VOL. XVII, No. 2 — WINTER 1963-1964

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Editor's Notebook

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Ambitious beginners, hot for the camera

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and splicer, seeking some way to practice their art and hopefully reach an audience, do not have it easy anywhere. But it surely could be made less impossible. The special concerns of the film devotee must go beyond the generalities and enthusiasms of the press and ask some embarrassing concrete questions: How can we strengthen the short-film market? How do we break down the commercial routine responses of distributors and exhibitors, so that new work can reach a new audience? How do we develop new means of publicizing personal films? How do we find new sources of finance bringing with them less onerous controls than Hollywood money? The film scene may be taken up as a quaint "life of art" because of its novelty and dash—as Kerouac and the beatniks were. This will be magnificently to the good if it results in some structural changes: if the actual ways in which films are made and distributed can be changed. The publicity is a help—it reminds people that films are films and not just "product." It does not make the struggle to create a freer industry any less pressing.

Mail

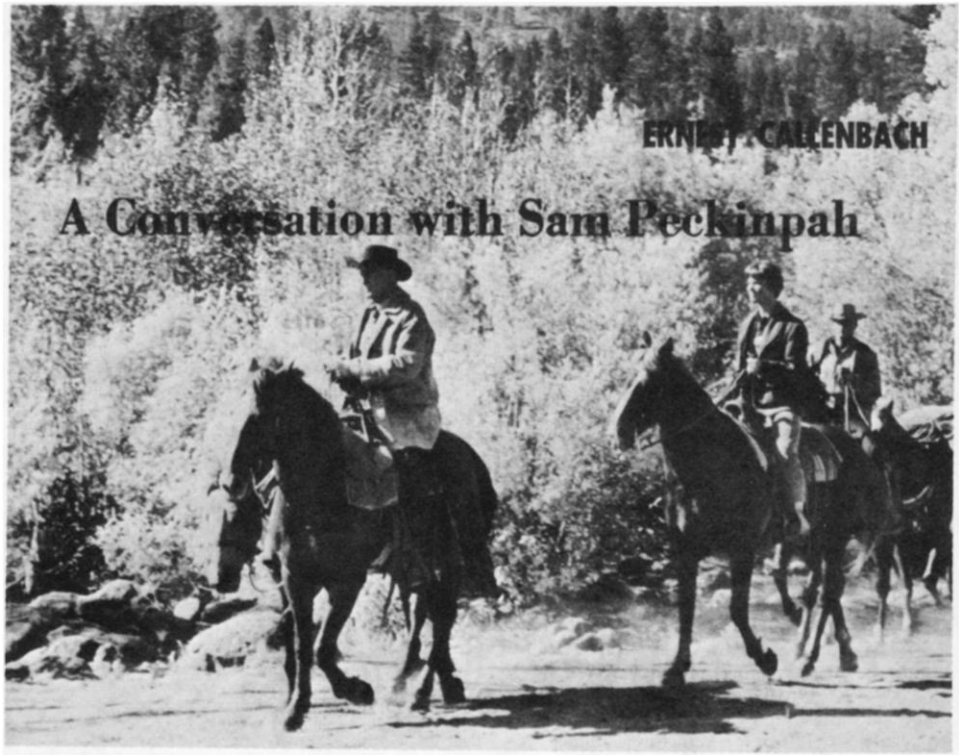
We never receive enough comments from readers, and perhaps a general invitation is in order. We are eager to receive letters intended for publication in our "Correspondence & Controversy" section, and also letters intended for the editors privately. We enjoy comments and criticisms of all kinds, including the vituperative; they show that somebody out there is listening, (and thinking)—which is a reassuring thing in this enormous and scattered country. We are always interested in suggestions about topics, films, and film-makers who ought to be written about; we also welcome names of promising writers who may have appeared in publications which escape our regular scrutiny. We try to answer all letters that require reply, though the paid staff of the journal totals five-eighths of a person and we thus cannot devote as much time to correspondence as we would wish.

Periodicals

Film Society (60¢ per issue, $2.00 per year, from P. O. Box 2607, Grand Central Station, New York 17, N.Y.) is the new journal of the American Federation of Film Societies. The first issue contains an article on the New Wave by Andrew Sarris, an early piece by Dwight Macdonald, a piece on slapstick by Mark Sufrin, part one of an article on Griffith by William K. Everson, an article on psychiatry in the movies, and several reviews.

Contributors

JACKSON BURGESS is a novelist who has recently been working on a series of plays. HERBERT FEINSTEIN'S interviews with film people are broadcast on many radio stations. NORMAND LAREAU works in NY publishing, and is preparing a screenplay. HARRIET POLT spent the past summer attending many of the European festicals. SELMA RASKIN lives in LA and writes verse for various magazines. DONALD RICHIE is now writing a film script for Irving Lerner. ROBERT C. ROMAN lives in NY and has written for many film magazines. TINO MENDES SARGO is Portuguese and a film student at UCLA. SUSAN SONTAG'S recent novel, *The Benefactor*, attracted wide notice. JAMES STOLLER is strating a new magazine, *Moviegoer*—333 East 13th St., New York 3. TUNG was in the Playwrights Theatre Workshop in Chicago; she now lives in Berkeley.



Ride the High Country, which was Sam Peckinpah's second film, was a Western, and in some ways a conventional Western at that. But it was a leisurely and beautiful film, and something about it began to attract attention: its sense of space, its complete control in setting forth the moral dilemma at its center; perhaps most intriguingly, its occasional bursts into almost surrealist uproar and its lively eye for character. When it appeared, no one took it terribly seriously. But as time wore on, its unobtrusive virtues began to seem more appealing, and by now it is hard to see what American picture of 1962 could be rated above it. If it was a conventional film, it was a masterful one.

The story has a neat balance. Steve Judd (Joel McCrea) is an ex-marshal who seeks to recoup his fortunes, and in a way to re-establish his own character after some mysterious reversals, by getting a job transporting a shipment of gold from a mining camp across the Sierra to the bank. To help him, he hires an old friend, Gil Westrom (Randolph Scott), who has a young and slightly sinister sidekick. It is a long ride through the mountains. On the way they stop at a ranch where a plain but appealing girl (Mariette Hartley) is tyrannized by her father, and they carry her with them, taking her to her fiancé in the camp. This much is filmed straightforwardly. At the camp the scale begins to alter. The fiancé has a pack of brothers, wild and wolfish men. The marriage takes place in the brothel:

Above: RIDE THE HIGH COUNTRY.

and this scene, with its interplay of the frightened girl, the whores, the brothers already itching to get their hands on the girl, is an extraordinary evocation of milieu and character.

Then comes the trip back across the mountains, with the gold and with the girl too, running from the impossible "marriage." It develops, little by little, that Westrom's life has hardened and corrupted him, and that in fact he is intent on making away with the gold—by persuading Judd to join them if possible, but by force if necessary. In a long, Faustian sequence, he tempts Judd and argues with him. Judd wavers, for all the obvious arguments are on the other side, but he holds out. Westrom and the kid try to jump him.

Judd escapes, however, and his outrage at the deception, the betrayal of what he had taken to be bonds of long friendship, together with his disgust at Westrom's moral position, leads him to rope him up and take him along captive. It turns out that the brothers are also after the party to retrieve the girl. Another shift has been going on, however, which makes this virtually impossible situation tenable: the boy, callow and defiant and sullen at the outset, has learned something from Judd; and in the showdown he is with Judd rather than with Westrom. In the terminal gun-battle with the brothers, Judd is killed; but the gold goes on to the bank, with both Westrom and the boy wiser men.

There is no social or psychiatric stuff in this fable; it is a purely moral tale. It employs no ironies, at the expense either of characters, story, or audience. Nor are its characters epic heroes: they are clearly real men, with notable weaknesses and confusions, and if they are "symbolic" (of the difficulties of being good, in a world where the customary forms of goodness tend to be suicidal) this is on a remote level where it must be dredged up analytically rather than seen. Yet the film has a remarkable size and scope to it, perhaps because, in the Western form, so much that is confining and demeaning in ordinary contemporary characters can be omitted. It is enough that we grasp the moral nature of the men; we take them in a stylized context so that we are not bothered about their "reality"—though Peckinpah insists, and it is clearly a matter of prime importance to him, that the virtues of the film spring from his actual knowledge of the scene and of similar real persons.

His first film, *The Deadly Companions*, bears certain similarities to *Ride the High Country*, and these may have led to his being brought to Metro when the latter film was proposed. It vanished without trace, but is now to be reissued under the title *Trigger Happy*. It is worth seeing, if only for the study of the later film. The basic situation and the characters were both deficient in many respects (see below), but the film uses the forbidding desert terrain ingeniously, and some of the dialogue exchanges—when they manage to get around the inanities of the script—foreshadow the kind of moral tension, the confrontation of two men measuring each other's values as well as their strength, which is one of Peckinpah's special achievements.

His television work is extensive, and I have only seen two examples of it. His favorite in the "Westerner" series, *Jeff*, is the story of a whore who does *not* have a heart of gold. She is a rather plain girl who once was innocent; now Brian Keith rides to rescue her from her bondage to a boxer-turned-tavernkeeper who seems to be modelled on Gentleman Jim Corbett. Keith wants to bring her back to his ranch and marry her; he takes on the boxer and, by some ungentlemanly tactics ("This isn't a game!" he snarls) beats him. The boxer says they are both fools to be concerned with her, and gives permission to take her away. But she does not go; for better or worse she is beyond that simple redemption. Keith must ride away again, with his dog, past a street revivalist who asks if he has found salvation. This tale is handled with a pleasant sincerity. It shows technical flaws inevitable with a three-day shooting schedule, but the performances are first-class and the rather del-

icate point conveyed with restraint. (I asked an experienced Hollywood TV writer who saw *Jeff* with me why the series was dropped, and he replied: "Well, you can see it right there. It was good.")

The Losers is quite another type of work—a loosely strung episodic story about two ne'er-do-wells (Lee Marvin as the relatively straight man and Keenan Wynn as the sharpie gambler) who roam about Texas, gambling, fighting, partying, and being chased, in various rattletrap vehicles, by a gang of gambling horse-dealers in a giant white Lincoln convertible. It would be pointless to outline the drift of events; suffice it to say that they involve another oppressed ranch girl and her wiry father, some card-game chippies who do a bored twist, marked cards, the shoveling of a barnful of manure, a supposedly blind gospel singer who plays Spanish songs on his guitar (sometimes accompanied by Rosemary Clooney—the girl), a wild fruitless night chase after a raccoon, and several touching renditions of "I Believe." Marvin and Wynn talk in an ornate, Yale-boy speech and make their footloose existence appallingly attractive. The car chases are pure Sennett, complete with gagooga horn noises and plinkety-plink piano accompaniment. The whole thing is delightful, and one may wonder whether this kind of rambling fun, faintly reminiscent of vaudeville, is not something that television is especially suited for.

Now, with the success of *Ride the High Country* behind him, Peckinpah is able to make his next film as he wishes. He is in an unusually lucky position. Born in Madera County, California, on the side of a mountain which bears the family name and was homesteaded by his grandfather, he gained a first-hand knowledge of the real west. He is equipped, like W. S. Hart before him, with a solid and extensive experience which happens to lie well within the traditions familiar to Hollywood. His personal background and, one gathers, his personal taste and vision of life, aree reasonably congruent with something the

Mariette Hartley in the wedding scene of RIDE THE HIGH COUNTRY.

industry is used to. So long as his vision does not become too harsh, too flamboyant, or too unorthodox, he should be able to work freely and successfully.

Peckinpah is a laconic man, as befits a Westerner. But the following conversation gives something of a flavor of his approach, as well as background on the Hollywood scene in which he operates.

He went to Los Angeles in 1949, and attended drama courses at the University of Southern California, where he received an MA in 1950. After that he began working in television . . .

How did you decide to follow that route—was it a conscious thing, when you were at USC?

Mostly economic. I wanted to direct very badly. I did, at USC, in a local community theater, finally in summer stock. When my second daughter was born I had to make a living and went to work at KLAC-TV as a stage hand ($22.50 a week). After two and a half years of sweeping stages I got a job as a dialogue director with Don Siegel.

Was Siegel doing TV at this time?

No, these were theatrical films. As a dialogue director I did 13 pictures at Allied in a little over a year. During that time I realized it was kind of a slow way to get behind a camera myself, so I started writing on my

own. Again, Don Siegel, and Walter Wanger, gave me a chance to rewrite a scene—in a picture called *The Invasion of the Body Snatchers.* And because of that scene I did the rewrite on the picture. Shortly thereafter Bill Warren, who started the TV series "Gunsmoke," asked me if I wanted to write one. It took me five months to write the first one. But I ended up doing 13, and later wrote five television pilots, three of which sold.

Were these pilots all Westerns?

All Westerns, but good ones. I got two nominations—one for a "Gunsmoke," the other for a 20th Century-Fox Hour. Two years later, I was writing, producing, and doing most of the directing on my own series "The Westerner," which didn't last very long but turned out critically very well.

How did you set that up? I'm very naive about how these television series are generated. Was this an idea you had and took to the studio or—

No. I had written a series called "The Rifleman," and it was very successful. But I wanted to leave "The Rifleman," because I thought it was getting typed—it was a children's program. And they had a title called "Winchester." It turned out they didn't have the title at all—but from that title I wrote the pilot script which later became "The Westerner." Dave Levy of NBC liked it and bought it. And, thank God, both he and Dick Powell were very explicit in giving me carte blanche.

Incidentally, how fast did you shoot the TV westerns?

Three days, some of them two and a half days.

You've gone on doing TV work, which isn't usual for a director who has started making films, so evidently you are pretty happy with the way you can work in TV?

Well, after I finished *Ride the High Country* I went back to Four Star to do two Dick Powell anthologies; *Pericles on 34th Street* from a story by Harry Mark Patrakis, which we wrote together, and which I produced and directed; the second was called *The Losers,* by Bruce Geller and myself, which I produced and directed.

Set in contemporary times?

Both of those are contemporary shows.

Could you sketch out briefly your new project, Major Dundee?

It's a story by Harry Julian Fink, who took several historical incidents of the Civil War and the Indian campaigns of the 'eighties, and made a fascinating treatment out of them. Very simply, it's the story of a strong-minded major who takes it upon himself to run down an Apache predator. Actually the chase is subordinate to what happens within the man. It's high adventure, and I hope a little something else.

I still think Ride the High Country *is probably the best US film of 1962. But I had to see it in a drive-in, which is hardly the best place to see a movie, and it didn't get much serious critical attention. Is it still running anywhere*?

Well, in Europe we've had tremendous critical acclaim, particularly from Sweden and France, and from England too. Both *Sight & Sound,* and *Films & Filming* I think, and the papers too. But both here and in New York it was well received. There's a funny story about the release of this picture, which is a little bitter. The producer, Richard Lyon, and the head of the MGM studio at that time, Sol Siegel, brought me into rewrite the N. B. Stone script and shoot the picture— and they also gave me a free hand. Sol Siegel not only gave me a free hand in shooting the picture but let me cut it—I had a marvelous cutter working with me named Frank Santillo whose enthusiasm had a great deal to do with the success of the picture. However Mr. Siegel left the studio just as we were beginning to dub, and Mr. Vogel took over. Mr. Vogel hated the picture, and I think that's why it was released as a second feature.

Why didn't he like it?

We had a very brief discussion, and I don't remember his exact words, but he thought that a great deal of it was distasteful, that the

brothers, for example were not true to life.

The scenes in the mining camp?

Especially the brothel scene.

That's one of the glories of the movie! I was wondering whether you had any special strategies in mind about that. The film up to the arrival in the mining camp is quiet, natural, nothing pushed at all, calm and matter-of-fact. But when you get into the mining camp, and have met the brothers, and get into the whore-house, everything becomes practically surrealistic. But this switch works smoothly.

Well, a lot had to do with the girl who was playing Elsa, and I mainly wanted to show the difference between her life with her father on a remote ranch, as compared with the vitality of these towns, which I know so well myself. I also know the brothers—like they were my own. Those people *do* exist. I think they're as true to life as anybody in the picture.

It wasn't that they were unrealistic, but the scale suddenly expanded.

I just tried to play that sequence from her point of view.

Mariette Hartley's performance was very good, whereas I thought Maureen O'Hara's in Deadly Companions *was terrible. The only thing she could do right was point a gun and snarl. Or was I missing something?*

I don't think her performance was terrible—she had a very difficult script to work with.

You didn't rewrite that one?

I was forbidden to, by the producer, Miss O'Hara's brother. The picture was done in 19 days under tremendous difficulties.

It looks skimped. I noticed two moving-camera shots in the whole thing—where the camera rises over Serengo, and then —and maybe that was a zoom—in the showdown scene. You must have shot it at a breakneck pace.

Nineteen days, all on location, twelve days of inclement weather.

Why did they use Pathécolor, by the way?

Pathé was financing the picture.

I wondered, because it's kind of nice on the interiors, with this golden quality, but terrible on the outdoors.

The miracle is that we got anything outside at all. You can give Bill Clothier complete credit for that.

It has impossible lines in it—even a great actress couldn't manage some of them. Like "I could never love a man who was a cold-blooded killer—"

It was an unmanageable story.

But there are certain resemblances between this movie and Ride the High Country, *in the central character, who is a maimed man in a certain sense, and trying to re-establish himself with himself. I thought one of the great achievements of* Ride the High Country *was that line that McCrea delivers and gets away with; where Scott has been tempting him, and asks him what he wants anyway, and he replies "I want to enter my own house justified." That's a big line, hard to make stick, but you did it.*

The people in *Ride the High Country* are *real*, the situation was real, even though in some ways it was cliche. The people in *Deadly Companions*, it was all based on gimmicks—the scarred head, the dead boy being carried across the desert for five days. The one thing I *will* take credit for doing, at least I kept off that enough so that you weren't too conscious of the . . . to do it realistically would I suppose have been a lot of fun—you'd have buzzards flying over them and wearing the masks and so on.—That line, by the way, in *Ride the High Country*, was paraphrasing a biblical verse I learned from my father. He was a great student of the Bible, and this is one of the things I remember from my childhood.

Did you have these actors in mind when you were doing the script?

The actors were cast, but they hadn't been set yet. But I knew these were the actors I would have to work with. And I was delight-

ed. These two gentlemen are strong, hard workers.

How about the kid?

Ron Starr. He was new at the time. I think he came off very well.

At the beginning he's callow and by the end he's become a man. It seems to me that the Western is a form in which you can deal with serious moral conflicts on a level where you're not tied down with a lot of narrow realistic considerations—whether a drugstore clerk would really talk like that, and so on. So you can play on a bigger scale and yet have people accept it. But do you want to work in other forms?

I have worked in other forms, and my next picture, in fact my next two, will be non-Westerns.

Do you feel there's any common thread running through your work?

If you mean message, no—leave that to Army Special Services. But up to date it seems that most of my work has been concerned one way or the other with outsiders, losers, loners, misfits, rounders—individuals looking for something besides security.

What did you think of The Ox-Bow Incident—*that was one of the first Westerns to get much "social" stuff into it.*

It was a fine novel, and particularly the first half of the picture was beautifully done, beautifully acted; when they get on the night set the realism suffers.

—That letter.

Exactly right.—One picture that holds up very well is *The Gunfighter,* with Gregory Peck. Another is *Bad Day at Black Rock.*

Tracy is an actor I should think you'd like.

I certainly would.

Who's going to be in your new film?

Charlton Heston. He read Harry's treatment, saw *Ride the High Country,* and committed. So now Oscar Saul and I are doing the script. We'll begin shooting in January, in Mexico—we'll be down there two and a half or three months, the whole picture will be done in Mexico. Jerry Bressler is producing.

Is this the same project that was originally to be shot in Colorado?

No, I did a script for Walt Disney, based on a novel *Little Britches,* which we tried to whip and then just threw out completely because I found that my doing *Little Britches* wouldn't work—but I had some ideas and Disney said go ahead. He was quite enthusiastic about it, and I am too, it's a hell of a good script; it's a family story of the *Shane* genre. The producer on the show wanted a rewrite, to bring more children and dogs into it, so we engaged in some arguments along those lines, but the producer had to go to Greece and I came to Columbia. But I gather they'll do it, and I hope they'll leave it structurally the way it is.

How do you work with actors? I got the impression, from what you've said about McCrea and Scott, that you probably let them pretty much alone—they were doing what they usually do . . . .

No, that's not the case at all. We rehearsed — we only had four days — and I worked very closely with them on the set. They *want* to work, they are looking, I won't say for help but they give a lot on the set and they expect a lot, which is exactly the way I like to work. Brian Keith, Theo Bikel—these are also dedicated performers.

How much stage direction did you do—you were with the Huntington-Park Civic Theater for a year or two—

Two years, and then I was in summer stock, and did a lot of university work, about 30 plays in all, I think.

A lot of young film-makers coming through documentary films and so on don't seem to be able to work with actors.

I had nothing to do with the Cinema Department at USC, I had nothing to do with films until I was a dialogue director. Except for making my own shows—I did four 16mm monstrosities, for $35 or $168, or—in fact I shot my MA thesis as a film.

Going back to Deadly Companions, *I thought one of the best things about it was*

the score—what was it, guitar, accordion, organ—

Something like that, plus some castanets, or a can full of rocks—I didn't like it.

When he makes "When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again" into a fugue—it's full of stuff like that—

Well, after making my first cut I left the organization very abruptly. I didn't like it. So I had nothing to do with that. In fact the whole point of the story was screwed up by the cutting. For example, at the end, where Brian Keith is marching to kill Turkey, the character played by Steve Cochran steps up in front of him, with his particular kind of little-boy bravado, which he does quite well, and Brian pulls his gun and kills him, a brutal, realistic act. But it was cut in such a way that it appears the shot came from Turkey, which changed the whole focus of the thing—we really had everybody riding off into the sunset. —Which wasn't my touch.

I thought the basic problem with it was the psychiatric revelation about his scar. Given the way the first part of the picture goes, this is an unreasonably slight explanation, though Keith was very good in that scene where she says "Aw, I've seen *you with your hat off," and he does that slow smile. But it was the best of a bad job.*

I couldn't work with it, obviously, so I just kind of went around the edges, trying to bring some life into it. I think I failed. However, it was because of that picture that I was called to Metro.

Do you have anything printable to say about the title change—you know they're going to call it Trigger Happy *now.*

I don't even have any idea of what they're doing with it. Obviously I'm not happy about the picture, though I'm glad the reviews came out as well as they did. It was a great lesson to me, that I would never do a picture again until I had complete story control. So from that standpoint it was quite valuable. I enjoyed working with Miss O'Hara, though I didn't have too much communication with her. We were under such tremendous shooting pressure, that I would try to figure out, every night, some way to change the lines, and I think we changed about 20 per cent, Brian and I, because he felt exactly as I did.

Did a lot of this bad dialogue come straight from the novel—it had a stilted quality that can arise that way.

All I can say is this: you think it's bad dialogue, I think it's bad dialogue, but Mr. Fitzsimons thought it was excellent dialogue. I believe the novel was adapted from the screenplay.

As critics say, there's no accounting for some tastes.

Well, Mr. Fleischman is a clever writer, but I think they just fell in love with the script and couldn't stand to have a word of it changed. Also they were under tremendous pressure from the exhibitors, who had okayed the script with the idea that it wouldn't be changed. So I suppose the ultimate blame must go to the exhibitors.

Some of the money came from one of these exhibitor combines?

Yes, and I think their standpoint was that it must be shot as written, and this put shackles on everybody, including Fitzsimons.

How much did it cost?

Damn little, but nobody really knows exactly.

I wanted to ask if Deadly Companions *and* Ride the High Country *made money?*

Deadly Companions I am sure broke even—if it played in four cities it broke even. *Ride the High Country,* I heard from Dick Lyons (the producer), a couple of months ago, is one of the highest-grossing Metro pictures in Europe in five years. It's done very well.

What did it cost?

Their studio figures were $813,000, I believe.

A very modest figure, these days.

Studio costs were very heavy, the picture could have been made for a great deal less. We had 24 days, and went 26, I believe.

It had a marvellous sense of space and lei-

sure to it; it certainly didn't look hasty.

That was the soapsuds we used in the Bronson Canyon in the 115-degree temperatures, to make it look like a mining camp! I give a lot of credit to Leroy Coleman, the art director. He stole old *Bounty* sails to make the tents, and everybody pitched in. Then again I had a marvellous cameraman in Lucien Ballard.

*You're lucky to be able to use your own backgrou*nd.

It's very difficult to write about things you don't know. Those mining sequences and the brothel sequence, for instance, took a great deal of research—but it paid off. We've had letters from all over the western United States, from people who wrote in and said "That's how it was!" And they're right.

It had a very fluid feel, with a lot of moving camera—

I had learned! I insisted. Everybody would say, no you don't need a dolly, and you don't needs this, and we'll fix that. It's a lie. You have to worry and fight—until you get what you want.

James Drury and Warren Oates as two of the brothers in RIDE THE HIGH COUNTRY.

Though I don't particularly want a fluid camera just to have a fluid camera: sometimes you want to lead or follow someone, sometimes you want them to come to you. That can change.

What did you think of the Budd Boetticher westerns—Ride Lonesome *and so on*?

He did a great many with Randolph Scott. I saw one. I understand he's in Mexico now.

It's been alleged that Ride the High Country *was a kind of summary of the Boetticher films.*

No, I think it came from N. B. Stone, who did the story and the screenplay. I'd like to be able to make a Western like Kurosawa makes Westerns.

But I notice you didn't include Seven Samurai *in that list of your favorite films? Is this because you didn't like it for some reason, or just didn't think of it?*

No, it's a highly entertaining film, but can't be compared to *Rashomon.* Did you see *The Bad Sleep Well?*

Yes. That beginning scene I liked.

Marvellous. And the rest of the picture was bad soap opera on the grand scale! Very pretentious—which is what I really resent in a picture more than anything else, that fatal weakness of so many really astonishingly good directors. Speaking of pretentions, there's a motion picture called *The Leopard . . .*

DONALD RICHIE

Yasujiro Ozu: The Syntax of His Films

In the Autumn issue of Sight and Sound, Tom Milne surveys Ozu's work on the basis of a series of films recently seen in London. Five Ozu films will shortly tour the United States (Late Spring, Tokyo Story, Early Spring, Good Morning, and Late Autumn) and the following stylistic analysis explicates some of the methods we will soon be able to observe in these pictures.

With Ozu, as with Antonioni or Resnais, the critic may speak of grammar, of vocabulary, of syntax—something which one cannot do with Mizoguchi, with Bergman, or even with Truffaut, intuitive directors all. Ozu is not an intuitive film artist, he is a master craftsman; for him, film is not expression but function. In an Ozu film, as in Japanese architecture, you can see all the supports, and each support is as necessary as any other. He uses neither paint nor wallpaper; he uses natural wood. He makes a film as a carpenter makes a house. The finished object one may measure, one may inspect, one may compare. But within this object, as within the house, lives the human, the immeasurable, the nonfunctional. It is this combination of the static and the living, of form and content, which makes the films of Ozu the compelling emotional experiences they are and, at the same time, the wonderfully hand-tooled *containers* which they also are.

The opening funeral scene in AKIBIYORI *(Setsuko Hara, Yoko Tsukasa, and Ryu Chishu)*

GRAMMAR

Ozu, like Antonioni, knows that plot is worthless because it is manipulated. It is life used and consequently untrue: life must at least appear to be gratuitous to appear true. Antonioni believes that "the episode is the only fit unit for film" and this Ozu too believes—with the difference that he believed it thirty years before Antonioni did. For this reason, though the chronicle of an Ozu picture is fairly straightforward, you cannot make a précis. Everything Ozu-like evaporates if you merely tell the story, for the reason that story (or, more often, merely anecdote) is but a pretext for the film, the real reason for which is revelation of character. Ozu therefore restricts content (a plot is an indulgence—it is too easy) and, in the same way, he restricts his technique: hence his celebrated avoidance of these elements of film grammar which other directors find indispensable. Dissolves are "cheating"; fades are "merely attributes of the camera"; dollies, pans, etc., are "uninteresting." The only punctuation which Ozu allows himself is the simple cut; the only camera position, that of the person seated upon *tatami,* his eyes about three feet from floor level, the traditional attitude for talking, for watching, for listening. He allows himself three kinds of shots—the classical three of primitive cinema. (1) The long shot is used to show solitude, precisely because it isolates; or humor, for it isolates and makes apprehendable; or aesthetic beauty, because it gets us far enough from it to see it all. (2) The middle shot, the standard unit of the Ozu film, is the "business" unit during which most of the action occurs. (3) The close-up, used for heightened moments, either with or without dialogue, is used rarely and never allowed to enlarge itself into the "big" close-up. Each shot has its place within the sequence and the order of the sequence is usually 1 - 2 - 3 - 2 - 1. Musically, it is the a-b-a pattern, simple binary form, one of the most immediate and satisfying formal experiences possible, through reason (in films as in music) of its being firmly apprehendable, and perhaps for the more metaphysical reason of its being circular: a balanced, continuous geometrical form congenial to the human mind. The sequence in Ozu is the paragraph (the Ozu film has no "chapters") and within these paragraphs the shot becomes the "sentence."

STRUCTURE

Just as the sequence in Ozu is circular, so is the basic form of the entire picture. It would be difficult to find an Ozu film that did not end where it began—though such an atypical picture would be *Soshun* (*Early Spring* 1956). Often, indeed, this effect of form becomes "formal," even—in the best sense—mannered. The neighbor lady appears twice in *Tokyo Story (Tokyo Monogatari*—1953), once in the first reel, and once in the last. In the first the old couple is preparing their trip and she comments upon it; in the last reel the wife is dead, the husband will remain where he is alone (the opposite certainly of travel) and this too she obliquely comments upon. *Ohayo*: (*Good Morning*—1959) like its ancestor, *Umareta a Mita Keredo, (I was Born, But . . .* (—1932) ends precisely where it began and the adventures of the little boys (very meaningful in the latter film; merely comic in the former) count for nothing other than the emotional experience which they give us. In most Ozu films the structure presumes this "return" and it is this which makes the final reels of these pictures so compelling. The idea of the "return" (like the idea of the circle) is something which all of us find emotionally compelling—a somewhat common, if not vulgar, example of its great filmic effect is in the two celebrated 180° pans (before and after Micheline Presle's death) in *Le Diable au Corps.* Musically, it is more instantly apprehendable. The master of the "return" is Mozart, because of the freshness, the surprise, the astonishing "newness" of the sound when he completes the return in a rondo. For one thing we are back in the home key, always a grateful feeling; and for another we return home (as in the finale of the *Jupiter*) doubly

enriched; we are surprised by the new beauty of the familiar. The formal parallel to Ozu is precise because the effect is never merely formal, the "return" is not contrived (as it is all too often in the pictures of, say, John Huston), nor is it for its own effect (as in Carné), an aestheticism for its own sake. Rather, with true art, that art which hides art, Ozu triumphs in making this necessary formal device *appear* natural. Perhaps the main reason for this is that the structure of the Ozu film appears so logical—there is a definite reason for each shot. Even in Antonioni (who shortened *L'Avventura* himself) shots and sequences may be removed. Remove one shot from an Ozu picture and you damage it irreparably. The logic which controls the structure is responsible for this. Take, for example, the extremely logical way which Ozu will move us from one sequence to another. He feels it important that we keep our bearings, that we do not get lost. In *Akibiyori* (*Late Autumn*-1960), as in most Ozu films, there is, at the beginning of a sequence, a "still" shot showing either the location (the bridge) or the place, the wall on which there is a picture of a bridge and over which are the ripples of reflected water from the river) or the particularity (an object in the room itself, a lamp or a single vase) — we always know where we are. This is true even if great distances are involved: the Kyoto sequence of *Banshun* (*Late Spring*-1949) begins with a "still" shot of typical and unmistakable Kyoto hills; in *Tokyo Monogatari,* the cities of Onomichi, Tokyo, Atami, and Osaka, are always introduced by, respectively, still shots of, the strait and the graveyard, factory chimneys, the wharf and beachfront, and Osaka Castle. Often these make a comment on the film (as does the Onomichi graveyard); thus in *Soshun,* in order to get us from the suburbs to downtown Tokyo, we are given three shots: the first shows the suburbs, a few men in white shirts (in Japan an office worker actually is a "white-collar" worker) walking to the station; the second shows, somewhere nearer the city, many more workers going into a larger station; and, the third, Tokyo Station itself, with literally thousands of men going to their offices. Thus we are bodily moved and at the same time are shown something relevant to the ethos of the film, which is concerned with the anonymous life of one of these workers. It is telling, too, that in these three shots Ozu deliberately chose for the second a location which is actually in a direct line from the first location. It would be possible to see this if you yourself actually took the train trip. Ozu never lies about geography, unlike any other film director now alive. The taxi-ride in the first reel of *Ochazuke no Aji* (*The Flavor of Green Tea Over Rice*-1952) is literal, the visual continuity outside the window is just as it really would be; the train-ride to Tokyo in the opening reels of *Banshun* is chronologically accurate; so is the hiking trip in *Soshun* —first the island of Enoshima in the background and then Ozu computes his time and for the next shots the walkers are passing the oddly-shaped rock which only a person familiar with this coast would know is precisely where he shows it to be. This logical concern for geography is worth commenting upon because it is a strong indication of the scrupulousness of Ozu—a quality which is most noticeable in his treatment of character, and in his editing.

EDITING

All of Ozu's technique has only one object —the revelation of character. His waiting, listening camera records, not the heights of emotion but those moments, those signs, which both precede and come after such moments—these little tropisms through which true emotion is to be apprehended. The "portraits" which he thus achieves of character are typical of the richness of Ozu's world: the fathers alone at the end of *Tokyo Monogatari, Hitori Musuko* (The Only Son-1936), *Tokyo Boshoku* (Tokyo Twilight-1956), or *Higanbana* (Equinox Flower-1958); the pleasure of the mother listening to the radio in *Higanbana,* of the father in the train in the same film, of the

The married couple (Ryo Ikebe and Chikage Awashima) in SOSHUN.

father at the Noh drama in *Banshun*—one could continue such a list indefinitely. But one of the ways in which he controls this presentation is in his placement of the cut. Just as he refuses to *use* (for to use is to misuse) plot or story and so falsify his film, so he refuses to *use* dialogue, to *use* character study. Both serve their function but both appear to be gratuitous. Within the a-b-a pattern of the Ozu sequence, the cut can occur some time before the story point is made and, also, some time *after* it has been made. Most directors allow their characters only enough time to contribute one more link in the story-chain and will then efficiently but also ruthlessly clip off their film-life in the interests of such abstract considerations as story-continuity or what is called a tight film. By contrast Ozu's scrupulousness is astonishing, as is his tact. Necessary dialogue will be given but will occur only in the center (the "b" section) of the sequence. The 1959 *Ukigusa* (*Floating Weed*) is filled with marvelous examples of this but perhaps the most perfect is the very long Noh-watching in *Banshun*. There is a point to be made (silently: the daughter sees her father nod in greeting to the woman she suspects will become her stepmother) but it only occupies about a half-minute of this four-minute scene. The rest of the time we watch the father, his pleasure, his delight in the Noh. Both before and after the anecdotal point of the scene, the camera stays with the father whose supreme delight, and our delight in his, is the real, the emotional point of the shot. Ozu places his cut after the emotional point and not the anecdotal point of the scene is made—and he almost never cuts directly from either dialogue or action. Tactfully, he waits for his characters to fall into repose. Only in moments of great emotion (which he must show), weeping in *Banshun* and *Tokyo Monogatari*, the completely atypical "romantic" kiss in *Soshun*, does he cut from action, and then out of a sense of discretion—like that discreet moment when Antonioni's camera can no longer bear to watch the protagonists of *La Notte* and consequently turns away. Ozu refuses to "take advantage" of his characters in the way that most directors are only too delighted to do. His scrupulousness is extreme and the placing of the cut within the body of the picture shows this. Again, like Mozart, he knows precisely when to end.

TEMPO

Ozu's time is not clock-time, it is psychological time, and he will give any length so long as there is a point of character involved. But such revelation of character need not be direct. Ozu's films are almost as noteworthy for what they leave out as for what they include. His treatment of time as a continuum, for example: in *Banshun* the daughter visits her friend, then they go to another room but the camera remains behind and its only ostensible reason is to watch the clock (in the background) and to listen to it strike four o'clock; at the beginning of *Akibiyori* (the scene is in a temple) the characters leave, but the camera remains to listen for the striking of a gong (meaning that funeral services are about to start), then there is a cut to the temple where we see the second stroke of the gong; in *Tokyo Monogatari* just before the very touching scene between mother and daughter-in-law, the camera places itself in the outside corridor (a geographically-placing shot) and listens to ten of the strokes of midnight, only entering the room with the characters in time for the final two strokes. Ozu, it will be apparent, observes chronological time only for its

psychological effect—the effect upon his characters and upon us. In the same way he will interrupt or punctuate clock-time. This is seen mostly in his placing shots. In *Soshun* there are five identical set-ups (the outside of the couple's house) and each is held for at least fifteen seconds. These perform the double function of "placing" us geographically and, at the same, indicating that "an amount" of time has passed. The "actual" time of scenes which are chronological is rarely interrupted—though it occasionally is, as in *Soshun* where, perhaps in order to induce an actual feeling of alienation which is one of the moral points of the scene, Ozu cuts from the middle of the mah-jong scene out into the empty corridor before returning us again to the (uninterrupted) game they are playing.

There is another kind of tempo in Ozu's films, however, and this is within the sequence itself. The order is almost invariable and put into musical terms it would be:

1. the placing shot, often with no one in it; or, the establishing (long) shot, with characters in repose:	largo
2. people; or, preliminary action:	moderato assai
3. dialogue—the "anecdotal" point:	allegro
4. the point made, the "after" talk, often humorous:	allegretto
5. the return to repose and/or the final and/or next placing shot:	poco a poco larghetto

Just as the visual form is the binary a-b-a, so the temporal form is slow—fast—slow. Each sequence may follow this pattern precisely because the sequence pattern is *not* the story pattern. Though the length may vary, the balance of the sequence is usually the same. One of the reasons Ozu can do this is that he is not concerned with the past—only with the present. His characters, no less than Antonioni's, are living in the *now*, and they have no history (certainly Ozu's purposeful failure to mention the all-important dead mother in *Banshun* until the final reel is just as astonishing, and just as right, as Antonioni's apparent lack of curiosity as to what happened to Anna in *L'Avventura.*) And when a person dies in Ozu's world (which is often) they are merely and instantly *gone.* There are no ghosts in Ozu as there are in Resnais and Bergman. The past barely exists in Ozu. *Tokyo Monogatari* is about the natural advisability of forgetting the dead (daughter-in-law forgets dead husband; old man will forget dead wife) just as much as *L'Avventura* is about the horror which Claudia and Sandro feel at forgetting Anna. The difference is that Ozu's people accept this from the beginning and Monica Vitti (in both *L'Avventura* and *L'Eclisse*) must "learn" to accept—she does not know this truth. The length of her education is the length of the film. Too, Ozu would not be concerned with a tableau at the end which contrasted Sandro with a blank wall and Claudia with a dormant, or dead, volcano.

SCENE

The reason is that Ozu has also refused himself what has now become the most popular way through which directors may directly comment: the placement of people within a scene. When Ozu photographs his people from the back, or shows them facing opposite directions, it does not necessarily mean a direct comment, as it would in Bergman, in Fellini, in Ichikawa. People kneeling side by side mean nothing beyond the image itself—just as those who read symbols into Ozu's work (the dropped apple peel, the final shot of the sea in *Banshun*) are on the wrong track. Direct comment, symbolic scenes—these are alien to a director of Ozu's sensitivity precisely because they constitute an unfair comment on character—unfair because they are the kind of comment which attempts to sum up something as complicated as a character with something as simple as a symbol. Ozu prefers something more subtle—the still-life. The hanging lanterns in the later *Ukigusa,* the flower-arrangements of *Higanbana,* the single vase in

the darkened room in *Banshun*—what do these mean? They are apparently still-lives, objects, photographed for their own beautiful sakes. This is not true, however. Take the vase, for example. Father and daughter (soon to part since she will get married) are going to bed. They talk about what a nice day they had (and Ozu very carefully refrains from their saying that it is their last day together—as it is) and then the daughter asks a question in the darkened room, lying next to her father, and gets no answer. From here on: a shot of the father asleep, a shot of the daughter looking at him; a shot of the vase in the alcove, and over it one hears the gentle sounds of the father's snoring; a shot of the daughter, half-smiling; a long shot of the vase, almost ten seconds; a shot of the daughter, her mood entirely changed, near tears. The vase serves the function of pivot. It means nothing in itself (except perhaps repose, sleep); it is, rather, a pretext, a reason for an amount of elapsed time, an *object*, something to watch, during which the feelings of the daughter change. It is difficult to say why this is more satisfying than would be the ordinary way of doing it—our actually watching the change on the daughter's face. Perhaps the reason is that Ozu imposes a kind of impersonality, a kind of coolness, between the daughter and ourselves. Not by seeing her but by seeing what she sees (a vase, alone, solitary, beautiful) we can more completely, more fully comprehend and *hence* feel what she herself is feeling. Again and again in Ozu this technique occurs (in the Noh-watching scene from the same film, you watch a good portion of the Noh itself—even after it is over, the next shot, a placing shot with trees, carries under it the music of the Noh) and we feel by objectively sharing the object of the emotion and not by subjectively observing this mere emotion upon the face of the character.

This is a kind of impressionism in that Ozu brings us both the impressions and the things which created them, combining them in such a way that the impression upon us is the same as that upon the characters. This is one of the reasons for the flavor of the Ozu film. He is not concerned with action. He is concerned with reaction. Ozu almost never makes a "story" point visually; he makes it verbally, in the dialogue. And he almost never makes a "character point" verbally; he makes it visually. Did the old people in *Tokyo Monogatari* have a good time on their trip? They say they did; their children say they did; everyone appears to believe that they did—and probably this is sincere, everyone (including themselves) agreed to think that they did. This is one of the points of the story. Yet, we know the truth. We have been shown it rather than told it, we have read it in their faces—we know it by having seen everything they have seen and then seen their faces. We have been seduced into comparison—and this is the function of the scene in Ozu's pictures.

Ozu's method, like all poetic methods, is oblique. He does not confront emotion, he surprises it; he restricts himself precisely in order to achieve profundity, in order to transcend these limitations; his formality is that of poetry, a context which surprises and hence destroys habit and familiarity, returning to each word, to each image, a freshness which was its originally. In all this Ozu is very close to the *sumi-e* ink-drawing masters of Japan, to the *haiku* poets, and this the Japanese somewhat dimly understand, calling Ozu "the most Japanese of all Japanese directors." Ozu's cinematic syntax is as it is because he has found through trial and error (as have all master craftsmen) that it best creates the container, the structure, which must best contain, must best present, must best preserve this revelation of human character because it is human character, these observations which are moral because they are true.

Festivals 1963

It is reported that, for next year, the international film producers association will crack down still further on the plethora of small festivals. Restricting recognition as competitive events to three (Cannes, Venice, and probably Berlin) may enable these to maintain a reasonable level of film quality; hopefully, it should encourage the general festivals elsewhere to become noncompetitive and give their educational functions an equal footing with their touristic or promotional ones. Many films briefly described below deserve full-scale review, and we will return to as many of them as space permits in future issues.

Cannes. *Ginette Billard writes:* The gossip has it that 1963 was an exceptionally bad festival, with no great films, no great performers, no starlets, no scandals. Admittedly, we had no strip tease on the beach. But, as in every year, we had a reasonable ration of discoveries, masterpieces, and disappointments.

The greatest disappointment was the French selection. *Les Abysses; Le Rat d'Amérique; Carambolages.* Nico; Albicocco; Bluwal—new names, new noise, but empty and with an appreciable amount of snobbism. But outside the festival we saw films which proved the French cinema was still alive: *La Jetée,* Chris Marker's remarkable half-hour science-fiction film, made from stills; Marker's *Le Joli Mai,* a study of Paris as the Algerian War finally came to an end—an essay on the march of history which is perhaps the summit of the unhappy cinéma-verité; Fréderic Rossif's *Mourir à Madrid.* Hollywood still doesn't seem to have grasped what type of films should be sent to Cannes; neither *Baby Jane* nor *To Kill a Mockingbird* did anything for its prestige abroad, while the independent US entries *Hallelujah the Hills, David and Lisa,* and *The Balcony* made quite an impression. The Soviet Union also fared badly; the jury had to invent a prize "for the best revolutionary epic" for *Optimistic Tragedy.* The entries from Spain, Argentina, Holland, and Poland are best passed over in silence. Armand Gatti's Cuban film *Altro Cristobal* also proved a deception and was violently resented.

The great revelation came from Japan—Kobayashi is not known in France and his *Seppuku,* a cruel story with modern echoes, was the great moment of the festival. *This Sporting Life,* a remarkable film coming from England, won the best-male-actor prize for Richard Harris. Vojtech Jasny's *Un Jour un Chat,* from Czechoslovakia, is a delightful legend film in which people take on the colors of their passions. Canada's *Pour la Suite du Monde* showed an intelligent kindness toward the peasant.

The best selection was, again, from Italy. Burt Lancaster is clever and refined in *The Leopard,* which won the grand prize, though it disappointed some Visconti admirers. Ermano Olmi's *Fiancés* gives a talented picture of the lives of the "small people." But the best film of the festival, without any possible doubt, was Fellini's *8½.* It has a sincere exhibitionism, some brilliant moments of cinema, various touches of bad taste, and probing insights; in its very self-consciousness Fellini proves that he is one of the greatest directors.

Venice. *Herbert Feinstein writes:* If, as Faulkner tells us in *Wild Palms* (then Godard in *Breathless*), man's choice is "between grief and nothing"—then film festivals are both. A big nothing can become more than a bore: it can oppress the soul. After some dozen film festivals in my life, and three in that many months (Venice, Cork, San Francisco), I don't much care if I never see another festival again. Ask me next spring, but, today, in the fall of my discontent, I'd prefer not to. The schoolteacher in me rates Venice as "C," Cork as "D," and San Francisco as an unmitigated flunk.

It is a dead heat whether the United States or Russia enters the worst pictures. The Russian delegates, at least, are charmers. The visiting Americans, and I don't spare myself, are every bit as ugly as Eugene Burdick (the American judge at San Francisco who referred to the no-show Romy Schneider as "he") might crack them up to be.

As for the films, the rules of festivals appear to reduce entries to the lowest available denominator of cinema art. No need to go through the same wild, grim comedy thrice over. For my money, or on an Annie Oakley, Shirley Clarke's *Cool World* won booby prize. As I've lived on the fringe of Harlem for three years, Mrs. Clarke's distortions kept smacking me in the face. The world is her Rorschach and her picture is very black.

Greenwich Village Story was written, directed, produced, and butchered by Jack O'Connell, late of Madison Avenue and sometime observer on the sets of Antonioni and Fellini. From Fellini, O'Connell has learned to throw everything into his picture—but kitchen sinks do not a movie make. I'm sure the film's creator meant to stand at keen, psychological distance from his untalented unhero: he told me so. *Hud* was the third American entry. Its director-producer, Martin Ritt, and its star who owns a piece of

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the action, Paul Newman, have a curious view of their own film: they assured me, both at a public press conference and in private, that they simply cannot condone Hud's immorality. Needless to say, the visiting Russians and Czechs seemed wryly amused at the poor American showings. But America did beat Russia on the Retrospective scene. Buster Keaton's work remains a terrible beauty to behold; the humane comedy of *Our Hospitality* (1923) and *Steamboat Bill, Jr.* (1928) rages far more into the present than does, say, Grigori Alexandrov's preachy and pretentious *Circus* (1935). England's entries came out somewhat better than America's. Tony Richardson's *Tom Jones* opened the festival. Scenarist John Osborne was around modestly asserting he had "tidied up Fielding's rather messy novel." (*Tom Jones*, I contend, is perhaps the most perfectly constructed novel in the English language.) I suspect that the script for *Tom Jones* was really ghostwritten by Samuel Richardson—the Richardson who was Fielding's old time rival—and should be called *Getting Even*. In *Tom Jones*, Fielding takes us through the evolution of his hero, Tom's gradual coming of age. In the film, we leave Tom as we find him, virginal in all but deed. Tom remains what Squire Allworthy discovered between his sheets: a charming bastard.

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New York. *Colin Young writes*: Some time ago William Schuman, the director of the Lincoln Center in New York, gave an interview to Eugene Archer, one of Bosley Crowther's assistants on the *New York Times*. A few days later the *Times* published a report which announced Lincoln Center's intention to hold film showings. The report was careful to point out that Lincoln Center did not wish to compete with the program of the Museum of Modern Art Film Library, and added that it hoped the film showings would help to support some of the Center's more marginal activities. The first point was difficult to understand since there had then been no consultations between Lincoln Center and the Museum, and the second point sounded ominous, reminiscent of many colleges

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throughout the nation which use film as a money-maker to support programs in dance, chamber music, and so on. It was not an auspicious report (although it was good to know that some film plans existed), and there was a certain amount of relief when Schuman denied it all the next day.

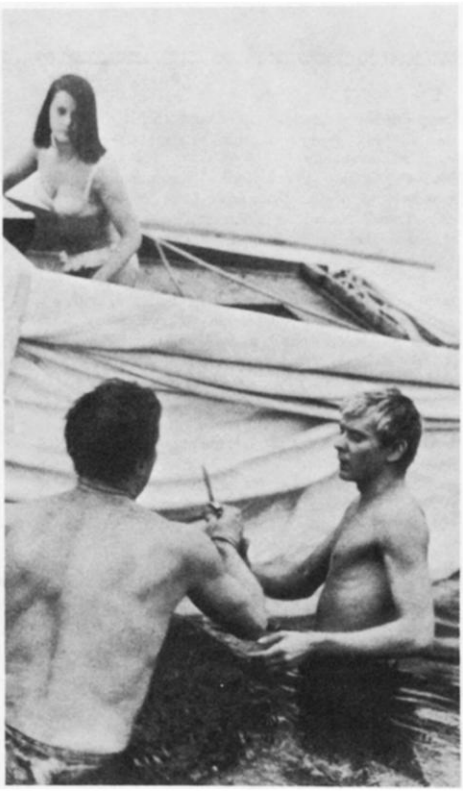
Subsequently, Lincoln Center invited the British Film Institute to give advice on the possibility of organizing a noncompetitive festival in New York, along the lines of the Institute's London Festival: a festival of festivals, without prizes. The BFI assigned Richard Roud, who programs their showings in the National Film Theatre and organizes the London Festival, to do the same for New York. Lincoln Center hired Cinema 16's Amos Vogel, a budget of $100,000 was set, acoustical changes (required anyway for the concerts) were completed in Philharmonic Hall, and in mid-September the Festival was on—to a generally good press and with formidable public support.

There was no organized and very little accidental glamor (Adolfas Mekas shocked the Center and pleased the crowd by getting his "fiancée" on the platform in a bikini), and there was little attention given to providing the sort of hospitality which is an essential part of the competitive festivals in Europe—so the emphasis had to be on the films themselves. Not all of them could stand the strain.

The official program spoke of the London Festival's achievement in bringing film-makers to public attention in advance of their commercial acceptance, and hoped that this would also be true of the New York experience. It is hard to see, however, that Jean-Pierre Melville is launched on much of a heady American career with his trite 1940ish Hollywood picture *Magnet of Doom* (*L'Ainé des Ferchaux*), or that Pasolini's *Rogopag* sequence has done much to prepare the American intelligentsia for *Mama Roma*. On the other hand Chris Marker's *Le Joli Mai* (to be reviewed in the next issue) was a good introduction to the work of one of the most intelligent film-makers alive, who has been completely neglected in this country. Resnais' *Muriel* was almost obligatory for a festival of this sort, as was Roman Polanski's first feature *Knife in the Water*, Olmi's second feature *The Fiancés* (*I Fidanzati*—his first, *Il Posto*, has just opened in this country as *The Sound of Trumpets*), and the new Bresson—*Trial of Joan of Arc*. Adolfas Mekas' *Hallelujah the Hills* had a *succès d'estime*, although it confused a large part of the audience; and the two Drew Associates films, *Crisis* and *The Chair* (especially the former) were well received, even although they were placed very badly in the program—the first with *Joan* and the second with *The Fiancés*, neither of which quite recovered from such an arrangement. Some films were well below festival standard—the Melville, a commonplace Belmondo vehicle; the Hungarian *Love in the Suburbs* (by Tamas Fejer), a dreary suburban unromantic tragedy which gruesomely demonstrates that socialist realists have the same problems we have; Kobayashi's top-heavy *Harakiri* which, in spite of some good scenes, was too ponderous for its material, and was surprisingly weakly staged (in CinemaScope). Susskind's overly respectful and mawkish production of *All the Way Home* (drawn from Tad Mosel's play and James Agee's novel *Death in the Family*) was, as directed by Alex Segal, a counterpart of Zurlini's *Cronica Familiare* (distributed here as *Family Diary*): a too-respectful treatment of a respected novel. The Greek *The Sky* (*Ouranos*), which apparently woke Roud up at Cannes this year, sent me to sleep. Most of the omnibus *Rogopag* was unsatisfying, with only the Gregoretti sequence moderately amusing, and the sequences of Rossellini, Godard, and Pasolini weak and, although short, over-extended one-scene gags. The Epidauras (stage) rendering of *Elektra* is obviously a special case. I found it a disaster, neither stage nor screen, whereas the Cacoyannis version found a style which kept the text alive and yet at the same time fitted the screen. But those who hated the Cacoyannis loved this. A festival can stand at least one like that.

Added to all this were the ten Museum of Modern Art screenings of films considered somehow even more eclectic (and, certainly, less topical). Among these were a 1954 Mizoguchi, *Sansho the Bailiff;* Kent Mackenzie's *The Exiles* (1958-1961); Kurosawa's *I Live in Fear* (1955), which is quite well known on the West Coast but had not been shown before in New York; James Blue's sincere but not entirely successful Algerian film *The Olive Trees of Justice;* Emile de Antonio and Daniel Talbot's *Point of Order*, based on the Army-McCarthy kinescopes, Torre Nilsson's *Fin de Fiesta* (1959), a political melodrama (his *La Terraza*, a much more interesting film, was included in the Lincoln Center program); and Herbert Veseley's wildly experimental (and mostly successful) *The Bread of Our Former Years*. Max Ophuls' *Lola Montés* was shown uncut.

The only film which was generally liked in the Lincoln Center programs was Polanski's *Knife in the Water* (*Noz w Wodzie*), produced last year by the Kamera unit in Warsaw, winner of the critics' prize last year at Venice (passed over for second prize in favor of Godard's *Vivre Sa Vie*, now in release here



Leon Niemczyk (left) and Zygmunt Malanowicz with Jolanta Umecka looking on: KNIFE IN THE WATER.

under the title *My Life to Live*). Since *Two Men and a Wardrobe*, a Lodz film school project which won Polanski a prize at the second Brussels Experimental Festival, and *When Angels Fall* (his Lodz diploma film), Polanski had produced another short, *The Mammals*, in France, which won the 1962 grand prize at the Tours short-films festival.

Polanski's wit and his sense of violence and sexuality is as evident in the new feature as it was in the shorts, but it is more subtly employed. This gives a subdued quality to *Knife in the Water* which has disappointed some viewers—especially many in Poland, who make the further criticism of it, a criticism which is really only intelligible in strongly nationalist countries (like Scotland) that the film lacks a *raison d'être, is* sufficiently Polish, could have been made anywhere. The story of the film is of a young hitchhiker, picked up by a man and his younger wife, on their way for a weekend's yachting, who somewhat reluctantly accompanies the couple as deck-hand. During the two days there are various shifts of power, the husband enjoying his temporary hold over the young man and at the same time resenting the possible competition for his wife.

Although the situation is "contrived" and "artificial" in the sense that there is nothing inevitable or necessary about this encounter, Polanski takes this as given (as Bresson and Godard take their situations as given). I do not know what were his reasons in making the film, but it stands as a fascinating exercise in which he has severely limited himself to the three characters, a tightly enclosed universe, and the sort of natural events which might reasonably be expected to occur in such a situation without additional melodramatic ingredients. Everything is gratuitous, yet everything is relevant. As often happens, the wife is nicer than the husband, and it only remains to be seen how this affects the young man, and what happens as a result of his being affected. As in many good contemporary films it is possible to say that too little happens, that the events, although natural, are not "entertaining" enough by themselves, nor are they symbolically suggestive enough in a general way. People who say this probably also find their own lives dull, and miss the drama under their noses. They are the people who are endlessly surprised that their wives (or husbands) have left them, or that the world, suddenly, is not at all what they took it to be. Polanski is concerned with the world as he sees it, and it is not at all coincidental that this is how many others see it too—any more than Graham Greene's view *simply* coincides with ours when he puts into words something which has been lying outside our vocabulary.

In a perfectly superb dilemma, Polanski sums up the husband's confusion. The young man has been knocked overboard, apparently unable to swim. We see that he has caught hold of a buoy, but the husband thinks he has drowned and swims ashore. The young man comes back aboard the yacht, seduces the wife, and then helps her bring the yacht back into the quay before leaving, as mysteriously as he came. The husband returns and as they drive away his wife tells him what happened. He thinks she is joking, but the alternative is of course that the young man drowned. In one case he should report it to the police which would embarrass him; in the other he must believe that he has been cuckolded. He stops

the car at an intersection. To the left is the way to the police, to the right is the way home. His wife waits for his decision. Polanski cuts to a long shot, the car at the intersection. We half expect the young man to walk into the frame, but Polanski ends the film with that shot. No doubt the car is still there.

Other films from Lincoln Center deserve extended discussion—among them the Bresson, the Olmi, the Losey, the Resnais, the Marker and Patroni-Griffi's *Il Mare*, which, like so many daring films before it, was booed and hissed at Venice. I was struck by the sense of locale in Olmi's film and the sense of style which allows us to feel that, however local the film's roots may be, we are watching something of very general relevance—the dance-hall sequence could have taken place in any northern country. But a view of this must wait upon seeing Olmi's earlier film *Il Posto*.

Opening the festival was Buñel's *The Exterminating Angel* (*El Angel Exterminador*) which I saw last year at London, so that its details are a little fuzzy. I regretted not seeing it again in New York so that I could have defended it better against its critics, who found it needlessly obscurantist and somewhat dull. As preparations for a society party get under way in contemporary Mexico City, one after the other the servants make excuses to leave before the guests have arrived, until only the butler is left to attend to their needs. Some jokes are made, but then as it comes time for the guests also to leave, the host and hostess are astonished to find instead that they are making preparations to spend the night. Jackets come off, ties are loosened, and the guests arrange themselves on chairs, sofas, and even on the floor. The siege has begun. No one knows why, but no one can leave the room. Nor can anyone enter the house. The guests are isolated.

Most of the guests behave badly in the unnatural situation—jealousies come out, anger, vanity, and only occasionally compassion. People die and are forgotten about, water is obtained by drilling through a wall to a pipe, an animal wanders into the house and is slaughtered the moment it sets foot in the room; but life must go on—a couple keeps a strange assignation in a closet. They take turns accusing each other of blame, although no one can finger the cause of their predicament. (I was reminded of a friend describing how he had taken a suitcase containing a running gyroscope into a hotel lobby. When the bell-boy tried to turn it to carry it into the elevator, it rose up into the air. The bell-boy turned on my friend and shouted "You're drunk!"). They all assume there must be an explanation, but in their confusion they personify it, uselessly. In the end a repetition of the events which led up to the "imprisonment" gives them the chance of changing the next step and, just as easily as if there had never been a barrier, they leave the house. Coincidentally, the servants have gathered outside—all drawn to return at the same moment. As the party's host had promised, their "rescue" is acknowledged by a high mass. It is a great social occasion. At the conclusion of the mass the priests turn to leave, but the head prelate hesitates, "waiting for the faithful to leave first." A colleague points out that they will not go first, but will wait for the priests to withdraw. But the prelate declines to leave. There is an impasse. No one can leave. Rioting breaks out in the streets. The last shot shows a flock of sheep entering the huge church.

There is nothing very difficult about this, and it is very funny, in a gruesome sort of way. The point—The false assumption of personal responsibility, the useless reliance on supernatural authority, the collapse of social order. The film may move quickly to its general thesis at the end, but it is another contribution to the contemporary cinema which is concerning itself more and more with non-causal drama, with conflict (or "problem" or "predicament") as *given* and not justified by conventional expository devices, as more interested in the results of the conflict than in the conflict itself, as more concerned with character than story.

San Francisco. Though it had more hoopla than ever before (chiefly through Columbia Pictures' participation in sending *The Victors* by Carl Foreman, greeted on opening night by the municipal band and Governor Brown) the Festival was again marked by a scarcity of good films and a good deal of acrimony among distributors, critics, and film-makers, who complain of the festival's basic orientation as a society

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bash rather than cultural event. Audiences, however, were large, except for the unpublicized shorts and 16mm competitions, where they were tiny.

The Polish entry, *How to be Loved*, by Wojciech Has, won the best-film prize; it is the most original film of the festival because of its deftness in what must be called "feminine psychology," and its off-hand structure which is effective if sometimes stagey or lacking in control. *The Moving Finger*, by the American Larry Moyer, won best-direction prize in what was evidently a consolation gesture toward the domestic product. Notes on other films: Bardem's *The Innocents* (script by Beatriz Guido) is a study in Argentine class and guilt—somber, with a slight air of obsession, neat but not deeply felt. Fernando Ayala's *Paula Cautiva* (Argentina) begins erratically but settles into a reasonably sophisticated urban comedy. Yugoslavia's *Kozara*, a routine "Occupation" with unusual amounts of shooting, has beautiful crowd movements which make *King of Kings* look feeble. South Korea's *O Bal Tan* passes from intended dreariness and depression into inadvertent farce. *The Courtesan*, from India, well acted but badly cut, was a potentially interesting contemporary variation on the rehabilitated-prostitute theme. *Weekend*, by Palle Kjaerulff-Schmidt (Denmark) tries to cope with the malaise of thirtyish young people: they gather at the seashore, drink a great deal, consider seducing each other's wives, and lament that even these diversions do not excite them; the film is sincere and competently made, but it is hard to share the film's interest in the characters, who have differences but don't seem different. Ichikawa sent two films: *My Enemy the Sea*, nicely photographed in Eastmancolor, shows a young man sailing across the Pacific alone; *Being Two Isn't Easy* is a bucolic family comedy, with some sharp overtones, about the troubles of an infant with confused "modern" parents. Mexico's *The Paper Man* is a sentimental fable somewhat redeemed by a varied performance from Ignacio Lopez Tarso as a mute (he won best-actor award). Samsonov's *Optimistic Tragedy* USSR) is old-fashioned both politically and artistically; it ends with its terrifying commissar-moll-heroine, who has symbolized the Bolshevik line against the anarchists, literally apotheosized on the camera crane. Peter Solan's *The Boxer* (Czechoslovakia) is a sensitive psychological oddity set in a concentration camp. Lina Wertmuller's *The Lizards* (Italy) is an intriguing variation on *I Vitelloni* (the drifter who leaves for the city comes right back). Foreman's *The Victors* is one of those immensely long World War II movies; its young heroes get about as corrupted by the war as they would have been by college, and its net effect is almost nostalgic.

A considerable collection of short films was also shown, including *Robert Frost*, *Gallina Vogelbirdiae*, *The Critic*. In the "Film as Art" competition prizes were awarded to Bruce Baillie's *To Parsifal*, Clément Perron's *Day after Day*, and *A Child's Christmas in Wales*.—E. C.

CORRECTION

In our last issue, due to a last-minute telephone addition to copy, *Chemin de la Mauvaise Route* was erroneously titled *Semaine de la Mauvaise Route*.

Ah, How Complete Are The Uses Of Publicity!

Twinkle, twinkle, little Star,
Shining brightly in Show Biz,
We don't wonder what you are—
Not if we can read, that is.

Daily, in the nation's Press,
We learn something new about you:
What you eat and how you dress . . .
Who, in nightclub, tried to clout you . . .
Whether you are shy or brassy . . .
Which decor your current house is . . .
Each dimension of your chassis . . .
Who your current beau or spouse is . . .

Like Niagara flows the prose
On the Inner-Outer You!
Fascinating. ***And who knows?***
Maybe, even, partly true.

—Selma Raskin

bash rather than cultural event. Audiences, however, were large, except for the unpublicized shorts and 16mm competitions, where they were tiny.

The Polish entry, *How to be Loved*, by Wojciech Has, won the best-film prize; it is the most original film of the festival because of its deftness in what must be called "feminine psychology," and its off-hand structure which is effective if sometimes stagey or lacking in control. *The Moving Finger*, by the American Larry Moyer, won best-direction prize in what was evidently a consolation gesture toward the domestic product. Notes on other films: Bardem's *The Innocents* (script by Beatriz Guido) is a study in Argentine class and guilt—somber, with a slight air of obsession, neat but not deeply felt. Fernando Ayala's *Paula Cautiva* (Argentina) begins erratically but settles into a reasonably sophisticated urban comedy. Yugoslavia's *Kozara*, a routine "Occupation" with unusual amounts of shooting, has beautiful crowd movements which make *King of Kings* look feeble. South Korea's *O Bal Tan* passes from intended dreariness and depression into inadvertent farce. *The Courtesan*, from India, well acted but badly cut, was a potentially interesting contemporary variation on the rehabilitated-prostitute theme. *Weekend*, by Palle Kjaerulff-Schmidt (Denmark) tries to cope with the malaise of thirtyish young people: they gather at the seashore, drink a great deal, consider seducing each other's wives, and lament that even these diversions do not excite them; the film is sincere and competently made, but it is hard to share the film's interest in the characters, who have differences but don't seem different. Ichikawa sent two films: *My Enemy the Sea*, nicely photographed in Eastmancolor, shows a young man sailing across the Pacific alone; *Being Two Isn't Easy* is a bucolic family comedy, with some sharp overtones, about the troubles of an infant with confused "modern" parents. Mexico's *The Paper Man* is a sentimental fable somewhat redeemed by a varied performance from Ignacio Lopez Tarso as a mute (he won best-actor award). Samsonov's *Optimistic Tragedy* USSR) is old-fashioned both politically and artistically; it ends with its terrifying commissar-moll-heroine, who has symbolized the Bolshevik line against the anarchists, literally apotheosized on the camera crane. Peter Solan's *The Boxer* (Czechoslovakia) is a sensitive psychological oddity set in a concentration camp. Lina Wertmuller's *The Lizards* (Italy) is an intriguing variation on *I Vitelloni* (the drifter who leaves for the city comes right back). Foreman's *The Victors* is one of those immensely long World War II movies; its young heroes get about as corrupted by the war as they would have been by college, and its net effect is almost nostalgic.

A considerable collection of short films was also shown, including *Robert Frost*, *Gallina Vogelbirdiae*, *The Critic*. In the "Film as Art" competition prizes were awarded to Bruce Baillie's *To Parsifal*, Clément Perron's *Day after Day*, and *A Child's Christmas in Wales*.—E. C.

CORRECTION

In our last issue, due to a last-minute telephone addition to copy, *Chemin de la Mauvaise Route* was erroneously titled *Semaine de la Mauvaise Route*.

Ah, How Complete Are The Uses Of Publicity!

Twinkle, twinkle, little Star,
Shining brightly in Show Biz,
We don't wonder what you are—
Not if we can read, that is.

Daily, in the nation's Press,
We learn something new about you:
What you eat and how you dress . . .
Who, in nightclub, tried to clout you . . .
Whether you are shy or brassy . . .
Which decor your current house is . . .
Each dimension of your chassis . . .
Who your current beau or spouse is . . .

Like Niagara flows the prose
On the Inner-Outer You!
Fascinating. ***And who knows?***
Maybe, even, partly true.

—Selma Raskin

Film Reviews

MURIEL
ou
Le Temps d'un Retour

Direction: Alain Resnais. Script: Jean Cayrol. Photography: Sacha Vierny. Score: Hans Werner Henze. Eastmancolor.

Muriel is the most difficult, by far, of Resnais' three feature films, but it is clearly drawn from the same repertoire of themes as the first two. Despite the special mannerisms of the very independent scriptwriters he has employed—Marquerite Duras in *Hiroshima Mon Amour,* Alain Robbe-Grillet in *L'Annèe Dernière à Marienbad,* and Andre Cayrol in *Muriel*—all three films share a common subject: the search for the inexpressible past. Resnais' new film even has a co-title to this effect, like an old-fashioned novel. It is called *Muriel, ou Le Temps d'un Retour.*

In *Hiroshima Mon Amour,* the subject is the collation of two disjunct and clashing pasts, the past of the Japanese architect and of the French actress. The story of the film is the unsuccessful attempt of the two principals to extract from their pasts the substance of feeling (and concordance of memory) that could sustain a love in the present. At the beginning of the film, they are in bed; and they spend the rest of the film literally reciting themselves to each other. But they do not get beyond the statements of guilts and separateness.

L'Année Dernière à Marienbad is another version of the same theme. But here the theme is put in a deliberately theatrical, static setting, at a tangent to both the brash modern ugliness of the new Hiroshima and the solid provincial authenticity of Nevers. This story entombs itself in an outlandish, beautiful, useless, and unused palace, and plays out the theme of *le temps retrouvè* with abstract personages, who are denied a solid consciousness or memory or past. *Marienbad* is a formal inversion of the idea of *Hiroshima,* with more than one note of melancholy parody of its own theme. As the idea of *Hiroshima* is the weight of the inescapably remembered past, so the idea of *Marienbad* is the openness, the abstractness of memory. The claim of the past upon the present is reduced to a cipher, a ballet, or—in the controlling image of the film—a game, whose results are entirely determined by the first move (if he who makes the first move knows what he is doing). The past is a fantasy of the present, according to both

MURIEL: *Delphine Seyrig and Jean-Pierre Kerien.*

Hiroshima and *Marienbad. Marienbad* develops the meditation on the form of memory implicit in *Hiroshima,* cutting away the ideological clothing of the first film.

The reason *Muriel* is difficult is because it attempts to do both what *Hiroshima* and what *Marienbad* did. It attempts to deal with substantive issues—war guilt over Algeria, the OAS, the racism of the colons—even as *Hiroshima* dealt with the bomb, pacifism, and collaboration. But it also, like *Marienbad,* attempts to project a purely abstract drama. The burden of this double intention—to be both concrete and abstract—doubles the technical virtuosity and complexity of the film.

Again, the story concerns a group of people haunted by their memories. Helene Aughain, a fortyish widow living in the provincial city of Boulogne, summons a former lover whom she has not seen for twenty years to visit her. Her motive is never named; in the film, it has the character of a gratuitous act. She is an impulsive, troubled woman, running a touch-and-go business of selling antique furniture from her apartment; she is a compulsive gambler and is badly in debt. Helene lives in a painful loving stalemate with her uncommunicative stepson, Bernard Aughain, the other memory addict. Bernard has recently returned from serving in the army in Algeria, and is unable to forget his share in a crime: the torturing of an Algerian political prisoner, a girl named Muriel. He is not merely too distraught to work; he is in an agony of restlessness. On the pretext of visiting a nonexistent financée in the town (whom he has named Muriel), he often flees his stepmother's modern apartment, where every item of furniture is beautiful and for sale, to a room he maintains in the ruins of the old family apartment, which was bombed during World War II. . . . The film opens with the arrival from Paris of Alphonse, the old lover of Helene with his mistress, Françoise, whom he passes off as his niece. It ends, several months later, the unsuccessful reunion of Helene and Alphonse having run its course. Alphonse and Françoise, their relationship permanently embittered, leave for Paris. Bernard—after shooting the boyhood friend who, as a soldier, led the torture of Muriel and is now a civilian member of the OAS underground in France—says good-bye to his stepmother. In a coda, we are shown the arrival in Helene's empty apartment of the wife of Alphonse, Simone, who has come to reclaim her husband.

Unlike *Hiroshima Mon Amour* and *L'Année Dernière à Marienbad, Muriel* directly suggests an elaborate plot and complex interrelationships. (In the sketch above I have omitted important minor characters, including friends of Helene, who figure in the film.) Yet, for all time. I didn't. *Muriel,* like *L'Année Dernière á* direct narration. He gives us a chain of short scenes, horizontal in emotional tone, which focus on selected undramtic moments in the four main characters: Helene and her stepson and Alphonse and Françoise eating together; Helene going up, or coming down, the steps of the gambling casino; Bernard riding his bicycle in the town; Bernard going horseback riding on the cliffs outside the town; Bernard and Françoise walking and talking; and so forth. The film is not really hard to follow. I have seen it twice, and expected after I saw it once that I would see more in it the second time. I didn't. *Muriel,* like *L'Année Dernière à Marienbad,* should not puzzle, because there is nothing "behind" the lean, staccato statements that one sees. They can't be deciphered, because they don't say more than they say. It is rather as if Resnais had taken a story, which could be told quite straightforwardly, and cut it against the grain. This "against the grain" feeling—the sense of being shown the action at an angle—is the peculiar mark of *Muriel.* It is Resnais' way of making a realistic story over into an examination of the *form* of emotions.

Thus, although the story is not difficult to follow, Resnais' techniques for telling it deliberately estrange the viewer from the story. Most conspicuous of these techniques is his elliptical, off-center conception of a scene.

The film opens with the strained good-byes of Helene and a demanding client at the threshhold of Helene's apartment; then there is a brief exchange between the harried Helene and the disgruntled Bernard. Throughout both sequences, Resnais denies the viewer a chance to orient himself visually in traditional story terms. We are shown a hand on the doorknob, the vacant insincere smile of the client, a coffee pot boiling. The way the scenes are photographed and edited decomposes, rather than analyzes, the story. Then Helene hurries off to the station to meet Alphonse, whom she finds accompanied by Françoise, and leads them from the station back to her apartment on foot. On this walk from the station—it is night—Helene is nervously chattering about Boulogne, which was mostly destroyed during the war and has been rebuilt in a bright functional modern style; and shots of the city in the daytime are interspersed with shots of the three walking through the city at night. Helene's voice bridges this high-speed visual alternation. In Resnais' films, all speech, including dialogue, tends to become narration—to hover over the visible action, rather than to issue directly from it.

The extremely rapid cutting of *Muriel* is unlike the jumpy, jazzy cutting of Godard in *Breathless* and *Vivre Sa Vie*. Godard's abrupt cutting pulls the viewer into the story, makes him restless and heightens his appetite for action, creating a kind of visual suspense. When Resnais cuts abruptly, he pulls the viewer away from the story. His cutting acts as a brake on the narrative, a form of aesthetic undertow, a sort of filmic alienation effect.

Resnais' use of speech has a similar "alienating" effect on the viewer's feelings. Because his main characters have something not only benumbed but positively hopeless about them, their words are never emotionally moving. Speaking in a Resnais film is typically an occasion of frustration—whether it is the trance-like recitation of the uncommunicable distress of an event in the past; or the truncated, distracted words his characters address to each other in the present. (Because of the frustrations of speech, eyes have great authority in Resnais' films. A standard dramatic moment, so far as he allows such a thing, is a few banal words followed by silence and a look.) Happily, there is nothing in *Muriel* of the insufferable incantatory style of the dialogue of *Hiroshima Mon Amour* and the narration of *L'Année Dernière à Marienbad*. Apart from a few stark, unanswered questions, the characters in *Muriel* mostly speak in dull evasive phrases, especially when they are very unhappy. But the firm prosiness of the dialogue in *Muriel* is not intended to *mean* anything different from the awful poetizing of the earlier two long films. Resnais proposes the same subject in all his films. All his films are about the *inexpressible*. (The main topics which are inexpressible are two: guilt and erotic longing.) And the twin notion to inexpressibility is banality. In high art, banality is the modesty of the inexpressible. "Ours is really *une histoire banale*," the anguished Helene says ruefully at one moment to the suave, furtive Alphonse. "The story of Muriel can't be told," says Bernard to a stranger in whom he has confided his excruciating memory. The two declarations really amount to the same thing.

Does it work? As a literary idea, perhaps. As a cinematic idea, I don't think so. And Resnais' techniques, despite the visual brilliance of his films, seem to me more literary than cinematic. (Bernard, in *Muriel*, is a filmmaker—he is collecting "evidence," as he calls it, about the case of Muriel—for the same reason that the central consciousness in so many modern novels is that of a character who is a writer.) Most literary of all is Resnais' love of formalism. Formalism itself is not literary. But to appropriate a complex and specific narrative in order deliberately to obscure it—to write an abstract text on top of it, as it were—is a very literary procedure. There *is* a story in Muriel, the story of a middle-aged woman trying to see if she can reinstate the love of twenty years ago and a young man wracked by guilt for atrocities committed as a

soldier. But *Muriel* is designed so that, *at any given moment of it*, it's not about anything at all. At any given moment it is a formal composition; and it is to this end that individual scenes are shaped so obliquely, the time sequence scrambled, and dialogue kept to a minimum of informativeness.

This is exactly the point of many new new novels coming out of France today—to suppress the story, in its traditional psychological or social meaning, in favor of a formal exploration of the structure of an emotion. Thus, the real concern of Michel Butor in his novel *La Modification* is not to show whether the hero will or will not leave his wife to live with his mistress, and even less to base some theory of love on his behavior. What interests Butor is the "modification" itself, the formal structure of the man's behavior. It's exactly in this spirit that Resnais handles the story of *Muriel*.

The typical formula of the new formalists of the novel and film is a mixture of coldness and pathos: coldness enclosing and subduing an immense pathos. Resnais' great discovery is the application of this formula to "documentary" material, to true events locked in the historical past. Here—in Resnais' short films, particularly *Guernica*, *Van Gogh*, and, above all, *Nuit et Brouillard* (*Night and Fog*)—the formula works brilliantly, educating and liberating the viewer's feelings. In *Nuit et Brouillard*, it is Dachau, ten years later. The camera moves about (the film is in color), nosing out the grass growing up between the cracks in the masonry of the crematoria. The ghastly serenity of Dachau—now a hollow, silent, evacuated shell—is posed against the unimaginable reality of what went on there in the past; this past is represented only by a quiet voice reciting the statistics of extermination (text by André Cayrol), and some interpolated black-and-white newsreel footage of the camp when it was liberated. (This is the parent of the scene in *Muriel* when Bernard recites the story of the torture and murder of Muriel, while showing a crude home-movie type film of his smiling uniformed comrades in Algeria. Muriel herself is never shown.) The triumph of *Nuit et Brouillard* is its absolute control, its supreme refinement in dealing with a subject that incarnates the purest, most agonizing pathos. For the danger of such a subject is that it can numb, instead of stir, our feelings. Resnais has overcome this danger by adopting a distance from his subject which is not sentimental, and which yet does not cheat the horror of its horrifyingness. *Nuit et Brouillard* is overwhelming in its directness, yet full of tact about the unimaginable.

But in Resnais' three feature films, the same strategy is not nearly so apt or satisfying. In *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, *L'Année Dernière à Marienbad*, and *Muriel* the lucid and brilliantly compassionate documentarist has been superseded by the aesthete, the formalist. Noble sentiments—like guilt for the bomb (in *Hiroshima Mon Amour*) and for the French atrocities in Algeria (*Muriel*)—become the subject for aesthetic demonstration. Nostalgia itself becomes an object for nostalgia, the memory of an unrecapturable feeling becomes the subject of feeling. The method is to enclose a strong emotion—say, as in *L'Année Dernière à Marienbad*, the pathos of erotic frustration and longing—in a visual setting which has the character of an abstraction—say, that of a huge chateau peopled with *haute couture* mannequins. The aim of this formalism is to break up content, to *question* content. The questionable reality of the past is the subject of all Resnais' films. More exactly, for Resnais, the past is that reality which is both unassimilable and dubious. The new formalism of the French novels and films is thus a dedicated agnosticism about reality itself.

In the pursuit of these themes, *Muriel* is the most intelligent, the most original, and the most beautiful of Resnais' three feature films. But—fundamentally out of sympathy as I am with the formalist aesthetic that informs so many French novels and films today—I must admit to not really caring for *Muriel*. I admire the film, but I don't love it. The formalism of

Muriel (unlike that of Godard's *Vivre Sa Vie*) is unlovable. It is not formalism as such that is bad. The films of Bresson and Godard and Truffaut are tonic, sprightly, emotionally exalting, even when they are being most dead-pan or cerebral or self-parodying. But *Muriel* is somehow depressing, weighty. It's an extremely intelligent film, and an exciting one visually; but these virtues do not work together. There is much less in *Muriel* of that preciousness, that studied air, that damned artiness that nearly ruins what's good in *Hiroshima Mon Amor and L'Année Dernière à Marienbad.* But the film still lacks an essential ingredient of greatness in the cinema. Resnais knows all about beauty. But, unlike Bresson and Godard and Truffaut, he lacks sensuousness. And this, in a film-maker, is a fatal deficiency.

A beautiful film, though, *Muriel* certainly is. First, in its visual composition. This is a strong point in all Resnais' films, but here he surpasses himself. Vierny's color photography in *Muriel* stuns and delights, giving one the same sense, as did *Gate of Hell* a decade ago when it burst on the eyes of Western viewers, of having never appreciated the resources of color in the cinema.

Second, its cast. All of the principals—and notably Jean-Pierre Kerien as the white-haired Alphonse and Jean-Baptiste Thierrée as the stepson Bernard — are remarkable as actors and in the clarity of their physical presences. (The young Thierrée in particular has an unforgettable haunted face, like a Bresson hero.) But it must be noted that unlike the other two feature films of Resnais, *Muriel* is dominated by a single performance. The performance of the ravishing Delphine Seyrig as Helene is, in the peculiarly cinematic sense of the word, that of a star. Mlle. Seyrig has the nourishing irrelevant panoply of mannerisms of a star; that is to say, she doesn't simply play (or even perfectly fill) a role. She becomes an independent aesthetic object in herself. Each detail of her appearance—her greying hair, her tilted loping walk, her wide-brimmed hats and smartly dowdy suits, her gauche manner in enthusiasm and regret—is indelible, unnecessary, delightful. There are two kinds of great cinema, director's films and star films. The great films of the past decade and a half have been mostly director's films (which perhaps accounts for the appeal of the *auteur* theory), while most of the great movies of the 'thirties and 'forties were the American movies, the star films of Bogart and Cagney and Dietrich and Davis and Crawford. The star is an unpredictable resource, and cannot be created by even the most intelligent direction. Antonioni wants Monica Vitti to be a star, but she isn't yet. Godard wants Anna Karina to be a star, but she isn't yet. Delphine Seyrig wasn't a star in *L'Année Dernière à Marienbad,* and maybe Resnais doesn't see her that way. But she is, in *Muriel.* In *Muriel,* she joins that small company of genuine star presences (Belmondo, Jeanne Moreau, Jean-Pierre Cassell, Annie Girardot) who have arisen in films the last five years.

The third great asset of *Muriel* is the music of Hans Werner Henze for voice and orchestra, one of those rare film scores that stands as a musical composition by itself, while it beautifully serves Resnais' most specific dramatic intentions. The atonal vocal line sung by Rita Streich is sometimes used, like the dialogue, to soar over the action, as in those moments when Helene is most beleagured by the barely-named emotions which torment her. In the scene when Bernard shows his crude film of the soldiers who share the guilt for Muriel's death, the music becomes harsh and jolting—contradicting the innocence of the image, and illuminating it. In the final scene, when Simone comes looking for her husband in Helene's apartment and finds no one, the music, voice and orchestra alike, rise to a crescendo of lament. In *Muriel,* a beautiful wordless voice has the last word. —SUSAN SONTAG

MOTHER JOAN OF THE ANGELS

Director: Jerzy Kawalerowicz. Script: Tadeusz Konwicki and J. Kawalerowicz, from the novel by Paroslaw Iwaszkiewic. Photography: Jerzy Wójcik. Music: Adam Walacinski. With Lucyna Winnicka and Mieczyslaw Voit.

Much of modern drama and film consists of setting up a situation and gradually "explaining" it. The Freudian revelations of Tennessee Williams are the most transparent and tiresome examples of this mechanism, but it is everywhere. Even *Citizen Kane* tries to bring us to the heart of Kane with the single word "Rosebud." In *Hud,* we are given to understand that the traumatic guilt of having been involved in his brother's death is largely responsible for Hud's character. Examples can be multiplied endlessly, from both past and present, for such psychiatric reasoning is taken to be the very sign of "contemporary" characterization, and reaches out into practically every stage and film work.

We have become so obsessed with the supposedly hidden springs of motives that we tend to disregard the daily patterns, the endless thoughtless repetitions, the unconscious fabric of life—the "probabilities" through which, nonetheless, our characters are far more formed than by traumatic single events. Hence our drama is expected to poke out secret crises for us, rather than to body forth a dense and possibly inscrutable network of personality; figures in our films and plays have a (largely factitious) "depth," but they tend to lack substance: that multiplicity of motive, seeming opacity, even contrariness which we actually find around us. We have perverted Freud's "Nothing happens without cause" into "Everything has *a* cause."

What is the structural consequence? Films made with this kind of approach are laid out like puzzles. We are shown the characters in action or inaction; we are given various clues. Finally we come to a point where we feel we "understand." Aha! John is the victim of an unresolved Oedipus complex, or Mary is unable to accept her own aggressive impulses! Then we feel satisfied, or are supposed to feel satisfied—especially if, at roughly the same time, the initial situation works itself out in one way or another.

Kawalerowicz is up to something else. Judging by his *Night Train* and the present film, his instinct is to begin with a situation that appears simple and easily comprehensible; but as the film progresses we find that our responses and anticipations are insufficient, and we end with genuine mystery—though *not* obscurity. In *Night Train,* which looks at the outset like any thriller set on a speeding express, the relations between the characters become increasingly hard to fathom; critics complained of "loose ends," though the film was neatly constructed. At the beginning of *Mother Joan,* and through the first encounter with Father Joseph, it is easy to believe that the picture will be a slightly sour comedy: the uproar at the convent will boil down to a bunch of sexed-up nuns putting everybody on. We anticipate, in short, one of the intriguing frauds that constitute much of our "news," which the film will unmask. We settle back, ready to be shown deceptions, cunning, perhaps venality. And indeed we are soon made privy to a deception: Sister Margaret reveals a disconcerting familiarity with Mother Joan's "sooty doorhandle trick," and slyly reminds an inquirer that even if it *is* a cheat, do not the devils put her up to it?

This is not an idle question, though it seems so at the time. From Joan's standpoint, it turns out to be the central problem of the film. By the time of her great confession scene, when she tells the Father that in fact she welcomes the devils, we know that the manner in which she is possessed—by devils, by sexual impulses, by pride—is extremely complicated and touching. Joan is, as played with ferocious passion by the cat-eyed Lucyna Winnicka, a marvellous woman: her physical warmth and emotional intensity confined with great tension beneath her aseptic white robes.

The film poses an immensely difficult uphill struggle for an actress. Subject to our initial doubts and cynical scrutiny, she must gradually convince us of her honesty, of the genuine passion mixed with her guile, of her fanatic pride, of her suffering; and she must not seem false to her religion.

(Exhibitors have been worried by the religious question; the film is preceded by an awkward apology which explains that it is not an attack on the church—as indeed it is not. In San Francisco, which is heavily Catholic, the only theater which would handle it was the Surf, an art house at the western edge of the city. Of course it is possible that the audiences which jammed the Surf were largely backslid Catholics titillated by the idea of a nun tearing her clothes off. The Surf programmed *Mother Joan* with *Viridiana*: the savage irony of the Buñuel complementing the intent observation of *Mother Joan*, Buñuel's camera bounding subtly as Kawalerowicz's gravely paces . . .)

Mother Joan is not an exposé but an exploration of human character, loosely based on the 1634 Loudun incident which also attracted the attention of Huxley. It has many resemblances to Dreyer's great *Dies Irae*, including successful management of a scene in which a beautiful girl realizes that she is possessed. But it is a more humane film than Dreyer's, and is even graced with humor: it has the confidence in its own seriousness to be able to let Joan say, as she grasps Joseph's hand, "I feel the devils rising in me!"—and to get away with it. The mark of an important artist is the chances he takes, and Kawalerowicz takes many. (The other obvious influence is Bergman, who would also have enjoyed counterpointing the dark tavern scenes with those in the whitewashed convent; but he would have been less patient—and more didactic—than Kawalerowicz.)

The style of *Mother Joan* is deliberate and formal, with the camera and actor movements careful and conscious—occasionally a bit uncomfortably stage-like. (The group of nuns when present in a body are always bad, like Cacoyannis's chorus in *Elektra*, or any group made to do pretty much the same thing.) The picture is visually built around and through barriers, which the actors and the camera are continually counterpoised to. Grilles, heavy doors, barred windows, stone columns, uniform clothing, and the wooden grating which Father Joseph is finally forced to have erected between him and Joan—these barricades *are*, in a sense, the central theme of the film. It deals with all those obstructions which stand between human beings, and also those they try to keep between the religious life and the life of the flesh: the film is primarily about the human animal trapped in the meshes of his own ideas and ambitions. Thus in one aspect *Mother Joan* is a slow ballet of *eros* and *agape*. The church, for better or worse, was civilization, and these were its discontents. The hugest lust of Mother Joan, after all, was to become a sainted martyr and thus live "forever"; she was too great a woman to be "small and colorless." Outside the convent walls were only the sensual barbarians of the inn: the busty wench Awdosia with her lute, the devious squire bent on seducing a nun, the cynical piper, the fearful yeoman—and the fat, matter-of-fact working priest who doubts that there are any devils there at all. (He jests that Behemoth may be the name of the great devil —that of the lesser Beer.) The penalties exacted by the church were horrible: Father Garniec, previously the parish priest, was burned at the stake for alleged—and impossible—carnal knowledge of Joan. But outside lay disgrace or nothingness—the blankness in Awdosia's eyes. Sister Margaret, the shyly devilish nun whom the devils did not bother with (because she was too homely, she says) is seduced and decides to remain in the fallen human condition. The weeping of Joan and Margaret, at the film's close, is a weeping for inevitable losses—of both love and grace. They have gambled in a house they did not know

was fixed; Father Joseph has been driven to murder. Kawalerowicz cuts from their slumped bodies to the bell clanging in the sun above them. But, by a daring suppression of sound, we share their anguish and hear only their weeping. . . .

Many film-makers have seized the opportunities for formality and starkness in ecclesiastical settings, and the chance to direct a film with costumes that is not a "costume picture." Kawalerowicz makes the most of the contrasting black and white robes; the bare white walls and the open spaces they enclose making for a clarity and force of composition; the abject postures of prayer and the mincing gentleness of the nuns' steps; the peculiar emphasis on the nuns' faces framed by their white headdresses. He has used these in ways that retain and strengthen the mysteries he is dealing with, in particular those which are largely sexual. (The picture is, need it be said, intensely sexy.) In one scene where Joan's devils prove recalcitrant, she is tied down to a bench; heavy ropes make her robes show the contours of her body; she struggles and groans. The camera views her, as does Father Joseph, from the safety of the altar; her sweaty, fierce, defiant face stares at us, hanging upside down. In the one moment in which Kawalerowicz may not be strictly naturalistic, she breaks the bonds. (To give him the benefit of the doubt, people in unusual emotional states do sometimes display incredible strength.) And then the devils depart. Joan stands before the altar shaken, drained, suppliant; by this time we have begun to see how complex is her blend of actress, seductress, and perhaps saint.

In another beautifully managed scene, she and Father Joseph are alone in the attic, where the habits drying on poles swing languorously to and fro between them: incitements and dividers. They have been lashing themselves, according to the tenets of the faith; just previously she has asked, "Is it possible not to give love for love?" and, suddenly possessed, torn her habit, baring her breast. A great sadness hangs over the scene: an acceptance, perhaps, of whatever might come, from her; a suspension, not quite readiness, from him; from both, loneliness and longing. The poles sway; she moves toward him, passes toward the door, hesitates, then goes. And as we find immediately after, she thus triumphs over herself and defeats him: the barricade is ordered built.

This austere style has no room for "background music." Hymns are sometimes heard, when the nuns are singing; the girl sings in the tavern kitchen, and her song is the first assault of the world upon Joseph as he rises on the first morning. (The sarcastic questions of the piper about the bread are the second, and Awdosia's low-cut bodice perhaps the third—the first tiny steps on his *descensus averni.*) Sister Margaret sings her shyly risqué song about becoming a nun. There is nothing else.

One could go on for a long time analyzing the delights of *Mother Joan.* How the camera balances back and forth between antagonists in the exorcism scenes (and the interview with the rabbi). How Winnicka passes the first great test: her low voice welcoming Joseph, hinting of trials past and menaces to come, her fierce lovely eyes (still *her* eyes) surveying this new man come to subdue her—or her devils; and how, after tripping meekly to the door, she stops, crouches, crawls, grins, mocks, as Dog's Tail the demon: "Don't think it will be so easy to drive me out of this sweet body!" Then a flash of naked leg, the smoky hand imprint on the wall. Or how the lash is tenderly hung on the wall. Or how the camera swings back and forth, like a fearful listener, to the talk of priestly burnings. Or how Joseph's devils come to him through a swinging mirror. The film seems to me a first-class example of what we might call the deliberate cinema—as opposed to that of (say) Truffaut or directors who follow generally in the footsteps of Renoir, taking informality as their keynote. *Mother Joan of the Angels* will not please those who consider an

open offhand style the only one proper to film; but it will please anyone who has less narrow tastes—certainly anyone who likes the formality of Dreyer, the elegance of Eisenstein, or the gravity of Antonioni. With this film, Kawalerowicz surpasses Wajda and establishes himself as one of the world's top directors. He has made a film with that extraordinary formative vision we find in a great director, a film of immense evocative power concerned with complex and touching people. After *Mother Joan*, we can expect everything of him.

ERNEST CALLENBACH

LORD OF THE FLIES

Director: Peter Brook. Producers: Lewis Allen and Dana Hodgdon. Screenplay by Peter Brook, based on the novel by William Golding. Photography: Tom Hollyman. Music: Raymond Leppard. Continental.

"Lord of the Flies" is a rough English equivalent of the Hebrew "Beelzebub", and in his remarkable novel of that title William Golding set out to verify the existence of the Fiend and to show just where he lives in us all. The novel's translation to film, by Peter Brook, is a brilliant and disturbing picture in which Golding's grim parable of human depravity undergoes a subtle secularization.

Brook's screenplay preserves Golding's simple plot in detail: a planeload of English schoolboys is marooned on an hospitable but remote Pacific Island. Under the leadership of Ralph, a decent and intelligent boy guided by a strong sense of fair play, they take care of the smallest boys, build huts, and maintain a signal fire. There are wild pigs on the island, and some of the older boys, led by a moody and egotistical lad named Jack, organize as hunters. Their success in killing a pig excites and elates them and Jack manipulates their excitement and the younger boys' terror of supposed "beasts" on the island against Ralph, whom he gradually supplants. When Ralph refuses to join Jack's bloodthirsty and squalid band of savages—they have let the fire go out

Jack Chapin in LORD OF THE FLIES.

and live only for hunting, dancing, feasting, and sadistic terror — he is hunted like an animal. Ralph is saved, however, by a landing party from a British warship, drawn to the island by the smoke of the brush-fires lit to drive Ralph out of hiding.

There are two crucial points at which the film changes the emphasis of this story. The first is the beginning: Brook has superimposed the titles on blurry halftone stills suggesting a nuclear war, an evacuation of children from Britain (to Australia?), and a crash. This plus his treatment of "The Beast" of the island, is almost enough to make war the villain of the film . . . that is, to deal with collective rather than individual depravity. The second important alteration occurs at the very end of the film. Golding has a trick, practiced in all four of his novels that I've read, of committing a book to one, narrow point of view, then violently shifting to another point

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of view, radically opposed to the first, for the final chapter. The loss of this ironic shift, which is simply impossible in a film, seems to me pure gain in *Lord of the Flies*. Nonetheless, it contributes to the "sociological" tendency I mentioned, and makes the rescue seem simply a Providential happy ending, while in the novel the rescue served to extend the parable of the boys' ordeal to all the rest of mankind, and was not at all reassuring. In the film, Ralph ceases to be a decent man defeated by human selfishness and brutality, and becomes the last Social Democrat, flying before the Stalinist liquidators. Perhaps those are the only terms in which we can read a parable these days, but the pell-mell pace of the film (which is horrendously exciting) and Brook's insistence in the script upon the issues of fair play and "rules" both increase this feeling, while the film's principal attempt to deal in terms of personal morality, the portrayal of a saintly boy named Simon, who is Jack's first victim, is sentimentally vague. (Simon was a weakness in the novel, too.)

Still, as an adventure story with Orwellian political overtones, this is a first-rate film. Brook has handled his young actors (all amateurs, by report) splendidly. They were allowed to improvise most of their lines—as well as their make-up and many of their props. The result is a little strange, but effective: the dialogue (there isn't much) has a slow, stilted, self-consciousness which perfectly embodies the groping moral and social improvisation to which the boys are reduced. I think, too, that a child's idea of how grown-ups talk is the way children talk, while a grownup's idea of how children talk is the way that nobody ever talked. It is this groping, awkward speech that creates the film's most touching moment. All the older boys go off to hunt, leaving the fat, near-sighted "intellectual," named Piggy, to care for the smallest boys. To entertain them, Piggy tells the story of how his home town got its name of "Camburly." Pedantically, self-consciously, blinking and scratching, Piggy talks—the shot juxtaposed with shots of Jack's howling tribe on the trail of a pig. So dignified and poignant is the scene that I couldn't help feeling that any species represented by Piggy telling the story of Camburly cannot finally be brought low by its Jacks.

The photography is black and white, with some fine low-key work, and throughout the film the camera exploits the landscape of the boys' island to the limit, with wide long shots and slow pans. The reliance, particularly in the early scenes, on long and medium-long shots, gives the visuals a certain old-fashioned feeling, but that's not inappropriate to a parable, and the shots work, creating a perspective in which the boys' frailty and helplessness contrasts frighteningly with their hopes and their uncertain courage.

The score is straightforward and effective, developing the Kyrie which we first hear as the marching-song of Jack's choir-boys into a sinister, thumping march and finally into a wild war-chant.

It's impossible to write of this film, finally, without comment on its propositions about human nature. While Brook has altered the emphasis, I think he shares Golding's much-discussed views on "natural depravity," and the film conveys them with disturbing effectiveness. I find two dubious assumptions, however, underpinning both the novel and the film: that the essential nature of man is peculiarly visible in the behavior of children, and that brutality (that is, brutishness) equals sin. If children are naturally brutal (and the film shows us that they are, and shows us convincingly) then man is naturally sinful. But what makes man most human is precisely his experience of having grown up, and mindless brutality is less a sin than a failure to have grown up into the realm of good and evil.

JACKSON BURGESS

THE COOL WORLD

Director: Shirley Clarke. Producer: Fred Wiseman. Script: Shirley Clarke and Carl Lee. Editing: Shirley Clarke. Photography: Baird Bryant. Score: Mal Waldron (jazz sections with Dizzy Gillespie and Yusef Lateef). Production manager Dorothy Oshlag. Documentary footage, in part: Leroy McLucas.

With "Duke" Custis, fourteen years old and a Negro, we walk along the streets of Harlem. A speaker exhorts a crowd, half-convinced, half-bored, to rise and assert their superiority over the white man; the voice of a revivalist comes from a window-sill radio; kids play or saunter; men and women lounge along the buildings; dogs, more purposeful than the people, trot up the street. We hear Duke's voice as he speaks to himself, and only after a few minutes, when we become accustomed to the dialect and the argot, do we note that he is speaking of getting a gun — a "piece" — so he can become a man and the leader of his gang, the Royal Pythons.

Duke's class in school is taken on a tour of Wall Street by their harrassed teacher, who points out to them places "where George Washington walked" and hands out pamphlets telling them how they can "own a share of America." The boys are unimpressed.

Duke's friend, Priest, an adult Negro gangster, offers to sell him a gun for fifty dollars. Duke tries to raise the money by snatching a purse and peddling marijuana, but he can't even approach the sum. His grandmother quotes the Bible at him and his mother threatens to turn him over to the youth authorities, but none of this has any more effect on him than did the tour of Wall Street.

Priest asks Duke to keep his gun for him, and for a day Duke has a taste of what it is he wants. He shows the gun off to the Royal Pythons, who have moved into the apartment of Littleman, one of the gang members whose father has deserted him. When Duke returns the gun, Priest's white girl friend tries to take him into her confidence, but he backs out as quickly as he can.

The gang members try to persuade Duke to throw out the current president, Blood, a junkie, but Duke isn't ready. Blood shows up one night with Luanne, "eighteen, going on fifteen," who, he announces, is going to be the gang's woman. All the boys take their turn with her, but Duke becomes her special friend —she will even let him have her without payment of the usual dollar.

When Blood shows up the next time, he is high, and Duke finally throws him out, becoming president. News arrives that Littleman has been killed by the Wolves, the rival gang, and Duke plans a rumble to avenge his death. It is now vital for Duke to get the piece, but he can't persuade Priest to come down on his price. In the meantime he takes Luanne to Coney Island to prove to her that there really is "an ocean at the end of the subway," a notion new and incredible to her. But at the beach Luanne disappears, and Duke knows she is gone for good.

Duke has lost Luanne, has lost the chance of proving himself in the rumble by having failed to get the gun: his eagerness for the rumble is gone, but he feels he must go through with it now. Just as the gang is about to start out, Priest appears begging for sanctuary because the members of his syndicate are after him.

In the rumble, Angel, leader of the Wolves, is killed, and the boys flee. Returning to the apartment, Duke finds the dead body of Priest, and runs in panic to his mother's house. There the police find him, beat him with night sticks, and drag him into the police wagon, which drives off through the dark.

This is the plot of the film which Shirley Clarke adapted from Warren Miller's novel and finished just in time to show at the Venice Film Festival this summer. If the purpose of a film, like that of a novel, is in part at least to give the "feel" of life, then *The Cool World* is a good film. I am not a judge of how "real" or how "accurate" that feel is— friends, white like me, told me that Harlem isn't really like that. I myself, living on the

West Coast, don't know. I do know that many of the scenes that Mrs. Clarke shows are representative of West Coast Negro life, as I have observed it. More importantly, Mrs. Clarke persuades me that Harlem life *is* like that: the film is convincing enough to involve me, to make me believe in it. Granted there are probably brighter sides to Harlem life. But that is hardly the point, not the point of *The Cool World,* at any rate.

The persuasion is achieved in part through the techniques of the documentary film: long, seemingly random scenes of street life, faces, feet walking, lights at night. Sometimes these documentary techniques serve Mrs. Clarke badly. There are too many such scenes, they are too long, and consequently they occasionally distract from the point of the film, causing irritation and impatience. Mrs. Clarke admitted that there was still some cutting to be done, and I suspect that the final version will be more economical.

Part of the film's feeling of authenticity stems from the way it was made. All the exteriors were shot on location. For the interiors Mrs. Clarke used a condemned tenement, setting up each floor as one of the rooms or apartments of the film. For props and furniture, the crew had only to scout around among the discards of the former tenants, assembling the "decor" for each set from abandoned furniture. The cast was given freedom of movement through the use of radio-microphones (no boom to contend with) and pre-lit sets (no lights to be moved).

Significant and necessary is the casting of nonprofessional actors in all the children's roles. (Professionals played the adults.) Carl Lee, who plays Priest, did most of the casting, scouring settlement houses, social clubs, and schools, not for the "star" pupils, who were the ones most frequently offered him, but for the noncoöperative boys, the loners, most of whom led lives similar to those of the gang members they depicted. Since many of these kids are largely illiterate, Mrs. Clarke did most of the scenes by having the boys improvise on the situations she presented. Only the more serious, tender moments, which the kids got embarrassed when asked to improvise, did she write out and have them memorize.

Sometimes the film tries to be too definitive in its portrayal of the Negro's situation or too blatantly ironic. The opening Wall Street school excursion sequence, though well-managed and quite funny, turns out to be extraneous to the body of the film; the boys' school life is never come back to, and the sequence hangs as an abstract lesson on the Negro's position in relation to "The Man," the white man, to whom he is both hostile and servile. Worse is an episode in which an ivy-leagueish Negro, returning from college, confronts his tea-head brother and tries to rouse him from his apathy by extolling education and self-esteem. I hope that these episodes, especially the latter one, will not appear in the final version.

If one purpose of a film is to give the "feel" of life, a second and more important one is to heighten our understanding of life by exploring and revealing the perceptions or feelings of one or more individuals. In this, *The Cool World* is fully successful. Duke becomes a reality for us, the reality of Hampton Clanton, the "real" actor, merging with that of the fictional boy of the story, and the fact that his soft, wide-lipped face is not that of the "cool killer" that he wishes to be, makes him all the more credible and poignant. We see Duke's motives shaped by his life and driving his life, a life with a predetermined destiny, as his mother and grandmother too fully realize. But *we* realize more than *they* do. As the story takes shape among the masses of documentary detail, we see it *as* a story, a story related to its detail but having a reality of its own as well.

Part of this reality stems from the persuasiveness of the acting (though where acting leaves off and directing takes over is hard to determine) which also enables *The Cool World* to avoid sensationalism and sentimentality, both of which it seems to skirt at cer-

tain points. The poignancy of Luanne's astonished "You mean there's really an ocean at the end of the subway?"—which is several times repeated and functions as an index to all that is denied these Harlem kids—is kept off the shoals of affectation by the terrifying coolness with which Yolanda Rodriguez plays the part. The idea of the ocean at the end of the subway is *the* only one which rouses her from her deadpan acceptance of life. Other scenes, those involving Priest's blonde mistress, could easily have become shockers (some of the stills, taken out of context, look like ads for C-pictures, not to descend further in the alphabet), were it not, again, for the actress' capacity to convince us that she regarded her position not as one which she had either chosen or fallen into, but one which, somehow finding herself in, she accepted with a junkie's resignation.

One footnote and one postscript. The jazz score, by Mal Waldron, played by Dizzy Gillespie, Yusef Lateef, Arthur Taylor, and Aaron Bell, seemed to me totally in keeping with the action of the film. It is not one of those scores that you don't notice. Its noticeability is accentuated in those scenes, such as the one of Priest's entrance to the apartment just before the rumble, when the music is interrupted, then continued, then again interrupted. The counterpoint between music and action accentuates both music and action.

I asked Mrs. Clarke what had happened to her young actors since the films completion. She told me that the kids, most of whom had police records, had for the most part changed their lives. Hampton Clanton is finishing high school and attending a neighborhood playhouse. Other boys are acting in an off-Broadway play written by the set-builder of *Cool World*. Some are working, full or part-time. Mrs. Clarke said that she had lost track of Yolanda Rodriguez, "but she didn't want to act anyway—she was more interested in the work she was doing for a bra manufacturer than in working on the film."—HARRIET R. POLT

THE LEOPARD

Director: Luchino Visconti. Producer: Goffredo Lombardo. Script: Suso Cecchi D'Amico, Pasquale Festa Campanile, Massimo Franciosa, Enrico Medioli, and L. Visconti. Photography: Giuseppe Rotunno Art director: Mario Garbuglia. Score: Nino Rota. Titanus.

The disappointment of seeing *The Leopard* is in direct proportion to the promises of the project: Lampedusa's novel *Il Gattopardo*, Visconti's previous *Senso*, Claudia Cardinale, *Paolo* Stopa, etc., etc. There were other promises too: that Goffredo Lombardo had learnt a lesson with *Sodoma and Gomorrah* and *The Condemned of Altona*, that Burt Lancaster would lend his prestige and looks to the Prince. In brief, the film had everything to make it a smashing success, even the excellent photography of Rotunno.

I understand the film has been a great box-office success in Italy and it won the Grand Prix at Cannes. It has not done well in America, though *The Leopard* is a super-production à la Hollywood, in its cost, its international cast, its sumptuousness. But, unlike most films made in this part of the world, it is not a producer's film. It is a director's film. (For some interesting background, see John Francis Lane's "A Case of Artistic Inflation," (Sight & Sound, Summer, 1963.) And, what's more, it is the film of a man with great experience in working from literary sources; also, this man is an aristocrat himself, coming from a most distinguished Italian family. He is also a member of the Italian Communist Party, which makes him a sort of Mirabeau, like Tancredi in the novel. I mention this because it seems to me that Visconti was the best possible director for this film. Again the big promise.

I still believe, rather melancholically, in the cathartic function of art. I still believe that great works of art can sweep an audience off their feet. It is said that the Eumenides, in Aeschylus' play, provoked such a commotion by their entrance that people fainted in panic and that several women had miscarriages right there and then, such was the trauma. I am

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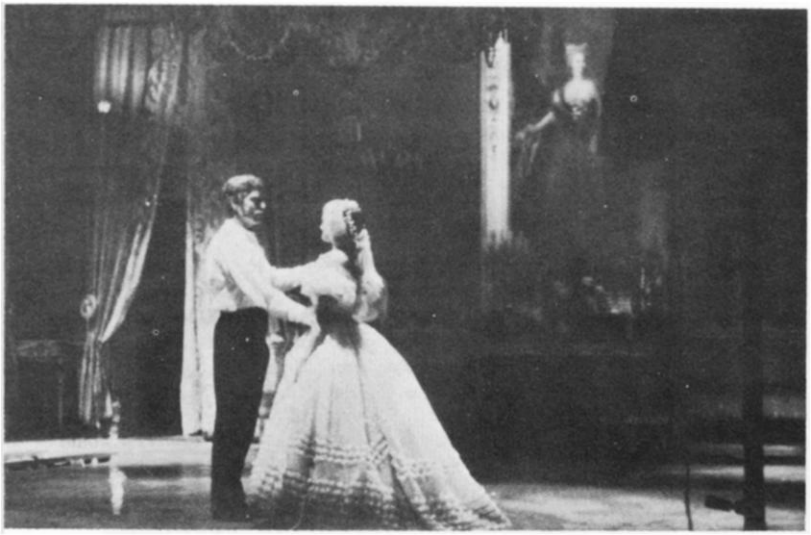

During production of THE LEOPARD

inclined to believe there is a grain of aesthetic truth in this exaggeration. Having watched *The Leopard* with an American audience, however, I can only say, in gloom, that the sole miscarriage I saw took place on the screen. The mountain had given birth to a mouse.

Visconti is a director whose films have largely derived from literary works; but he approached these works as a pretext, as it were, to make films that stand on their own feet and not to make films as mere illustrations or adaptations of the books. In viewing *The Leopard* one is astonished by the faithfulness with which the director follows Lampedusa's novel. The text seems so precious to Visconti that he goes as far as putting into the dialogue commentaries and reflections made by the Prince. He follows the text *pari passu* in such a way that one has the disturbing feeling that one is reading the book all over again. And yet, I submit, the success of the book is the film's failure.

Visconti ends the film right after the ball at the Palazzo Ponteleone and leaves off two entire chapters; the death of the Prince (maybe the four or five writers of the script thought we would not approve the Prince's death, that is to say, B. Lancaster's) and the Relics, last chapter of the book.

The story revolves around a Sicilian prince, at the time of the Italian Risorgimento. Garibaldi had landed at Marsala and a new era in Italy had begun. Tancredi Falconeri, the Prince's nephew, gives way the theme at the beginning of the book: "Unless we ourselves take a hand now, they'll foist a republic on us. If we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change." The dialectics of revolution and counterrevolution are clearly stated. The character of Tancredi, in its Jacobin traits, is never fully developed in the film. How could it be? Aren't we supposed to like him?

The Prince has the centrality of a character whom everything is reflected upon, in the book and in the film. However, in the book there is a character, or rather, a supporting cast, as it were, that does not "appear" in the film: The historical background. Visconti gives two scenes he has added to the film in order to suggest what is happening in Palermo. We see some Garibaldini in street scenes fighting the Bourbon troops. These sequences are of an

appalling mediocrity in their conception and directorial handling. John Francis Lane is right in saying they look like scenes of a B-Western and that one does not expect to see Alain Delon but rather Audie Murphy.

The other important character is Don Calogero Sedara, the bourgeois on his way up the social ladder, upon whom Visconti, quite inexplicably, bestows farcical traits in a most arbitrary fashion. Maybe being an aristocrat and a Communist, the director does not see what is in the middle even if Don Calogero *is* a revolutionary force. The ridiculousness of Sedara is the measure of the Prince's rationalizations and justified fears—and that only in the beginning of the book: the Prince is soon made aware of "the man's rare intelligence" and power. In the film, the ridiculousness of Don Calogero runs throughout and the loss of subtlety is serious. When we read of the Prince thinking about "revolution coming up his stairs," referring to Sedara's arrival, whom did we laugh at? Not just Don Calogero, even if his recently acquired "tails" make him awkward.

Lampedusa gives us an historicist interpretation of history. Visconti, faithful to the book as he is, does not. The theme of the book somehow escapes the film: the flux of history, the fall of aristocracy, the rise of a new and vital class and the betrayal of a revolution. Visconti tries, but never quite succeeds. The shooting of the four deserters who joined Garibaldi (this scene was added by the scriptwriters) does not show the ordinary audience, unaware of the vast historical background, the real meaning of the film. We are told en passant during the ball at Ponteleone that four men will face a firing squad, at dawn after the ball. Thus, on the one hand we have literal faithfulness which does not mean thematic faithfulness; on the other we have added scenes, subtle enough and timid enough not to give us the rendering of these themes.

Visconti oscillates between an historicist interpretation of history and a romantic view of the characters that make and are made by the same history. The theme of the flux of history is washed out by the theme of an aging man's foreknowledge of death. I have nothing against the intersection of biography and history. In fact, I am all for it, provided that biography and history do not annihilate each other, as is the case in *The Leopard.* Visconti's timidity is shown in the conventionality with which he approaches these themes. He is not bold enough to "recreate" the book in such a way that the film could be a great and autonomous work of art. His timidity is also shown by the fact of treating the character of the Prince as the most important one. However, his centrality as a character, on whom all the contradictions of history resolve themselves, does not oblige us to empathize with him. Visconti wants us to see things through the Prince's eyes; Lampedusa uses "his eyes" as a device. In the book we are in and out of the Prince through whom and upon whom we see historical and personal conflicts in interwoven patterns of mutual influence. It is the book of a dialectician in which everything and everybody seems to cope with their own contradictions and unfold themselves as a result.

The conventionality of this film lies precisely in the reduction of everything to a character. This is not only a question of structure, but also a question of scale, dictated by the supposed need of motion pictures to create characters with whom we can identify. We had the boy-next-door, now we shall have the Prince-next-door! Empathy, no longer obligatory in the theater or the novel, is still haunting motion pictures.

A foreign student asked me, with his eyes rolling like the famous bodyguard of Ivan the Terrible: "How can the Americans understand *The Leopard* if they have never had a feudal experience?" He left me envying the Americans for having never had one. Another student, specializing in Documentary, tells me that what is really wrong with Visconti's film

is that "a Sicilian Prince should only be played by a Sicilian." I did not ask whether he should also be a Prince. I was recollecting at the moment that the productions of Othello I had seen on stage or film had been played respectively by two Englishmen, an American, and a Russian and that I had liked them all; I have not yet had the fortune to have seen a Moor playing Othello. I confess I did not have the courage to defend Burt Lancaster for the crime of not being a Sicilian, or a Prince for that matter. In fact, I rather liked his performance; it was consistent and very often convincing. My fellow-student left me with the same uneasy feeling (at another level) that I got after seeing *The Leopard*. This film, in all its merits (because it *has* merits: the ball at Ponteleone, the Plebiscite, the hunting scenes, etc.), was an effort and a great one that did not pay off, commercially or artistically. It was, of course, made under formidable practical difficulties as well as the inherent challenge of making a film from Lampedusa's book. The international cast created problems that made dubbing not only necessary but so extremely bad. This accounts for the discomfort caused by certain scenes (the dinner at Donnafugata, for instance) in their rubbery speech and artificial emotional content. Certain other scenes, however, are to my mind brilliant in their conception, meaning, and direction, notably the arrival of the Salina family at Donnafugata, all dirty with road dust. They enter the church in great solemnity and sit down in their ancestral chairs. The camera in a pan picks up the entire Salina family, one by one, in close-ups; their faces livid with white dust, they look like living mummies, venerating the "wrong" relics. The camera cuts to Don Calogero Sedara who surreptitiously watches them. It cuts back to the Prince who astonishes us by the mere fact of being able to speak at all, so much does he look like a whitewashed mummy; and he astonishes us still more by what he says to his wife: "Invite them and their wives to dinner tonight." The long, painful descent of the Prince begins here. Visconti, in a stroke of genius, compresses in three shots the entire drama of the book. Needless to say, this is obvious for the happy few who read the book before seeing the film. I think that the same criterion can be applied to the ball at the Palazzo Ponteleone. The giggling girls of the Palermo aristocracy, so symbolic of the decline of this same aristocracy, by their looks, their giggling, their utter lack of charm, by their monkey-like movements, are erased by the subversive beauty of Angelica, "that flower that had been fertilized by her ancestor's filth and dung." Visconti compares the girls to monkeys by having Lancaster say: "I would not be surprised if they hang in the chandeliers by their tails." This, by the way, was a thought of the Prince, not dialogue.

I am told that Visconti, in the scenes of the ball, is greatly influenced by Antonioni, in his attempt to create a sort of emptiness. Influenced or not, I think that the intention of this entire sequence is to show the end of an epoch and the beginning of another. The aristocracy gathers in a ball for the performance of a ritual now superfluous, and yet not completely devoid of meaning. The giggling girls, the Sedaras, and the chamber pots full to the brim eloquently attest to that as does Tancredi, now domesticated by bourgeois politics. (We find out that he is now a candidate for some sort of political post.) These scenes are, to me, stunning by their directorial prowess. They do not, however, make the film.

Thus, Luchino Visconti's talent for recreating works of literature on the screen, his immensely refined taste and his lucidity seem, in *The Leopard*, neutralized by romantic nostalgia and subserviency to motion picture myths. I said earlier that this was a director's film. But maybe inside every director there is a producer lurking. Given the fact that this was Visconti's most expensive film, I dread to think that the producer inside Visconti has taken over. The birth of a producer is usually the death of a director.

—Tino Mendes Sargo

THE FRENCH GAME

Director: Jacques Doniol-Valcroze. Script: Jacques Doniol-Valcroze. Photography: Christian Matras. Music: Michel Legrand. With Françoise Brion and Jean-Louis Trintignant. Atlantic.

New York's first Doniol-Valcroze, actually *Le coeur battant* (1960), was especially useful coming in the wake of the Festival: its calm, fresh charm quite served to dispel the stiff parade of art-films we had begun to assume were speaking for all of contemporary cinema. It isn't much to look at in a conventional sense, visually revealing tact and understanding much more than what we typically call imagination; still, the imagination is fully engaged. The film is so exactly felt from first to last, with only minor lapses (one or two camera tricks, some overlong seascapes), that it becomes a viable experience, which one wants to have again. Its moral tensions aren't abstract, but are followed to their inescapable results on the faces of the two leading actors; the film is very like de Broca's *Five-Day Lover* in this.

On a Mediterranean island, a young artist poses as the lover of a woman he himself desires, so she can resume last summer's affair with a married man. Here, and how pleasurable to find it, is a film whose characters take for granted in each other, at the start, the kind of extremeness it takes others whole films to arrive at. Their respect for the seriousness of each other's positions is so graciously complete that the sobriety is transmuted into a shared gaiety. Beginning with this situation, the film weaves a busy fabric of games, small and large, innocent and injurious, mutual and one-sided; until finally, in one of the last shots, the artist walks past a company of playing children, calmly observed in middle distance, who suddenly begin jabbing and hitting each other, in the service of a symbolism that is unobtrusive, moving, and says nearly all there is to say.

Several perfectly wrought comic scenes, like the lovers' first attempt to share a bed chastely, with its various collisions and falls, combine energy and flavor in a way that certifies the later, lyrical moments as naturally grown into. The spare, remarkably beautiful shots which signal the eventual consummation are especially exemplary, with their wordless tenderness; in them, nothing is taken for more than it is, but that is so well conveyed that almost every previous sexual encounter remembered in films seems suddenly false.

Two attractive people, Françoise Brion and Jean-Louis Trintignant, play with extraordinary ease; aware, apparently, of appearing in an uncommonly humane film, they force nothing, taking time to breathe, to feel the situation around them fully. Michel Legrand's lush, mock-vulgar score, in its own way, is nearly as felicitous. Better thanks than the slick title, the misspelled name in the lobby, and the week's run (with Crowther chortling godspeed) are due Doniol-Valcroze, a modest but genuinely knowing and feeling film-maker with a taste—how rare this has grown—for human relations; one hopes his other works will provide the same quiet elation.

—James Stoller

A TOUT PRENDRE

(The Way It Goes) Director: Claude Jutra. Producer: Robert Hershorn. With Claude Jutra, Johanne. Orion Films, 2152 Mackay Street, Montreal, P. Q., Canada.

Within the National Film Board of Canada, increased emphasis is going to the French unit, evidently a reflection of the general resurgence of French feeling in Quebec province, where there is even a certain body of separatist opinion. The present head of the NFB is a French Canadian, Guy Roberge. Members of the French unit come and go between Canada and the Continent—Claude Jutra made a short in France (*La Bonne*); Michel Brault has worked with Rouch (on *Chronique d'un Eté*) and Ruspoli (*Regards sur la Folie*), and has just completed an episode for an omnibus feature on adole-

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scence. The Montreal Film Festival is dominated by the French film-makers and shows much contact with French developments. Leading contenders this year for the top Canadian prize were *A Tout Prendre* and Brault's *Pour la Suite du Monde*. The international jury, chaired by Lindsay Anderson, gave the prize to Jutra's film. (Financed privately and shot on 16mm, it was dubbed two days before the festival showing.)

A Tout Prendre was made without any of the conventional controls; it has the air of freedom and spontaneity missing in any (good) North-American narrative film since *Shadows*. And it is also filled with the inventiveness which a man risks when he has a grasp of the medium and is free to explore it.

Thus the film is extremely stylish (in the decorative sense), filled with directorial and editorial flourishes, and it is revolutionary (in its structure and narrative form). We are aware of all this from the time of the credits. We see a young man (Claude—played by Jutra) performing his toilet, dressing, primping in front of a mirror, affecting different guises, and finally shattering his mirror image with a pistol shot. The remainder of the film can be thought of as an embellishment of this opening. We observe Claude as he meets and falls romantically in love with an amazing Negro girl, Johanne. They drift apart, but she announces that she is pregnant and that they are having trouble, perhaps, because he may prefer "the young men." He has a homosexual experiment, Johanne leaves him alone, and then finally he abandons Johanne (after contemplating marriage), dissolving the affair by the simple expedient of sending her some money in the mail—to take care of her pregnancy. He has borrowed the money from a bank, and he feels so good that, to celebrate, he buys himself a new sweater. Stroking himself happily he saunters off. Later Johanne meets a friend. "Any news of Claude?" He replies no. They walk on. The film ends. An image, a series of images, is shattered.

There is much more to it than this, of course, but it is all done with so much style, apparent ease, and felicity, that we realize we have finally been given the American film we have been waiting for since France and Italy startled us with *their* innovations a few years ago. Jonas Mekas has argued repeatedly (*Film Culture, Village Voice*) that the American independent film-maker must hew his own path and find his own forms independently of his European peers. That sounds all right but the "films" of the New American Cinema have no form and do not seem to be following any useful path. It is thus not surprising that Mekas did not like *A Tout Prendre* very much, although it is the best American film of many years and certainly the best of its generation.

Why does such a thing happen in Canada, and not the United States? The Film Board is partly responsible, no doubt—where in this country is such training available? But the answer lies with the individual film-makers. Jutra dedicates his film to McLaren and Rouch, and he is close friends with Truffaut. McLaren gives him the courage to jump around in his continuity. Rouch gives him the courage to begin, not with a scenario, but an event, a feeling, an experience—thus the film's inspiration is in autobiography. But its justification is in its style—and here there is the influence of Truffant, not considered, self-consciously by Jutra, but evident to the viewer.

Our producing film-makers often see the films of Truffaut, Godard, and Antonioni (Rouch is unknown to them) but few know

Johanne in A Tout Prendre.

what to do about what they have seen (any more than do the distributors or exhibitors). Thus we have film-makers cut off from life *and* art, hesitant to deal with life and, when they do, they are either in search of a style (Ben Maddow in *Affair of the Skin* and Denis Sanders in *War Hunt*), mixing styles (Joseph Strick in *The Balcony*, Strick, Maddow and Myers in *The Savage Eye*, Shirley Clarke in *The Connection*), leaning stolidly on the past (Frank Perry in *David and Lisa*, most of Kramer and Frankenheimer) or killing style altogether (Jonas Mekas in *Guns of the Trees*). Adolfas Mekas at least has some fun with style, in *Hallelujah the Hills*, but no one seems capable of finding a style which so accurately fits the subject as Jutra does here (I am excepting the documentary directors — Leacock, Maysles, etc.). Jutra has taken the oldest subject—boy meets girl, boy gets girl in trouble, boy leaves girl—and has found ways of showing the complexity behind the simplest event.

In reconstructing his story from the past he has understood that common-sense usually simplifies the past, not necessarily making it chronological, but leaving out the confusions of the present tense. In *A Tout Prendre* Jutra deals in confusion and ambiguity—uses them as ingredients of a scene as vital and necessary as the surface event itself. Thus, to take the simplest example: Claude embraces Johanne in his apartment; it should be a moment of concentration, but some small boys are outside the window, shooting cap pistols (there is almost always something going on outside—this is never a closed world; one of them points his gun inside the open window and fires; Claude takes the "shot," staggers limply. The tension of the scene is interrupted and then shifts away from the usual one-track concentration of a conventional scenario ("art" must abstract from "life") to the multivalence of an actual, untidy event.

Thus Jutra dramatizes experience—and in at least three other sequences carries these shiftings of concentration over into fantasy. While walking in the park with Johanne he imagines a sinister stranger stalking them, trying to take Johanne, but in the struggle killing them both. At another time Claude imagines himself attacked and beaten up by two thugs, and yet again, he imagines himself on a fire-escape, fleeing from gangsters, and being shot in the back in the act of shouting out to the world. These incidents are inserted without any technical preparation (dissolves, wipes, or fades)—they are simply cut into the scene and proceed more or less with conventional logic. Rather than existing at the same level of "realism" as the scenes on either side of them (as do the shifting scenes of tragedy and comedy in *Shoot the Pianist*), they function as escapist fantasy, as illustrations of the emotional fabric of a character, always martyring himself (in imagination) when demands are being made of him (in actuality). It is all very funny.

Jutra now feels that this method unfortunately limits the narrative in *A Tout Prendre* to the viewpoint of Claude—and that the character of Johanne suffers thereby. "Doing it again," he said at the Flaherty Seminar, "I would try to get closer to the character of Johanne." Any autobiographer might feel this weakness in his own work, but an audience need not judge this film as autobiography (although it was the autobiographical element which contributed to the sensation in Montreal—Jutra's father is a well-known doctor, and his mother is represented in the film). A distributor may sell it as "confession," but an audience can see it simply as narrative—certainly the audience at the Flaherty Seminar was overwhelmed by the film as film. The news that it was also autobiography, recreated from memory several years later, added to the quality of the experience that night (Johanne also present), but is scarcely necessary for an understanding of the film.

It *is* relevant for our judgement of Jutra as a director and of Johanne as an actress. The scenes of Claude's first meetings with Johanne are brilliantly romantic and beautiful. It is hard

to believe that this is Jutra's first narrative film. It is hard to believe that Johanne has not always been an actress. In a crucial scene Johanne confesses that she has been living a fiction—that she is not the exotic Haitian she has had everyone believe, but was born in the Negro slums of Montreal. Here Jutra reverses his procedure—concentrates on the event itself, allows no element to intrude, prevents our attention from being attracted by anything but the confession itself. In the context of the film as a whole, this scene thus takes on significance that italics lend to prose on a printed page.

It is a rich, suggestive, provocative work—one that I could go back to again and again—and hope to when it becomes available. It is the only thoroughly *contemporary* American (albeit French-Canadian) film of my generation—that is perhaps why it seems so alive. But in a more general way its pleasures and its insights and craft are available to all.

—COLIN YOUNG

THE MAN WHO SHOT LIBERTY VALANCE and DONOVAN'S REEF

The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance: Directed by John Ford. Producer: Willis Goldbeck. Screenplay: James Warner Bellah and Willis Goldbeck, from a story by Dorothy M. Johnson. Photography: William H. Clothier. Music: Cyril Mockridge. Paramount.

Donovan's Reef: Directed by John Ford. Producer: John Ford. Screenplay: Frank Nugent and James Edward Grant. Photography: William Clothier. Music: Cyril Mockridge. Paramount

"Liberty" Valance is a pathologically vicious, whip-wielding outlaw; the man whose reputation came from shooting him didn't do it; the reign of law in The Territory is established by a cold-blooded murder.

Such are the dominant ironies in this rather sinister little fable, constructed in an offhand but mildly entertaining manner by the old master, John Ford. (It's like one of those TV programs you watch with a hand on the switch, but never quite turn off.)

From the opening shot of the iron horse tooting around the bend, we are in the presence of overwhelming *genre*: everything in the film has been seen before; it is ritual. The only questions are: What doctrine is the ritual illustrating, and how stylishly? In this case it is the contrasts between informal, physical power (represented by quick-draw rancher John Wayne) and formal, social power (represented by aspiring lawyer-politician James Stewart). Wayne is laconic, amoral, dangerous, yet vaguely good; Stewart is verbose, stubbornly legal-minded, and obviously good. They are both after the same girl; in shooting Liberty Valance (Lee Marvin) from ambush Wayne preserves Stewart who, he knows, will win the girl; he brings an end to the reign of lawlessness, starts the Territory to statehood and Stewart to the Senate, and ruins his own life.

Nothing of this quite holds together if taken seriously; the direction of actors is loose and indulgent, and the dialogue is witless. Also there is a persistent nastiness of underlying tone; the film has too much of a *parti pris* for the personality and power of Wayne to attain a balanced structure—we know from the outset that only Wayne's gun can preserve Stewart from the whip of Liberty. If the film had been made in France, we would point out its "cryptofascist" tendencies: that it ignores the actual power basis of organized society in favor of a romanticized version glorified by Wayne, and that by isolating The Territory it makes a foolish individualist allegory out of a mighty social drama. (In most of these moralities the townsfolk are *all* craven, leaving the hero utterly alone; they are a crowd of boobies and weaklings, whose commitment to family unmans them—a curious convention in view of our belief in other contexts that men will go to great lengths to defend their families.)

However, Wayne is always fun to watch as

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However, Wayne is always fun to watch as

he slouches about, and some of the supporting cast is pleasantly familiar or at least "warmly" characterized. As with most of the Westerns I've seen on TV, however, the trouble is that the genre materials have been manipulated to death. Only the twists of plot retain a certain puzzle quality. One may here, for instance, note a neat thematic parallel between *High Noon* and *Liberty Valance*—in both, a central figure who espouses order, law, and peacefulness learns that plain violence is sometimes necessary. (The case was made that *High Noon* was a cold-war allegory: the wife's pacifism evaporated and she shot the enemy in the back, just as we might push the buttons in a "pre-emptive" nuclear strike—the Western showdown being a general metaphor of nuclear brinksmanship.) But the stock materials are terribly worn by now, and we cease to take morality or amorality plays seriously if they do not have some human novelty and reality, some structuring artistic force. *Ride the High Country* rose above the routine Westerns it resembles in many respects because it had solid and fairly complex characterization, a vividly realized sense of interpersonal atmosphere, and a serious Faustian theme; the shooting and editing had drive, economy, cogency. *Liberty Valance* is by comparison very laxly made. Its flashback construction is a distraction, awkwardly led into by both Stewart and Vera Miles; its bows to racial "equality" in the person of Wayne's helper Pompey are embarrassing; its shameless repetitions of the cowardice gag with the marshal are tiresome. Worst of all, its over-all sugary tone belies the sinister line of the story. I suppose some will try to make the case that this disparateness only illustrates how consummate an *auteur* Ford is; to my mind it destroys the film. The settlers and cowboys who accept Liberty's bullying, the hearty cynicism of Wayne, the matter-of-fact murder of Liberty, the yokelling Territorial Convention, the ineffectual *présence civilisatrice* of Stewart (in an apron half the time): these are materials for a savage farce which might possibly have been seen as resulting in the later West. Ford's film ends up in a faceless West flitting past the train windows, where legends are left undisturbed—in short, where never is heard a discouraging word, and no Huds are yet in sight.

Donovan's Reef, which has been highly touted by certain critics, is actually a remake of *Hatari!* If either picture has an *auteur*, his name is John Wayne. Wayne is living the carefree frontier life in a remote corner of the world (East Africa in *Hatari!* and the South Pacific here). He has a comic friend (foolish Red Buttons, boyish Lee Marvin) with whom he has a prolonged adolescent friendship. He is beset by a young but spunky city girl (Elsa Martinelli, Elizabeth Allen) whom he teaches to understand real life, instead of the citified existence she has been living. After a terminal crisis involving a good deal of dashing about in a jeep, he catches her and marries her.

Hatari! is a better picture because it has some exciting rhinoceros-hunts; *Donovan's Reef* has no animals, but it has "natives" instead. In particular, it has some "half-caste" children who are turned out of their house to conceal their existence from half-sister Amelia, arriving from Boston and presumably out to snatch their father's inheritance by proving he's been living an immoral life. It turns out he doesn't want the money anyhow; however, if this was known at the outset there would have been no movie. This ingenious device enables the film to pretend to be quite liberal and good-hearted toward the humiliated children—Donovan (Wayne) can treat them well, Amelia can understand his motives in hiding them, and all can end in a touch of the cap to brotherhood, while nobody's prejudices are threatened—or perhaps they are actually strengthened, for the film abounds in patronizing jokes about the island Chinese, and the children's mother is carefully made a princess—so that miscegenation is all right. (Evidently Donovan himself had to be content with Dorothy Lamour, and the relation was with-

out issue.) The whole thing makes one wish Ford had been chained down for a couple of viewings of *Moana* before going aground on Donovan's Reef.

Even if taken as hardly serious, the plot and theme are either dispiriting or revolting. What remains? The same kind of traveloguish material which we got in *Hatari!*—lovely views of sea and canyons—and competent direction in the sense of mise-en-scène, though not in the handling of actors. The mixture has been praised as "unabashed sentimentality and rowdy fun" (the latter because of the fist-fights, which are realized surprisingly badly). It's unabashed, all right, in its vulgar pseudo-morality and in its celebration of the American perennial adolescent. As Wayne nears old age this gets more and more astounding. He is one of those "natural" actors of great presence but narrow range who are almost always appealing to watch, no matter what idiocy they are involved in. To the question of when he will begin to act his age—as grandfather rather than lover of 18-year-olds—one can anticipate his reply: *"That'll be the day!"* (His scenes of passionate embrace, in which he grabs the girl as if he is about to administer a spanking—which indeed he may do, more or less simultaneously—are one of the joys of the current cinema.) It will be our loss, speaking sincerely now, when that day comes. Wayne's portrait of the big, generous, common-sense, open, frank-spoken, tough, "lusty" American, with the heart of softest peanut-butter-and-jelly: this fatherly figure must surely be the most imposing single item in our film "iconography." Icons are to reassure oneself with; and it would make an interesting essay to speculate what elements of our society this image reassures us against.

— ERNEST CALLENBACH

THE HAUNTING

Director: Robert Wise. Producer: Robert Wise. Screenplay: Nelson Gidding, based on "The Haunting of Hill House" by Shirley Jackson. Photography: David Boulton. Music: Humphrey Searle. MGM.

The Haunting is a full realization of the many talents of its director, Robert Wise. His abilities—in over-all directorial concept, in visualizing a theme in energetic compositions, and in assembling these compositions in short, intense, fast-moving scenes—are here in supreme combination.

As editor of *Citizen Kane* (1941) and *The Magnificent Ambersons* (1942) Wise was inspired by Orson Welles and is still greatly influenced by him. Wise became a director in 1944 with the editorial aspect of film craftsmanship an indelible part of his creative self. He has evolved an ability to inject a sense of pulse-beat rhythm and mounting, suppressed tension into his films. These Wise characteristics were most evident in *The Set-up* (1949) and again in *Somebody Up There Likes Me* (1956). His greatest period of development has been since 1958, the year of *I Want to Live.* Again he cut his film into short, rapidly paced scenes, but now added penetrating close-ups. (Walking away from the camera, badgered by reporters, Susan Hayward suddenly turns — into close-up — shaking a toy tiger into their faces.) The barbaric rite of capital punishment was Wise's point of attack; this film may have been an influence in the repeated stays of execution granted Caryl Chessman in 1960. With *West Side Story* (1961) Wise (and Jerome Robbins) blended elements of ballet with those of the stage and screen into a semi-abstract film; in addition, he changed the size of the screen so often that it seemed a limitless canvas. With *The Haunting*—a study in psychic phenomena—he has achieved his masterpiece.

The Haunting is not intended as a ghost story. The spirit that manifests itself through Hill House—an 80-year-old Gothic mansion—is not imaginary. Though unseen, Wise illustrates early in the film, it is a living, breathing monster. Pleading humbly or raging, it is constantly, calculatingly cruel. Its intention is to possess, and its choice is the pitiably unloved Eleanor (Julie Harris). At 32 she is on the verge of accepting her sister's condemnation

out issue.) The whole thing makes one wish Ford had been chained down for a couple of viewings of *Moana* before going aground on Donovan's Reef.

Even if taken as hardly serious, the plot and theme are either dispiriting or revolting. What remains? The same kind of traveloguish material which we got in *Hatari!*—lovely views of sea and canyons—and competent direction in the sense of mise-en-scène, though not in the handling of actors. The mixture has been praised as "unabashed sentimentality and rowdy fun" (the latter because of the fist-fights, which are realized surprisingly badly). It's unabashed, all right, in its vulgar pseudo-morality and in its celebration of the American perennial adolescent. As Wayne nears old age this gets more and more astounding. He is one of those "natural" actors of great presence but narrow range who are almost always appealing to watch, no matter what idiocy they are involved in. To the question of when he will begin to act his age—as grandfather rather than lover of 18-year-olds—one can anticipate his reply: *"That'll be the day!"* (His scenes of passionate embrace, in which he grabs the girl as if he is about to administer a spanking—which indeed he may do, more or less simultaneously—are one of the joys of the current cinema.) It will be our loss, speaking sincerely now, when that day comes. Wayne's portrait of the big, generous, common-sense, open, frank-spoken, tough, "lusty" American, with the heart of softest peanut-butter-and-jelly: this fatherly figure must surely be the most imposing single item in our film "iconography." Icons are to reassure oneself with; and it would make an interesting essay to speculate what elements of our society this image reassures us against.

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as a useless old maid when an invitation comes from a Dr. Markway (Richard Johnson) to visit Hill House. The professor, devoted to the analysis of supernatural manifestations, is certain that such disturbances are not random occurrences; he suspects they are specifically motivated, unknowingly, by the people whom they affect. Because Hill House has a long history of unexplained deaths, and is presumed to be haunted, he occupies the house with two assistants—Eleanor and Theo—and the owners of the property send Luke, their wayward heir apparent. When Eleanor was 12, and very shortly after her father's death, showers of stones fell on her house for three days. The showers continued until Eleanor was moved away. Theo (Claire Bloom) was able repeatedly to identify correctly 18 and 19 cards out of 20 held out of her sight. Markway believes their presence in Hill House would intensify the supernatural forces at work there.

The opening sequence, which relates the grisly history of the house, is narrated by the professor as its prospective tenant. This prologue, in excellently distorted photography (as though photographed for small screen and then stretched to Panavision size), is often composed of blacks and whites with no intervening degrees of gray. Because Wise is dealing with totally abnormal situations, he has created grotesqueries, first by high-lighting and then by angling the camera to further distort the people on the screen to freakish proportions. We see them in appropriately twisted, tortured shapes, the victims of a maddened mind. When a young girl is fatally shocked standing at the top step of a long flight of stairs, he cuts from this angle quickly to the bottom step as the victim tumbles down. With the camera placed so close to her, her head becomes unnaturally large and the sprawled black costumed figure contrastingly small on the steps.

His Wellesian perception carries him through through the entire length of the film and reaches a visual climax in the repetition of four ascents up a weirdly designed spiral staircase. With the early suicide (in the prologue) we look up the heavy, leaden stairway. In a reverse-angle "shock" cut, the dead girl is suddenly hanging, her feet dangling over the edge of the stairway. The murky lighting suggests the girl's unbalance and the emptiness beneath her swaying feet catches her utter loneliness. The second ascent up the stairway is made by the camera itself to approximate the feeling that Eleanor is being intrigued by it, that its spirit is calling her. Here the camera romanticizes the ascent for her with a swaying, tipping climb. The scene is uncut; it is one melodic visual flow. When Eleanor actually ascends, the scene moves more quickly. Wise creates the mood of a supernatural manifestation by short cuts from Eleanor's sublime face to the inviting steps, gradually accelerating the pace until the steps themselves seem to have accomplished the feat for her. When the professor follows Eleanor to save her, the stairway tears away from the wall and begins a constant circular motion. There is suspense in each shot of the doctor's foot carefully placed on a step, in the consequent movement of the stairs, in the supports' completely giving way, and in his clutching the banister. Each individual camera set-up is drawn to its unbearably tense maximum length, each additional frame intensifying the horror. We have seen the stairway in four variations—through madness, romance, the supernatural, and finally reality.

Wise almost entirely escapes the use of tricks. I imagine that some will argue that he does employ them in two scenes: as Eleanor is pursued by something unseen, the ghost of the house itself, she runs down a long hall that seems to be shaped like the inside of a barrel. She runs into an oval mirror and this explains the odd shape of the passageway. Later, on a balcony, she faints, falling backward. The camera duplicates the movement of that fall. Since these are recreated in the manner in which Eleanor experiences them, they are shatteringly real; the odd shape of the hall is

a superb projection of the pulse of the monster close behind her, and in the fall the camera sways dizzily and goes out of focus.

The film runs two hours; Wise and photographer David Boulton are just as resourceful at the end. In a climactic scene, Eleanor attempts to steer her car but it is obvious that outside forces are in control and it zig-zags across the landscaped grounds. Shooting past Miss Harris (Eleanor) and through the front windshield, we see her final moments as she crashes into a tree and is killed. What has brought her to her death, specifically, is the apparition of a ghost, the illusion that she knew pursued her. In jumping in front of the moving car and then to the tree, the ghost has commanded Eleanor to follow and die in consequence.

The basic difference between Shirley Jackson's novel and Nelson Gidding's superb adaptation of it is that while the former suggests natural explanations for the disturbances at Hill House, the latter gives evidence (in the nightmare sequence, in Eleanor's flight through the house and in her last moments alive) of an existing spirit. The history of the house is covered in one paragraph in the book; the film uses this as a ghoulish prologue to set the fiendish mood of the piece. The appearance of the ghost in the form of thunderous clashing of metal along the hall outside the girls' bedroom is minimized by Miss Jackson because the girls are able to laugh about it; in *The Haunting* they are justifiably petrified. Wise uses this manifestation as the emotional climax to the prologue; he has built perfectly one climax on another, and because he has succeeded in involving us to such an emotional pitch he draws us progressively closer to Eleanor's pitiful surrender to the spirit and our acceptance of it. Her last act before the tragic drive is a separate plea to Theo, the doctor, and Luke to let her stay and share some part of one of their lives. But they say that her life is in danger and each turns her away. Eleanor has waited all of her life for "something to happen" and now, rejected by everyone, she knows the emptiness will continue. But if she could stay . . . if she somehow could belong to Hill House. . . At this moment the car begins to sway and goes out of control. The doctor's theory is proven. After the accident, the doctor's wife, dazed, walks away from the tree—the "ghost" that Eleanor saw—and the living have an explanation which they can accept. Wise, however, never veers from the implication of a supernatural manifestation. Nelson Gidding has not only intensified Shirley Jackson's novel, compressing it into a consistently harrowing experience, but by rearranging some of the incidents has added further dimensions to many of the characters. (Jackson has Theo dance around a group of ancestral statues in a characteristically carefree way; Gidding has Eleanor do the dance to point up the influence the house has upon her. The doctor and his wife are no longer tweedy stereotypes but bitter antagonists; she is a constant threat and a motivating part of the climax.)

The Haunting is perfectly cast. Wise has avoided using any major stars: it is impossible to throw big names together—*à la Kramer*—and still make the sort of film that Wise has made here. One of the greatest gratifications is when a director can see the possibilities of a good face and then give it its proper screen time. Again and again Wise realizes this potential by holding on Miss Harris. As she drives to Hill House to accept the first invitation of her mother-dominated life, Wise shoots from the front of the car, framing her face toward the right of the screen. She tries to imagine what this vacation will be like; this is heartwarming. Holding further on her is no longer necessitated because the inner dialogue has just ended. Now it is used for what it is—an intelligent, expressive face bringing her character to life solely through exposure.

The director adopts an opposite technique with Claire Bloom; instead of using her in close-up, he places her in the background for strategic scenes. On her first morning in the "haunted" house, and after a tortured night of

iron-banging nightmares, Miss Bloom enters the breakfast room. The camera set-up is the breakfast table with Miss Harris and Johnson in close-up. While they are speaking, Miss Bloom enters the frame in the background, centered between the two large faces. The scene is overlighted; Miss Harris is blurred in beautifying soft tones and Miss Bloom's appearance in black brings the eye to her. We are extremely interested in what Miss Harris and Johnson have to say in explanation of the previous night, but our interest is diverted by Miss Bloom's entrance. We can't afford to miss a word, and yet we are drawn to her as she sits in view at a further distance. She looks longingly at Miss Harris ("Is she as exciting as I thought she was?" Miss Bloom's eyes and smile seem to ask and answer), turns to Johnson for a moment and then again to Miss Harris. In an earlier scene Miss Bloom rejected the thought that she and Miss Harris could be as close as "sisters." The Lesbian attachment was humorously suggested in Miss Bloom's reading of the line at their first meeting and now admirably understated by placing her at a distance from the camera. She plays to Miss Harris as the latter responds to Johnson who, in turn, gazes dispassionately at them both. It is as fine a moment as I have seen in any other American film this year.

Sound has never been used with more effectiveness. The ghost is not seen. There are no wisps of flowing robes and skeletal faces. Instead, the presence is conveyed by the thunderous, clashing sound of the ghost outside the girls' door.

The costumes affirm Eleanor's timidly somber tastes and accent Theo's sophistication. The music always finds some way to express the mood of a character. Elliott Scott's excellent, busy, Gothic-like mansion provides the necessary realistic setting; somewhere there must be such a house a-hunting on a hill. It is impossible to adequately assess editor Ernest Walter's contribution to this film, but *The Haunting* is so solidly a unit that Walter, Wise and Boulton seem to have worked as one mind.

NORMAND LAREAU

THE RANSOM

Directed by Akira Kurosawa. Script by Akira Kurosawa, Hideo Oguni, Ryuzo Kikushima. Photographed by Choichi Nakai. Music by Masaru Sato. Produced by Tomoyuki Tanaka and Ryuso Kikushima. With Toshiro Mifune, Tatsuya Nakadai, Kyoko Kagawa, Tatsuya Mihashi, and Takashi Shimura. A Toho picture. Original title *Tengoku To Jigoku* (Heaven and Hell).

If this film were by anyone else one might praise it as an extraordinarily well-made cops-and-robbers entertainment. But from Kurosawa one has the right to expect much more. Not that he does not attempt to give it—and there perhaps is the trouble.

It is indeed the moral aspect of the plot which first attracted Kurosawa, the possibilities of which he saw when he first read the American novel upon which the film is based. A wealthy manufacturer's chauffeur's son is kidnapped by mistake. The kidnapper really wanted the rich man's son. All the same, he demands ransom. The problem is: is a chauffeur's son worth as much as that of a wealthy industrialist?

The answer is yes and after some soul-searching Mifune, with help from Kyoko Kagawa, his wife, agrees to pay. He knows that by doing this he will be jeopardizing a business deal which involves his factory and, sure enough; he loses both it and factory. The child is returned, the criminal is caught, and Mifune faces having to start his life all over again.

In précis this does not sound unpromising, but along the way the moral issues become confused, the final confrontation means nothing outside itself, and all the art in the world cannot make the film meaningful. The first half of this two-hour film is as tight and as carefully staged as the stage play it all too often resembles. We never leave the mansion but sit there waiting for the kidnapper to telephone, watching the police, watching Mifune wrestling with his problem. The second half shows what Kurosawa tried to do in the first. It is very swiftly cut (the first half has a number of eight-to-ten-minute scenes) and moves

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all over: automobiles, trains, roving all around Yokohama and Enoshima.

Somewhat like *The Bad Sleep Well, Stray Dog,* and *Ikiru,* the form is that of statement and conclusion, cause and effect, theory and practice. Just as the first half of *Ikiru* is story and the second half (the funeral sequences) explanation, so the first half of this film is anecdote and the second half is a trip behind the scenes, as it were, to see how the anecdote is unraveled. The trouble, of course, is that it is not the meaning of a man's life that we are searching for. We are only hunting for a kidnapper.

Kurosawa, however, likes his second halves and sections of this one are brilliant. The problem he sets himself is to show how the police capture the criminal. Bit by bit the man's identity is pieced together (each new clue receiving a fanfare in the score) and the hunt (reminiscent in the wrong way of the meaningful hunt for the pistol which is the story of *Stray Dog*) takes the cops through hospitals, junk yards, factories, the whole lower depths of Yokohama, right down to the slums of Nankin-machi where the addicts really did roam the streets screaming for heroin as the film was being shot.

Perhaps the best of these fast-moving and tiny little sequences is that in a rowdy sailors' cabaret in Yokohama where, very much in the manner of the night-town sequences in *Ikuru,* Kurosawa creates a flamboyant microcosm of the world at its sordid play. Easily the worst (even worse than the "native dance" sequence in *The Hidden Fortress*) is the heroin-addict scenes with decorative rubbish, backlighting, mist—the sequence looks like something from a forgotten UFA production.

Though a great deal of excitement is generated during this hunt the film never becomes really gripping. The child is safe halfway through the picture and the interest becomes mechanical, and even the superb mechanics of Kurosawa's cinematic style are not enough. We rightly expect the parts of a Kurosawa film to add up to more than merely their sum.

The ending is particularly disappointing. The ruined Mifune goes to see the captured kidnapper in prison at the latter's request. He is a young man who picked Mifune out at random, mainly because from his "hell" of a three-mat tenement room he could see the "heaven" of Mifune's hillside mansion (hence the Japanese title of the film)—they meet, but the revelation we expect never comes through.

In *Stray Dog* Kurosawa has cop and robber engage in a final fight in a marsh which leaves them both so muddied that you cannot tell which is which; this works, it is an original and a stunning comment. In this film, Kurosawa makes much play with the glass which separates the two. Mifune is outside; the reflection of the criminal almost precisely superimposes itself over his face. Yet this is meaningless. In *Stray Dog* the cop (the young Mifune) needed his stolen pistol or else he would be kicked off the force; the thief (Ko Kimura—who plays a cop in this film) needs the pistol in order to make a successful criminal living. Both may be equated. In this picture, however, the criminal is vicious, his act was gratuitous (he doesn't spend any of the money—it is difficult to believe that he needed it, though he is supposed to be a heroin addict). Mifune is a good family man, a good worker, the moral triumph is his. There is no way to equate the two, except by meaningless generalities of the all-men-are-brothers type.

Therefore, like *The Idiot, The Silent Duel, Scandal,* or *The Bad Sleep Well, The Ransom* is minor Kurosawa. One can see what he is doing. He is revisiting, or reviving his interest in the chase film—seen at its best in *Stray Dog*—just as both *Yojimbo* and *Sanjuro* grow from his interest in the comic and satiric epic first seen in *They Who Step on the Tail of the Tiger.* The difference is that the morality of *Yojimbo* is real and uncontrived. The morality of *The Ransom* seems artificial and inconclusive. Kurosawa may have tried very hard in illustrating his film, but one feels he ought to have tried harder on his script.

—DONALD RICHIE

A Checklist of World Film Periodicals

As of November, 1963, the following appear to be the most active, important, or useful of world film publications, including some in relatively inaccessible languages—Czech, Danish, Serbo-Croatian. There are hundreds of other film periodicals: some are trade publications of primarily national interest, some fugitive critical journals which appear fitfully, some publicity magazines. The brief annotations below have been prepared in part by Ernest Callenbach and in part by Ben Hamilton, editor and publisher of *Cinema-TV-Digest*, a guide to current writing in foreign-language journals, which can be obtained from Hampton Books, Hampton Bays, New York, for $2.95 per year. Readers should note that addresses, dollar prices, and frequency of publication may fluctuate.

American Cinematographer. 1782 North Orange Drive, Hollywood, Calif. Technical articles for the film-maker, both professional and amateur. Monthly, $5.00 per year.

L'Avant-Scène du Cinéma. 27 rue St-Andrédes Arts, Paris 6e, France. Prints in each issue the definitive director-and-editors' version of a complete film. $6.00 for 11 issues.

Bianco e Nero. Via Antonio Musa 15, Rome, Italy. Associated with the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia, Italy's film school. See review in *Film Quarterly*, Fall, 1961. Critical articles and reviews; industry problems; philosophical and aesthetic issues. $10.00 per year.

Bulgarian Films. Publication Service, State Film Distribution, 135-A Rakovski St., Sofia, Bulgaria. A publicity sheet, but contains useful information.

Cahiers du Cinéma. 146, Champs-Elysées, Paris 8e, France. The most adored, most hated, and most discussed film magazine in the world; the critical hotbed from which sprang Truffaut, Godard, Chabrol. $7.75 per year, monthly.

Ceskoslovensky Film. Ceskoslovensky Filmexport, Press Dept., Václavské Nam. 28, Prague 1, Czechoslovakia. A publicity sheet, but contains useful information.

Cine Cubano. Calle 23, No. 1115, Apartado 55, Habana, Cuba. A fitfully intelligent, remarkably European journal, with articles and interviews bearing on foreign and Cuban films. $5.00 per year.

Cine Forum. San Marco, 337, Venezia, Italy. Journal of the Italian cineclubs. 2500 lire for 10 issues.

Cinema. Box 1309, Hollywood 28, California. Nicely printed high-level fan magazine. Hollywood interviews, sexy pictures. $3.75 per year.

Cinema. Edizioni di Cinema Nuovo, Via Valvassori Peroni 55, Milano, Italy.

Cinéma 63. C.I.B. 7, rue Darboy, Paris 9e, France. Journal of the French Federation of Cineclubs. A lively monthly with reviews, news, history, film diaries, notes on TV films, amateur film-making, etc., etc. $5.50 per year.

Cinema Nuovo. Via Valvassori Peroni 55, Milan, Italy. Much Marxist criticism, especially as derived from Hungarian theoretician Georg Lukacs. Bimonthly, $5.50 per year.

Cinema-TV-Digest. Hampton Books, Hampton Bays, New York. A jaunty quarterly guide to what is being written in foreign film periodicals. $2.95 per year.

Cinespaña, "Uniespaña" Castello 18, Madrid, Spain. A glossy publicity journal with synopses, starlets, etc.

Documentos Cinematográficos. Rambla de Cataluña 104, Barcelona 8, Spain. Extensive documentation on directors, films, economic and social problems, factual film-making, etc. $10.00 per year.

Etudes Cinématographiques. 73, rue du Cardinal-Lemoine, Paris 5e, France. Grouped essays on problems, film-makers, genres, etc. 10 issues, 37 NF.

Film. 12 Sherlies Ave., Orpington, Kent, England. Journal of the British Federation of Film Societies. Critical articles, reviews, organizational news. 5s per year.

Film. Promenadenplatz 10, 8 Munich 2, Germany. A new journal, bimonthly.

Film A Doba [Film and the Epoch]. Vinohradská 46, Prague 2, Czechoslovakia. Varied short articles and reviews, concentrating on films from the Soviet sphere. Monthly, $9.50 per year.

Film Comment (formerly *Vision*). 11 St. Luke's Place, New York 14, N.Y. Interviews, articles, reports; emphasis on social issues relating to cinema. $2.00 per year, 75c per issue.

Film Culture. GPO Box 1499, New York 1, N.Y. Articles, interviews, manifestoes, reviews, focusing on "the New American Cinema." $1.00 per copy, $4.00 per year.

Film Ideal. General Goded 42,2 Dcha. B, Madrid 2, Spain. A high-level fan magazine, sometimes with interesting interviews. $6.00 per year.

Film Journal. 5 Zetland Rd., Mont Albert E. 10, Victoria, Australia. A general journal of comment and criticism. $2.20 for 4 issues.

Film Quarterly. University of California Press, Berkeley 4, California. Articles, reviews, interviews, discussions. $1.00 per issue, $4.00 per year.

Film Society. American Federation of Film Societies, P. O. Box 2607, Grand Central Station, New York 17. A new general critical journal. 60c per issue, $2.00 per year.

Filmkritik. Siesmayestrasse 58, Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany. Allied with the German counterpart of the Nouvelle Vague. $4.00 per year.

Filmfacts. P.O. Box 53, Village Station, 150 Christopher St., New York 15, N.Y. Provides complete credits, synopses, and excerpts from the leading daily and weekly reviewers. $20.00 per year.

Filmkunst. Renngasse 20, Wien I, Austria. Emphasis on Austrian films. $2.50 per year.

Films and Filming. 16, Buckingham Palace Road, London S.W. I, England. Gossipy and erratic, but contains good interviews on occasion, exhaustive review coverage, and some interesting articles. 33s per year.

Films In Review. 31 Union Sq. West, New York 3, N.Y. Nostalgia pieces and hilarious "uncorrupted" film reviews.

Indian Film Culture. B-5, Bharat Bhavan, 3, Chittarangan Avenue, Calcutta 13, India. Articles on both Indian and western cinema; apparently the best Indian film magazine. $2.00 per year.

Iskusstvo Kino. Moscow G-69, Ulitsa Vorovskovo 33, U.S.S.R. The official Russian film journal. See review in *Film Quarterly*, Fall, 1960. Can be ordered through various U.S. importers, among them Imported Publications, 4 West 16th St., New York, N.Y.

Journal of the SMPTE, 55 W. 42 St., New York 36, N.Y. Technical and occasional historical articles on motion picture and television technology. $12.50 per year.

Kosmorama. Danish Film Museum, Vestergade 27, Copenhagen, Denmark.

Kwartalnik Filmowy. Wydawnictwa Artystgcznei Filmowe, ul. Krakowskie Przedm. 21-23, Warsaw, Poland. Leading articles summarized in French; chiefly history, rather high-flying aesthetics, and sociology.

Le Film Yougoslave. Kultura, Knez Minailova 19-11, Belgrade, Yugoslavia.

Lo Spettacolo. S.I.A.E., Via Gianturco 2, Rome, Italy. Economic reports.

Motion. 23 Summerfield Road, Loughton, Essex, England. A journal of the younger British generation.

Movie. 3 Antrim Mansions, London N.W. 3, England. An elegantly printed, often outrageous journal of the young British critics whose most-admired directors are Hitchcock and Hawks. $6.00, monthly.

Motion Picture Times (Kinema Jumpo). Kinema Jumpo Sha, Hideyoshi Bldg., 5-5 Ginza Nishi, ChuoKu, Tokyo, Japan. Prints full scripts of Japanese films.

Movie Marketing (including **Far East Film News**). Box 30, Central P.O., Tokyo, Japan. A useful brief guide to the world film industry.

New York Film Bulletin. 3139 Arnow Place, New York 61, N.Y. The self-appointed American disseminators of the "auteur" line. $6.00 for 6 issues.

Nuestro Cine. Malasana 7, 1° dcha, Madrid, Spain. The problems and achievements of the vital yet struggling Spanish industry. $6.00.

Obectif. C.P. 64, Station "N", Montréal 18, Canada. Journal of young Montreal Frenchmen, some of whom make films at the National Film Board. $4.50 for 10 issues.

Postif. Editions du Terrain Vague, 23-25 rue du Cherche-Midi, Paris 6e, France. Most violent, hence sometimes the most entertaining of the French journals; most overtly far-left; vehemently anti-*Cahiers*, anti-Bazin. $8.10 per year.

Premier Plan, B.P. 3, Lyon, France. Each issue devoted to a director, actor, or issue. $4.50 per year.

Présence du Cinéma. 25 Passage des Princes, Paris 2e, France. A journal with a special liking for spectacle. 33NF for 4 issues.

The Seventh Art. 311 East 50th St., New York, N.Y. An attempt at a middle-brow movie magazine, serving somewhat the same function as *Films & Filming*.

Sight and Sound. British Film Institute, 81 Dean St., London W.I., England. The doyen of English-language film criticism; often attacked, but still an excellent journal. $3.00 per year.

Soviet Film. V-O Sovexportfilm, K-9,7 Maly Gnezduikowski, Moskow, Russia. A publicity sheet.

Temas de Cine. General Goded 42-2B, Madrid 4, Spain. Special issues devoted to directors of films, with complete scripts. Prices vary.

Tidskriften Chaplin. Box 913, Stockholm, Sweden. A small but influential journal.

Tiempo de Cine. Avda. Gaona 2907, piso 3°, Oficina 4, Buenos Aires, Argentina. Journal of the Buenos Aires cineclub. Reviews, reports, detailed documentation; good coverage of Latin American cinema generally. $1.00 per copy.

Unijapan Film Quarterly. Shochiku Kaikan Bldg., No. 8 3-chome, Tsukiji, Chuo-Ku, Tokyo, Japan. A publicity sheet, with synopsis and stills.

Variety. 154 W. 46th St., N.Y. 36, N.Y. The weekly trade journal of the U.S. entertainment industry. $15.00 per year.

World Screen. 26 Avenue de Segur, Paris 7e, France. Published twice yearly by the International Film and Television Council; articles on industrial and organizational problems. 70c single issue, $1.40 double issue.

Films of the Quarter

Pauline Kael was unable to get her contrbution to us in time for this issue; she will be back next time. With the Spring issue Colin Young, Los Angeles Editor of FQ *and a contributor to* Sight & Sound, Frontier, Kosmorama, *and other journals, will join the panel.*

Stanley Kauffmann

New York's first Film Festival at Lincoln Center was highly interesting because of the audience, and because of three features and the chance to see a display of international shorts. The audience, if we discount the fringe that would flock to soup-can sculpture if they thought it would demonstrate special sensitivities, showed an enthusiasm (both pro and con) that proved again the unique importance of the film today. The three outstanding features were Polanski's *Knife in the Water* (already discussed here), Olmi's *The Fiancées,* and Losey's *The Servant* (to be discussed later). Outstanding shorts were those by the Czechs Bedrich and Brdecka, the Italian Bozzetto, the Englishman Dunning, the American Vanderbeek.

Some adverse comments. First, it was senseless for the Museum of Modern Art to run a concurrent series; both programs simply could not be encompassed. Second, the "cinéma-verité" shorts by Leacock and Drew seemed to me corruptive in their assumptions that these matters of presidential and legal activity were public property. Of course the individuals concerned had assented. Of course the films were not boring. It would not be boring if a camera were secreted in the president's bedroom, but it would not be much more intrusive. (The fake democratic-public interest argument could run: "The White House belongs to the country and the people have a right to know what happens in it.")

We were asked not to comment on specific pictures so I will note only that the status of "cinéma-verité" was not enhanced by a French feature; that an imitation of Antonioni proves that the adolescent mind thinks that the way to respond to commercialism is to wallow in artiness; that all the films (excepting Olmi's) were too long. Richard Roud's selection of features was extremely questionable. One realizes that his choice was limited; presumably he could not have every film he would have liked. But this does not excuse (to particularize just once) the ludicrous Jean-Pierre Melville trash and several others. Moreover, Roud's program notes, soggy with the worst film-journal jargon, lavished such indiscriminate praise on all the films that the program became the cinéaste equivalent of the Mad. Ave. hard sell.

Brief notes on three recent pictures. *Tom Jones,* easily the film most overrated by New York reviewers in my lifetime, is a sporadically amusing, generally well-acted, superbly photographed jumble. Tony Richardson, a director without a style, grabs at everything from Turpin to Truffaut, seemingly in fear of boring his audience with an 18th-century story. *Billy Liar,* scripted by Keith Waterhouse and Willis Hall from the former's novel, is bitterly funny for the most part, and shows increased self-confidence on the part of the gifted John Schlesinger. Tom Courtenay, imaginatively supple enough, lacks the sex and bottled-up steam that Albert Finney must have brought to the stage production. Also, the role of the "free" girl is cloudy, and in it Julie Christie gets an almost MGM star build-up of smiley close-ups. *It's A Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World,* a film no less inflated than its title, shows what a man who doesn't understand seriousness can do when he turns to lightness. (Stanley Kramer.) Dozens of comedians, three hours and forty minutes of Cinerama slapstick, and nothing like equivalent laughs. I'll remember thirty or forty seconds of Buster Keaton,

Gavin Lambert

The film of *Tom Jones* succeeds through creative disrespect for its material. It's a personal, contemporary version of a period novel (like Buñuel's *Robinson Crusoe* or Lang's *Moonfleet*) as opposed to the conventional re-creation (*Wuthering Heights, Le Rouge et le Noir,* etc.). And the novel in question is not easy to like: some funny characters and scenes, but how long and mechanically complicated the narrative, how determined the heartiness, how stodgy the prose... "Understanding of human nature" and "superb construction" are the old critical stand-bys for it, but Fielding seems deficient in both of these beside Defoe or his own marvelous contemporary, Smollett. *Tom Jones,* incidentally, was written just before Fielding became a police magistrate. His attitude toward his young hero and heroine is at times unbearably patronizing, as from the bench.

The contribution of John Osborne's screenplay is to simplify the action, retaining the best comic episodes and characters, to heighten the climax (Tom's escape from the gallows), and to suggest—through "alienation" devices such as commentary, asides to the audience, and so on—a detached view of the plot's formalities. Tony Richardson and a wonderful company of actors take it, so to speak, from there. The older characters are now seen from Tom's and Sophia's point of view, instead of the other way around, and the attitude is deliberately "modern"—beneath all the high jinks a view of the eighteenth century emerges, with its grossness, brutality, violent contrasts between the lives of rich and poor. The London scenes, alternating elegant masquerades with slums, ornamental mansions with Newgate prison, are particularly effective in this way. The elements of parody and caricature, apart from being entertaining in themselves, lighten the plot contrivances and forestall monotony. The silent film introduction quickly and wittily establishes that Tom was a

TOM JONES.

foundling, discovered by the drunken Squire Allworthy in his own bed, and disarms convention from the start. The courtship of Tom and Sophia becomes unexpectedly charming when Richardson, remembering *Jules et Jim,* describes it in improvised mime. The bravura scene of the hunt builds to a sardonic comment on the hunters, and the interlude between Tom and Mrs. Waters at the inn, where they devour chicken, oysters and pears with grotesque lewdness, is suitably delicious. Whatever one's view of the novel, by the way, all this is in keeping with Fielding's (weightier) habit of digression.

Impossible not to pick out, from an unusually frisky cast, Joyce Redman as the seedy voluptuous Mrs. Waters, and Hugh Griffith as Squire Western, absurd and horrible, leaping indiscriminately on girls and pigs in the hay. Albert Finney skilfully does all that he can with Tom—as so often, the picaresque hero is the leading but the thinnest part. The photography has a watercolor quality, appropriately reminiscent of Rowlandson. If the film is sometimes over-directed—cutting and hand-held camera effects at moments too frantic—this is the defect, as they say, of its virtue. Richardson has gone all out, rightly, for pace, jauntiness, and electric invention. It is perhaps inevitable that this kind of film should be both wildly over-rated and prissily under-praised. Obviously not one of the greatest comedies ever made (you would think the reviewers who said that had never seen Chaplin, or

Laurel and Hardy, or W. C. Fields, or *The Lady Eve*), it is still a sophisticated and exuberant one, unserious in the best way—seriously.

Andrew Sarris

This quarter has been marked (for me at least) by the scholarly dividends of the Fourth Montreal International Film Festival and the First New York International Film Festival, two steps forward in cinematic enlightenment without the expenses of trans-Atlantic voyages to Cannes, Venice, Berlin, London, etc. We all know that film festivals are, by definition, complete disasters. There are never enough good films, interesting companions, or stimulating conversations. The protestations of Art over Commerce are never convincing, and the pretentiousness of the merchant posing as the mandarin is always absurd. NEVER AGAIN! is the perennial battle-cry between the end of one festival and the beginning of the next. What else is there to being a film critic, after all, but seeing films ad infinitum, if not ad nauseam. Actually, if nausea precedes infinity, it is time for the film critic to change his profession.

Taking it from the top, the big treat of the quarter was Max Ophul's *Lola Montès,* shown relatively uncut for the first time in America at the Museum of Modern Art in September 1963. (The utterly complete version was shown in Montreal last year, and in Paris two years ago when last I saw it.) Kenji Mizoguchi's *Sansho the Bailiff* won some converts among critics who generally disagree with me about everything else. Luis Buñuel's *The Exterminating Angel* opened the New York Film Festival before the kind of glittering opening night audience which makes theater-going such an ordeal. Needless to say, Buñuel was not well received by the Philistines.

Thanks to the two festivals, I have now seen all of Jean-Luc Godard's films, long and short, with the exception of his latest feature, *Le Mépris.* Godard's range of technical expression puts him at the head of the *Nouvelle Vague* class of 1959. I particularly admire *Une Femme est une femme* for its evocation of all the irrational joyousness of the cinema, and *Le Petit Soldat* for its unified vision of political and personal emotions against the cynical background of the Algerian Civil War, resuming in a different form as I write. (I was also struck by the construction of an atomic installation at Bodega Bay, site of Hitchcock's *The Birds.*) An advance viewing of Alain Resnais' *Muriel* suggests that further viewings will be necessary before an informed critical verdict is possible, but then all films worth writing about at all should be seen more than once. At first glance, I like *Muriel,* which should be even more controversial than *Marienbad.*

Joseph Losey's *The Servant* is notable not only as the director's most accomplished work to date, but also for the richly tinted absurdities of Harold Pinter's script, and the brilliant ensemble performance of Dirk Bogarde, James Fox, Sarah Miles, and Wendy Craig. Robert Bresson's *Le Procés de Jeanne d'Arc* is a bit too austere for my taste, but like Godard's *Vivre sa vie,* a starkly personal testament which makes no concessions to its audience. No comment on Chris Marker's *Le Joli Mai* until I can include it in a general article on *cinéma-verité. ("Je vois la verité, mais je ne vois pas le cinéma.")* Roman Polanski's *Knife in the Water* displays a sense of humor not usually associated with the tortured Polish cinema.

Thumbs down on Enrico (*Au Coeur de la vie*), Kobayashi (*Harakiri*), Ozu (*An Autumn Afternoon*), Torre Nilsson (*La Terraza*), Baratier (*Sweet and Sour*), Teshigahara (*The Pitfall),* and Anderson *(This Sporting Life.).* From Hollywood and Hawaii, *Donovan's Reef* is John Ford's *Picnic on the Grass* just as *Picnic on the Grass* was Jean Renoir's *The Tempest,* the ultimate distillation of an old artist's serenity and wisdom.

Book Reviews

THE WESTERN: FROM SILENTS TO CINERAMA

By George N. Fenin and William K. Everson. (New York: Orion Press, 1962. $12.50)

The authors of this authoritative and analytic history of the Western film set out to fill a void which they believed existed in the writing of motion picture history. They felt that the Western film had been neglected by American screen historians (they do cite three books of foreign origin devoted specifically to the Western) and decided to do a substantially organic work on this major genre in American films. They also hoped to correct some of the misrepresentations of the Hollywood flacks, the work of writers who knew or cared little about Westerns, and those who lampooned the Western art, reverting to the "cliché of the hero always kissing his horse instead of the girl."

George N. Fenin, a critic for *Film Culture*, and William K. Everson, one of America's foremost historians, have done an admirable job. Their detailed and comprehensive study examines how our nation's ideals, prejudices, disillusions, and social problems have been reflected in this popular film form. And they have described and critically evaluated a large number of films, from the unscrubbed realism of the early silents to the present attempts at epic or "psychological" Westerns and television's Western boom (1955–1960).

The book begins with a discussion of the reality of Western history as opposed to the Hollywood versions of the West, and a critical evaluation of the contents and moral influences of various films. We read about Western history moving out of the American Revolutionary states to new frontiers and no man's lands stretching out to a geographical border of ocean. And we can remember how Hollywood took "a drab and grim frontier, with its people struggling for existence as ranchers, farmers and merchants, and depicted it to audiences in an entirely different fashion."

Western characters could also be so transformed. Thus Sam Bass could be a ruthless outlaw, portrayed by fat and swarthy Nestor Paiva, in *Badmen's Territory* (1946) or a clean-cut, clear-blue-eyed, misunderstood hero, as typified by Howard Duff in *Calamity Jane and Sam Bass* (1949). General George Custer's character traits and historical deeds were also tailored for *Santa Fe Trail* (1940), *They Died With Their Boots On* (1941), and *Sitting Bull* (1954), specifically to suit the screen personalities of Ronald Reagan, Errol Flynn, and Douglas Kennedy. Even Geronimo, the famous Apache, was never captured in the same manner–in *Geronimo* (1939), *I Killed Geronimo* (1950), and *Walk the Proud Land* (1956), the latter presenting the most straightforward account.

But even with such plot and personality alterations, epic or adulterated "grade B" Westerns, necessarily shot on location and containing clusters of cinematic action, reflected timeless and universal American traditions. Western themes, base according to the authors on "the triplex system of the hero, the adventure, and the law," have, on occasion, been so handled as to reach a poetic spirit through their documentary simplicity. But the authors also see value in the films of Bill Elliott (for Monogram and Allied Artists) and in the sure-fire entertainment aspects of the numerous "Hero versus Badman" plots with Jack Palance, Doug Fowley, Harry Woods, Roy Barcroff, Robert Frazier, or Edmund Cobb (a Western hero of the 'twenties) taking aim at silver stars or the too-fancy costumes of many a Western hero. They rightly attack the screen formulas employing the stereotype evolving from "a good Indian is a dead Indian." And they point out how the women in Westerns have changed through the years–evolving through stages of companionship, frailty, self-reliance, and various degrees of sexuality (including sexually aggressive heroines). Adventure and law have been as

The book then assumes a chronological approach. The authors take us back to the tracks of the Delaware and Lackawanna Railroad (near Dover, New Jersey) for Edwin Porter's work on *The Great American Train Robbery* (1903). They call Porter "the most creative single force in motion pictures between 1901 (when he was among the foremost of the 'industry's reputed total of six motion picture cameramen) and 1908," when D. W. Griffith joined Biograph. Big and beefy Broncho Billy Anderson, the first western star and a masked bandit in *Train Robbery,* is given detailed attention, particularly in regard to his lack of riding ability and to his continuing character in close to 500 short Westerns—largely based on pulp magazine and dime novel stories.

An analysis of the Western contributions of D. W. Griffith and Thomas H. Ince comes next. Both, the authors assert, built upon the work of Porter, Griffith heightening tension through editing, close-ups, and the cross-cutting technique—which added maximum excitement to melodramas. *The Last Drop of Water* (1911), called here a precursor of *The Covered Wagon* (1923), *Fighting Blood* (1911), and *The Battle at Elderbush Gulch* (1913) exhibited Griffith's serious study of the genre, although he was still only approaching the fulfillment of his art. Ince was already "at the zenith of the purely creative stage of his career." *War on the Plains* (1912) and *Custer's Last Fight* exhibited the efficient shooting methods and showmanship for which he is mainly remembered. The authors provide information concerning Ince's preference for detailed shooting script and offer the opinion that Ince was overly fond of unnecessarily tragic endings. But they do pay tribute to Ince's tragic, moving, and expertly photographed two-reeler, *The Heart of an Indian.*

Although William S. Hart was actually the third important Western star, arriving on the film scene after Broncho Billy Anderson and Tom Mix, he is treated after Griffith and Ince —particularly because of his importance and his quest for realism. The authors devote some thirty-four pages to proving that Hart brought more stature, poetry, and realism to the Western than anyone else.

The section traces Hart's career through his odd jobs—East and West—his stage acting career in *Romeo and Juliet* and *Ben-Hur* and, more appropriately, as Cash Hawkins in *The Squaw Man* and in the title role in *The Virginian.* Hart's introduction to screen audiences in the films of Thomas Ince (Hart later directed most of them, although Ince was given credit), his screen character, which evolved from reformation-of-the-badman plots (through love of a heroine, the admiration of a child, the cowboy's love for his horse, a devoted affection for a sister), his constant quest for authenticity, and his refusal to introduce action for its own sake, are thoroughly discussed and evaluated. The authors have done a detailed analysis of *Hell's Hinges* (1916) and have discussed all of the other important films including: *The Taking of Luke McVane, The Aryan, The Silent Man, The Toll Gate, Wild Bill Hickok* and Hart's final appearance in *Tumbleweeds* (1925, reissued with music, sound effects, and an eight-minute poignant prologue, spoken by Hart, in 1939). Their description of Hart's retirement years and his legacy to the American public (his will left money for a museum on his old West Hollywood estate and money for philanthropic purposes) is an appropriate tribute to "a grand old man who loved truth of the West and the Western with a passion and a devotion rarely shared later by other human beings."

Mix is not treated with as much detail or as much feeling. The rugged cowboy is most memorable for his slick and polished screen personality and for his spectacular riding stunts. However, the authors recognize the magnetism of his screen personality and point out that his films made needed money for Fox to attempt more serious things (such as F. W. Murnau's *Sunrise* in 1927). Mix's days from Clearfield County, Pennsylvania (his birthplace) through the Spanish-American War, The Miller Brothers' 101 Ranch, his early start with Selig as a "safety man," and his days as a star for Fox are all included.

Fenin and Everson mention that during Mix's Selig period, a gradual standardization of the Western—particularly of the "series" Western with set stars—had already begun. Triangle released a series of Westerns starring Douglas Fairbanks, in which some fine action and comedy suited the earlier Fairbanks personality—which has often been neglected by screen historians when they estimate the actor's art and techniques. Roy Stewart, Harold Lockwood, William Desmond, William and Franklyn Farnum, William Russell, Wallace Reid, and most notably Harry Carey (directed by John Ford) were others who attempted to establish or increase reputations through "series" Westerns.

But by 1923 Westerns were generally out of favor. However, that year James Cruze directed his classic *The Covered Wagon* and John Ford followed (in 1924) with *The Iron Horse*. Fenin and Everson fully analyze and evaluate the stories, production details, and acting of these films.

Despite the success and the influence of these two films, the authors tell us, "assembly line" Westerns began to develop a new crop of stars. In the 'twenties the aforementioned Maynard and Gibson, Bob Steele, Buddy Roosevelt, Wally Wales, Buffalo Bill, Jr., Al Hoxie, Fred Thompson, Art Acord, Jack Hoxie, Leo Maloney, Tom Tyler, Buzz Barton, Pete Morrison, and others followed the Tom Mix tradition. Only Harry Carey avoided such "streamlined" Westerns and stuck to the Hart tradition. Buck Jones' pictures reflected the formats of the successful Mix Westerns, but "his personal performance, underplayed and rugged" and his costume, "far less gaudy and flamboyant," followed the Hart line. Directors like William Wyler and William K. Howard served apprenticeships to such material. Howard's *White Gold* is particularly mentioned as an offbeat and classic Western (no prints have survived in the U.S.) and as a forerunner of Victor Sjöström's *The Wind* (1928).

A long and interesting section on the western costume follows, which throws light upon the changing concepts of Westerns and Western heroes through the years. Costumes range from gaudy (Roy Rogers' usual attire) to realistic (George O'Brien's in *The Iron Horse*). A happy medium, according to the authors, might be the sort of outfit worn by Gary Cooper in *High Noon* and by Hugh O'Brian in his Wyatt Earp series.

The remaining half of the book is not as important, in my opinion, as the historically and aesthetically valuable first half. Westerns of the 'thirties and 'forties are discussed as to type, the starring players, and their significance to the public. The majority of the films mentioned were programmers, popular with Western fans, but not so memorable as the work of Hart and Mix. Fenin and Everson mention some of the work of Ken Maynard and Buck Jones as worthy of study. Forgotten Western "classics"—such as William Wyler's *Hell's Heroes* and Edward L. Cahn's *Law and Order* —plus *Robin Hood of Eldorado, Sutter's Gold, The Plainsman, Wells Fargo, The Texas Rangers,* competent Westerns of the 'thirties—are dealt with. The Hopalong Cassidy cycle, the film personalities of Gene Autry, Roy Rogers, and their imitators are thoroughly discussed. And two of John Ford's favorites—George O'Brien, Fox's top Western star in the 'thirties, and John Wayne, who worked for various smaller companies until *Stagecoach* changed his market and star potential, are placed in their proper perspectives.

The section on the 'forties is most interesting when the authors deal with *Stagecoach, Union Pacific, The Westerner* (with Walter Brennan's classic portrayal of Judge Roy Bean), *Arizona, My Darling Clementine, Wagonmaster,* and the socially significant *Ox-Bow Incident.* Their comments on Western serials (from their inception to their high point in the 'forties), of outlaw cults (from the Daltons to the James boys), and of parodies and satires (*Ruggles of Red Gap, Destry Rides Again,* etc.) will also command attention.

During the war years cowboys battled both Nazis, in *Cowboy Commandoes,* and Japanese, in something called *Texas to Bataan.* But the new trends in the postwar Western were far

more important. "Sex neuroses, and a racial conscience," the authors tell us, appeared (in that order) as a result of the postwar gloom and "psychology" that seemed to permeate American films. Howard Hughes' *The Outlaw* which emphasized outsized physical proportions of Jane Russell, along with the blatant suggestiveness of the love scenes between Rio (Russell) and Billy the Kid (the inept and inexperienced Jack Beutel); King Vidor's *Duel in the Sun,* called by some "Lust in the Dust"; and the illegitimacy in *Jubal,* are some of the examples of the former. "Neurotic" Westerns such as *Pursued* and *The Furies,* and racial-theme pictures, usually dealing with the Indian (primarily following the pattern of *Broken Arrow*), also seem to bear out the authors' thesis.

Henry King's much-imitated *The Gunfighter* and William Wellman's *Track of the Cat,* which Fenin and Everson called a "moody Eugene O'Neill-flavored Western," are used as examples of the offbeat Western of neurotic content.

Sections on the unsung heroism and the seasoned dedication of stuntmen and second unit directors; the decline of the "B" Western in favor of the grade-Z television Western; the Western's international audience; and even the international Western, lead us to the contemporary Western scene. Among the interesting facts assembled here are items about the hazardous stunts of Yakima Canutt; rising production costs which forced the use of less dramatic pan shots for exciting, running shots; and the excessive use of stock footage (the plot of *Laramie* was developed to employ all the big scenes from Ford's *Stagecoach*); the new stars of television (even more interestingly covered in "Westerns: The Six-Gun Gallahad" —*Time,* March 30, 1959); the vogue of imitating American Westerns which did and does exist in Germany and England (the authors might have done more with Japan). Notes on the ambitious efforts of Howard Hawks *(Red River, The Big Sky, Rio Bravo),* William Wyler *(The Big Country),* Delmer Daves *(3:10 to Yuma, Three Young Texans),* George Stevens *(Shane)* and Fred Zinnemann *(High Noon),* lead the authors to some hopeful comments on Westerns released at the time of writing—*Lonely Are the Brave, Ride the High Country* (these first two are beginning to attract the attention they deserve), Ford's *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valence,* and Cinerama's attempt to capture *How the West Was Won.* The authors mention, too, the projected remake of *The Great Train Robbery.* Perhaps the Western has come full cycle.

The Western: From Silents to Cinerama is and will be for many years the definitive study of Western films. It provides engrossing reading for those who have experience with the genre and for those who want to become acquainted with it.

However, I would like to point out some flaws. Too much emphasis is given to the films of people like Ken Maynard and Buck Jones at the expense of a longer analysis of *Stagecoach, Red River,* and *Track of the Cat.* Even *Shane* gets a somewhat cursory treatment. The authors do point out that *Stagecoach* has often been overrated, and that William S. Hart remarked that the prolonged chase could never have taken place (the Indians would have been smart enough to shoot the horses first), but they compare the character development to "a sort of Grand Hotel on wheels," rather than something it is closer to—Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales.* The plots of Western B's and some of their production values are more important to the writers than they will be to future screen historians (including those who analyze Western films). And some of the quotations which introduce the chapters reveal that at least one of the writers was attempting to show us that he has examined Eisenstein and Pudovkin.

But most readers will applaud the entire product. The accuracy of research on curious questions—such as why heroines never seem to have any mothers, and why some Western streets have little dust arising from them—prove that Fenin and Everson loved what they were doing and did it well. They can be proud of their accomplishment.—ROBERT C. ROMAN

FILM: BOOK 2
Films of Peace and War

Edited by Robert Hughes. (New York: Grove Press, 1962. $4.75)

This volume covers a vast field in two senses: a dismayingly complex set of problems and issues, and a huge number of films. Sam Fuller is surely right in saying "Generally speaking, war films are bad." Nonetheless, the danger of war today is so overriding, and our political and emotional responses to it are so primitive, that any intelligent discussion of it has a very high priority. Robert Hughes has assembled materials which bear on the problem from various directions: analytical discussions of films by critics, interviews with John Huston, Norman McLaren, and Alain Resnais, and answers to a questionnaire by a long list of critics and film-makers. (There are also two supplements: the scripts for Huston's *Let There Be Light* and Resnais' *Nuit et Brouillard.*)

The danger of the project is that discussing a film's "attitude" toward a "problem" such as war is to isolate aspects of it which are only separable for bad films—tractish films like *All Quiet,* evasive films like *On the Beach,* confused films like *Bridge on the River Kwai,* and so on. The contributions here mostly avoid this problem. Also, films of quality whose attitude toward war could be considered generally sane by those outside the orbit of the U.S. military establishment are very few, and some of them have become socially irrelevant, like *La Grande Illusion.* Most "anti-war" films are, to say the least, ambiguous; and perhaps the chief value of *Film Book: 2* is that it establishes this very clearly.

The most intriguing remarks by the film-makers bear on the crucial question of whether one can make films about nationalistic military conflicts without being contaminated by some kind of patriotism or glamor. This is most sharply put by Truffaut, who outlines a film called *Le Refus*—about various soldiers resisting war, but centering on a "modest individualistic deserter" who "purely and simply *refuses* war." And the issue is generalized by Paul Goodman, in a thoughtful, systematic, and discouraging article which gets behind political formulation to psychological questions as well. Of all the writers in the volume, Goodman best understands the terrible ambivalences of love and rage that are the emotional wellsprings of the few works of genuine art which deal with war; of all the writers in the volume, he is most aware of the extent to which war preparation has become our way of life, with almost every man of us dependent, for our existence, to some degree on it.

Neil Morris, after an excellent survey of East European films, remarks that the only pacifist film to come from Europe since World War II was from Finland; both *Mein Kampf* and *Der Brücke* were made by neutrals; film-makers of both East and West seem confined "within the strait jacket of an approach dictated either directly or subtly by the cold war." Colin Young's survey of Hollywood implies similar conclusions. My own suspicion is that the only sane kind of film Americans might be able to make about war, which would not entail either confused ambiguity or the "logical" problems of Truffaut's, would be comedies. Comedy is the form that most tenaciously and resourcefully clings to the human, the individual—at the expense of the machine, the system, the impersonal. The subject is surely ripe: the entire warfare state provides a ready-made comic cast apt for the most ghastly and touching comedy. It will take film-makers of audacity and compassion, and backers of considerable nerve, but I am confident that audiences would much rather die laughing than just plain die. Personally, the only war film I would like to make would be a successor to *Duck Soup.*—ERNEST CALLENBACH

IMPROVISATION FOR THE THEATER

By Viola Spolin. (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1963. $6.95)

Improvisation for the Theater by Viola Spolin: an iconoclastic handbook of theater by the high priestess of improvisational theater in this

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Edited by Robert Hughes. (New York: Grove Press, 1962. $4.75)

This volume covers a vast field in two senses: a dismayingly complex set of problems and issues, and a huge number of films. Sam Fuller is surely right in saying "Generally speaking, war films are bad." Nonetheless, the danger of war today is so overriding, and our political and emotional responses to it are so primitive, that any intelligent discussion of it has a very high priority. Robert Hughes has assembled materials which bear on the problem from various directions: analytical discussions of films by critics, interviews with John Huston, Norman McLaren, and Alain Resnais, and answers to a questionnaire by a long list of critics and film-makers. (There are also two supplements: the scripts for Huston's *Let There Be Light* and Resnais' *Nuit et Brouillard.*)

The danger of the project is that discussing a film's "attitude" toward a "problem" such as war is to isolate aspects of it which are only separable for bad films—tractish films like *All Quiet,* evasive films like *On the Beach,* confused films like *Bridge on the River Kwai,* and so on. The contributions here mostly avoid this problem. Also, films of quality whose attitude toward war could be considered generally sane by those outside the orbit of the U.S. military establishment are very few, and some of them have become socially irrelevant, like *La Grande Illusion.* Most "anti-war" films are, to say the least, ambiguous; and perhaps the chief value of *Film Book: 2* is that it establishes this very clearly.

The most intriguing remarks by the film-makers bear on the crucial question of whether one can make films about nationalistic military conflicts without being contaminated by some kind of patriotism or glamor. This is most sharply put by Truffaut, who outlines a film called *Le Refus*—about various soldiers resisting war, but centering on a "modest individualistic deserter" who "purely and simply *refuses* war." And the issue is generalized by Paul Goodman, in a thoughtful, systematic, and discouraging article which gets behind political formulation to psychological questions as well. Of all the writers in the volume, Goodman best understands the terrible ambivalences of love and rage that are the emotional wellsprings of the few works of genuine art which deal with war; of all the writers in the volume, he is most aware of the extent to which war preparation has become our way of life, with almost every man of us dependent, for our existence, to some degree on it.

Neil Morris, after an excellent survey of East European films, remarks that the only pacifist film to come from Europe since World War II was from Finland; both *Mein Kampf* and *Der Brücke* were made by neutrals; film-makers of both East and West seem confined "within the strait jacket of an approach dictated either directly or subtly by the cold war." Colin Young's survey of Hollywood implies similar conclusions. My own suspicion is that the only sane kind of film Americans might be able to make about war, which would not entail either confused ambiguity or the "logical" problems of Truffaut's, would be comedies. Comedy is the form that most tenaciously and resourcefully clings to the human, the individual—at the expense of the machine, the system, the impersonal. The subject is surely ripe: the entire warfare state provides a ready-made comic cast apt for the most ghastly and touching comedy. It will take film-makers of audacity and compassion, and backers of considerable nerve, but I am confident that audiences would much rather die laughing than just plain die. Personally, the only war film I would like to make would be a successor to *Duck Soup.*—ERNEST CALLENBACH

IMPROVISATION FOR THE THEATER

By Viola Spolin. (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1963. $6.95)

Improvisation for the Theater by Viola Spolin: an iconoclastic handbook of theater by the high priestess of improvisational theater in this

country. It is a long-awaited work because since the early 'fifties when the first professional improvisational company, The Compass, was founded in Chicago—and perhaps earlier still with the influence of Brecht—there has been the breeze of a new movement on the battlefield of acting methods. This is the charter for that movement, and it comes with all its semantic battle flags flying.

In its vocabulary *acting* is defined as "hiding behind a character . . . to avoid contact with theater reality . . . a wall between players"; *believing* (that cornerstone of The Method) as "something personal to the actor and not necessary to creating stage reality"; *biography* (another sacred cow) as "information, statistics . . . keeps players from an intuitive experience . . . 'No biographies!' "; *feeling* as "private to the actor; not for public viewing"; *imagination* as "belonging to the intellect as opposed to coming from the intuition"; *recall* (most sacred of all) as "subjective memory (dead) . . . confused by many with acting."

The improvisational school of acting regards theater as a game, actors as players, audience as part of the game. The body of this book is devoted to a large number of exercises designed to free the student for playing. "Culture, race, education . . . prejudices, intellectualisms, and borrowings most of us wear to live out our daily lives" are regarded as forming a cage over the intuitive, while spontaneity is the "explosion that for the moment frees us." The exercises are artifices against artificiality, structures designed to almost fool spontaneity into being—or perhaps a frame, carefully built to keep out interferences, in which the student-actor waits. Important in the game is the "ball"—the "Point of Concentration," a technical problem, sometimes a double technical problem which keeps the mind (a censoring device) so busy rubbing its stomach and its head in opposite directions, so to speak, that genius, unguarded, "happens," and stage fright, awkward movements, poor enunciation, phoniness, lack of characterization, in fact nearly every ill ever witnessed on stage, disappears. Panacean—but rather convincingly so. "There is no time for . . . [all of this] anymore than a quarterback running down the field can be concerned with his clothes or whether he is universally admired."

Though there is an interesting section on children's theater and another on rehearsing and performing a formal play (as opposed to an improvised one), the center of the book is this group of exercises—remarkably ingenious whether considered together or separately. In the author's anti-authoritarian scheme an actor's weaknesses are never criticized directly as that only adds to his anxiety and traps him in the "approval/disapproval" treadmill which destroys creativity; instead the actor is prescribed certain exercises. Here is one for advanced students which necessitates nonverbal communication and intense observation between actors: two players in an art gallery. A is already seated on stage. "B makes entrance, walks around viewing exhibit. B decides what A looks like and must in some way show this to A. When A knows what he looks like, he gets up with the character qualities B has given him, walks around the gallery, and exits."

The author is presently director of Workshop at The Second City (son of Compass); in her background are Hull House, WPA Recreational Project, and an improvisational theater for children. The tone of her book, the workshop atmosphere that is prescribed, and the exercises themselves—some of them games from Neva Boyd's collection—reflect these influences as well as those of more standard theatrical sources.

Those in theater—film-makers included—will find this an important document in practice and theory; it is a bit like Natural Childbirth to obstetrics. It is full of insights into the manifold problems of performance. But the book can also be read as a problem in freedom, or like the Zen method of teaching archery, a system of instruction technical on one level, but on another a demonstration of world view: "Improvisation is openness of contact with the environment and each other and willingness to play."—TUNG

CLASSICS OF THE FOREIGN FILM

A Pictorial Treasury

By Parker Tyler. (New York: Citadel, 1962. $8.50)

We have come to the happy point where a film picture-book may be classed in the book trade as a gift item, and brought out at a specially arranged pre-Christmas price. The report is that Tyler's book sold very well, and it will doubtless continue to do so.

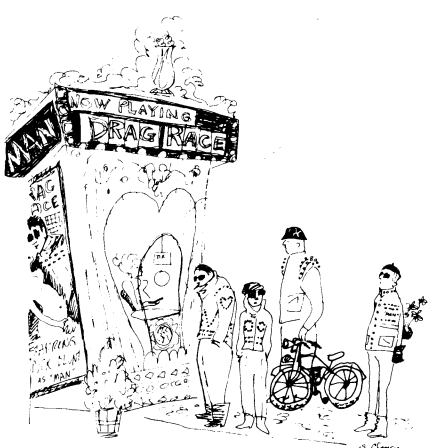
It is not at all the sort of thing one would expect from him—in fact he goes so far as to describe himself as a "fun-loving, broadminded collector of classics." Its sentences are short, their grammar straightforward, almost entirely free of lapses such as "Human aims, enriched by its egos, connect like things in a test tube." There is hardly any mythological analysis, though once he points out that a shadow above Raf Vallone's head looks like pagan horns. The films include most of those which we have all loved, at one point or another, and which have become the basic fare of film societies: it is an uncannily "mainstream" list. But Tyler is not afraid to include *Ecstasy* or *The Time Machine* too; and the book closes with *La Notte*. One may quibble endlessly with anybody's list of "best" films. What counts is that Tyler's comments are full and sensible; they recall for us the films we haven't seen for a while and entice us to see the few we haven't seen at all.

It must be admitted, however, that some of the tone of the new Tyler is unfortunate. In place of turgid Greenwich Village-ism we get a sometimes alarmingly middle-brow approach, especially in the captions to the pictures (which themselves are selected with impeccable taste). These usually trip along, in a slightly librettoish way, reminding us of the essentials of the action, but they can sink to describing Mastroianni (in *La Notte*) as "the heel who grinds a woman into the dirt in broad daylight." The closer Tyler gets to the present, of course, the more one wishes to quarrel with him (how can he put in *La Dolce Vita* yet leave out *Jules and Jim*? Why *Man in the White Suit* but not *Kind Hearts and Coronets*? and so on). But on the whole the book is a useful one, both for the initiated and for those becoming so. Like the best criticism, it sends one back to see the films again.—E.C.

R. M. Hodgens*

Entertainments

The Girl Hunters. Mike Hammer (Mickey Spillane himself, who adapted his novel with producer Robert Fellows and director Roy Rowland) stumbles through a dull, dim, grimy world that turns on nothing but personal passions—friendship, love, hatred, jealousy and above all revenge—but even this "philosophy" is mostly talk. Mike has been drinking since Velda disappeared some years ago, but he sobers up when a dying man tells him that the Dragon is after her, Tooth and Nail. He never does find Velda. He only



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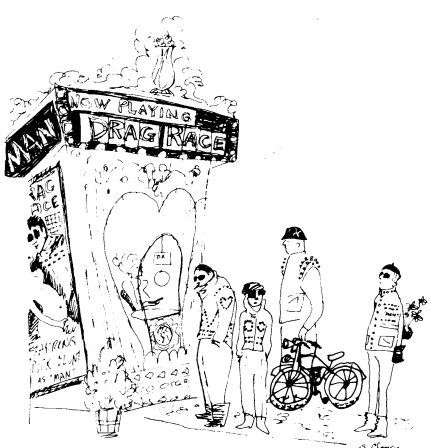

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Gigot. A quaint, lugubrious, arch comedy about a poor, mute slob (Jackie Gleason, who is responsible for the story, if not for the script, and for the music, if not for the arrangement) who is cheated, ridiculed, insulted, gotten drunk, drenched, beaten up, deprived, driven to theft, accused of kidnapping, and sees his one human friend, a little girl (Diane Gardner) almost killed, whereupon he is pursued and falls into the river—and all the time they're trying to put him in a home for the feeble-minded. Under Gene Kelly's direction, all this has an air of unreality, of course, but it is not the unreality of comedy, so that one keeps expecting something terrible to happen, and it does, but it never seems terrible enough. There are a few good moments—such as Gigot apprehensively running round and round with a carousel to keep an eye on the little girl—and the conclusion would be good enough with a few less shots; but there are some atrocious moments, too—such as Gigot's attempt to tell the child something or other in church.

The Great Escape. The objections are obvious. It is all too familiar, too elementary, too pretty, and too long. It may be, but it works. The only real difficulties seem to be those imposed upon W. R. Burnett and James Clavell in turning Paul Brickhill's nonfiction into escape opera; the only real error seems to be the prefatory note about accuracy. It is not a realistic film by any means. There are no lice, there are no louses. There is the Gestapo, of course, and the one Good German has the decency not to talk about it; but among the POW's the only missing stereotype is the informer and the only frailties are myopia, claustrophobia, and nerves. The score (Elmer Bernstein) is simple and stirring. The color photography (Daniel Fapp) is invariably beautiful, and producer-director John Sturges' wide-screen staging is invariably fluid—in barracks, tunnels, and open countryside. *The Great Escape* is about persistence and heroism. The simplicity and familiarity allow it to raise no other issues; all the goodness and beauty allow it to be, quite simply, an exhilarating film. At times, what accurate reality there is does threaten to turn it into an anthology of clichés and plot-lines, and the heroism comes close to sentimental paradox at the end. But Sturges' degree of success through all 169 minutes is remarkable; the total effect is barely marred.

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Irma la Douce. Has Billy Wilder reached the end of his tether? Can it be that the man responsible for *Double Indemnity, The Lost Weekend, Sunset Boulevard, The Big Carnival, and Some Like It Hot* just doesn't care any more? *Irma La Douce* is the dullest, most uninspired Wilder film in years. Not even Jack Lemmon can save it. A sense of realism has been the foundation of Wilder's best films. The concessions to fantasy here are those of Wilder the Hollywood producer with an eye on the box-office, not Wilder the one-time Berlin journalist with a cynical eye for the truth. Was there ever a *poule* so glamorous, a *flic* so naive, a *mec* so stagey, or a Paris so Viennese? Why then dispense with the score? This is a film almost totally "based" on something else. The Previn score is based on the Breffort music. The treatment is based on Wilder's previous *The Apartment*. Even the performances are "based"—Jacobi's philosophical barkeep on the missing Laughton, Bernardi's chief of police inspectors on the O'Brien of *Some Like It Hot*, MacLaine, with her inordinate cleavage, on the late Marilyn Monroe. As the show stands, it flops; it's a hastily made production, despite the money put into it. Ultimately, it's a long-winded, widescreen, Technicolor nudie, with Lemmon and MacLaine standing in for Hank Henry and June Wilkinson. It's a waste and an insult, to them and to us, without either the art of *Some Like It Hot* or the pace of *One-Two-Three* to cover. But the picture is cleaning up, and Wilder must be laughing, though not at the movie.

DANIEL BATES

Kiss of the Vampire. Another nearly successful horror from Hammer Films, somewhat disfigured even before the titles by the obligatory excess of bright, waxy blood. An English bride and groom (Jennifer Daniel and Edward De Souza) run out of petrol in a black forest somewhere in Germany. The poor, innocent fools are unable to tell a Van Helsing (Clifford Evans) from a Dracula (Noel Willman), but they somehow survive to finish the honeymoon as human beings. John Elder's screenplay makes little sense and mixes conventions. His vampires are traditional creatures, easily upset by garlic and crosses, but they are sophisticated Satanists as well. The good Professor speaks of the devil as "the principle of

finds corpses, and then has long conversations about the deceased. The only good reason for sitting through all this is that some of the talk is with a dragon lady (Shirley Eaton) whose husband, Senator Knapp, was killed by Commie punks while Mike was pretty much out of things. Spillane himself makes an initial impression as a likable slob; he never seems sufficiently obsessed to consider chopping up the Dragon's unconscious Tooth but then, remembering that the Federal government has its own passions, to hammer him down instead. What he does to the Nail is even farther beyond belief.

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Taras Bulba is in one respect better than *The Tartars*, better than *The Mongols*, and better than *The Huns*: there are more horsemen (the Argentine army). In other respects it perhaps has a bit more to offer, too: one onscreen mutilation and two threatened ("I'm not going to kill you, Cossack, I'm just going to fix it so that you'll never molest a Polish woman again"), a couple of floggings, one maiden almost burned at the stake, two routs and one siege, several glimpses of plague victims, two wild parties (music by Franz Waxman, lyrics by Mack David), one horseman down a gorge, one army off a cliff, one father killing his son, and a happy ending ("There will be no more killing. . . ."). One expects this sort of thing, and one expects the very heavy hand; what is surprising (except, perhaps, to those who notice that five editors are credited) is that though director J. Lee Thompson or second-unit director Cliff Lyons has done well enough with one of the two big chases and one of the Cossacks' rides, the rest is very clumsy, even allowing for the special effects and special lenses. In that respect, *The Mongols* and *The Huns* are much better, and they are shorter besides.

The VIP'S. We all know that the rich are not real people, and that their problems are mere escapism.

evil," but he cleans out the vampires by conjuring Beelzebub, who sends a stiff breeze and a plague of small, bloodthirsty bats. Like Alfred Hitchcock's birds, director Don Sharp's bats are ridiculous, unconvincing, overindulged, and disgusting. Even so, cast, color and decor are generally pleasant, there are some good portentous moments with everybody looking askance, and it is less of a jumble than *The Haunting*.

Rampage. Renowned trapper Harry Stanton (Robert Mitchum) goes to Malaya (Hawaii) to trap two tigers and a hybrid, auburn-coated "enchantress" (a plump jaguar sprayed orange) for a German zoo (San Diego). The great hunter Otto Abbot (Jack Hawkins) and Anna, his auburn-haired staff (Elsa Martinelli) go along to help. Since Anna regards Otto as a god, and Otto is out to prove he's still a man, these two cause no end of trouble, but Harry Stanton doesn't tense. The color is harsh, the score sounds borrowed, the scenery is dull, the action of little interest, and the lines are elementary, explicit, insistent. *Rampage* does have a surprise or two after Otto disproves himself, but it can be recommended only to those who thought *Hatari* was bad. Phil Karlson directed.

The Running Man. Rex (Laurence Harvey) plays dead to collect insurance. Just as his wife Stella (Lee Remick) is beginning to think he might as well be dead, they run into the man from Excelsior (Alan Bates) in Malaga. Plot and itinerary are familiar, and what comes of it all is predictable. Nothing is very exciting or outrageous, except the ironic coincidences and the magical assumption (i.e., if you play dead, you are). There is a clumsy flashback stitched in for no good reason (sympathy). Moreover, John Mortimer's talkative adaptation and the score are at odds with producer-director Carol Reed's understated manner with wide screen and color. Rex lives just long enough to gasp out an ironic line; Stella, stolid in misfortune, pauses long enough to give the police a smart, ironic answer before she walks into the dusk, loose ends dangling. Reed more or less brings it off.

Shock Corridor deals with insanity, incest, nymphomania, voyeurism, brainwashing, civil rights, and the Bomb—in other words, something for just about everyone. All that's needed to make it all-round family entertainment is a short sequence with Victor Mature leading three disconsolate pachyderms over a range of cardboard Alps.

In what must be one of the most preposterous and tasteless films of all time, a newspaper reporter who desperately wants to win a Pulitzer Prize has himself incarcerated in a mental institution, in the guise of a sexual deviate, with the intention of solving a murder committed there. In due course, he gains the confidence of the patients and solves the murder, but at a terrible price.

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Be that as it may, Terence Rattigan's original screenplay states its initial situation—fogbound at London Airport—with admirable skill. Will Paul Andros (Richard Burton) lose Frances (Elizabeth Taylor) to Marc Champselle (Louis Jourdan)? (No, of course not.) Will Les Mangrum (Rod Taylor) go to jail for writing that check? (Not with Miss Mead—Maggie Smith—working for him, he won't.) For comic relief, will producer-director Max Buda (Orson Welles) have to pay his taxes? (No, not if G.G.—Elsa Martinelli—can play Mary Stuart.) The one character who does not want to go anyway, Margaret Rutherford as an impoverished Duchess, does not have to, as it turns out. Rattigan's development contains some moments of genuine tension and humor, despite his stolid demonstrations that love can change people and that money cannot buy happiness. Unfortunately, his conclusion linking the two serious and the two comic plots is hardly convincing; and though the big triangle solves itself satisfactorily, it may be persuasive only because Paul, Frances, and Marc, like characters in an Antonioni film, seem capable of feeling and doing almost anything, despite the great personal presence of the stars who play them. A special splendor of setting is achieved in the Andros' grand entrance, but on the whole the film seems insufficiently extravagant. Anthony Asquith's direction still shows how much pure polish can do.

X. You can't get around it, scientists are Unnatural. They'll do anything to improve upon Nature, and then anything can happen. Take Dr. Xavier (Ray Milland), for instance. His motives were all right, but Nature's own x-ray machines were not good enough for him. He had to use those eye drops to develop x- or *n*-ray vision. He must have been crazy to begin with. *X* is an arbitrary series of obvious episodes developed with all the logic of "Superman" inverted: the perceptive Dr. X at a party, at an operation, in a carnival, in an unlicensed diagnostic clinic, and in Las Vegas. Police keep chasing him, but it takes a revivalist to put him in his place, in a wry but unprepared conclusion. What Dr. X says he sees (screenplay by Robert Dillon and Ray Russell) is sometimes interesting; what he does see (Spectarama) makes a good background for the titles, and though the color is bad some of director Roger Corman's more ordinary efforts are effective.

The Yellow Canary. Director Buzz Kulik has made a type of film which has begun to seem almost remarkable: a very-low-budget American film with solid cinematic craftsmanship. Frightful script weaknesses are mostly concealed by the lively if largely conventional direction and by Floyd Crosby's photography. The film suffers from too much Pat Boone too early (he sings three songs); some of the acting is embarrassing,, notably the jail-cell scene; there is a shameful fuzzy "montage" and other structural flaws. But Kulik deploys the familiar elements smoothly: the opening door shot from the blind side, the shadowy beach-joint scenes, several nerve-shattering shock cuts, a tense climax where kidnapper and father confront each other, with the audience ignorant of who is bluffing. (The audience cheers as the gun roars and the psychopath lurches to his death, as they earlier cheered an elementary deduction of his whereabouts.) Banal though it may be, it's exciting, which is more than you can say for most films that cost ten to fifty times as much.—E.C.

Correspondence & Controversy

Cinemascope

Since Mr. Barr was flattering enough to refer to me in his article in your issue of Summer 1963, perhaps you will allow me to make a brief comment.

I would not deny for a moment that in skilled hands CinemaScope can be employed most effectively, nor dispute Mr. Barr's examples. What I do not understand is why he should need to belittle other forms of cinema to justify his case: such exclusiveness is more calculated to betray lack of confidence than to carry conviction. Visually, the film medium consists of moving images shown in sequence. Directors may sometimes find it more congenial to express themselves by composing their action within a single image, and at others may be more attracted by the

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expressive possibilities of sequence; the emphasis will surely depend partly on personal style (the fact that Renoir has feelings against the use of close-ups, for example, in no way reduces the stature of Dreyer's *Passion of Joan of Arc*), partly on the period or country in which the director is working, and partly on technical necessity. I use the word "emphasis," because a skilled director should be able to mix his styles, and to convey his intention at any particular moment by the method most appropriate to it. A director who undertakes an assignment in CinemaScope accepts the necessity of working with that particular screen shape; but it is also a hallmark of the genuine artist to be able to make a virtue of necessity. It is pointless to ask a Leonardo whether he prefers to work in oils or tempera; sometimes one, sometimes the other; give him either, and he will produce a masterpiece.

My own exposition of the film-medium (I would not dare to elevate it to the level of an "aesthetic") is not "based on the Russians" as Mr. Barr suggests. It owes more to D. W. Griffith, the creator of editing. But fundamentally, as readers of my book will know, it derives from the mechanism of perception familiar to us in everyday life, and from a conception of the film as a temporal art rather than a spatial one.

It is easier to discover what Mr. Barr is against than what he is for, but if, as I gather, he is concerned to defend CinemaScope as a step towards "reality" (whatever that may mean), he must have been disconcerted to find his article immediately followed by the Editor's contribution, making it clear that a screen shape "analogous in proportions to the human field of vision . . . should be roundish, or failing that, squarish." Dare one remind Mr. Barr that it was Eisenstein, in a lecture given in Hollywood in 1930 called "The Dynamic Square," who suggested the use of a circular frame within which rectangles of various proportions might be introduced?—ERNEST LINDGREN, Curator National Film Archive, London

(ED. NOTE: Mr. Barr writes that he believes his article needs no special defense against Mr. Lindgren's remarks, and recommends readers to refer back to the original article.)