooms with a handful of other people, are still a public spectacle: a "hot" medium, not a "cool" one, to use MacLuhan's terms. Exhibitors and their architects, whatever their particular stylistic vagaries, forget this at their peril.—E.C.

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THE CINEMA OF ALFRED HITCHCOCK

By Peter Bogdanovich. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1963. No price given. To be available in bookstores through Doubleday.)

Consists primarily of a long and unusually detailed interview with Hitchcock, and complete credits for all his films, including television films. Disorganized and not intended as criticism, but intriguing to anyone interested in Hitchcock; 48 pages, many illustrations. The booklet was prepared to accompany the retrospective series at the Museum of Modern Art, May 5-November 16.

INSIDE DAISY CLOVER

By Gavin Lambert. (New York: Viking, 1963. $4.50)

A delightful novel about a tough Los Angeles teen-ager who becomes a singing star and is not spoiled by success (or failure); the freakish "characters" of *The Slide Area* give way to characters engagingly yet bitingly realized, and handled with a tone of virtually flawless control.

TEACHING ABOUT THE FILM

By J. M. L. Peters. A UNESCO study. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962. No price given.)

Our school curricula are still mainly founded on print; the careful study of other languages labors under dismal disadvantages. Even advocates are not necessarily real friends, either. This book, for instance, is so dull that one hardly manages to care about anything it says. It is primarily concerned with the teaching of films to children and adolescents; as such it exists within the context of regular school programs and a concern for the proper upbringing of the young generally. "It is remarkable that, generally speaking, the teaching of appreciation of the film as art must still be first defended with the argument that the best way to protect young people against the moral dangers of the cinema is to cultivate their film aesthetic taste." Often enough, of course, it is precisely the so-called "moral dangers" of films which make them attractive or important — to juveniles or to ourselves; the difference from other arts is that it does not seem that paintings (except perhaps nudes) or music are so *dangerous*. It is like studying Marxism not to find out whether there is any truth in it, but to "know your enemy."

Chapter II includes a detailed examination of a sequence from *The Fallen Idol*, with a still of each component shot, and a variety of other illustrative stills. Analysis is also given to sequences from *The Third Man* and *Naked City*. Unfortunately, the book includes no film using wider screen ratios, more protracted and ensemble-type playing, and a less analytical camera style. The balance of the book deals with the many pedagogical problems of the field, including those of having the class make a film. Bibliography. —E. C.

Film Teaching Addendum

Our survey of the major film teaching programs of the country regrettably omitted the courses at CCNY, many of whose students have gone on to make names for themselves in film-making. The note below should be added to those in our Spring, 1963, issue.

CITY COLLEGE OF NEW YORK

The Institute of Film Techniques at CCNY has been in existence for 22 years. It is part of the Liberal Arts Program as well as the School of General Studies at The City College of New York and currently enrolls over 200 students. There is a large number of foreign students who, upon returning to their homelands, lead in the development of indigenous film movements. Institute graduates are everywhere in film, some with the highest honors.

The matriculated student may graduate with a Bachelor of Arts degree with the major in films, and the nonmatriculated student receives a Certificate upon completion of the full course of study.

Our point of view is simple. Film is art. Granted it is many other things as well, but for the purpose of teaching, this is the hypothesis. Our ideal student is one who some day, some place, in an ideal situation, will have complete creative control over the making of a film. Although a tremendous percentage of our students move out of school into the film industry in New York, somewhere over 90%, we are not a professional nor a vocational school in that we do not train people for the purpose of stepping into the industry. We feel that there is, over-all, very little opportunity in one's lifetime to express oneself in film, and if it cannot be done in college, where else? Further, a basic understanding of the fundamentals of any art is essential to purposeful work in it.

The most we can hope to achieve for our ideal student is to open his mind to film expression and to teach him whatever techniques are necessary so that he can accomplish on the screen the matter of his mind and soul. We must help the student grow and develop to the full extent of his talent and ability.

How does one teach an art form? We feel the best path is through work and experience. A student must practice in order to progress. Lectures are invaluable, but no one can learn a means of expression by simply listening to others talk about it. To this end our entire program is pointed toward the workshop classes wherein actual film-making is the center of all activity.

The curriculum divides itself into three main divisions. The first division courses are devoted to the fundamentals of production and to the history and development of all film forms ranging from the traditional feature to the most avant garde impressionism. Always the individual judgment of the student is brought into focus by analyzing the various films in terms of the creative decisions reached by their makers and how or how not they were executed.

The second division is devoted to courses in photography, writing, and editing. Here the object is technique training as well as judgment. It is obvious that one cannot photograph without operating a camera and one cannot edit without using a splicer. Technical practices should become automatic so that they do not interfere with the creative process—yet they should be completely absorbed, since so much in film is governed by technical detail.

The third division is the group of workshop classes. In the first workshop each student must conceive and produce a complete motion picture. This means that he must write, photograph, edit, record and mix sound, match negative into A & B rolls, and end with a composite answer print within the time limit of one semester. This course is followed by at least two advanced workshops where these students again make films, broader in scope and more complex in technique. The film assignments in the advanced classes remain flexible and are determined by individual and group needs.

Any student graduating from the Institute has made at least three films. While making them he has exercised his creative control, but always subject to discussion, criticism, and the interchange of ideas in terms of filmic expression.

Over and above these main divisions the Institute offers specialized courses in directing, sound, ad-

vanced editing and photography, etc. The faculty has included such people as Hans Richter, Sidney Meyers, Richard Leacock, Peter Glushanok, Arthur Knight, Robert Hughes, etc.

The Institute also sponsors the Annual Robert J. Flaherty Award for creative achievement in the non-fictional film.

Tutition costs for a full-time program are approximately $600 per year.

Inquiries and applications should be sent to me at the Institute of Film Techniques, Stieglitz Hall, 133rd St. at Convent Avenue, New York 31, N. Y.—YAEL WOLL, *Director*