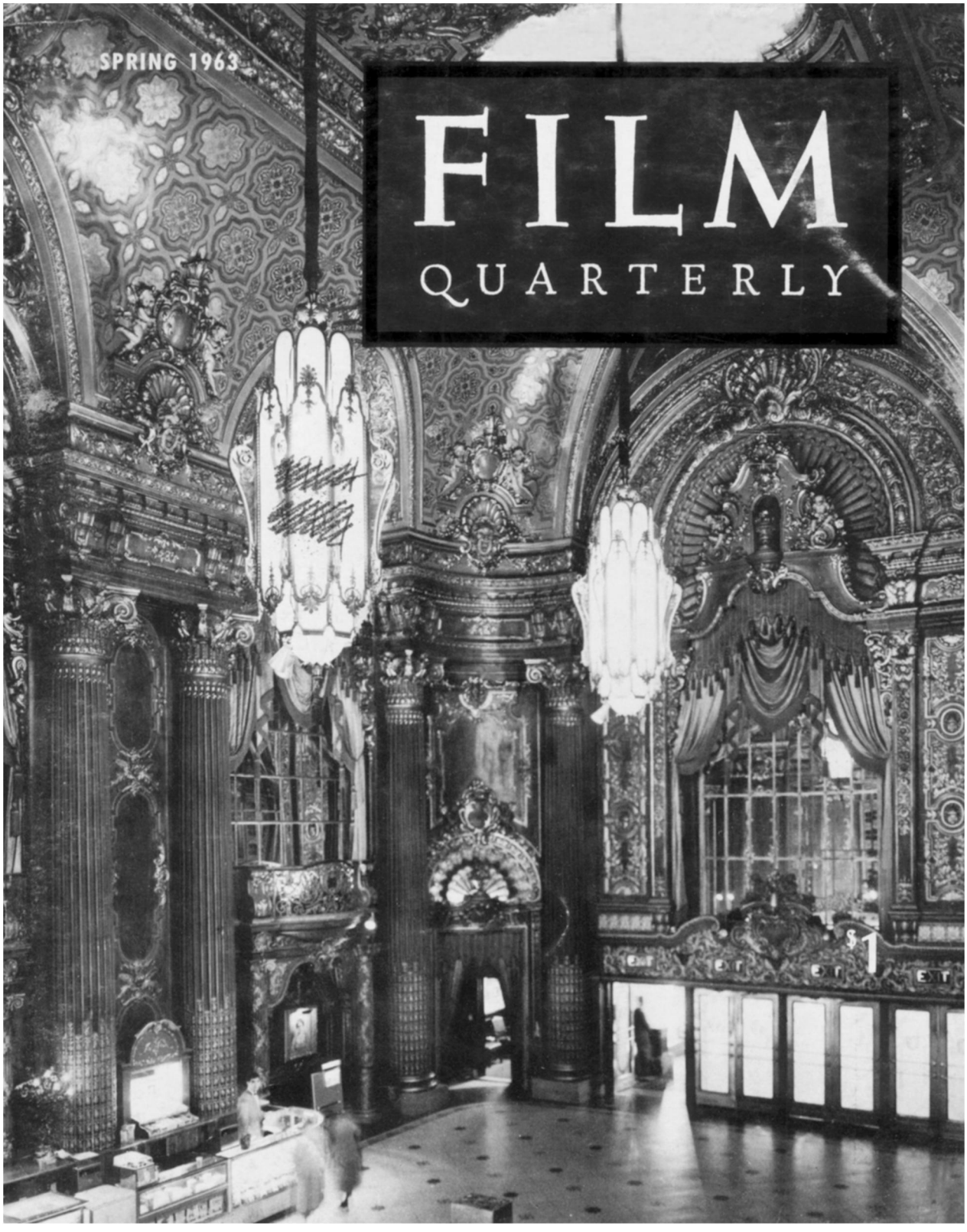
SPRING 1963

FILM QUARTERLY



SATYAJIT RAY'S

TAGORE

In 1961, the world celebrated the centenary of one of India's greatest figures, Dr Rabindranath Tagore. As part of the commemorations organized in Tagore's honor, the Indian Government asked its leading director, Satyajit Ray, to produce a documentary film on the man, his background and his contribution to the arts and international understanding.

This is Satyajit Ray's film biography of Rabindramath Tagore, prepared with the help of live shots, sketches, photographs and a dramatic impersonation of his early life. Here we see the unfolding of the career of one of the great and noble men of the century—in the humanities as novelist, poet, philosopher; as composer; and as a rebel and educational reformer.

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VOL. XVI, No. 3 — SPRING, 1963

THE COVER: Lobby of the Fox Theater in San Francisco, now being demolished. [Photo: Wm. R. Heick.]

Editor's Notebook

Film Teaching

In our previous issue we surveyed U.S. archival resources for film scholarship; in this one we survey the major film teaching programs in American universities. Connections between film-makers, critics, and scholars are far too tenuous; if they can be developed they will help toward the wide and deep cinematic culture we need. At present, our film-makers write only autobiographies; our scholars write very little of anything; most serious books about film are written by persons outside the academies—Kracauer, Richie and Anderson, Rotha and Griffith, Leyda, Reisz. . . .

The cafeteria system of higher education has gotten out of hand in many of our giant educational mills. What we need, if we are to have real growth in film thinking — which means more intellectual contact but not necessarily more agreement — is not added film courses in a lot of schools, but a couple of schools which can compare with what the Poles have at Łódź. If such places existed, it would matter little that at Michigan you can learn to play the harp, but not how to make films, or that at Penn State you can study the properties of wood, but not those of film.

An Invitation to Writers

A magazine is only as good as its contributors; much of an editor's task is to find new writers to whom films are a passionate concern, and to lure, chivvy, and persuade them to write. Film criticism, like art and literary criticism, is carried on by a tiny band of volunteers; its healthiness depends upon whether this group can be expanded and replenished. Writing

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good film criticism is not easy, clearly, or there would be more brilliant critics about. It takes time to learn to meet reasonable standards of background knowledge and writing style; it takes a lot of writing to become a writer of any kind. This should not discourage aspiring critics from getting in touch with us, and above all from sending in articles and reviews. We are delighted to receive unsolicited manuscripts; it is impossible for an editorial staff, however devoted or thoughtful, to propose subjects that will inspire a writer as much as something he himself thinks of and wishes to do. These days films are going through a weird and wonderful period of change, full of new directions, new hopes, new perspectives on what has been done in the past. The medium has grown in creative interest as it has diminished in industrial might. The makers of new films need critics equipped to understand and interpret what they do, to help create the atmosphere appropriate to an art form that has joined the other arts on the frontiers of our twentieth-century culture. We hope many new writers will come forward.

Above all we want to be *surprised* by what such writers have to say; that is, we hope they will be genuinely new. We cannot for these say "what we want," except perception and intelligence and taste. On the other side, where we *can* say what we want, we are looking for articles and reviews about films which the writers love and can analyze with the vigor of partisanship; for pieces that raise important aesthetic issues by dealing in concrete textural detail with individual films or sets of films; and for articles that see the world of film-making from the inside, or deal with technical matters in more than a technical way.

So far as possible, we try to review films soon after their commercial release. However, if by waiting an issue we can obtain a review from someone who is especially interested in a given film, we would rather do that than assign it to someone who can be counted on to do a satisfactory job but is not impassioned by the film. This policy, of course, only works well if contributors frequently volunteer reviews, and we promise quick replies to postcard queries.

There are some films which demand comment even though they may not be of serious critical interest: a spectacle of crucial industrial importance like *Cleopatra*, an award-winning film which is bad in some unusual way, like *West Side Story*, an ordinary film which wins special acclaim like *David and Lisa*. There is also the flood of pictures which range from barely competent entertainments to something like art. Many of these are dealt with in our "Entertainments" section; some of them are reviewed, when a writer comes forward with something interesting to say about them. The distinction is muddy, and always will be, unless one adopts an *auteur* metaphysics. What is important is that untouted and unobtrusive films of value should not be neglected. To be relatively sure of covering the ground – especially that of the Hollywood film – we are dependent upon our contributors and friends for tips, informal judgments, and suggestions, and we welcome more of these.

Contributors

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JUDITH SHATNOFF

François Truffaut— The Anarchist Imagination

The problem is: a phenomenal young talent which gives no quarter and demands the ultimate in tolerance.

One can either submit with a helpless bow, or retreat to the more comfortable artistry of a fashionable crew—the Fellinis, Viscontis, Bergmans, Resnais — or rush even farther backward to the primitive security of Hollywood cinema chiefs who show a chair as a chair as a chair.

For the braver critics there is François Truffaut, who has come to the screen in a whirlwind of amoral energy. Whether we like what he does or not, he can't be ignored. He's a dangerous talent.

To begin with, he's dangerous because of his sense of form, which is highly personal, subject to quirks and shifts. And he's dangerous because his use of time upsets what we've come to expect from recent film art: either a delicate rendering of fractured moments (Kurasawa, Resnais), or a brutal recreation of a minute as a minute (Antonioni). And Truffaut is dangerous because he specializes in weird combinations: tragedy plus comedy plus melodrama plus slapstick; and because he's able to balance these combinations so tastefully they "work." But mostly, he is dangerous because he continually thinks.

He thinks on a visual level:

Odd camera angles, high-key exposures, grain, interspersed stop-and-go motion, sequences which suddenly zoom into a bird's eye view, multiple-scene frames, cut-outs, squares of action surrounded by black — Truffaut uses whatever technique suits his purpose, or his whim. He will shorten or lengthen scenes for an effect, for a change of pace, for a joke, for their beauty. Consider, for instance, the race in the early part of *Jules and Jim.* It was run to show that Catherine will break any rules to win, but it was photographed in blurs and close-ups which are rhythmical studies of motion, reminiscent of Kurasawa's treatment of horseback riders in *Throne of Blood.* In *Shoot the Piano Player,* overlapped stopped views of lovers asleep in bed are used to show passage of time; but they also create a high-key montage of bodies, scattered clothing, and objects, which is abstractly beautiful. The scenes of the boy in *The 400 Blows* spinning in an amusement park centrifuge are mainly included for visual dazzle. But above all — whether initiated by whim or reason — the camera technique and the audacious editing (especially in the opening ten minutes of *Jules and Jim*) are the work of an artist who knows exactly what he is doing and does not for a moment give up or lose control.

Some devotees would say the same for *Last Year at Marienbad;* but *Marienbad* is all visual icing, as elegant and as blatantly mannered as the plaster curlicues in the tiny summerhouse of Nymphenberg Palace which Resnais photographed up, down and sideways in his opening sequence. In tone, *Marienbad* is equivalent to a fugue based on "Three Blind Mice," and its content is no more worth unraveling than a puns and anagrams crossword-puzzle. François Truffaut, in his three major films, gives us as much visual dash and splendor as we can possibly admire, but in addition his cinematic virtuosity expresses a complex and dangerous point of view. He is the equal of Michaelangelo Antonioni — with one important difference. Antonioni bravely leads us through despair to the blank wall of meaninglessness only to stop

short before the rear exit — the exciting circuit to pleasure, absurd joy — supplied by the best existential thinkers, everyone from Albert Camus to Paul Tillich. Truffaut doesn't stop short. He's an ex-j.d., a slum kid with a slum kid's energy and ability to thumb his nose and laugh and suffer simultaneously. He's also a French intellectual — a special breed nurtured over centuries to despise sentimentality. All these qualities are present in his three feature-length films, and they supply the dramatic tension of high art.

It's at first hard to understand *The 400 Blows* in relation to Truffaut's later work, for in some ways it isn't a French film at all, but an excellent version of the American "art" movie. What is remarkable about these movies is their lack of philosophical base. They spring, instead, from an adolescent verve (*Shadows, Senseless* or any "experimental" film you can name), and rapidly fizz out; or they lean heavily on The Problem motif in amateur sociology (*The Defiant Ones, Come Back, Little Sheba, The Connection,* etc.); or they sell a version of Freud which even the vulgar can applaud (see, for example, the ecstatic reviews in *Time* of *David and Lisa,* a psychiatric soap-opera which drags and lisps out the "truths" of *The Snake Pit* (1946) and *Spellbound* (1945) as if they were tomorrow's revelations).

The 400 Blows has many memorable scenes, including some which allude to Jean Vigo's *Zéro de Conduite.* The boy and his stepfather happily cooking together in their miserable little kitchen, an inane interview with an off-screen psychologist, the boy enjoying a rare outing with his mother and stepfather, the running views of Paris through the grille of a police wagon, are fine. But now and then, despite the autobiographical "necessity" which gives *The 400 Blows* its force, it's preachy. It levels an accusing finger at "you out there" — society — following the best of Stanley Kramer gestures.

THE 400 BLOWS: *Jean-Pierre Léaud.*

True, French law is brutal and perverse: a man is guilty until he proves himself innocent; a man can be held incommunicado for days in one of those clever chicken-cages, shown in the film, in which young, old, murderers, maniacs, pickpockets, traffic violators, are thrown together indiscriminately. James Baldwin, in an essay, described how he was caught in Paris with a stolen bedsheet in his possession (innocently so), and subjected to the medieval niceties of the French criminal code. Baldwin, an adult American, finally got help from outside. Truffaut himself was rescued from a prison sentence by the famous critic André Bazin, whose protegé he became. But no such luck for the boy-hero of *The 400 Blows.* He is a straw tossed by twin hurricanes: his family and society. His crime is trivial; his capture is ironic. The treatment he receives is heartless and unreasonable. It suggests that a society which has always prided itself on its rational base, is really inhuman; that to fear this society is not paranoiac, but logical and necessary. And when the boy escapes from a reformatory and runs for the ocean, merely to see it for the first time, his action is far more respectable than the rigid social structure which has battered him about. It is here, at the end of the film, when the boy stands in the surf, that Truffaut makes the comment which goes beyond any of those sociological clichés we are too often asked to swallow as important messages.

Here Truffaut's "thinking" shows. For we have identified with the underdog as incident upon incident piles against him; we can't help but cheer his run for freedom. And suddenly, we are stopped; the boy stops, sociology stops, the film stops. What now? Where next? The

poor dreamer has run to and *through* his dream. Mistreatment and misunderstanding fuse as we are asked to consider something shocking: If the reality of our dreams is as futile as the reality of experience, what is left? Where can one run? The question remains as motion stops and a grainy image of the boy as a clipped newspaper photo, dehumanized, hangs on the screen.

It is from this ironic position, this inquiry into absurdity, that *Shoot the Piano Player* begins; and fiercely, wildly, it pushes beyond any adolescent or Beat glee in the destruction of form and symbol to a resolution which is as effective as a blow on the head. It's a fascinating accomplishment. It works through an exploitation of incongruity, and we, the audience, are its happy victims.

The opening sequence of *Shoot the Piano Player* is characteristic. A man runs desperately through the foggy dark streets of Paris. We can see the strain on his face and hear the panting of his breath above the urgent clatter of his heels, and from long experience we know what all that means. Then he collides, comically, with a lamppost. He moans, he groans, he rubs his head, and a hand reaches for him. He's caught! Yes? No. He's helped to his feet by a complacent passer-by, and the two walk on casually, joking, and discussing the pros and cons of marriage. This chit-chat is allowed to continue long enough to assuage any sensation of desperation or danger which may have been left over from the opening scene, and, as soon as this is gauged to have been accomplished, our man runs off even more desperately in another direction. He is still being chased; his life is still in danger; and we sit gaping in surprise.

Our next view of him is when he enters a cabaret, greets his brother "Charlie" Saroyan, the piano player, and talks vaguely of his troubles. When Charlie refuses help, the desperate runner simply begins to enjoy himself dancing with the local whores. Once again we are surprised. Surely no man in danger would

". . . what is left?" (400 Blows).

dance with such abandon at such a time. We are further misled by a scene which raises *Shoot the Piano Player* to high comedy. A waiter gets up onto the bandstand to sing. He is shot head-on, from a fixed camera position, as he sways and bounces up and down, deadpan, singing verse after verse of what must be the wittiest song yet heard in films: the blight on the berry (a euphemism for an unlucky lady). While we are still laughing, the pursuing gangsters catch up with our "desperate" man. And it is no joke. They carry loaded revolvers. Once more a desperate chase begins and we wonder: where are we? in comedy? In the shock of ironic juxtapositions?

This is clearly indicated in the long flashback which tells the history of the piano player. Only in this sequence does Truffaut use a standard, chronological presentation which leaves us in no doubt which attitude to adopt. It's a tragic story with cynical overtones: a talented pianist gets his first concert opportunity because his wife sleeps with an impresario. In itself this is nothing unusual; we're all cynically aware that a roll in the hay has been the start of many brilliant careers. But it proves tragic for the pianist and his wife, for she commits suicide during the moment he flees from her.

In one moment, through one act, everything which took years — a lifetime — to accomplish becomes meaningless; perhaps it always was meaningless. The pianist turns his back on suc-

SHOOT THE PIANO PLAYER

cess, on ambition, on effort, on feeling. He can't exorcise his love of music, but he can refuse to do anything more than just play the piano. In a world which can suddenly become meaningless, why should anything be done with or about anything? Thus, Charlie barely responds to his new girl's ambitious proposal to reinstate him as a serious artist. He smiles vaguely and lets her do as she likes. Unfortunately, she is vulgar and gets him into trouble. Later, oddly, she is killed. Why? Well, why does anything happen? Because it does. If there is any unifying tone in the film it is an existential irrelevance, coupled with a shrug from Charles Aznavour, a masterful actor, which asks, What did you expect? Existence is a succession of dirty jokes: nothing lasts, struggle is futile, hope is obscene. (The title *Shoot the Piano Player* refers to a barroom sign in old Westerns — "Don't Shoot the Piano Player" — but Truffaut's film might as easily be called *Why Not Shoot the Piano Player?*)

Ironic juxtapositions are used on another, equally deadly, level through the gangsters who kidnap Charlie and his girl. Never did two gangsters behave more like businessmen suffering from indigestion. All the ominous old gangster conventions from Al Capone to *Rififi* have been blithely avoided for the gangster unconventions of farce, such as the ones which open the hilarious movie, *Some Like It Hot*. At one point, after one gangster swears he is telling the truth or may his mother drop dead, there is a flash shot of a skinny old woman kicking up her heels and dropping dead. The slapstick is a little forced, but funny. Then our hero and heroine make a nonchalant escape. Yes, this is farce; we feel assured. Thus, towards the end, when these same lovable gangsters behave ruthlessly, when real bullets scatter and someone is actually, senselessly killed, we are as shocked as if a gentle neighbor suddenly ran berserk with an ax.

What has occurred throughout *Shoot the Piano Player* is the deliberate explosion of each cliché in turn, or, to be more precise, a deliberate destruction of the expected order of events. A series of clues which usually lead in one direction are abruptly, deliberately, interrupted and rushed in another direction. On-track, off-track, on a new track, off that, we in the audience are shunted around until we give up and docilely obey Truffaut, the ringmaster. Our judgment has proven wrong so many times, at last we sit with judgment suspended, forced outside logic into a hodgepodge of pain and pleasure. A mock fight between the piano player and his boss can turn deadly serious. A young girl can be killed by a stray bullet and her headlong slide down a snowy slope can be breathtakingly beautiful. A good man can produce evil as easily as an evil man. In fact, there is no such thing as good *or* evil; there are only complex mixtures

of both, and there is circumstance. There is also a muddled reference to fate or blood-curse in the talk among Charlie and his brothers; but the real explanation is that there is no explanation. Life is unpredictable and inexplicable. It simply happens. There are lulls in the process of destruction, some fun, some love, some success; but finally, we are left with a tinkling, mocking little tune. Truffaut has managed to do what Henry Miller always tries* to do: disrupt, disorientate, kiss You, spit in Your eye.

Jules and Jim does the same in a more sophisticated style. Here, Truffaut isn't as autocratic in his method of control, but wins his way through charm, wheedling and coaxing the viewer to give up his standard of judgment — especially his moral standard — and his usual pattern of perception and interpretation.

At first this is accomplished by a quick series of whimsical, charming views of the exploits of Jules and Jim, Mutt and Jeff, Sancho Panza and Don Quixote (as they prefer to call themselves, thereby ennobling their comic aspects), a gangly, effervescent pair of innocent libertines looking for someone to worship — Dulcinea, perhaps? They find her, first as a statue, then in the flesh: Catherine, who, if we are to trust those dear boys, Jules and Jim, is the quintessence of female charm.

Charm is the key to the film. In *Une Histoire d'Eau*, a short Truffaut made with Jean-Luc Godard in 1958, the touch of irreverent charm was already apparent. An ultra-Gallic pair enjoy the flooding of a river: they race a car along a flooded road, spraying the drowned countryside with their gay wash; they jitterbug on the one square of dry land left; they picnic and make impossibly French faces at each other. Death, inconvenience, millions of dollars of damage, may have resulted from this flood, but we are never told about it; it's simply an occasion for charming fun. It also shows Truffaut's rare joyous quality — one that is much less fashionable and much more difficult to express than Swedish gloom or Italian emptiness.

". . . gangster unconventions of farce . . ."

Jules and Jim is a literate film. It is based on a novel (as is *Shoot the Piano Player*) and there are references to literature throughout, such as the continual mention of Cervantes' pair of heroes. Jules and Jim, both writers, are part of a bohemian circle of artists, and a newsclip of Nazi book-burning implies the barbarism which ended that post-World War I intellectual and artistic period in Europe. There is even a famous literary precedent for their maison à trois, Voltaire's fifteen-year affair with Mme. du Châtelet — although Voltaire and the Marquis du Châtelet were not as close friends originally as Jules and Jim.

Visually, the film echoes Jean Renoir, and no film since *A Day in the Country* has been as charming as *Jules and Jim*. It is delicately lighted; its historical atmosphere is effortlessly correct. There is only beauty in the landscapes, the architecture, the faces, the gestures, the period costumes — and for a reason: the visual loveliness contributes to the idyllic misrepresentation. It's a deft seduction. It prepares us to accept whatever unorthodoxy appears on

*Perhaps Truffaut succeeds because a film can control both the visual and auditory perceptions of its audience, whereas a novel can only approximate a visual world through imagery, and must, therefore, rely on its energy to construct its "closed universe." Perhaps in this sense the film is more dangerous and potentially greater than the novel as an art form.)

screen, until any bluster of "Thou shalt not . . ." as a reaction to Catherine's behavior becomes irrelevant. Once again judgment is suspended — not through shock as in *Shoot the Piano Player* — but pleasantly. We are won to acceptance through beauty and spontaneity, and there we are for a while, poignantly wondering at ourselves recreated as we never were.

For Jules, Jim, and Catherine are children, just the sort of children we would have grown up to be if the nasty real world hadn't interfered. Jules and Jim are the sweet children and Catherine is the bad child, the mischievous demigod who makes life fascinating but exacts payment in absolute loyalty. The nasty real world finally intrudes in the form of rough newsclips of World War I, but it does little to mature our boys. It makes them a little sadder than before, and it makes them need someone to worship even more.

True, they are beginning to despair of human love. Jules remarks that someday he will write a love story and all the characters will be insects. But they are firm in their adoration of Catherine — almost as firm as she is in demanding it.

The price is high but so are the rewards, for Jeanne Moreau's portrayal of Catherine is brilliantly charming. She is charming when she makes funny faces, cuddles in bed, sings songs, rides a bicycle, skips stones, and especially charming when she plays tag. "Catch me," she says, tapping Jim on the shoulder and galloping off; she is thirty-two and looks older — a genius stroke of casting, for a baby-faced Catherine would be banal. She invents a charming game called The Village Idiot to amuse her adorers. Oscar Werner, Henri Serre, Jeanne Moreau, and a Jane Withers midget-type of child (an awful choice, whether deliberate or accidental) sit gibbering and twisting their faces at each other as the picture spins and reels round and round like a child spinning and reeling with delight. It's a pure recreation of youthful joy. We can identify wholeheartedly with our carefree friends, who hardly ever remember they are adults with the weary weight of adult responsibility ready to fall on them at any moment. Truffaut doesn't moralize, and why should we? We are enjoying an emotion which hasn't been as splendidly recreated on the screen since the swinging, giggling expression of young love in *Miracle in Milan*. To judge our friends in any way is to impose external standards on their "world."

Similarly, to interpret Catherine's jump into the Seine as her "act of freedom" goes beyond

JULES AND JIM: *"the sweet children . . ."*

the limits of the film, for the jump is only free as an act of childish derring-do is free. It fits with the behavior of the two children in the British thriller *The Yellow Balloon* who tragically dare each other to jump the chasms between bomb ruins. It's no "proof" that women are more equal than men, at least more courageous about jumping into rivers, and wasn't meant to be. Truffaut would never be so provincial as to show Catherine hooting and tooting feminist propaganda. He simply shows her: here she is. Here is her gang.

What the jump does prove is that Jules and Jim are ninnies, that Catherine knows it, and that she has chosen them precisely for their perfectly charming ninny-ness.

As the boys walk along the banks of the Seine they blabber nonsense about the inferiority of women. When Jules reaches the final silliness — a woman would never be allowed in the presence of God — Catherine orders Jim to protest. "I protest," he says weakly, after a moment, and she jumps, because her subject's performance hasn't been good enough. Stop that blabbering and look at me, her jump orders; I am I and I am better than you and don't you forget it! Her jump is an act of arrogance and egotism. It's an act of passion, and for that reason, despite everything which follows, Catherine is great. We must honor her intensity as the essence of greatness; she adds magic to a story of two sweet ninnies.

But Catherine's is a vastly limited force and shouldn't be mistaken for freedom. Her passions are great, but she is their victim. They control her. She isn't free. And anyway, *Jules and Jim* isn't about freedom; it's about fantasy. It is fantasy.

More pertinent than the jump to understanding the film, is the story Jim tells Jules and Albert about the French soldier who wrote letters to a casual lady friend every night in the trenches. At first these letters were formal, then they became more and more loving, then passionate, until an engagement was proposed and marriage arranged. But two days before the Armistice, before passion by correspondence could be consummated, the soldier was killed. As Jim explains it, such an extraordinary affair could never have developed without the stimulating danger of death in war. His friends agree and sit silently gazing at the magnificent scenery. They can all appreciate how lucky a man is to have his fantasy forever protected as fantasy. Death has preserved what life would inevitably destroy. It's sad, but they savor the paradox, sigh, and rush off after their common dangerous fantasy: Catherine.

Catherine and her two ninnies (JULES AND JIM).

The parallels are obvious. The story Jim tells is the example which precedes the example of a major fantasy acted out to its conclusion. And, in terms of an adult world, the child's conclusion must be destructive.

Thus, Catherine kills herself and Jim. As she drives off the bridge she smiles twice, most charmingly. We watch the car plunge into the river and see bubbles rise to the surface. But it is unbelievable for it is all so charming; the view is so pretty. Therefore, we are shown the cremation of the bodies in rather factual, if uneasy, detail, and the entombment of the ashes. Now we believe. Now we understand Jules's feeling of relief. The great fantasy will be preserved by death, but in life it is done — or is it? What is that charming music which accompanies Jules as he walks stiff-leggedly through the cemetery? We wonder as we realize that Truffaut has succeeded again — this time much more subtly — in being outrageous. Once again he has played, we have danced, and we are left to wipe our

Henri Serre, Jeanne Moreau, Oskar Werner.

kissed and insulted eyes. But we are no longer in a schoolboy-shocker nihilistic mode. We have, instead, approached the anarchical position of the rebel in Camus' terms. We have experienced "an unrepentant work of art."

Many of us have lost sympathy en route. Many may feel that Truffaut's evocation of charm and suspension of judgment hasn't been total enough to make them accept the cruelty which builds and dominates the end of the film — the indiscriminate bed-hopping, betrayal, suicide, murder. It's difficult to be appreciative unless we remember we are not dealing here with life seen through a camera keyhole, but with art. To quote Camus (*The Rebel*):

"Here we have an imaginary world . . . which is created by the rectification of the actual world — a world where suffering can, if it wishes, continue until death, where passions are never distracted, where people are prey to obsessions and are always present to one another. Man is finally able to give himself the alleviating form and limits which he pursues in vain in his own life. . . . Far from being moral or purely formal, this alteration aims, primarily, at unity and thereby expresses a metaphysical need. . . . On this level [a work of art] is primarily an exercise of intelligence in the service of nostalgic or rebellious sensibilities."

Needless to say, this position is the antithesis of Realism.

Well, we are used to nonrealistic films. We are sophisticated about abstract, surrealist, Dada, Beat films. We are even more sophisticated about the unrealistic commercial movies made in Hollywood about the glamorous life of the working girl, the doctor, the white hunter, the ad-man, the gunman, the salesman, anybody. We have Stan Brakhage, Walt Disney, *Naked Lunch*, self-destroying machines, and we are comfortable without realism. But we are not comfortable with Truffaut, simply because he refuses to allow it. As soon as we settle down with one metaphor he jars us out and into another, perhaps one which is contradictory. As soon as we pin him down aesthetically, he shrugs us off. Before we can get soulful about the philosophic implications on screen, he makes us laugh. He literally "assaults the sensibilities" in any way he can,

using any handy means. Thus, Truffaut, to whom the labels "realism" or "nonrealism" are most likely meaningless, nonetheless deftly and deliberately uses materials of both:

Characters are recognizable, some even empathic, but they develop so complexly shaded, good and bad, strong and weak, that our impression of them, and therefore our identification with them, must be continually revised. Michel, the "hero" of *Breathless* (based on a Truffaut story suggestion) is a prime example of this appealing-repelling mixture; Catherine is another. Settings are accurate to the last detail, but occasionally, deliberately, they are photographed in a way which shatters and rearranges their appearance. Scenes move in climatic order, but in logical disorder, erratically, as life moves; and there is no reason why some episodes follow rather than precede others. Stories hint of important ideas, but there are no "messages" of any kind, anywhere, to clutch and carry off. Most uncomfortable of all, Truffaut doesn't indicate that his realism is or isn't real. He doesn't use any of the paraphernalia of Cocteau, for example, to announce: Attention, this is Art you're watching — Art, not life. And so as an audience we are in the grip of a double irony. There is no safety.

Truffaut does as he pleases. He has an uncanny ability to sense the moment at which to jar us, and enough artistic courage to act swiftly, even violently, to take advantage of that moment. His attitude is iconoclastic — nothing is sacred. It is anarchistic because it is entirely personal, yet tightly controlled; his intellectual vision controls an emotional context for a creative — *not* a destructive or nihilistic — purpose. Truffaut seems to be an anarchist even in relation to his own creations, for he recognizes no structure beyond the one required for each individual work of art, and this, too, is made to be remade. All positions are established to be transcended. All that is constant is the creator himself, saying *Sic volo, sic jubeo*—This is will, this I command. And that, necessarily, is the final statement of great art.

". . . the cruelty which builds and dominates the end of the film . . ."

THE FILMS OF FRANÇOIS TRUFFAUT

Shorts

1954: *Une Visite.*
1957: *Les Mistons* (The Mischief-Makers). Screenplay by Truffaut, based on a story, "Virginales," by Maurice Pons. Photography: Jean Malige. Score: Maurice le Roux. With Gerard Blain and Bernadette Lafont.
1958: *Une Histoire d'Eau.* Made in collaboration with Jean-Luc Godard.
1962: *Antoine et Collette.* Truffaut's part of the multiple-director film, *Love at Age Twenty.*

Features

1959: *Les Quatre Cents Coups* (The 400 Blows). Produced and directed by Truffaut. Scenario: Truffaut and Marcel Moussy. Photography: Henri Decae. Editing: Yoyotte, Decugis, DePossel. Score: Jean Constantin. Les Films de Carosse—SEDIF. With Jean-Pierre Léaud.
1959: *Tirez sur le Pianiste* (Shoot the Piano Player). Scenario: Truffaut and Marcel Moussy from the novel *Down There,* by David Goodis. Photography: Raoul Coutard. Decor: Jacques Mely. Score: Jean Constantin. Films de la Pleiade. With Charles Aznavour, Albert Remy, Nicole Berger.
1961: *Jules et Jim* (Jules and Jim). Based on the novel by H. P. Roche. Adaptation and dialogue: Truffaut and Jean Gruault. Photography: Raoul Coutard. Score: Georges Delerue. Les Films du Carosse—SEDIF. With Jeanne Moreau, Oskar Werner, Henri Serre.

(One can only wonder what Truffaut is doing with *Fahrenheit 451,* Ray Bradbury's devastating futuristic novel about life under totalitarian science. Fahrenheit 451 is the temperature at which books burn.)

PAULINE KAEL

Circles and Squares

In 1957, in the Paris monthly "Cahiers du Cinéma," François Truffaut proposed for the magazine a "politique des auteurs"—a policy of focussing criticism primarily upon directors, and specifically upon certain chosen directors whose individuality of style qualified them, in the eyes of the Cahiers "team," as "auteurs"—creators in the personal sense we accept for other arts. This doctrine galvanized the "Cahiers" polemicists, and lent some of the impetus which helped Truffaut, Godard, and many other young men break through as film-makers (and aspiring "auteurs"). In the years since then, the doctrine has gained adherents in England, chiefly around the magazine "Movie," and to some extent in the United States, through the "New York Film Bulletin" and "Film Culture." In its homeland the politique has led to many peculiar judgments, especially of American film-makers: it is Samuel Fuller, Nicholas Ray, and Otto Preminger who figure as the gods of this new pantheon. The results upon export are turning out to be even more peculiar on occasion. The time seems ripe, therefore, for a direct examination of the Anglo-Saxon version of the "politique des auteurs." Is it, in fact, a new and stimulating approach to films, which ought to displace the tradition of criticism developed by the "Sequence" and "Sight & Sound" writers? Pauline Kael offers a resounding negative view; and we anticipate in our next issue a rejoinder by Andrew Sarris, in whose writings the politique has had its most extended and thoughtful American presentation.

JOYS AND SARRIS

". . . the first premise of the *auteur* theory is the technical competence of a director as a criterion of value. . . . The second premise of the *auteur* theory is the distinguishable personality of the director as a criterion of value. . . . The third and ultimate premise of the *auteur* theory is concerned with interior meaning, the ultimate glory of the cinema as an art. Interior meaning is extrapolated from the tension between a director's personality and his material."

—Andrew Sarris, "Notes on the Auteur Theory in 1962," *Film Culture*, Winter 62/3

"Sometimes a great deal of corn must be husked to yield a few kernels of internal meaning. I recently saw *Every Night at Eight*, one of the many maddeningly routine films Raoul Walsh has directed in his long career. This 1935 effort featured George Raft, Alice Faye, Frances Langford and Patsy Kelly in one of those familiar plots about radio shows of the period. The film keeps moving along in the pleasantly unpretentious manner one would expect of Walsh until one incongruously intense scene with George Raft thrashing about in his

> sleep, revealing his inner fears in mumbling dream talk. The girl he loves comes into the room in the midst of his unconscious avowals of feeling, and listens sympathetically. This unusual scene was later amplified in *High Sierra* with Humphrey Bogart and Ida Lupino. The point is that one of the screen's most virile directors employed an essentially feminine narrative device to dramatize the emotional vulnerability of his heroes. If I had not been aware of Walsh in *Every Night at Eight,* the crucial link to *High Sierra* would have passed unnoticed. Such are the joys of the *auteur* theory." *Sarris, ibid.*

Perhaps a little more corn should be husked; perhaps, for example, we can husk away the word "internal" (is "internal meaning" any different from "meaning"?). We might ask why the link is "crucial"? Is it because the device was "incongruously intense" in *Every Night at Eight* and so demonstrated a try for something *deeper* on Walsh's part? But if his merit is his "pleasantly unpretentious manner" (which is to say, I suppose, that, recognizing the limitations of the script, he wasn't trying to do much) then the incongruous device was probably a misconceived attempt that disturbed the manner—like a bad playwright interrupting a comedy scene because he cannot resist the opportunity to tug at your heartstrings. We might also ask why this narrative device is "essentially feminine": is it more feminine than masculine to be asleep, or to talk in one's sleep, or to reveal feelings? Or, possibly, does Sarris regard the device as feminine because the listening woman becomes a sympathetic figure and emotional understanding is, in this "virile" context, assumed to be essentially feminine? Perhaps only if one accepts the narrow notions of virility so common in our action films can this sequence be seen as "essentially feminine," and it is amusing that a critic can both support these clichés of the male world and be so happy when they are violated.

This is how we might quibble with a different *kind* of critic but we would never get anywhere with Sarris if we tried to examine what he is saying sentence by sentence.

So let us ask, what is the meaning of the passage? Sarris has noticed that in *High Sierra* (not a very good movie) Raoul Walsh repeated an uninteresting and obvious device that he had earlier used in a worse movie. And for some inexplicable reason, Sarris concludes that he would not have had this joy of discovery without the *auteur* theory.

But in every art form, critics traditionally notice and point out the way the artists borrow from themselves (as well as from others) and how the same devices, techniques, and themes reappear in their work. This is obvious in listening to music, seeing plays, reading novels, watching actors, etc.; we take it for granted that this is how we perceive the development or the decline of an artist (and it may be necessary to point out to *auteur* critics that repetition without development is decline). When you see Hitchock's *Saboteur* there is no doubt that he drew heavily and clumsily from *The 39 Steps,* and when you see North by *Northwest* you can see that he is once again toying with the ingredients of *The 39 Steps* — and apparently having a good time with them. Would Sarris not notice the repetition in the Walsh films without the *auteur* theory? Or shall we take the more cynical view that without some commitment to Walsh as an *auteur,* he probably wouldn't be spending his time looking at these movies?

If we may be permitted a literary analogy, we can visualize Sarris researching in the archives of *The Saturday Evening Post,* tracing the development of Clarence Budington Kelland, who, by the application of something like the *auteur* theory, would emerge as a much more important writer than Dostoyevsky; for in Kelland's case Sarris' three circles, the three premises of the *auteur* theory, have been consistently congruent. Kelland is technically competent (even "pleasantly unpretentious"), no writer has a more "distinguishable personality," and if "interior meaning" is what can be extrapolated from, say *Hatari!* or *Advise and Consent* or *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?*

then surely Kelland's stories with their attempts to force a bit of character and humor into the familiar plot outlines are loaded with it. Poor misguided Dostoyevsky, too full of what he has to say to bother with "technical competence," tackling important themes in each work (surely the worst crime in the *auteur* book) and with his almost incredible unity of personality and material leaving you nothing to extrapolate from, he'll never make it. If the editors of *Movie* ranked authors the way they do directors, Dostoyevsky would probably be in that almost untouchable category of the "ambitious."

It should be pointed out that Sarris' defense of the *auteur* theory is based not only on aesthetics but on a rather odd pragmatic statement: "Thus to argue against the *auteur* theory in America is to assume that we have anyone of Bazin's sensibility and dedication to provide an alternative, and we simply don't." Which I take to mean that the *auteur* theory is necessary in the absence of a critic who wouldn't need it. This is a new approach to aesthetics, and I hope Sarris' humility does not camouflage his double-edged argument. If his aesthetics is based on expediency, then it may be expedient to point out that it takes extraordinary intelligence and discrimination and taste to *use* any theory in the arts, and that without those qualities, a theory becomes a rigid formula (which is indeed what is happening among *auteur* critics). The greatness of critics like Bazin in France and Agee in America may have something to do with their using their full range of intelligence and intuition, rather than relying on formulas. Criticism is an art, not a science, and a critic who follows rules will fail in one of his most important functions: perceiving what is original and important in *new* work and helping others to see.

"THE OUTER CIRCLE"

> "... the first premise of the *auteur* theory is the technical competence of a director as a criterion of value."

This seems less the premise of a theory than a commonplace of judgment, as Sarris himself indicates when he paraphrases it as, "A great director has to be at least a good director." But this commonplace, though it *sounds* reasonable and basic, is a shaky premise: sometimes the greatest artists in a medium by-pass or violate the simple technical competence that is so necessary for hacks. For example, it is doubtful if Antonioni could handle a routine directorial assignment of the type at which John Sturges is so proficient (*Escape from Fort Bravo* or *Bad Day at Black Rock*), but surely Antonioni's *L'Avventura* is the work of a great director. And the greatness of a director like Cocteau has nothing to do with mere technical competence: his greatness is in being able to achieve his own personal expression and style. And just as there were writers like Melville or Dreiser who triumphed over various kinds of technical incompetence, and who were, as artists, incomparably greater than the facile technicians of their day, a new great film director may appear whose very greatness is in his struggling toward grandeur or in massive accumulation of detail. An artist who is not a good technician can indeed create new standards, because standards of technical competence are based on comparisons with work already done.

Just as new work in other arts is often attacked because it violates the accepted standards and thus seems crude and ugly and incoherent, great new directors are very likely to be condemned precisely on the grounds that they're not even good directors, that they don't know their "business." Which, in some cases, is true, but does it matter when that "business" has little to do with what they want to express in films? It may even be a hindrance, leading them to banal slickness, instead of discovery of their own methods. For some, at least, Cocteau may be right: "The only technique worth having is the technique you invent for yourself." The director must be judged on the basis of what he produces — his films — and if he can make great films without knowing the standard methods, without the usual craftsmanship of the "good director," then that is the

way he works. I would amend Sarris' premise to "In works of a lesser rank, technical competence can help to redeem the weaknesses of the material." In fact it seems to be precisely this category that the *auteur* critics are most interested in — the routine material that a good craftsman can make into a fast and enjoyable movie. What, however, makes the *auteur* critics so incomprehensible, is not their *preference* for works of this category (in this they merely follow the lead of children who also prefer simple action films and westerns and horror films to works that make demands on their understanding) but their truly astonishing inability to exercise taste and judgment *within* their area of preference. Movie-going kids are, I think, much more reliable guides to this kind of movie than the *auteur* critics: every kid I've talked to knows that Henry Hathaway's *North to Alaska* was a surprisingly funny, entertaining movie and *Hatari!* (classified as a "masterpiece" by half the *Cahiers* Conseil des Dix, Peter Bogdanovich, and others) was a terrible bore.

"THE MIDDLE CIRCLE"

> "... the second premise of the *auteur* theory is the distinguishable personality of the director as a criterion of value."

Up to this point there has really been no theory, and now, when Sarris begins to work on his foundation, the entire edifice of civilized standards of taste collapses while he's tacking down his floorboards. Traditionally, in any art, the personalities of all those involved in a production have been a factor in judgment, but that the *distinguishability* of personality should in itself be a criterion of value completely confuses *normal* judgment. The smell of a skunk is more distinguishable than the perfume of a rose; does that make it better? Hitchcock's personality is certainly more distinguishable in *Dial M for Murder, Rear Window, Vertigo,* than Carol Reed's in *The Stars Look Down, Odd Man Out, The Fallen Idol, The Third Man, An Outcast of the Islands,* if for no other reason than because Hitchcock repeats while Reed tackles new subject matter. But how does this distinguishable personality function as a criterion for judging the works? We recognize the hands of Carné and Prévert in *Le Jour se Lève,* but that is not what makes it a beautiful film; we can just as easily recognize their hands in *Quai des Brumes*—which is not such a good film. We can recognize that *Le Plaisir* and *The Earrings of Madame De* are both the work of Ophuls, but *Le Plaisir* is not a great film, and *Madame De* is.

Often the works in which we are most aware of the personality of the director are his worst films—when he falls back on the devices he has already done to death. When a famous director makes a good movie, we look at the movie, we don't think about the director's personality; when he makes a stinker we notice his familiar touches because there's not much else to watch. When Preminger makes an expert, entertaining whodunit like *Laura,* we don't look for his personality (it has become part of the texture of the film); when he makes an atrocity like *Whirlpool,* there's plenty of time to look for his "personality" — if that's your idea of a good time.

It could even be argued, I think, that Hitchcock's uniformity, his mastery of tricks, and his cleverness at getting audiences to respond according to his calculations — the feedback he wants and gets from them — reveal not so much a personal style as a personal theory of audience psychology, that his methods and approach are not those of an artist but a prestidigitator. The *auteur* critics respond just as Hitchcock expects the gullible to respond. This is not so surprising — often the works *auteur* critics call masterpieces are ones that seem to reveal the contempt of the director for the audience.

It's hard to believe that Sarris seriously attempts to apply "the distinguishable personality of the director as a criterion of value" because when this premise becomes troublesome, he just tries to brazen his way out of difficulties. For example, now that John Huston's

work has gone flat* Sarris casually dismisses him with: "Huston is virtually a forgotten man with a few actors' classics behind him . . ." If *The Maltese Falcon,* perhaps the most high-style thriller ever made in America, a film Huston both wrote and directed, is not a director's film, what is? And if the distinguishable personality of the director is a criterion of value, then how can Sarries dismiss the Huston who comes through so unmistakably in *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre, The African Queen,* or *Beat the Devil,* or even in a muddled Huston film like *Key Largo?* If these are actors' movies, then what on earth is a director's movie?

Isn't the *auteur* theory a hindrance to clear judgment of Huston's movies and of his career? Disregarding the theory, we see some fine film achievements and we perceive a remarkably distinctive directorial talent; we also see intervals of weak, half-hearted assignments like *Across the Pacific* and *In This Our Life.* Then, after *Moulin Rouge,* except for the blessing of *Beat the Devil,* we see a career that splutters out in ambitious failures like *Moby Dick* and confused projects like *The Roots of Heaven* and *The Misfits,* and strictly commercial projects like *Heaven Knows, Mr. Allison.* And this kind of career seems more characteristic of film history, especially in the United States, than the ripening development and final mastery envisaged by the *auteur* theory — a theory that makes it almost de rigeur to regard Hitchcock's American films as superior to his early English films. Is Huston's career so different, say, from Fritz Lang's? How is it that Huston's early good — almost great — work, must be rejected along with his mediocre recent work, but Fritz Lang, being sanctified as an *auteur,* has his bad recent work praised along with his good? Employing more usual norms, if you respect the Fritz Lang who made *M* and *You Only Live Once,* if you enjoy the excesses of style and the magnificent absurdities of a film like *Metropolis,* then it is only good sense to reject the ugly stupidity of *The Tiger of Eschnapur* botch. It is an insult to an artist to praise his bad work along with his good; it indicates that you are incapable of judging either.

A few years ago, a friend who reviewed Jean Renoir's University of California production of his play *Carola,* hailed it as "a work of genius." When I asked my friend how he could so describe this very unfortunate play, he said, "Why, of course, it's a work of genius. Renoir's a genius, so anything he does is a work of genius." This could almost be a capsule version of the *auteur* theory (just substitute *Hatari!* for *Carola*) and in this reductio ad absurdum, viewing a work is superfluous, as the judgment is a priori. It's like buying clothes by the label: this is Dior, so it's good. (This is not so far from the way the *auteur* critics work, either).

Sarris doesn't even play his own game with any decent attention to the rules: it is as absurd to praise Lang's recent bad work as to dismiss Huston's early good work; surely it would be more consistent if he also tried to make a case for Huston's bad pictures? That would be more consistent than devising a category called "actors' classics" to explain his good pictures away. If *The Maltese Falcon* and *The Treasure of Sierra Madre* are actors' classics, then what makes Hawks' *To Have and Have Not* and *The Big Sleep* (which were obviously tailored to the personalities of Bogart and Bacall) the work of an *auteur*?

Sarris believes that what makes an *auteur* is "an élan of the soul." (This critical language is barbarous. Where else should élan come from? It's like saying "a digestion of the stomach." A film critic need not be a theoretician, but it is necessary that he know how to use words. This might, indeed, be a first pre-

*And, by the way, the turning point came, I think, not with *Moby Dick,* as Sarris indicates, but much earlier, with *Moulin Rouge.* This may not be so apparent to *auteur* critics concerned primarily with style and individual touches, because what was shocking about *Moulin Rouge* was that the content was sentimental mush. But critics who accept even the worst of Minnelli probably wouldn't have been bothered by the fact that *Moulin Rouge* was soft in the center, it had so many fancy touches at the edges.

mise for a theory.) Those who have this élan presumably have it forever and their films reveal the "organic unity" of the directors' careers; and those who don't have it — well, they can only make "actors' classics." It's ironic that a critic trying to establish simple "objective" rules as a guide for critics who he thinks aren't gifted enough to use taste and intelligence, ends up — where, actually, he began — with a theory based on mystical insight. This might really make demands on the *auteur* critics if they did not simply take the easy way out by arbitrary decisions of who's got "it" and who hasn't. Their decisions are not merely not based on their theory; their decisions are *beyond* criticism. It's like a woman's telling us that she feels a certain dress *does* something for her: her feeling has about as much to do with critical judgment as the *auteur* critics feeling that Minnelli *has* "it," but Huston never had "it."

Even if a girl had plenty of "it," she wasn't expected to keep it forever. But this "élan" is not supposed to be affected by the vicissitudes of fortune, the industrial conditions of movie-making, the turmoil of a country, or the health of a director. Indeed, Sarris says, "If directors and other artists cannot be wrenched from their historical environments, aesthetics is reduced to a subordinate branch of ethnography." May I suggest that if, in order to judge movies, the *auteur* critics must wrench the directors from their historical environments (which is, to put it mildly, impossible) so that they can concentrate on the detection of that "élan," they are reducing aesthetics to a form of idiocy. Elan as the permanent attribute Sarris posits can only be explained in terms of a cult of personality. May I suggest that a more meaningful description of élan is what a man feels when he is working at the height of his powers — and what we respond to in works of art with the excited cry of "This time, he's really done it" or "This shows what he could do when he got the chance" or "He's found his style" or "I never realized he had it in him to do anything so good," etc., a response to his joy in creativity.

Sarris experiences "joy" when he recognizes a pathetic little link between two Raoul Walsh pictures (he never does explain whether the discovery makes him think the pictures are any better) but he wants to see artists in a pristine state — their essences, perhaps? — separated from all the life that has formed them and to which they try to give expression.

"THE INNER CIRCLE"

> "The third and ultimate premise of the *auteur* theory is concerned with interior meaning, the ultimate glory of the cinema as an art. Interior meaning is extrapolated from the tension between a director's personality and his material."

This is a remarkable formulation: it is the opposite of what we have always taken for granted in the arts, that the artist expresses himself in the unity of form and content. What Sarris believes to be "the ultimate glory of the cinema as an art" is what has generally been considered the frustrations of a man working against the given material. Fantastic as this formulation is, it does something that the first two premises didn't do: it clarifies the interests of the *auteur* critics. If we have been puzzled because the *auteur* critics seemed so deeply involved, even dedicated, in becoming connoisseurs of trash, now we can see by this theoretical formulation that trash is indeed their chosen province of film.

Their ideal *auteur* is the man who signs a long-term contract, directs any script that's handed to him, and expresses himself by shoving bits of style up the crevasses of the plots. If his "style" is in conflict with the story line or subject matter, so much the better — more chance for tension. Now we can see why there has been so much use of the term "personality" in this aesthetics (the term which seems so inadequate when discussing the art of Griffith or Renoir or Murnau or Dreyer) — a routine, commercial movie can sure use a little "personality."

Now that we have reached the inner circle (the bull's eye turns out to be an empty socket) we can see why the shoddiest films are often

praised the most. Subject matter is irrelevant (so long as it isn't treated sensitively – which is bad) and will quickly be disposed of by *auteur* critics who know that the smart director isn't responsible for that anyway; they'll get on to the important subject – his *mise-en-scène*. The director who fights to do something he cares about is a square. Now we can at least begin to understand why there was such contempt toward Huston for what was, in its way, a rather extraordinary effort – the *Moby Dick* that failed; why *Movie* considers Roger Corman a better director than Fred Zinnemann and ranks Joseph Losey next to God, why Bogdanovich, Mekas, and Sarris give their highest critical ratings to *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?* (mighty big crevasses there). If Carol Reed had made only movies like *The Man Between* – in which he obviously worked to try to make something out of a rag-bag of worn-out bits of material – he might be considered "brilliant" too. (But this is doubtful: although even the worst Reed is superior to Aldrich's *Baby Jane,* Reed would probably be detected, and rejected, as a man interested in substance rather than sensationalism.)

I am angry, but am I unjust? Here's Sarris: "A Cukor who works with all sorts of projects has a more developed abstract style than a Bergman who is free to develop his own scripts. Not that Bergman lacks personality, but his work has declined with the depletion of his ideas largely because his technique never equaled his sensibility. Joseph L. Mankiewicz and Billy Wilder are other examples of writer-directors without adequate technical mastery. By contrast, Douglas Sirk and Otto Preminger have moved up the scale because their miscellaneous projects reveal a stylistic consistency." How neat it all is—Bergman's "work has declined with the depletion of his ideas largely because his technique never equaled his sensibility." But what on earth does that mean? How did Sarris perceive Bergman's sensibility except through his technique? Is Sarris saying what he seems to be saying, that if Bergman had developed more "technique," his work wouldn't be dependent on his ideas? I'm afraid this *is* what he means, and that when he refers to Cukor's "more developed abstract style" he means by "abstract" something unrelated to ideas, a technique not dependent on the content of the films. This is curiously reminiscent of a view common enough in the business world, that it's better not to get too involved, too personally interested in business problems, or they take over your life; and besides, you don't function as well when you've lost your objectivity. But this is the *opposite* of how an artist works. His technique, his *style,* is determined by his range of involvements, and his preference for certain themes. Cukor's style is no more *abstract*(!) than Bergman's: Cukor has a range of subject matter that he can handle and when he gets a good script within his range (like *The Philadelphia Story* or *Pat and Mike*) he does a good job; but he is at an immense *artistic* disadvantage, compared with Bergman, because he is dependent on the ideas of so many (and often bad) scriptwriters and on material which is often alien to his talents. It's amusing (and/or depressing) to see the way *auteur* critics tend to downgrade writer-directors – who are in the *best* position to use the film medium for personal expression.

Sarris does some pretty fast shuffling with Huston and Bergman; why doesn't he just come out and admit that writer-directors are disqualified by his third premise? They can't arrive at that "interior meaning, the ultimate glory of the cinema" because a writer-director has no tension between his personality and his material, so there's nothing for the *auteur* critic to extrapolate from.

What is all this nonsense about extrapolating "interior" meaning from the tension between a director's personality and his material? A competent commercial director generally does the best he can with what he's got to work with. Where is the "tension"? And if you can locate some, what kind of meaning could you draw out of it except that the director's having a bad time with lousy material or material he doesn't like? Or maybe he's trying to speed up the damned production so he can do something else that he has some *hopes* for? Are

these critics honestly (and futilely) looking for "interior meanings" or is this just some form of intellectual diddling that helps to sustain their pride while they're viewing silly movies? Where is the tension in Howard Hawks' films? When he has good material, he's capable of better than good direction, as he demonstrates in films like *Twentieth Century, Bringing Up Baby, His Girl Friday;* and in *To Have and Have Not* and *The Big Sleep* he demonstrates that with help from the actors, he can jazz up ridiculous scripts. But what "interior meaning" can be extrapolated from an enjoyable, harmless, piece of kitsch like *Only Angels Have Wings;* what can the *auteur* critics see in it beyond the sex and glamor and fantasies of the high-school boys' universe — exactly what the mass audience liked it for? And when Hawks' material and/or cast is dull and when his heart isn't in the production — when by the *auteur* theory he should show his "personality," the result is something soggy like *The Big Sky.*

George Cukor's modest statement, "Give me a good script and I'll be a hundred times better as a director"* provides some notion of how a director may experience the problem of the given material. What can Cukor do with a script like *The Chapman Report* but try to kid it, to dress it up a bit, to show off the talents of Jane Fonda and Claire Bloom and Glynis Johns, and to give the total production a little flair and craftsmanship. At best, he can make an entertaining bad movie. A director with something like magical gifts *can* make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. But if he has it in him to do more in life than make silk purses, the triumph is minor — even if the purse is lined with gold. Only by the use of the *auteur* theory does this little victory become "ultimate glory." For some unexplained reason those travelling in *auteur* circles believe that making that purse out of a sow's ear is an infinitely greater accomplishment than making a solid carrying case out of a good piece of leather (as, for example, a Zinnemann does with *From Here to Eternity* or *The Nun's Story*).

I suppose we should be happy for Sirk and Preminger, elevated up the glory "scale," but I suspect that the "stylistic consistency" of, say, Preminger, could be a matter of his *limitations,* and that the only way you could tell he made some of his movies was that he used the same players so often (Linda Darnell, Jeanne Crain, Gene Tierney, Dana Andrews, et al., gave his movies the Preminger look). But the argument is ludicrous anyway, because if Preminger shows stylistic consistency with subject matter as varied as *Carmen Jones, Anatomy of a Murder,* and *Advise and Consent,* then by any rational standards he should be attacked rather than elevated. I don't think these films are stylistically consistent, nor do I think Preminger is a great director — for the very simple reason that his films are consistently superficial and facile. (*Advise and Consent*—an *auteur* "masterpiece" — Ian Cameron, Paul Mayersberg, and Mark Shivas of *Movie* and Jean Douchet of *Cahiers du Cinéma* rate it first on their ten best lists of 1962 and Sarris gives it his top rating—seems not so much Preminger-directed as other-directed. That is to say, it seems calculated to provide what as many different groups as possible want to see: there's something for the liberals, something for the conservatives, something for the homosexuals, something for the family, etc.) An editorial in *Movie* states: "In order to enjoy Preminger's films the spectator must apply an unprejudiced intelligence; he is constantly required to examine the quality not only of the characters' decisions but also of his own reactions," and "He presupposes an intelligence active enough to allow the specta-

*In another sense, it is perhaps immodest. I would say, give Cukor a clever script with light, witty dialogue, and he will know what to do with it. But I wouldn't expect more than glossy entertainment. (It seems almost too obvious to mention it, but can Sarris really discern the "distinguishable personality" of George Cukor and his "abstract" style in films like *Bhowani Junction, Les Girls, The Actress, A Life of Her Own, The Model and the Marriage Broker, Edward, My Son, A Woman's Face, Romeo and Juliet, A Double Life*? I wish I could put him to the test. I can only *suspect* that many *auteur* critics would have a hard time seeing those tell-tale traces of the beloved in their works.)

tor to make connections, comparisons and judgments." May I suggest that this spectator would have better things to do than the editors of *Movie* who put out Preminger issues? They may have, of course, the joys of discovering links between *Centennial Summer, Forever Amber, That Lady in Ermine,* and *The Thirteenth Letter,* but I refuse to believe in these ever-so-intellectual protestations. The *auteur* critics aren't a very *convincing* group.

I assume that Sarris' theory is not based on his premises (the necessary causal relationships are absent), but rather that the premises were devised in a clumsy attempt to prop up the "theory." (It's a good thing he stopped at three: a few more circles and we'd really be in hell, which might turn out to be the last refinement of film tastes — Abbott and Costello comedies, perhaps?) These critics work embarrassingly hard trying to give some semblance of intellectual respectability to a preoccupation with mindless, repetitious commercial products — the kind of action movies that the restless, rootless men who wander on 42nd Street and in the Tenderloin of all our big cities have always preferred just because they could respond to them without thought. These movies soak up your time. I would suggest that they don't serve a very different function for Sarris or Bogdanovich or the young men of *Movie* — even though they devise elaborate theories to justify soaking up their time. An educated man must have to work pretty hard to set his intellectual horizons at the level of *I Was a Male War Bride* (which, incidentally, wasn't even a good *commercial* movie).

"Interior meaning" seems to be what those in the know know. It's a mystique — and a mistake. The *auteur* critics never tell us by what divining rods they have discovered the élan of a Minnelli or a Nicholas Ray or a Leo McCarey. They're not critics; they're inside dopesters. There must be another circle that Sarris forgot to get to — the one where the secrets are kept.

Long Live the—er—King

"Two Weeks in Another Town is without a doubt Minnelli's best film to date and perhaps the best thing he'll ever do, for never again will the coincidence arise of having a piece of 'respectable trash' like Shaw's novel, and a director who respects trash. The thing that makes *Two Weeks* great is not the acting (Douglas as per usual is horrendous; Robinson stupid, and Claire Trevor, faintly interesting). Certainly not the story, for the changes from the novel only make it more banal. It is the fact that Minnelli has taken something not fit for even the slightest bit of serious critical attention, and turned it into a film which demands exhaustive visual analysis on one level and offers a cinematic joy-ride on a more visceral level. . . . Most of all it is a movie which does not take itself seriously . . . full of beautiful shots and startlingly poetic moments, all of which would mean nothing unless placed in the context of Minnelli's background—a background that indicates, especially with *Two Weeks,* that Minnelli is fast challenging Douglas Sirk's title as Hollywood's 'King of Camp.'" —*New York Film Bulletin, #45*

OUTSIDE THE CIRCLES, or WHAT IS A FILM CRITIC?

I suspect that there's some primitive form of Platonism in the underbrush of Sarris' aesthetics.* He says, for example, that "Bazin's greatness as a critic . . . rested in his disinterested conception of the cinema as a universal entity." I don't know what a "universal entity" is, but I rather imagine Bazin's stature as a critic has less to do with "universals" than with intelligence, knowledge, experience, sensitivity, perceptions, fervor, imagination, dedication, lucidity, etc. — the traditional qualities asso-

*This might help to explain such rather quaint statements as: Bazin "was, if anything, generous to a fault, seeking in every film some vestige of the cinematic art"—as if cinema were not simply the movies that have been made and are being made, but some preëxistent entity. If Bazin thought in these terms, does Sarris go along with him?

ciated with great critics. The role of the critic is to help people see what is in the work, what is in it that shouldn't be, what is not in it that could be. He is a good critic if he helps people understand more about the work than they could see for themselves; he is a great critic, if by his understanding and feeling for the work, by his passion, he can excite people so that they want to experience more of the art that is there, waiting to be seized. He is not necessarily a bad critic if he makes errors in judgment. (Infallible taste is inconceivable; what could it be measured against?) He is a bad critic if he does not awaken the curiosity, enlarge the interests and understanding of his audience. The art of the critic is to transmit his knowledge of and enthusiasm for art to others.

I do not understand what goes on in the mind of a critic who thinks a *theory* is what his confrères need because they are not "great" critics. Any honest man can perform the critical function to the limits of his tastes and powers. I daresay that Bogdanovich and V. F. Perkins and Rudi Franchi and Mark Shivas and all the rest of the new breed of specialists know more about movies than some people and could serve at least a modest critical function if they could remember that art is an expression of human experience. If they are men of feeling and intelligence, isn't it time for them to be a little ashamed of their "detailed criticism" of movies like *River of No Return*?

I believe that we respond most and best to work in any art form (and to other experience as well) if we are pluralistic, flexible, relative in our judgments, if we are eclectic. But this does not mean a scrambling and confusion of systems. Eclecticism is not the same as lack of scruple; eclecticism is the selection of the best standards and principles from various systems of ideas. It requires more care, more orderliness to be a pluralist than to apply a single theory. Sarris, who thinks he is applying a single theory, is too undisciplined to recognize the conflicting implications of his arguments. If he means to take a Platonic position, then is it not necessary for him to tell us what his ideals of movies are and how various examples of film live up to or fail to meet his ideals? And if there is an ideal to be achieved, an objective standard, then what does élan have to do with it? (The ideal could be achieved by plodding hard work or by inspiration or any other way; the method of achieving the ideal would be as irrelevant as the "personality" of the creator.) As Sarris uses them, vitalism and Platonism and pragmatism do not support his *auteur* theory; they undermine it.

Those, like Sarris, who ask for objective standards seem to want a theory of criticism which makes the critic unnecessary. And he *is* expendable if categories replace experience; a critic with a single theory is like a gardener who uses a lawn mower on everything that grows. Their desire for a theory that will solve all the riddles of creativity is in itself perhaps an indication of their narrowness and confusion; they're like those puzzled, lost people who inevitably approach one after a lecture and ask, "But what is your basis for judging a movie?" When one answers that new films are judged in terms of how they extend our experience and give us pleasure, and that our ways of judging how they do this are drawn not only from older films but from other works of art, and theories of art, that new films are generally related to what is going on in the other arts, that as wide a background as possible in literature, painting, music, philosophy, political thought, etc., helps, that it is the wealth and variety of what he has to bring to new works that makes the critic's reaction to them valuable, the questioners are always unsatisfied. They wanted a simple answer, a formula; if they approached a chef they would probably ask for the one magic recipe that could be followed in all cooking.

And it is very difficult to explain to such people that criticism is exciting just because there is no formula to apply, just because you must use everything you are and everything you know that is relevant, and that film criticism is particularly exciting just because of the multiplicity of elements in film art.

This range of experience, and dependence

on experience, is pitifully absent from the work of the *auteur* critics; they seem to view movies, not merely in isolation from the other arts, but in isolation even from their own experience. Those who become film specialists early in life are often fixated on the period of film during which they first began going to movies, so it's not too surprising that the *Movie* group — just out of college and some still in — are so devoted to the films of the 'forties and 'fifties. But if they don't widen their interests to include earlier work, how can they evaluate films in anything like their historical continuity, how can they perceive what is distinctive in films of the 'forties? And if they don't have interests outside films, how can they evaluate what goes on in films? Film aesthetics as a distinct, specialized field is a bad joke: the *Movie* group is like an intellectual club for the intellectually handicapped. And when is Sarris going to discover that aesthetics is indeed a branch of ethnography; what does he think it is — a sphere of its own, separate from the study of man in his environment?

SOME SPECULATIONS ON THE APPEAL OF THE AUTEUR THEORY

If relatively sound, reasonably reliable judgments were all that we wanted from film criticism, then *Sight and Sound* might be considered a great magazine. It isn't, it's something far less — a good, dull, informative, well-written, safe magazine, the best film magazine in English, but it doesn't satisfy desires for an excitement of the senses. Its critics don't often outrage us, neither do they open much up for us; its intellectual range is too narrow, its approach too professional. (If we recall an article or review, it's almost impossible to remember which Peter or which Derek wrote it.) Standards of quality are not enough, and *Sight and Sound* tends to dampen enthusiasm. *Movie,* by contrast, seems spirited: one feels that these writers do, at least, love movies, that they're not condescending. But they too, perhaps even more so, are indistinguishable read-alikes, united by fanaticism in a ludicrous cause; and for a group that discounts content and story, that believes the director is the *auteur* of what gives the film value, they show an inexplicable fondness — almost an obsession — for detailing plot and quoting dialogue. With all the zeal of youth serving an ideal, they carefully reduce movies to trivia.

It is not merely that the *auteur* theory distorts experience (all theory does that, and helps us to see more sharply for having done so) but that it is an aesthetics which is fundamentally anti-art. And this, I think, is the most serious charge that can possibly be brought against an aesthetics. The *auteur* theory, which probably helped to liberate the energies of the French critics, plays a very different role in England and with the *Film Culture* and *New York Film Bulletin auteur* critics in the United States — an anti-intellectual, anti-art role.

The French *auteur* critics, rejecting the socially conscious, problem pictures so dear to the older generation of American critics, became connoisseurs of values in American pictures that Americans took for granted, and if they were educated Americans, often held in contempt. The French adored the American gangsters, and the vitality, the strength, of our action pictures — all those films in which a couple of tough men slug it out for a girl, after going through hell together in oil fields, or building a railroad, or blazing a trail. In one sense, the French were perfectly right — these were often much more skilfully made and far more interesting visually than the movies with a message which Americans were so proud of, considered so *adult.* Vulgar melodrama with a fast pace can be much more exciting — and more honest, too—than feeble, pretentious attempts at drama — which usually meant just putting "ideas" into melodrama, anyway. Where the French went off was in finding elaborate intellectual and psychological meanings in these simple action films. (No doubt we make some comparable mistakes in interpreting French films.)

Like most swings of the critical pendulum, the theory was a *corrective,* and it helped to remind us of the energies and crude strength and good humor that Europeans enjoyed in

our movies. The French saw something in our movies that their own movies lacked; they admired it, and to some degree, they have taken it over and used it in their own way (triumphantly in *Breathless* and *Shoot the Piano Player*, not very successfully in their semi-American thrillers). Our movies were a product of American industry, and in a sense, it was America itself that they loved in our movies — our last frontiers, our robber-barons, our naiveté, our violence, our efficiency and speed and technology, our bizarre combination of sentimentality and inhuman mechanization.

But for us, the situation is different. It is good for us to be reminded that our mass culture is not altogether poisonous in its effect on other countries, but what is appealingly exotic — "American" — for them is often intolerable for us. The freeways of cities like Los Angeles may seem mad and marvelous to a foreign visitor; to us they are the nightmares we spend our days in. The industrial products of Hollywood that we grew up on are not enough to satisfy our interests as adults. We want a great deal more from our movies than we get from the gangster carnage and the John Ford westerns that Europeans adore. I enjoy some movies by George Cukor and Howard Hawks but I wouldn't be much interested in the medium if that were all that movies could be. We see many elements in foreign films that *our* movies lack. We also see that our films have lost the beauty and innocence and individuality of the silent period, and the sparkle and wit of the 'thirties. There was no special reason for the French critics, preoccupied with *their* needs, to become sensitive to *ours*. And it was not surprising that, in France, where film directors work in circumstances more comparable to those of a dramatist or a composer, critics would become fixated on American directors — not understanding how confused and inextricable are the roles of the front office, the producers, writers, editors, and all the rest of them — even the marketing research consultants who may pretest the drawing powers of the story and stars — in Hollywood. For the French, the name of a director *was* a guide on what American films to see: if a director was associated with a certain type of film that they liked; or if a director's work showed the speed and efficiency that they enjoyed. I assume that anyone interested in movies uses the director's name as some sort of guide, both positive and negative, even though we recognize that at times he is little more than a stage manager. For example, in the 'forties, my friends and I would keep an eye out for the Robert Siodmak films and avoid Irving Rapper films (except when they starred Bette Davis whom we wanted to see even in bad movies); I avoid Mervyn LeRoy films (though I went to see *Home Before Dark* for Jean Simmons' performance); I wish I could avoid Peter Glenville's pictures but he uses actors I want to see. It's obvious that a director like Don Siegel or Phil Karlson does a better job with what he's got to work with than Peter Glenville, but that doesn't mean there's any pressing need to go see every tawdry little gangster picture Siegel or Karlson directs; and perhaps if they tackled more difficult subjects they wouldn't do a better job than Glenville. There is no rule or theory involved in any of this, just simple discrimination; we judge the man from his films and learn to predict a little about his next films, we don't judge the films from the man.

But what has happened to the judgment of the English and New York critics who have taken over the *auteur* theory and used it to erect a film aesthetics based on those commercial movies that answered a need for the French, but which are not merely ludicrously inadequate to our needs, but are the results of a system of production that places a hammerlock on American directors? And how can they, with straight faces, probe for deep meanings in these products? Even the kids they're made for know enough not to take them seriously. How can these critics, sensible enough to deflate our overblown message movies, reject the total content of a work as unimportant and concentrate on signs of a director's "personality" and "interior meaning"? It's understandable that

they're trying to find movie art in the loopholes of commercial production — it's a harmless hobby and we all play it now and then; what's incomprehensible is that they *prefer* their loopholes to unified film expression. If they weren't so determined to exalt products over works that attempt to express human experience, wouldn't they have figured out that the *mise-en-scène* which they seek out in these products, the director's personal style which comes through despite the material, is only a mere suggestion, a hint of what an artist can do when he's in control of the material, when the whole film becomes expressive? Isn't it obvious that *mise-en-scène* and subject material — form and content — can be judged separately only in bad movies or trivial ones? It must be black comedy for directors to read this new criticism and discover that films in which they felt trapped and disgusted are now said to be their masterpieces. It's an aesthetics for 1984: failure is success.

I am too far from the English scene to guess at motives, and far away also from New York, but perhaps close enough to guess that the Americans (consciously or unconsciously) are making a kind of social comment: like the pop artists, the New Realists with their comic strips and Campbell's Soup can paintings, they are saying, "See what America is, this junk is the fact of our lives. Art and avant-gardism are phony; what isn't any good, is good. Only squares believe in art. The artifacts of industrial civilization are the supreme truth, the supreme joke." This is a period when men who consider themselves creative scoff at art and tradition. It is perhaps no accident that in the same issue of *Film Culture* with Sarris' *auteur* theory there is a lavishly illustrated spread on "The Perfect Filmic Appositeness of Maria Montez" — a fairly close movie equivalent for that outsized can of Campbell's Soup. The editor, Jonas Mekas, has his kind of social comment. This is his approach to editing a film magazine: "As long as the 'lucidly minded' critics will stay out, with all their 'form,' 'content,' 'art,' 'structure,' 'clarity,' 'importance' — everything will be all right, just keep them out. For the new soul is still a bud, still going through its most dangerous, most sensitive stage." Doesn't exactly make one feel welcome, does it? I'm sure I don't know what the problem is: are there so many "lucidly minded" critics in this country (like Andrew Sarris?) that they must be fought off? And aren't these little "buds" that have to be protected from critical judgments the same little film-makers who are so convinced of their importance that they can scarely conceive of a five-minute film which doesn't end with what they, no doubt, regard as the ultimate social comment: the mushroom cloud rising. Those "buds" often behave more like tough nuts.

Sarris with his love of commercial trash and Mekas who writes of the "cul-de-sac of Western culture" which is "stifling the spiritual life of man" seem to have irreconcilable points of view. Sarris with his joys in Raoul Walsh seems a long way from Mekas, the spokesman for the "independent filmakers" (who couldn't worm their way into Sarris' outer circle). Mekas makes statements like "The new artist, by directing his ear inward, is beginning to catch bits of man's true vision." (Dear Lon Chaney Mekas, please get your ear out of your eye. Mekas has at least one thing in common with good directors: he likes to dramatize.) But to love trash and to feel that you are stifled by it are perhaps very close positions. Does the man who paints the can of Campbell's Soup love it or hate it? I think the answer is both: that he is obsessed by it as a fact of our lives and a symbol of America. When Mekas announces, "I don't want any part of the Big Art Game" he comes even closer to Sarris. And doesn't the *auteur* theory fit nicely into the pages of an "independent filmakers" journal when you consider that the work of those film-makers might compare very unfavorably with good films, but can look fairly interesting when compared with commercial products. It can even look original to those who don't know much film history. The "independent filmakers," Lord knows, are already convinced about their importance as the creative figures—the *auteurs;* a theory which suggested the importance of writing to film art might seriously damage their

egos. They go even farther than the *auteur* critics' notion that the script is merely something to transcend: they often act as if anyone who's concerned with scripts is a square who doesn't dig film. (It's obvious, of course, that this aesthetic based on images and a contempt for words is a function of economics and technology, and that as soon as a cheap, lightweight 16mm camera with good synchronous sound gets on the market, the independent film-makers will develop a different aesthetic.)

The *auteur* theory, silly as it is, can nevertheless be a dangerous theory – not only because it constricts the experience of the critics who employ it, but because it offers nothing but commercial goals to the young artists who may be trying to do something in film. *Movie* with its celebration of Samuel Fuller's "brutality" and the Mackie Mekas who "knows that everything he has learned from his society about life and death is false" give readers more of a charge than they get from the limp pages of *Sight and Sound* and this journal. This is not intended to be a snide remark about *Sight and Sound* and *Film Quarterly:* if they are not more sensational, it is because they are attempting to be responsible, to hoard the treasures of our usable past. But they will be wiped off the cinema landscape, if they can't meet the blasts of anti-art with some fire of their own.

The union of Mekas and Sarris may be merely a marriage of convenience; but if it is strong enough to withstand Sarris' "Hello and Goodbye to the New American Cinema" (in *The Village Voice,* September 20, 1962), perhaps the explanation lies in the many shared attitudes of the Mekas group and the *auteur* critics. Neither group, for example, is interested in a balanced view of a film; Mekas says he doesn't believe in "negative criticism" and the *auteur* critics (just like our grammar school teachers) conceive of a review as "an appreciation." The directors they reject are so far beyond the pale that their films are not even considered worth discussion. (Sarris who distributes zero ratings impartially to films as varied as *Yojimbo, The Manchurian Candidate,* and *Billy Budd* could hardly be expected to take time off from his devotional exercises with Raoul Walsh to explain why these films are worthless.) Sarris, too, can resort to the language of the hipster – "What is it the old jazz man says of his art? If you gotta ask what it is, it ain't? Well, the cinema is like that." This is right at home in *Film Culture,* although Sarris (to his everlasting credit) doesn't employ the accusatory, paranoid style of Mekas: "You criticize our work from a purist, formalistic and classicist point of view. But we say to you: What's the use of cinema if man's soul goes rotten?" The "you" is, I suppose, the same you who figures in so much (bad) contemporary prophetic, righteous poetry and prose, the "you" who is responsible for the Bomb and who, by some fantastically self-indulgent thought processes, is turned into the enemy, the *critic.* Mekas, the childlike, innocent, pure Mekas, is not about to be caught by "the tightening web of lies"; he refuses "to continue the Big Lie of Culture." I'm sure that, in this scheme, any attempt at clear thinking immediately places us in the enemy camp, turns us into the bomb-guilty "you," and I am forced to conclude that Mekas is not altogether wrong –that if we believe in the necessity (not to mention the beauty) of clear thinking, we are indeed his enemy. I don't know how it's possible for anyone to criticize his work from a "purist, formalistic and classicist point of view" –the method would be too far from the object; but can't we ask Mekas: is man's soul going to be in better shape because your work is protected from criticism? How much nonsense dare these men permit themselves? When Sarris tells us, "If the *auteur* critics of the Fifties had not scored so many coups of clairvoyance,

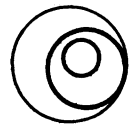
Beware of the Bull-Dozers . . .

"Granted that one must be 'committed' to Welles to even like *Arkadin,* but once one has made the commitment, there is no choice but to call it a masterpiece."

–New York Film Bulletin, #45

the *auteur* theory would not be worth discussing in the Sixties," does he mean any more than that he has taken over the fiats of the *auteur* critics in the 'fifties and goes on applying them in the 'sixties? Does he seriously regard his own Minnelli-worship as some sort of objective verification of the critics who praised Minnelli in the 'fifties? If that's his concept of critical method, he might just as well join forces with other writers in *Film Culture*. In addition to Mekas ("Poets are surrounding America, flanking it from all sides,") there is, for example, Ron Rice: "And the beautiful part about it all is that you can, my dear critics, scream protest to the skies, you're too late. The Musicians, Painters, Writers, Poets and Film-Makers all fly in the same sky, and know Exactly where It's 'AT'." Rice knows where he's at about as much as Stan Brakhage who says, "So the money vendors have begun it again. To the catacombs then . . ." In the pages of *Film Culture* they escape from the money changers in Jerusalem by going to the catacombs in Rome. "Forget ideology," Brakhage tells us, "for film unborn as it is has no language and speaks like an aborigine." We're all familiar with Brakhage's passion for obstetrics, but does being a primitive man mean being a foetus? I don't understand that unborn aborigine talk, but I'm prepared to believe that grunt by grunt, or squeal by squeal, it will be as meaningful as most of *Film Culture*. I am also prepared to believe that for Jonas Mekas, culture is a "Big Lie." And Sarris, looking for another culture under those seats coated with chewing gum, coming up now and then to announce a "discovery" like Joanne Dru, has he found his spiritual home down there?

Isn't the anti-art attitude of the *auteur* critics both in England and here, implicit also in their peculiar emphasis on virility? (Walsh is, for Sarris, "one of the screen's most virile directors." In *Movie* we discover: "When one talks about the heroes of *Red River,* or *Rio Bravo,* or *Hatari!* one is talking about Hawks himself. . . . Finally everything that can be said in presenting Hawks boils down to one simple statement: here is a man.") I don't think critics would use terms like "virile" or "masculine" to describe artists like Dreyer or Renoir; there is something too *limited* about describing them this way (just as when we describe a woman as sensitive and feminine, we are indicating her *special* nature). We might describe Kipling as a virile writer but who would think of calling Shakespeare a virile writer? But for the *auteur* critics calling a director virile is the highest praise because, I suggest, it is some kind of assurance that he is not trying to express himself in an art form, but treats movie-making as a professional job. (*Movie*: Hawks "makes the very best adventure films because he is at one with his heroes. . . . Only Raoul Walsh is as deeply an adventurer as Hawks. . . . Hawks' heroes are all professionals doing jobs — scientists, sheriffs, cattlemen, big game hunters: real professionals who know their capabilities. . . . They know exactly what they can do with the available resources, expecting of others only what they know can be given.") The *auteur* critics are so enthralled with their narcissistic male fantasies (*Movie*: "Because Hawks' films and their heroes are so genuinely mature, they don't need to announce the fact for all to hear") that they seem unable to relinquish their schoolboy notions of human experience. (If there are any female practitioners of *auteur* criticism, I have not yet discovered them.) Can we conclude that, in England and the United States, the *auteur* theory is an attempt by adult males to justify staying inside the small range of experience of their boyhood and adolescence — that period when masculinity looked so great and important but art was something talked about by poseurs and phonies and sensitive-feminine types? And is it perhaps also their way of making a comment on our civilization by the suggestion that trash is the true film art? I ask; I do not know.



JERZY TOEPLITZ

Film Scholarship: Present and Prospective

Our last issue provided a factual survey of American resources for film study, in our archives and libraries. In the article below the rector of the Polish state film school at Łódź, who is also president of the international federation of film archives, looks back over the development of film thought to date and makes suggestions for the future.

SCOPE OF FILM SCHOLARSHIP AND TRENDS IN RESEARCH

The term "film scholarship" is relatively new, having appeared only in the last two decades. Not only is the term new, but also vague. What exactly does film scholarship encompass? Doubtlessly included within its scope are aesthetics and its branch, which we call the theory of film art. Nor is there any doubt that film history also lies within the province of film scholarship. But from here on we enter upon controversial territory. That large department called filmology is actually a composite of various sciences which take account of film questions among others. The principal accent here is placed on psychology and sociology, although physiology, mathematics, and medicine also play a sizable role.

In recent years, a new type of research has, in a certain sense, superseded filmology. In this new approach, an attempt is made to explain film questions by means of the theory of information. Simultaneously, one may observe a tendency to include films in broader research programs which embrace all the media of mass influence — radio, television, press, and so on. In this confusion of questions it is difficult to ascertain a clear boundary between the separate branches of sciences and the trends in research. In many cases, the separate branches overlap, also researchers and scholars in various fields become interested in one area.

The purpose of the present article is to attempt to define the principal trends in research, to draw attention to fields with the greatest achievement, and to point out the essential future needs.

A short historical outline may first be in order. Aesthetics was the first branch of learning to appear in the large family of film scholarship. That was way back at the turn of the century. A scarce 20 years after the invention of the cinematograph, there began to appear books and articles on the artistic quality of the new art or, if you wish, the new medium of entertainment. Of the earliest students and theorists of the film art, we may mention here Ricciotto Canudo[1] in France, Vachel Lindsay[2] in America, and Herman Häfker[3] in Germany. All three wrote about the film before World War I or during that war. In the 'twenties, we observe a large number of valuable works in the field of film aesthetics and the rise of distinct schools in the film, like that of the French film impressionists, the German school, and the variegated and spontaneous development of Soviet film theory with Kuleshov and Dziga-Vertov in the early period and Eisenstein and Pudovkin in later years. A valuable contribution to the new theory of the film was *Der sichtbare Mensch,* a book by the

Hungarian writer Bela Balázs[4] published in the German language. Another good book which is completely unknown outside of Poland is the work of the Polish theorist Karol Irzykowski, *X Muza* [The Tenth Muse].[5] Irzykowski raised his theory of the film on a solid philosophical foundation.

The flux of theoretical ideas seemed to abate with the advent of sound in the 'thirties. True, the new eminent theorist Rudolf Arnheim emerged in this period and Bela Balázs continued to turn out new books, but film aesthetics were much poorer both in quantity and in quality than they had been in the period of the silent film. However, that was inevitable. Creative practice had already provided an answer to the question, "Is film an art?" asked invariably by the theorists of the silent film era, and the tide of discussion on this level ebbed.

A renaissance of aesthetics, in a broader sense, finally occurred after World War II. The center of filmological studies in Paris tried to combine aesthetic reflections with scientific methodology used in the exact sciences and philosophy, and simultaneously extended the field of research over the area of other sciences, principally sociology and psychology. The works of Cohen-Séat[6] are typical of this tendency. New and interesting work on the aesthetics of the film appeared in the 'fifties and 'sixties. The late André Bazin, a film critic, trying to disassociate himself from the style left over from the silent film and combating the old principles of montage, formulated new canons of the film art. Siegfried Kracauer in his *Theory of Film*, a discourse employing a truly scientific method, gives a new interpretation of the principal laws of the film art. We are not attempting to evaluate here the separate tendencies and schools in the film, but are trying to demonstrate that aesthetic research, which was quite restricted in the past, has in recent years become greatly diversified. Characteristic of the contemporary period is the projection of the film against the broad background of other artistic media with due attention paid to the social functions of the film medium. We observe that scholars are interested not only in the artist and his works, but also, and at times primarily, in the audience. The theoretical structure of Edgar Morin's reasoning in *Le cinéma ou l'homme imaginaire* and *L'esprit du temps*[7] derives from the two aspects of the film, the point of view of the audience and that of the artist.

The history of the film emerged later than the aesthetics of the film. For many years film history was restricted to newspaper accounts and the repetition of anecdotes and at times unfounded tales about film people. A standard example of a journalist-historian was Terry Ramsaye, author of a brilliantly written history of the American film,[8] which is virtually of no historical value. In the 'thirties, we note the appearance of historical film chronicles rather than the collections of anecdotes. Paul Rotha's *The Film Till Now*[9] may be taken as an example. The four volumes by Charles Ford and René Jeanne,[10] published after World War II, fall in the same category. The prewar history of the film by Bardèche and Brazillach[11] was one of the earliest attempts to approach this subject as a problem and to present the authors' point of view on these events.

However, the first film historian, in the true sense of the word, is Georges Sadoul who based his writings, anecdotal and journalistic as well as essayistic, but always scientific, on documents. Nevertheless, there is a weakness in Sadoul's history (reference is made here to the unabridged volumes and not to the one-volume publication),[12] in his failure to give a more selective account. Frequently, extraneous background and marginal facts overshadow essential facts. As far as the methodology of historical presentation is concerned, Rachel Low's *The History of the British Film*[13] far outshines Sadoul's work. It is to be regretted that after producing only three volumes, Low has not continued her work. Also regrettable is the fact that the richly illustrated and carefully written world history of the film by Carlos Fernandez Cuenca has only three volumes.[14] It is beyond our power to list all the examples of film histories that have appeared. We must

limit ourselves to a few in point of illustration. Of the most interesting from the point of view of their scholarship are: Siegfried Kracauer's *From Caligari to Hitler*,[15] a history of the German film brought up to 1933 and written with a strong sociological bent; the first chapters of Lewis Jacobs' *The Rise of the American Film*[16] and Nicholas Lebedev's *History of the Silent Film of the USSR*,[17] published in 1947, a book which is as timely and valuable in its scholarly context as it was then. The new history of the Soviet cinema by Jay Leyda, *Kino*,[18] should be accepted as an exceptionally valuable collection of informative facts and perhaps even a more valuable collection of Leyda's personal impressions from his contacts with the people of the Soviet film, but not as history in the strict sense of the word. Leyda's work suffers from a thematic disproportion between the separate chapters and, even more important, does not employ the methodology of historical presentation. Conclusions: there is still quite considerable pressure of chronicles, journalism, and the essay exerted on film historians; a complete transfer to a scholarly approach has not yet been made.

As we have already pointed out, apart from the two areas that deal exclusively with the film, there are many border regions where the film is studied within the scope of other branches of science. We are not referring here to technology or the problems of industry, economics, law, and so forth. These peripheral studies are without doubt very important and do at times affect directly the main fields of study. In addition to aesthetics and history, reference should be made also to the studies on audience reaction, a branch which has been developing spontaneously in recent years, especially in Anglo-American countries and most particularly in the United States. It is impossible to mention specific works for there are too many of them. It is my feeling that the most valuable among these works are the collective volumes *Mass Culture, Culture for the Millions* and *Mass Communications*.[19]

Enumerating the separate fields of film scholarship, it must be borne in mind that in each of them it is difficult to draw a clear boundary between serious scholarship work and the experimentation and fumblings of amateurs. These boundaries are fluid simply because the fundamental conditions necessary to the development and to the proper prospects of scholarly study on the film are entirely missing or exist only in a few nuclei. Obviously, the principal reason for this is that the branches of film lore are comparatively new. But we would over-simplify the problem if we reduced all questions to the number of years that a branch of science exists. The reasons lie deeper. They arise from the fact that virtually all over the world film studies are conducted in a desultory fashion; the results are not published or codified, there is no exchange of experience, and studies are conducted in an atmosphere of distrust on the part of other sciences toward a subject which frequently defies classification under established academic categories and rules of the game.

Three basic elements are necessary to the evolution of every science, hence also to the development of film scholarship: (1) properly organized research centers, (2) trained personnel, (3) educational aids. We shall deal with each of these problems in the present article.

WHAT IS NECESSARY TO THE EVOLUTION OF FILM SCHOLARSHIP?

We may begin with the research centers. There are lone scholars, like Siegfried Kracauer in the United States and Guido Aristarco in Italy,[20] but usually film study is carried out in: (1) separate film institutes or specialized agencies of these institutes, (2) departments, faculties, or institutes of universities, (3) film schools with separate departments in film theory or with courses in film theory, (4) film archives and museums.

A film institute, or center of film research, obviously provides the best conditions for film scholarship because this type of institution is able to concentrate its whole effort on film research and to map out long range programs. There are very few film institutes, in the strict

sense of the word, in the world. Both in the USSR and in Poland there are film departments within the institutes of art. In the USSR the Institute of the History and Theory of Art is under the Ministry of Culture,[21] in Poland it is one of the institutes of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Both institutions concentrate on research in the history and aesthetics of the film. L'Institut de Filmologie at the Sorbonne in France publishes *La Revue Filmologique*. In recent years the Institut has practically suspended its activity due largely to financial straits and to the death of Professor Rocque, one of the pioneers of filmology. However, a similar film center established in Milan[22] is prospering quite well. Finally a center of film research, devoted to problems of film history and aesthetics,[23] was established in the German Democratic Republic a few years ago. There are, to all practical purposes, no centers of film research in any other country of East or West Europe or in any other part of the world. Although the British Film Institute has in its title the words Institute and Film, it nevertheless does not conduct any research.

It is not possible to compile anywhere near a complete list of universities or schools of higher education with their own centers of film research. No full list is extant anywhere. Information about these institutes appears only sporadically in the newspapers. It seems to me that one of the more interesting centers of this category is the Münster University in the Federal Republic of Germany where Professor Hagemann[24] conducted research on journalism and the film. In the United States, some of the universities that conduct work on theory in addition to the practical courses are: Northwestern, Iowa State University, and the University of Southern California. The universities of Belgium are manifesting a lively interest in the film. The faculty of film history and criticism, conducted by the famous Italian theorist Luigi Chiarini, has been operating for many years now at the University of Pisa. And lastly, the University of Łódź in Poland has an interesting center of film research doing work touching on the film and literature in the Department of Philology.

Film schools actually train film practitioners, chiefly film directors and cameramen. However, several of these, like the VGIK in Moscow, the IDHEC in Paris and the Polish Film School in Łódź, take account of theory both in their curriculum and the duties of the professors. Moreover, the students who attend these schools must, in addition to their practical work on the production of films, write theoretical papers which are frequently an integral element of their final work for the diploma.

The fourth category of research centers are the film archives. Although this does not apply everywhere and to all archives, one may note a growing tendency to transform the larger archives into independent research institutes. The Gosfilmofond, the film archives of the USSR, publishes interesting historical material in its *Kino i Vremia*[25] which contains extensive studies of Soviet and foreign films. For many years now, George Pratt, working at the archives of George Eastman House in Rochester, N.Y., has been preparing a documented history of the American film; we fervently hope that the first volumes will appear soon.

All in all, there are very few centers of film research in the world. Moreover, they do not maintain a wide exchange of material and experience. The film schools constitute an exception, but it is primarily the schools in Europe that maintain an exchange of information. The large number of American centers seem to exist beyond the pale. No one in Europe knows what is being done in these centers. We shall return to the problem of exchange and coöperation later.

The film centers are helped by associations of scholars who work in the field of the film, but cannot be replaced by them. There are not many such associations. We may mention the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Filmwissenschaft in the Federal Republic of Germany, the Österreichische Gesellschaft für Filmwissenschaft and Filmwirtschaft in Austria, and the Society of Cinematologists in the United States.

The problem of film scholars is closely bound up with that of the research centers. Here the

situation is as bad, or even worse than, in the case of the centers themselves. It is possible to establish film research institutions or institutes, and this is done occasionally, but it is impossible to produce in a day qualified workers who would consider themselves and who would actually *be* experts on the film, workers who would not treat their work as a hobby.

It is obvious that this problem cannot be resolved immediately and radically. However, it is necessary to plan a program of procedure. The program is not complex as far as its principles are concerned. First, there must be an established place where film scholars may be trained. The institutes mentioned here, or the universities, or even the film schools, may serve for this purpose. But it is essential that these institutions grant academic degrees and that the study of the history or aesthetics of the film be set up as a separate branch. Second, granted that the young people devote themselves to this branch of study at any one of the institutions, granted that they pass a certain apprenticeship and do independent work in their field, then they must be given the opportunity to continue their work and to advance. In other words, the students majoring in the film must have the same opportunity to work for an academic title — B.A., B.S., M.A., and Ph.D. — and to become assistant professors and professors, as students in the other branches of learning. But much ground is still left unturned. For in creating a system of education and advancement in the film similar to that in other branches of the arts and sciences, it is necessary to overcome many prejudices and to enter by force the academic and university area. So long as this remains undone, so long as a strong bridgehead is not established for further assault, film scholarship will be relegated to the very bottom and will not be treated seriously. Furthermore, willingly or no, it will become an area of operation for amateurs and pseudoscholars.

The first step has already been taken in many countries. There are doctor's degrees in the film and there is even a scattering of professors who conduct scholarly work in the field. But at the end of 60 years of film, there are perhaps several hundred (this is a high estimate) doctors of the film in the world and not more than a score or more of professors. This estimate does not take account of the graduates of film schools, that is of the practitioners who sometimes hold a B.A., B.S., or M.A., nor of the professors who lecture in the practical fields of the film art, like film-directing, film photography, scriptwriting and others. Reference is made here to film scholars in the strictest sense of the word, hence principally theorists and historians and secondly sociologists and psychologists.

Next on the list are educational aids. These are above all films, and then books and specialist periodicals. Here the film does not stand as badly as it would at first seem. Thanks to the network of film archives, a great deal has been accomplished in the last 20 years in restoring and preserving prints of valuable films from the past. Today, thousands of film prints are deposited in properly equipped vaults, there are catalogues of films and, most important of all, it is possible to see these films by international exchange arrangement. All films are not yet available to scholars for a diversity of reasons: intricate copyrights prove an obstacle at times, then again technical reasons are a hindrance. There may be only one copy of a film and no way to make a print. But considerable progress has been made and many classics of the film art circulate about the world today. The majority of the films are provided with exact and carefully edited texts and some archives have recently started to reconstruct the scripts of outstanding films. As illustration, we may mention Griffith's *Intolerance*, prepared by the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and the screenplay of Stroheim's *Greed* published by the Cinémathèque de Belgique.[26]

Books and other film publications present a graver problem. There is an enormous quantity of published matter which increases with each successive year. But there is a dearth of bibliographies, both on the national and international scale. An exception to the rule is the Polish catalogue of all film publications brought out at home and abroad, available in public librar-

ies and larger private collections in Poland, put out every two years by the Institute of Art, Polish Academy of Sciences.[27] The large international bibliographies, like the Italian *Bianco e Nero*[28] or *The Film as Art*[29] published in the United States before the war are obsolete today — but new publications of this type fail to appear.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

The films available in the archives and the growing number of books on the film constitute reference resources which, though still very modest, are nevertheless sufficient for the purpose of writing a standard work. It may be noted that all the larger film archives have cross-reference film catalogues. Furthermore, supplementary lists of new films are frequently published. Although the catalogues and the lists are designed for use in the archives and for exchange between the archives, any researcher who wishes information on any given film may approach an archive in his country or the Secretariat of the Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film.[30] I do not know of a single case where a film archive would fail to help determine where the necessary material is to be found or to make available a screening of the films the interested party may wish to see.

There is a legend abroad that the archives are closed and inaccessible fortresses. It may be assumed that the legend grew only because researchers very rarely make an attempt to seek information at the source. It may be mentioned here that in 1962 the FIAF compiled the first part of a catalogue listing the silent features found in the 31 archives which are members of the Federation. Apart from the lists and catalogues of films, many countries have prepared filmographies. A model of this kind of publication is the three-volume *Information Catalogue of Soviet Feature Films*,[31] which embraces about 2,500 film titles and gives exact data on the directors, cameramen, scriptwriters, and technicians, on the cast, the length of the films, the dates of premières, and the essential bibliographic material (reviews and press articles). This catalogue also provides a concise but absolutely sufficient resumé of the films. It would be desirable to have similar works appear in other countries. Though it is tinged with subjective evaluation, another valuable reference source is the British Film Institute *Bulletin* in which the researcher will find comprehensive data on the film and a resumé of films shown in England. The IDHEC in Paris has compiled a valuable collection of *Fiches Filmographiques*.[32] They are very uneven in quality as there was no one general methodology adopted and the authors — students of the IDHEC — worked according to individual systems of analysis and evaluation. On the whole, however, one may find considerable valuable material in these fiches, particularly in the description of the films, broken up into sequences and scenes.

Of the written sources the most valuable are the two Italian encyclopedias: *Enciclopedia dello Spettacolo*[33] an *Film Lexicon degli autori e delle opere*.[34] The first includes all the performing arts, the second is devoted exclusively to the film. So far four volumes of the Lexicon have appeared and the fifth is now being prepared. The second part of the *Lexicon* embraces film works, but we must wait another few years for it. This will be the first serious and documented list of the best films provided with an extensive bibliography. We sincerely hope that this second series of the *Film Lexicon* will perform the same role in film research as *Der Schauspielführer*,[35] edited by Professor Gregor, performed for the theater.

Publications of screenplays do not follow an established pattern. In the majority of cases, the published scripts are not the original scenarios but release scripts prepared from the release print. Usually these publications fail to give a commentary and a detailed analysis of the text. *Dal soggetto al film*[36] may be considered an exception. But the full texts of the scenarios or scripts are not always given. An interesting reference source is *The Battleship Potemkin*,[37] a book which reconstructed the scenario from the several existing versions of the film. Works of this type would be extremely

valuable, for the classics of the silent film have been preserved in variant forms. Incidentally, one of the principal tasks of the film archives is to establish the standard form of film classics by making use of the different existing versions.

Monographs devoted to film directors constitute a separate chapter in the department of reference material. Most of them are "vies romancées" filled with ancedotes but lacking any scientific discipline whatever. A similar reservation must be made concerning works which may technically be described as autobiographies. Actually, however, the authors of such books are usually journalists who simply transcribe the confidences of the film director. Now and then there does appear a true monograph, one that is based on documents and source material. But the majority of these works are not known widely nor do film researchers of other countries hear of them. At times, the language of the original constitutes a barrier, as for instance in the case of Zbigniew Gawrak's work on Epstein, written in Polish, which gives more comprehensive and, what is even more important, more documented material than many original French works.[38] Similarly the most valuable work on Ingmar Bergman is that written by the Swedish critic Jörn Donner,[39] which is not known more widely because of the language barrier. It seems that a certain breakthrough in the monograph department was made by the new French series, called "Cinéma d'aujourdhui," in which the following monographs have been published: *Georges Méliès* by Georges Sadoul, *Michelangelo Antonioni* by Pierre Leprohon, *Jacques Becker* by Jean Quéval, *Luis Buñuel* by Ado Kyrou, and *Alain Resnais* by Gaston Bounoure.[40] Reference is not made to the merits of the separate works, but to the method employed, which sets apart this series from other monographs written so far. Each volume in this series contains a selection of quotations from texts by the film director, excerpts of the screenplays of the most important films, a sample of reviews, and finally filmographic, bibliographic, and iconographic documents.

In concluding this short description of documentary works, we may mention the film year books or almanacs that are usually published annually in some countries. It seems that the almanacs published in the socialist countries contain more information on art issues, while those published in West Europe and America place the main emphasis on problems relating to industry questions. Documentary material is not always published. In Poland and Czechoslovakia, for instance, there are extremely valuable mimeographed materials which present virtually the whole development of the cinematography of both these countries — from the beginning up to 1939, and which give a complete list of the films produced, an index of people working in the film industry, an inventory of film publications, and so on.[41]

Conclusion: reference materials that are indispensable to the conduct of scholarship research in the film do exist. Though the materials are dispersed, too often undocumented, and not catalogued, they may nevertheless be sufficient for many purposes. An effort must be made to eradicate the blank spots which have not yet been explored and to make available information, at first within the boundaries of one country and later on the international level.

COOPERATION BETWEEN SCHOLARS

It must be reiterated that the primary and fundamental task is to make an inventory of the material on hand. Since there are many research centers and even more manifestations of individual initiative, it is extremely difficult to know exactly what is being done and what results are achieved even on a national scale. The situation is obviously even worse on the international scale, for scholars in one country do not as a rule know what is being done even in neighboring countries. The only source of information is correspondence conducted by individuals and individual visits.

It is not easy to recommend a way of overcoming these difficulties and of establishing international coöperation. There are doubtless many different ways and means of achieving these ends. The institutions appropriate to per-

form these tasks would be the numerous international film organizations and most particularly their chief representative the Conseil Internationale de Cinéma et Télévision, a department of UNESCO, which, however, has not, as of now, made provisions in its program for this type of project.

Certain aspects of international coöperation are already delineated. Film scholars have convened at two international congresses held in Paris in 1947 and 1955. But seven years have already elapsed since the last congress and there is no sign of a new international conference in sight.

In 1957, FIAF (Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film) established the Bureau International des Recherches Historique Cinématographiques and the first congress of film historians was held in Paris that same year. Unfortunately, the Bureau has shown no further initiative. This may be because the Bureau is not properly organized and also because the historians meet sporadically on international forums and do not prepare a working plan beforehand. One of the tasks that the FIAF now faces is to hold a discussion on how to rescuscitate the Bureau and how to turn it into an institution which will be of benefit to historians. However, the FIAF did not withdraw from organizing meetings and discussions on historical subjects. The manifestation in memory of Georges Méliès at the Congress held in Budapest in 1961 and the three-day discussion on Italian historical films and their impact on other countries at the Congress held in Rome in 1962 bear evidence to this fact.

Yet it is the representatives of film schools who maintain the liveliest contacts. They are organized in the Centre International de Liaison des Ecoles de Cinéma et de Télévision,[42] which has been convening every year since 1954. Each conference deals with a different subject. The following problems, given in the order in which they were taken up, have already been discussed: film sets, film comedies, the cartoon film, film directing, the art of acting, the art of film photography and, at the last congress held in Paris in 1962, the broad issue of the propagation of film culture. Each congress produces extensive material, in the papers read and in the discussions, which is later published in a large volume.

Theorists of the film art have not met as yet, particularly scholars who are interested in the aesthetics of the film. These problems were relegated to the background at the conference of cinematologists and emerged only as side issues at the film school congresses. If the international exchange begins to operate at some future time, it will then be necessary to propose first of all a conference or a symposium devoted to problems of aesthetics.

SUMMARY

Film scholarship exists. That is an incontestable fact, one that may easily be ascertained in the majority of countries. The fact that a new branch of learning exists does not by any means signify that it is generally recognized or that it enjoys the same rights other disciplines have won in the past centuries or years. Therefore, the most important issue and our first necessity is: to establish the full rights of film scholarship both on the national and the international scale. The institutions that conduct scientific research in the film should be not only maintained but also expanded and reinforced. An important factor is the training of qualified scholars, without interruptions or disturbances. For there can be no evolution in this new branch of learning without the constant flow and advancement of personnel. A secondary, though no less important problem, is concern for the publication of the results of scientific research. Frequently interesting experiences and conclusions are not brought to public attention, but are stored in the archives or files of the given institution.

A second necessity is to tie in the research work of institutions set up specifically for this purpose with pedagogical work at the film schools. A chronic ailment of film schools is an absence of textbooks, particularly in theoretical subjects. Who but the scholars are qualified to prepare the textbooks and mimeographed lectures? Incidentally, they may put this oppor-

tunity to advantage and classify and arrange methodically many of the basic questions which have been neglected for years. Incontestably, the key problem on which countless articles and criticisms have been written daily for many years now, is film directing. With the exception of *Film Directing* by V. L. Kuleshov,[43] a pioneer work which is now antiquated, there is no serious, analytical (as well as historical) modern work about directing and all the subsidiary branches that compound this term. How can one seriously hope to train film directors, if one does not provide them with a standard work in their field? Books like *Techniques of Film Editing,* by Reisz,[44] a useful work but limited in subject matter, can in no way take the place of the still unavailable handbook on film directing.

A tie-in between film scholarship and work at a film academy has other advantages, too. First or all, the scholar is constantly forced to confront his theories with actual creative practice. He can therefore conduct experiments of a practical nature by which he can easily test his theoretical theses and hypotheses. Secondly — an opportunistic reason but one that can not be omitted — through the future film directors, film scholarship will secure an influence on creative film circles. There is a partial or complete disharmony in most countries between the practitioners and the theorists.

The third necessity is to establish coöperation between the scholars and the centers of film documents, primarily the film archives. The scholars have not yet become accustomed to base their work on film material. The majority of those who write about films work within the scope of written sources. A radical change should be proposed. A historian of art deals primarily with the work of art itself — a sculpture or a painting — and later with what has been written about it. Similarly a film scholar must take the original film as the point of departure and not reviews and written commentaries. If film scholars exerted greater pressure on the film archives, they would remedy the tendency often encountered among archivists of acting rather more like collectors. They would then feel that their work is to some active purpose and that it is not confined to the storing and preserving of valuable film footage.

The fourth and last necessity: serious film periodicals should devote more space to film scholarship. As of now, substantial space is given over to critical articles, in other words to more extensive film reviews or critical appraisals of film directors written in the form of essays. I am not taking a stand against serious film criticism, but one must admit that criticism alone does not suffice. Criticism would gain a great deal if it were buttressed by a scientific discipline. Every author has the right to pronounce and to print his subjective views. But if these views are not based on general theoretical premises and if they are subject to frequent change, then the constructive influence of this type of pronouncement on the reader may be rather doubtful. Therefore if, in addition to the critical statements, there were to appear in the periodicals scientific articles or treatises which would organize certain problems and present ideas in a systematic and coherent order, this would have a favorable effect on the context of the periodicals.

We must not be carried to extremes, of course. No one is proposing that periodicals designed for the average reader start printing very specialized and technical works. There will have to be, there are a few even now, scientific film bulletins and scientific publications. But the fact that these publications exist should not preclude the possibility of dovetailing criticism with film scholarship. Good popularization of film scholarship promotes higher standards of film criticism and, conversely, film criticism adds color to the scientific discipline.

Some people ask: Is not film scholarship a fiction? Was it not invented to create a new discipline where none is needed? Such reservations can be heard quite frequently, but one must not take them too seriously. Every new branch of science must inevitably draw similar comments. Not so many years ago, research on the theater was hardly condoned, and even

musicology, that dignified branch of learning, was thought superfluous.

There are some critics who feel that film scholarship may exist, but that it is suspended in a void, that the research conducted is abstract and has no relation with the living film art. It is difficult to measure the role and importance of any knowledge by its practical results, particularly in the humanities. But no sensible person can deny that growth in culture is achieved solely with the coöperation and aid of the sciences. How then can one assume that this rule, which is binding in other fields of life and art, should not be binding on the film? And if we accept the fact that a rise in film culture is conditional to a great extent upon scholarship then the next logical conclusion should be: the film culture of a society promotes the production and distribution of valuable film works of art. This argument should, in the final analysis, testify to the practical advantages of film scholarship.

And a final remark. Film scholarship works in a different historical rhythm than Egyptology or the history of medieval literature. In film research the past is united almost imperceptibly with the present. The historical tempo of the film is different, consequently the tempo of film research must differ. In the future we shall hear more and frequently of the results achieved in scientific film research.

NOTES

[1] Lecture given by Ricciotto Canudo on March 29, 1911, at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes in Paris. The title of the lecture: "Le manifeste de sept arts."

[2] Vachel Lindsay, *The Art of the Moving Pictures*, New York, 1915.

[3] Herman Häfker: *Kino and Kunst*, Lichtbuhnen Bibliothek Nr. 2, Volksverein Verlag G.m.b.H., M. Gladbach, 1913.

[4] Bela Balázs, *Der sichtbare Mensch oder die Kultur des Films*, Deutsch Oesterreichischer Verlag, Wien, 1924.

[5] Karol Irzykowski, *Dziesiąta Muza*. Zagadnienia estetyczne kina, Kraków Krakowska Sp. Wydawnicza, 1924.

[6] Gilbert Cohén Séat, *Essai sur les principes d'une philosophie du cinéma*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1946.

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A SURVEY

University Film Teaching in the United States

The Winter 1962-1963 issue of *Film Quarterly* published reports from representatives of the major holdings of motion picture research material. What follows is a group of reports from the administrators of the major university film departments in the United States. Each school was asked to provide a general description of its program which would provide information for prospective students planning their film training.

With so much activity, we could think that the various arguments against university training of young film-makers and film historians had subsided. But such is not the case. Many established departments of cinema (whatever their local name may be) find themselves the subject of continuing controversy about their proper place in the university, and even the case for conducting historical and critical research in motion pictures has not yet been universally established. Nor does the professional film-maker necessarily agree that any kind of formal training in the arts and craft of motion pictures is desirable or even possible. Even many graduates of the various schools have misgivings about the nature of the training and preparation they received — although rarely is this sort of doubt backed by any positive alternative.

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[27] *Katalog wydawnictw filmowych w bibliotekach polskich.* Panstwowy Instytut Sztuki, 1956—Part One, 1958—Part Two.

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after consultation with trade representatives has resulted in a predicted estimate of need, four years later, when the successful candidates would be expected to be ready for professional work. Furthermore, possession of the diploma from Lódz is almost always a prerequisite for entering the profession. It is not so much the fact that both the film school and the film industry are state-financed in Poland that leads to such a solution to the problems of recruitment and training, as it is a predilection for planning, even in the arts, and for not leaving such matters to chance. There is little evidence of such predilection in the United States. And there is no industry scheme for recruiting new talent.

In fact the gap between the professional film industry and the academic film world may be growing. The universities produce critics more enamored of foreign product than of the Hollywood or New York studio productions. This is understandably resented by the studios, especially at a time when American production volume is falling and when the film industry is looking for friends. But the universities also produce young men and women with experience as writers, directors, cameramen, and editors, and the film industry for the most part turns its back on them, saying there is no *room* for new blood even although there may be a *need* for it. After a recent symposium organized by the Screen Producers Guild, the business manager of the cameramen's union in Hollywood, Herb Aller, was reported as saying that all talk of bringing new blood into the industry was wishful thinking. "In a diminishing market," Aller made clear, "the available jobs were not likely to go to newcomers, and it was hokum to pretend that they would." (*Variety*, January 9, pages 3 and 41.)

Most of the time in Hollywood the cameramen's and editors' unions report a 20-30% unemployment rate within their membership. In certain categories it is doubtful if the men involved will ever work again regularly in theatrical film or television, unless there is a substantial increase in studio production. Almost as if this were not happening, the universities continue to accept new students, each tries to outdo the others in the quality of films produced by their students, and each year the Screen Producers Guild gives prizes to the best student pictures. To some extent, most of the universities offering a film curriculum think of themselves in some way or other as offering professional (as distinct from vocational) training. They differ in their methods, as will be clear from the material below, but it is fair to say that few professors believe that the professional life to which even the best of their students can look forward will be the life of a traditional studio production unit, and in fact many schools limit themselves to training in the nontheatrical film.

Some people think the indifference of the industry is scandalous, especially since most industries recruit from universities. Others think that there is no danger in the collapse of the major studio, and in the reluctance of employers to hire newcomers in theatrical production. (Many do "make the grade," of course, as each school will show, with examples.) Within the universities there are, of course, many who are severely critical of the studio way of making pictures, of a system which gives more authority and creative responsibility to a producer than to either writer or director, and which has created and encourages technical oligarchies which are hard to work with (make-up, set-design, wardrobe, sound, camera departments and so on—each with a traditional and not always appropriate way of approaching a production problem). And some of the schools are reacting to the changes in professional production method, trying to apply some of the disciplines of traditional drama to the exigencies and pressures of a more makeshift kind of production than the conventional dramatic film—something closer to the documentary work of the Drew-Leacock-Pennebaker team, something which eschews the tightly contrived script and the methods of the studio film. And yet, apart from certain built-in institutional functions (which emerge clearly in the reports below), the best of the schools allow the student to make his own films in his own way, with the

faculty and staff occupying the role of teacher-cum-midwife. Each school makes its own claims for its method, some of these claims, no doubt, more exaggerated and fanciful than realistic.

Among those who find major studio and union and guild recalcitrance unsatisfactory are some Hollywood and New York professionals, even among the beleaguered unions. Apart from the various internship programs designed to bridge the gap between school and profession (see *Columbia* and *Stanford*) there are other evidences of coöperation. USC has a course in laboratory practice and management taught by Sid Solow of Consolidated Film Industries, UCLA has the Perlberg-Seaton course (see below) and currently has a class in production being taught by Stanley Kramer and two in photography by Charles Clarke. The American Cinema Editors for several years supplied guest speakers who give examples of their recent work and discuss the methods used to solve typical problems. There have been various degrees of support for plans to provide for studio internships, but to date this has materialized only to a limited degree. But the Screen Directors Guild (in Hollywood) gives an annual scholarship to USC and to UCLA, NYU benefits from the Edward Kingsley Fund award, and UCLA receives an annual scholarship from Walt Disney. Other universities often receive support of similar kinds.

In the face of what can at best be called a mixed situation in the professional field, each school tries to anticipate its students' difficulties in different ways. By now many of the schools have specific reputations—USC with an emphasis on the nontheatrical film, UCLA on the theatrical, dramatic film, NYU on the unity of the various media—film, television, radio, Boston on theoretical matters. None of the standing reputations is entirely accurate, and the reports below should cause the revision of many preconceptions. One useful guide to a department's progress is the home which a university has given its film curriculum—speech, communications, broadcasting, cinema linked with theater or television or an audiovisual department, and so on.

Each school which has a production program also offers classes in history and aesthetics, but there is little agreement, even within departments, about the proper relationship between analytic studies of the work of others, and the creative task of personal work. Some argue that "analysis" and "creation" involve basically different attitudes and that too much concentration on analysis can harm the creative process. Such arguments are usually based on personal experience and on the record of successive generations of students. But others point to the diversity in the film profession and argue that critics often make the best or at least the most interesting film-makers. It is clear if we are to take France as an example that there is evidence on both sides. Some of the *nouvelle vague* directors came from criticism, others did not, and there is good and bad in each group. Many of the old guard have also written on the cinema, others not. Where such arguments within schools do exist they are most often settled by local and pragmatic considerations rather than theoretical ones. Two universities equally strong academically might have an entirely different stress in their teaching, one devising an academic film curriculum with emphasis on theory and criticism so as to fit in with the more or less scholarly approach of its parent department, division, or college; whereas the other might violently protect its independence by throwing the bulk of its support to the production program. At present a more balanced program is likely to come from the latter case than the former, for in a university there is never much fear that criticism and aesthetics can be long subdued by a virile production program, but the reverse is easier to imagine.

Behind some of this controversy is a basic dislike of vocational training. How this varies specifically from professional training is rarely spelled out very clearly when film teaching is being discussed. Architecture is thought to be all right and brick-laying not, but each school finds limits put by its administration, from time to time, on the degree of technical information which should properly be taught in its classes, and if technical matters are taught, to

what extent they should be rewarded with units of academic credit. Each school solves this problem its own way and we know that each year the population of people outside the unions, who are capable of doing all the technical work involved in a motion picture, grows a little more, and threatens to that extent the sanctity of the unions. Eventually we may expect this to make a difference not only in the nontheatrical field, but in the theatrical field also. And to the extent that university departments give students their heads, and students come along who can benefit from this freedom, eventually we may expect the American theatrical and television film to break loose from its presently restrictive concentration on traditional theatrical methods and styles, which together make the Hollywood film about the most oldfashioned in the world. It is also likely, since not all students are the same, that the traditional methods and styles will always find support in the universities as they now do and that these students, presently under suspicion, will later be in a good position to continue the traditions which the studios, their hands tied by union contracts, cannot defend or protect by training programs of their own.

Several schools with film curricula of some scope are omitted from the survey because of limitations of one kind or another; these include Bob Jones University (Greenville, South Carolina), City College of New York, Indiana University (Bloomington), and the University of Miami (Florida). Scores of other universities offer a few courses which may be suitable for students with a more casual interest in film.

—COLIN YOUNG

BOSTON UNIVERSITY

The program in film at BU has been developed in accordance with two basic concepts: (1) that the moving image, with or without the addition of appropriate sound, is a means of communication just as important as, and perhaps in the final analysis more widely applicable than, writing itself; (2) that our present theoretical basis for the use of the moving image, with or without sound, as a means of communication is sadly deficient, and that the exploitation of film as a means of communication to a point somewhere approaching its real potential is dependent upon the development of a sound general theoretical basis, historically founded, currently tested, and intelligently projected, to enlarge the scope of the medium and intensify its impact.

It now seems to be high time for intellectual and aesthetic influences seriously and intensely to be brought to bear upon this medium as they have been brought to bear on other media of communication. It seems to us that this is properly the task and function of a film department in a university at this time.

In the film department at Boston University our objective is a properly balanced educational program, consonant with the over-all responsibilities of a university, designed to develop film communicators, primarily writer-directors, persons capable of organizing concepts according to specific terms of reference and of imaginatively translating such concepts into the language of the moving image on the screen. In order to do this effectively a person must have a certain degree of familiarity with the basic still photographic processes from which we believe cinema to be importantly derived (hence required courses in photography in the undergraduate film program).

Such a person must also be familiar with the basic operations and skills of the cinematic process, particularly the capabilities, limitations, and special qualities of the motion picture camera and, most important, with the editing processes (hence required courses in film production). The objective of the series of practical courses is not primarily to produce photographers, motion picture cameramen, or editors. It is rather to give basic knowledge of certain essential skills and processes with which students must become familiar in order to become effective film communicators. However, we always encourage the development of specific technical skills when the student shows a high degree of motivation and aptitude.

While undergraduate students are following the courses noted above, courses covering other aspects of their education as film communicators are required—ten hours in film analysis, criticism, and history; six hours in psychology and sociology of mass communication, economic, public policy, and legal aspects of communications; six hours in aesthetics, semantics, or research procedures; and elective courses in the areas of broadcasting, dramatic literature, script writing, European, documentary, sponsored, and experimental film, as well as a third course in film production. After successfully completing this four-year film program (two years in the case of transfer students who have completed the freshman and sophomore years), the student graduates with a B.S. in Communication Arts with a major in film. His degree represents four years of study of which approximately 75% has been in the general liberal arts area and 25% in his area of specialization.

This undergraduate program in film represents an educational program which is complete in itself. It has also been designed to lead highly motivated and suitably gifted students into the graduate

program for the M.S. degree in film production. The graduate program is also, of course, open to suitably qualified transfer students from other institutions. It requires a total of 36 hours of graduate work with two hours in a special graduate project-planning course and 12 hours in the graduate motion picture production workshop. It is in this latter workshop, over a period of three regular semesters, that a student carries out a creative project with full personal responsibility for all aspects of the production, from the original concept to the finished film. This project takes the place of a thesis, but there are also final oral and written examination requirements. Great importance is attached to the principle of full personal responsibility. The student must actually carry out the intellectual organization of the project, as well as all the practical work of cinematography, editing, preparation of the sound track and of all edited materials for processing by the laboratory of the finished project. It is required that all such productions be completed to the combined print stage and one copy of the combined print must be presented to the University at the expense of the student. The original of the film so completed becomes the property of the student, but Boston University reserves the right to have any number of prints made for the use of the University, not including commercial use.

Thus, when a graduate student leaves Boston University he carries with him a completed film which he can claim as his own work, a fact which the faculty is able and willing to confirm at any time. The possession of such a film has proved to be of decisive importance to graduates in securing suitable employment. Apart from the film production project, and the final oral and written exam requirements, the M.S. candidate is required to take eight hours in the general area of communications theory and is encouraged to elect advanced courses and seminars in cinema theory, broadcasting, journalism, and public relations, and international communications and social aspects of mass communication.

Throughout the offerings of the film department, at both undergraduate and graduate levels, certain guiding principles evolve from the two basic concepts stated at the beginning of this article which are constantly operative. They are: (a) A return to first principles in connection with the grammar and syntax of moving image continuity, and a rejection of the domination of sound where it has obscured the vital virtues of the medium. (b) Teaching of film production as an individual student responsibility from the initial theme to the finished film with stress, not on technical perfection, but on a fundamental understanding of the capacities and potentials of the moving image as a communications instrument of first importance. (c) Constant encouragement of original and experimental work in the moving image —a much needed activity, and one which is properly conducted at the university level. (d) Offering of new and revitalized courses in the theory of the cinema and in aesthetics. (e) Provision of a wide range of exposure courses in the literature of the cinema—classic and contemporary, domestic and international. (f) Maintenance of a world viewpoint on all film matters. The moving image is the one great international popular communication art. It was international in its origins, has been international in its historical development and is now international in its supreme importance to world understanding.

In the film department of the Division of Communication Arts, we endeavor to graduate mature individuals with a broad cultural background having unusual knowledge of the field of communication as a whole and a special knowledge and capability as practicing film communicators. We look for these graduates to be highly motivated, well and enthusiastically equipped to translate vital concepts into vital films in which creative talent, imaginative power and originality of approach are evident in the achievement of a high degree of communication through film.

Students in film pay the standard tuition charges of Boston University, $1,350 for the academic year September to June. The Division of Communication Arts provides one graduate working scholership of $1,200 with partial tuition coverage. Further information regarding the film program may be obtained from: Dr. D. Hugh Gillis, Chairman, Division of Communication Arts, SPRC, Boston University, 640 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston 15, Massachusetts.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

At Columbia the graduate Program in the Arts offers a master of fine arts degree in film, radio and television. The curriculum provides a variety of workshop courses such as film production, film editing, film directing, animation workshop, television workshop, film and television writing. Along with courses of this sort the student must take work in the history and literature of the drama and the history of motion pictures.

The student also writes a master's essay. Under special circumstances he may satisfy the essay requirement with creative work such as a short film or a screenplay. Recent or current essay topics include *Karel Reisz, Film Maker and Critic* (Karin Klink), *Animation in Mass Communication*, (Evelyn Johnson), *The American Reception of Antonioni's L'Avventura* (Michel Corbeil), *The Lost Years: Robert Flaherty, Erich von Stroheim, Orson Welles and Hollywood*, (Marvin Terban) *Maize, a 16mm documentary film in color* (Roger Sandall), *NBC-TV's Wide World 1955–1958*, (Harvey Fondiller).

Students engage in production projects both within the courses and to fulfill the essay requirement. Last spring the Venice documentary film festival selected for exhibition films by two Columbia students: *Sunday on the River* (Gordon Hitchens), and *Maize*. Some students earn credit through internship with a professional production unit. Thus one student (Barbara Schwartz) went on the annual scout encampment. Another (Slavko Nowytski) is serving as a production assistant on *Cool World*, a feature being produced on location in New York under the direction of Shirley Clarke. Another (Merle Fried) did research for *Mr. Secretary*, a documentary produced at the University for the National Educational Television and Radio Center under the direction of Stephen Sharff.

Last year the department inaugurated a course on film and television criticism which was taught by Cecile Starr. Its students broadcast a series of film critiques over New York FM station WRVR. At the end of the

course two students (Connie Fite, Linda Starr) continued the series as their internship.

At present the teaching staff consists of three full-time faculty members, each teaching three courses, and a number of associates, each teaching one course. The full-time staff consists of Professor Erik Barnouw, Professor Stephen Sharff, and Dr. Mojmir Drvota. Associates currently include Manfred Kirchheimer, Stan Vanderbeek, Edward King, Robert Lowe, Stuart Chasmar.

Professor Barnouw spent the year 1961–62 in India under a Fulbright grant to study the Indian film industry. His book *Indian Film*, written with the collaboration of S. Krishnaswamy (a former student), is being published by Columbia University Press.

In addition to teaching, Professor Scharff is executive producer for the Center for Mass Communication, a division of Columbia University Press producing and distributing films on a professional basis. Its 1961 release, *Water*, produced under contract with the United Nations, won second award among documentaries at the 1961 San Francisco festival. Its film series *Decision*, produced for NETRC, won the gavel award of the American Bar Association.

Dr. Drvota joined the staff in 1962, taking over the work of Miss Starr, who left to accompany her husband, film editor Aram Boyajian, on a long assignment in Europe. Dr. Drvota wrote the screenplay for the widely acclaimed feature *Distant Journey*.

At present the department limits its students to approximately two dozen degree candidates. University plans call for the incorporation of the program into a projected graduate school of the arts. Offering graduate programs in the theater, music, film, radio, television, painting, sculpture, the school is to be housed in an arts center providing studio and library facilities for all these arts.

Residence requirements for the current master of fine arts program call for at least 30 points of graduate work at Columbia. Tuition and fees for a 30-point master of fine arts program, not including room and board, are currently estimated at $1,400. Inquiries may be addressed to Office of Graduate Admissions, 106 Low Library, Columbia University, New York 27, N.Y.—Erik Barnouw

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

The Department of Television, Motion Pictures, and Radio (TMR) is one of the four departments comprising the Communication Arts Group of N.Y.U. Other departments are Communications in Education, Dramatic Art, and Journalism. Each department has its own chairman and its own faculty of full-time and part-time teachers.

These four departments have become a joint endeavor whereby students, teachers, and administrators can plan and pursue coöperative and integrated courses of study. The Group is headed by an Executive Officer responsible for the administration, coördination, and development of the Group as a whole.

A unique aspect of this plan is that it provides great flexibility for students in achieving their cultural and professional goals. Undergraduate students may variously matriculate in Washington Square College, the School of Commerce or the School of Education in accordance with the departments' association with one or more of these three University units. Thus, even while majoring, minoring, or merely electing certain courses in the Communication Arts areas, the student can academically and administratively relate his course of study to the varying cultural and professional orientations of the separate Schools and College.

A basic proposition underlying the Department, and reflected in the undergraduate curriculum, is that in an academic program of study the media themselves, and the arts and techniques of television, motion pictures, and radio, should not be arbitrarily separated. It is essential, therefore, that all students majoring and minoring in the Department be given a basic background in all three media. This is expressed in the four-year curriculum approach which in the first year stresses the art and history of these media, and in the second year stresses beginning writing and basic production-direction in the media.

Thus, in the first two years, the student receives a fundamental core upon which he builds, and out of which he leads into his specialty in his third and fourth years. More specifically, the program of study has been designed so that upper classmen may elect to specialize in one of the three areas of Television Production-Direction, Motion Picture Production-Direction, or Radio Production-Direction. Further, students may alternately select an emphasis in Creative Writing in one or more of the media, or if their main interest lies outside writing and production-direction, they may choose a Broadcasting-Radio and Television Management emphasis in which stress is placed on programming, sales, station management, advertising, marketing research, propaganda and persuasion, and social responsibility. This five-area approach has been designed to provide greater flexibility and scope for the talents of students. It does so, moreover, without the risk of an unplanned or random sampling of courses, for each of the five emphases has a planned, but non-rigid structure. Further, each student majoring or minoring in the TMR Department will be individually counselled by a factulty member in the selection of his emphasis and of the appropriate courses within his emphasis.

Graduate programs of study in the TMR Department, leading to the M.A. degree, are administratively and academically under the auspices of the School of Education. The Programs have been arranged, however, to provide not only for the teaching of television, motion pictures, and radio, at the college and university level, but also to provide for the prospective professional in the educational, governmental, and commercial areas of these media.

The TMR programs of study are not solely intradepartmental; certain courses are offered jointly with the other Communication Arts departments. M.A. candidates are expected to augment their TMR studies through supplementary work in other departments.

It has been found from experience that frequently students who are majoring in fields outside the arts (for example, psychology, anthropology, sociology, the physical, natural, and biological sciences) will have an interest in motion picture, television or radio production and/or writing as providing desirable additional background and skills that will aid them in field or laboratory research, in teaching, and in other professional activities. The TMR Department is prepared to answer

the needs of these students.

Relative to graduate work in television, motion pictures and radio, there are in the TMR Department two basic Programs of Study—one in writing, the other in production-direction. There are two separate orientations in each division—one college teaching, the other professional. Total fees for one semester are $770.00. Inquiries should be directed to Richard C. Goggin, Chairman, Dept. of Television, Motion Pictures, and Radio, N.Y.U., Washington Square 3, New York.

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

At Northwestern film education is relatively new (inaugurated in 1956) and small. We expect it to grow older and wiser; not necessarily much larger since our goals, teaching methods, and admission standards conspire against numbers. Set within a Department of Radio, Television, and Film, which is in turn part of a School of Speech, the film section has lately begun to move along lines that seem most proper to it. With increased autonomy has come clarification of objectives, and the first satisfactions as some of them are achieved.

On the undergraduate level the training is conceived as preprofessional, for entrance into the film industry. Though there are pressures for increased "practicality" – from the students, of course, and from local producer-employers as well—the program maintains an equal balance between production and history-criticism. How to conform 35mm negative to 16mm work print, sell a sponsor on a film, and like matters, can be learned faster and better on the job, we feel. A university can, however, teach supremely well and consistently within its general aims of higher learning what a particular medium of art and communication is, the special qualities inherent in it, an understanding and knowledge of past achievements that are valuable in themselves and suggest the range of its possibilities. In short, all of the matters basic to appreciation and creation. With this approach even film production, which we do a good deal of, is thought of as a way to learn how film works, what can be done with it, rather than a way to learn how to be a film editor, a script clerk, an assistant cameraman. Though we of course hope ours is also the best preparation for specific jobs.

On the graduate level production continues but here the basis is firmly that of artist-film-maker in control of his work. Much graduate and upper division production is done as independent study for credit by individuals or small groups who meet in tutorial fashion with the instructor throughout the phases of production. This film-making is experimental in the sense that solutions are attempted for certain problems of technique and subject; e.g., use of available interior light, fusion of fictional narrative with documentary description, shifting the point of view through changing camera set-ups. But most of the graduate study consists of advanced theory and research, much of it original and independent. Though it's not always clear how film scholars and critics will earn a living, it has finally seemed to us that film scholarship and criticism can't wait any longer on the answer to this question. It is our hope, too, that practicing film makers may gain most from this sort of intellectual muscle-stretching and freedom to experiment.

A discussion as brief as this is limited to general approach. Courses in film, as well as those in important complements such as theater, television, communication theory, and mass media research, are described in material the writer will be glad to send. The remaining space can best be devoted to our "products"—people, films, writing—and recent developments.

Several of our alumni are teaching university courses in film—at Stanford, Massachusetts, Alabama; a number are script writers, assistant directors, production managers, and the like in Chicago, Boston, Detroit, and elsewhere. Others are doing film work with ad agencies or with business firms or the government. Our student productions have been at their best in the story-documentary (e.g., *Kali Nihta, Socrates*—about a 12-year-old boy in Chicago's "Greek Town"), the free-cinema essay (e.g., *A Place to Go*—about a campus-area coffee house), and in a kind of whimsy (e.g., *The Bulb Changer*—about a Tatiesque character whose job is replacing stoplight lamps)—the first and third are distributed commercially. Recent research and criticism, completed and in progress, has included a study of Bergman's theology (published in Northwestern's *Tri-Quarterly*), D. W. Griffith during his last 20 unproductive years (to appear in *California Historical Quarterly*), an M.A. thesis on James Agee's criticism, Ph.D. dissertations on the changing myth of the American Indian in the Hollywood film, and on the social-political-economic reflections in the French films of the 'thirties.

Current developments which seem particularly significant include substantial additions of space and equipment, an increasing number of students attracted to film from other departments in the University, plans for additional courses (particularly at the graduate level) and teaching personnel. If the Northwestern film program were rated as in those personality evaluations where you check the adjectives that seem to apply, I would expect to find: intellectual, scholarly, critical, analytical, creative, aesthetic, experimental, free, individual. But this may seem like being for virtue and against vice. In any case, the aspirations are suggested and the goals, if not unique, continue to challenge.—JACK C. ELLIS

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Instruction in motion picture theory and practice is offered in the Department of Photography at the Ohio State University. The university-level course in photography was taught at Ohio State in 1890, and the curriculum now includes thirty-one credit hours in still and motion pictures. The photographic origins of cinema are emphasized by relating still photography to motion picture theory and production.

Motion picture work is offered primarily for the graduate level and is included in the program of the Graduate Institute for Mass Communication. At the M.A. and Ph.D. levels, students with majors in theater, fine arts, audiovisual education, telecommunications or other related fields, may elect photography as a minor area of study.

The intent of the academic curriculum is to make possible a flexible program for the specialist in cinema with the emphasis on

the use of the medium to advance or explore major fields of human endeavor. The result of this kind of program is a de-emphasis on formal course work in film, and the development of a series of individual minor problems which may either be completed in a single quarter or extend over a period of three quarters at the graduate level only.

Requirements are the same as for any graduate course, but also include a basic knowledge of photographic theory and practice, graduate standing in a major related area such as theater, fine arts, television, or audiovisual education, and two prerequisite courses in motion pictures.

Facilities include the professional studio and laboratories of the Department of Photography, and the guidance of the professional 10-member motion picture staff whose members also produce instructional, informational, and documentary films for the university.

The emphasis is on film theory put into practice through student production of short experimental films. On-the-job experience working with the professional staff on university productions is also available to a select number of advanced students. Most production is in 16mm but 35mm and 8mm equipment is also available along with high-speed, time-lapse, and other specialized cameras. The Motion Picture Division also has complete editing, optical and magnetic sound recording systems, and laboratory facilities for the processing of 8, 16, and 35mm negative and reversal film.

Students of film also have access to regularly scheduled free showings of important theatrical and nontheatrical films in the University Film Series, weekly showing arranged by the Motion Picture Division. The quarterly *Journal* of the University Film Producers Association is also published by the Motion Picture Division. An extensive library of books on film is available. The annual Columbus Film Festival brings producers from all parts of the nation to this affair which includes the screening of award-winning films.

Students interested in this program should show strong interests in the problems and activities involved in mass communication; should be at the graduate level in one of the related fields mentioned above; and should be concerned with exploring the film medium in relation to a major field of human knowledge as a minor area of study.

Resident fees $100.00 per quarter; nonresident, $225.00; plus approx. $20 production course fees.

Inquiries on details should be addressed to Professor Robert W. Wagner, Director, Motion Picture Division, 1885 Neil Avenue, The Ohio State University, Columbus 10, Ohio, or to Professor Franklin H. Knower, Executive Secretary, Graduate Institute for Mass Communications, 164 West 19th Avenue, Columbus 10, Ohio.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY

At Stanford, Film is taught in the Broadcasting and Film Division of the Department of Communication. The other divisions of the Department—Journalism and Communication Research—offer courses and engage in research which is both complementary and supplementary to the film curriculum. The basic orientation of the Stanford program is in the general area of documentary and factual film, although course work is offered in the history and aesthetics of the film medium as a whole. The goal of the program is to offer instruction in film of the highest quality possible. As a way of implementing this, admission standards are kept very high, the program is kept quite small in enrollment, and instruction is offered on as close to an individual basis as is possible, in order to meet the needs of the individual student. The general pattern of the program centers around a core of theory and production classes, seminars, and related courses which attempt to treat film as an art form, as a mode of personal statement, and as a means of communication unique in itself, as well as a related portion of the general communication complex.

The thesis operative in the core program is that familiarity with the mechanics of the medium makes theoretical considerations more meaningful. Script, visualization, camera, editing, sound, and the other skills are taught within the context of enabling each student to make a personal statement. In this sense technology becomes not an end in itself, but rather an extension of the student's own creative personality. The theory work deals mainly with various aesthetic and critical approaches to the medium. There is a large amount of reading and much time is devoted to the application of various critical and aesthetic theories to films. In addition to the readings in theory, considerable original work is required of the students.

The third core course, Experiments in Film, is concerned with the integration of basic production techniques, aesthetic theory, and the findings of empirical research in the behavioral sciences dealing with communication. Advanced techniques are dealt with, and each student again produces a complete short film.

In addition to these basic courses, other areas of film are explored in detail in such courses as History of Film, Non-Dramatic Writing, Mass Communication, and Society and Criticism. Further work in production and theory is done in small tutorial groups, which enables the students to receive individual attention to their needs and concerns, and in which they may engage in film projects of varying magnitude.

Students on the graduate level are usually required to take the basic core courses, but are also required to attend an additional graduate discussion section, so that much of the material may be examined in greater detail. Students are encouraged to take correlate work in radio, television, communication research methods, communication theory, and international communication. Generally, the program of a graduate student working for the M.A. degree is decided on in conference between the student and his advisor and is designed to meet the needs of the individual student. The department requires an M.A. thesis, which is usually partially met by a film production. Often outside financing is available to support thesis-film production.

Perhaps the most unique part of the M.A. program is the three-month internship, during which the graduate student spends his time working with a film production unit. The intern files daily reports and his performance is carefully supervised and evaluated. This gives the student an opportunity to bridge the gap between the academy and the in-

dustry and provides the department with a check on the nature and quality of its instructional program.

An important part of the work in film at Stanford is the research in the behavioral science aspects of communication. Students have the opportunity to work as research assistants on and to gain practical experience in experimental and research methods in film.

The Ph.D. in Communication is offered by the Department. This is essentially a research degree and is open only to especially qualified applicants. It is possible for a student to work in the Ph.D. program with special concentration in film.

The resources of the department include 16mm production facilities, a variety of cameras, recorders, lighting and editing gear. The Franklin Fearing Collection of approximately 4,000 items supplements extensive library holdings, including the Motion Picture Research Council papers, which are part of the Ray Lyman Wilbur Collection at the Hoover Library of Peace, War, and Revolution; and the Nazi Newsreel Archive, also located in the Hoover Library.
—Henry Breitrose

STATE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

SUI offers degrees at the undergraduate, the master's, and the doctor's level in the Department of Speech and Dramatic Art, Division of Television-Radio-Film. Graduate education in the Division is centered about research into the aesthetics, effects, uses, history, and sociological implications of the medium rather than upon production. However, graduate students are expected to engage in film production work, much of which is actually exhibited to the public. The division began its instruction during the early 'thirties. The first film course was taught in 1948, and in 1953 a large film and television production studio was added.

The research interests of the division are two-fold: historical–critical and experimental. In the area of historical–critical studies we are interested in close contextual studies of actual film material. For example, we have supported studies of the silent films of Eisenstein, the so-called German "expressionist" films of the 1920's, and an analysis of Harold Lloyd's silent comedies. In addition we are conducting research in the areas of film criticism and film theory. We have completed a study of the controversies engendered by D. W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* and are presently engaged in studies of various film critics and theorists. Among the major experimental research interests of the division are the film variables, which affect the audience's perception, retention, or attitude modification. We have already done, for example, some research on the effect on children's motivation of showing them films which illustrate practical applications of an academic area such as mathematics; we have studied the effect of filmic context on an audience's perception of a shot; we have tested the relative effects on learning of different methods of utilizing visual devices within films. Our other major experimental research interest is in the methodologies by which audience responses to films are obtained. We have done a number of studies in which various methods for obtaining continuous conscious responses to films were compared. We are currently comparing some of these to physiological responses of the audience during exposure to films and, at the same time, exploring the relationship of these various types of responses to retention and attitude change.

On the undergraduate level, film work is not regarded primarily as professional education but as a subject that offers a rigorous discipline for a student's judgment, emerging skills, and critical abilities. Film production work, however, is a requirement for graduation. The academic program of the Division is both theoretical and practical and attempts to strike a balance between the two that can be called liberal in nature.

The Department offers the following courses which treat the cinema: Drama in Western Culture, a survey of dramatic forms and media; Cinematography Techniques, a basic course in cinematography with an emphasis upon direction, camerawork, and editing; Cinema Production, a production course, which emphasizes script writing and the production of sound films; History of the Film, a survey of the history of dramatic film genres; Documentary and Educational Film, a survey of the nontheatrical film; Film Workshop, a production course in which advanced students produce complete films under staff supervision; Problems in Film, a course in which students undertake research into the nature of the film medium; Research in Film, which is reserved for advanced research leading to an M.A. or Ph.D. degree; Film Theory, a graduate survey of theoretical writings; Broadcasting, Film, Society, a survey of criticism, research, and theory on the functions of film and broadcasting in present-day societies; Communication Research, a review and analysis of quantitative research on interpersonal communications; and Quantitative Research Methods, a review of the principles and methods of designing and running experimental research.

Further information about the Department can be obtained by writing The Division of Television-Radio-Film, Old Armory, The State University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. Fees: Undergraduate resident, $145.00; nonresident, $310.00 per semester. Graduate students, $165.00.

—John B. Kuiper

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

In 1929, the University of Southern California, in coöperation with the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, offered a course in the liberal arts entitled *Introduction to the Photoplay*. The Department of Cinema was started in that same year. In 1932 the Department was the first in the United States to offer the B.A. degree with a major in Cinema. In 1935, it was the first in the United States to offer the M.A. degree with a major in Cinema, and since 1958 the Department of Cinema is offering the Ph.D. degree in Communication with emphasis in Cinema.

The Department of Cinema of the University of Southern California is the oldest and largest such department in the United States. And, as has been the case during its long history, the emphasis is, in large measure, on learning by doing. Actual film production is the core of our B.A. and M.A. programs, though there is a deliberate attempt to keep a balance among courses in appreciation,

history, criticism, responsibility, art, and actual production. For the past few years, student production has accounted for over six hours of completed film each year. The films vary in length from five to twenty-five minutes and in complexity according to the level of study. The types of production vary from semester to semester and from crew to crew, according to the desires of the students, since they write the scripts which are produced in the Senior and Graduate Production Workshops. This semester one crew is involved in an elaborate musical comedy, in color, depicting the problems of film-makers. It is a purely theatrical production. The Department offers a curriculum in animation, as well as live action. Several Fine Arts students are in the Animation Workshop making animated films.

The Department greets most B.A. students on a regular basis starting with the junior year. During this year the typical student will take required courses in writing, camera, editing, and sound recording as prerequisites to the workshop. Elective courses are taken in film history, documentary film, cinema and society, and so forth, along with electives in Drama, Television, and additional electives in departments outside the Division of Communication, of which Cinema is one of five departments.

In the senior year the student will take senior production workshop, along with his choice of such corequisites as advanced camera, advanced editing, advanced sound recording, directing, or unit management. Generally, two of these corequisites are taken with each senior production workshop. The workshop itself is normally taken both semesters of the senior year. Two films are produced in each workshop. Additional electives might include filmic expression, theatrical filmwriting, lighting, cinematic effects, theatrical film symposium, art direction, film distribution, story and story sketch for animation and so forth. Again additional electives will be taken in Drama, Television, English, Classics, Philosophy, Music, and other departments to meet the College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences requirements for the B.A. degree.

Students who wish to direct must follow a prescribed series of courses and experiences intended to equip them for the variety of responsibilities that will be theirs as a film director. They must edit a film directed by someone else, coördinate a production, and also prepare two scripts in advance so that they are essentially responsible for content as well as interpretation.

Slightly more than half of all our cinema graduate students come to us with a major in something other than cinema. Such a graduate student spends the first semester taking the beginning courses at the junior level. After this first semester the graduate student takes senior courses, including workshop (for one or two semesters). These senior courses carry graduate credit. He follows his senior production workshop(s) with one semester of graduate production workshop and such graduate courses as cinema history and criticism, films for television, film research and testing, and seminars in screenwriting, camera, and editing, among others. Again electives may be taken in other departments.

The M.A. degree requires 24 units of graduate courses, plus either a written or a film thesis. We recognize the film as a publication just as the written thesis is a publication.

For the student who desires less production and a broad education in film and communication, he can elect to become a "division" major with emphasis in cinema for either the B.A. or the M.A. In either case, only one semester of production is taken. Additional work is taken in Drama, Television, Speech, Journalism, Instructional Technology, and electives outside the Division of Communication. For the M.A., the student who elects to be a division major will generally do a written thesis.

The doctoral students take an M.A. in cinema and then additional advanced work in the other departments within the Division of Communication and some outside electives. A reading knowledge of two foreign languages, a qualifying examination, and a dissertation are required.

The library at the University of Southern California, under the Farmington Plan, houses the largest collection of foreign books and periodicals dealing with cinema in this country.

The Cinema Department maintains a professional production unit which makes films for the University, other departments, and outside nonprofit groups. All faculty and staff participate in this unit according to their varying interests. Thus, the unit becomes a means of recent professional experience, which is essential to the teacher in the classroom. Often, faculty members fulfill roles other than in the areas in which they teach in order to gain additional film-making experience.

Presently, the Cinema Department has seven full-time faculty members, plus fourteen other full-time and ten part-time staff members. These are augmented by twenty-five part-time evening faculty people, mostly from the nearby film industry.

Currently, tuition is $36.00 per semester hour, or $600.00 per semester for a load of 14 to 18 semester hours. Graduate students usually carry 10 to 14 hours of work. Three scholarships and eight assistantships are available each year within the Department. In addition, the University offers numerous scholarships and fellowships. Additional information can be obtained by writing directly to the Cinema Department, University of Southern California, University Park, Los Angeles 7, California.—BERNARD R. KANTOR

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES (U.C.L.A.)

The Motion Picture Division of the Theater Arts Department is primarily concerned with the development of individual filmmakers who may eventually make personal creative contributions in the motion picture medium. Classes are also offered in history and aesthetics, and this field is undergoing expansion.

The theory and practice of writing, direction, and editing are particularly stressed in the student's preparations, and the attempt is made to provide the student with an opportunity to make films which correspond to his individual interest in form, content, and approach, whether in the dramatic, documentary, educational, or experimental film, in the live or animated form. Some thirty-odd courses dealing comprehensively with the theoretical, creative, technical, and production aspects of film are offered by the Department. All students are required to take courses in film history,

writing, directing, editing, photography, design, and production as well as in dramatic literature. All undergraduates must write and direct as least one sound film.

A four-year course leads to the B.A. degree. The M.A. is also offered. Students holding the B.A. in other fields are accepted for graduate work but are required to make up course deficiencies, before taking graduate courses. Masters candidates have the choice of writing a thesis or making a thesis film. There are about 160 students at present in the program, about half of whom are graduates. A large number of the students are from other countries.

A special course is offered to a limited number of graduate students, taught by a member of the faculty and operated with the coöperation of Perlberg-Seaton Productions and MGM, which attempts to put the student in the position of the producer/director in making creative decisions related to a specific production, and then comparing these judgments with those of the professional company.

The emphasis throughout the curriculum is on the individual student film-maker, and about one hundred individual student films are produced each year. Apart from exercises (involving production) in photography and design classes, each student will be a member of the elementary workshop and will complete a short sound film. Those with a special interest in and talent for direction can continue through an intermediate workshop to the advanced workshop and the thesis production. In each case there are opportunities for experience as writers, designers, photographers, and editors as well as directors. Directors use scripts which they have developed, and with few exceptions the director is his own editor. The productions undertaken by the workshops vary from rather simple projects in which the sound is added after production to complex subjects requiring soundstage and location work, employing traditional studio equipment and methods, or more portable equipment which lends itself to use in documentary and candid shooting. The animation workshop is equipped to handle the most sophisticated camera requirements, though these projects also originate exclusively with the student. Many of the animation films produced in the department are the work of students who are enrolled in Theater Arts pursuing the regular curriculum. Others come into classes in animation from other departments, notably Art, and in two or three semesters are able to complete original work without necessarily committing themselves to the full program of motion pictures studies. The classes in the animation group attempt to make available animation as a method and approach to the solution of problems in communication (either in entertainment or education).

The work of UCLA students is chosen regularly for showing in major international film festivals in competition with professionally produced films. During the past year, several UCLA films were honored at such festivals as Cannes, Edinburgh, Oberhausen, Vancouver, Melbourne, Vienna, and Cambridge. *A Time Out of War* is undoubtedly the best known of the UCLA student films, but more recent titles include *111th Street*, a documentary on the attempt of a social worker in New York to deal with a street gang (a thesis film directed by Arnold Federbush), *The Beckoning Sea* (a thesis film directed by Stephen Kabak), an experimental work based on a short story by George Mandel, *Image of the Sea* (a thesis film by Richard Gray), a study of the pools and rivulets formed by the tide as it ebbs and flows, *Cross Country Runner* (an advanced workshop film directed by Mark McCarty), a satirical study of a man who can't stop running, and *August Heat* (an advanced workshop film directed by Abe Martin Zweiback) based on a story by W. F. Harvey. Among the animation films recently completed are *Three Views From an Ivory Tower* (by Colin Cantwell), *Eggs, Eggs, Eggs* (by Mallory Pearce), *On Guard* (by Nick Chaparos), *Freight Yard Symphony* (by Robert Able) and *Claude* (by Dan McLaughlin). Each of these films was made in the advanced animation workshop.

The instructors in the program at UCLA are drawn from both the academic and professional fields and all have experience with film production as well as with theoretical considerations. Distinguished professionals from all areas of the motion picture contribute to the program either as guest lecturers or regular instructors. Even with the high enrollment, much of the teaching is with small groups, often on a tutorial or face-to-face basis. Facilities include a sound stage, a laboratory stage, fifteen cutting rooms with sound moviolas, projection facilities for eight, sixteen, and thirty-five millimeter films in various formats, dubbing rooms, a special-effects room, animation workrooms and crane, and a departmental library of considerable scope. Eight, sixteen, and thirty-five millimeter cameras of various makes and models and professional lighting and sound equipment are available. Within four years the motion picture division will move into new premises with several sound stages and the facilities usually found only in a full-scale professional studio.

The fee for students is $75 for California residents, and $275 for nonresidents, per semester. Four graduate assistantships are available, two industry fellowships for thesis-film work, and the university fellowship program is available to qualified resident students.

Further information about the curriculum can be obtained from the departmental secretary, Mrs. Elba Guenther, Department of Theater Arts, UCLA, 405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles 24, California, or from the Head of the Motion Picture Division, Professor Richard Hawkins. Graduate students should address general inquiries to the Graduate Division, at UCLA. The Department of Theater Arts, with divisions of motion pictures, theater and television–radio, is part of a College of Fine Arts, which it comprises along with the Departments of Music and Art.

THE CHIEF FOREIGN FILM SCHOOLS

(American students have entered all but the two last-named)

Institut des Hautes Études Cinématographiques, 92 Champs-Elysées, Paris.

Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia, Via Tuscolana 1524, Rome.

Państstowowa wyższa Szkola Teatralna Filmova, Ul. Targowa 61, Łódź.

V.G.I.K. (State Cinematographic Institute), Ulica Textilcilov I.B., Moscow.

Instituto de Investigaciones y Experiencias cinematográficas, Montesquinza 2, Madrid.

MOTION PICTURE TECHNIQUE: A BASIC LIBRARY

Compiled by Raymond Fielding

In the case of most arts, the would-be practitioner who lacks the time or opportunity for formal instruction can acquire at least a fundamental familiarity with technique through diligent persual of the professional literature. Until fairly recently, however, this has not been possible in the field of cinema, for there has been no such literature to which the serious student could turn — at least, not in book form.

A variety of factors have operated in past years to restrict the publication of English-language texts on motion picture technique. There was, on the one hand, a relatively small market for the professionally written book. Technical knowledge, together with the practice of the art, remained largely in the hands of workers within the theatrical film industry; there, experienced practitioners had no need for textbooks, whereas younger apprentices acquired information and facility by means of on-the-job training.

By contrast, a gigantic market has always existed for the popularly written handbook on amateur film-making. The size of this market, the vigor with which its products have been merchandised, and the superficial similarity of its subject matter with that of the professional field, have combined to drain off both writers and readers from the better class of textbook publication. Additionally, the technical literature of film has suffered from a lack of writers who were both knowledgeable and articulate — a not uncommon problem in other fields of craft instruction.

During the last decade, however, the economics of motion picture production have changed in such a way as to create a new and vastly more profitable market for professional texts. The almost explosive growth of the non-theatrical film industry has attracted thousands of young film-makers who desire competent, continuing instruction in their field, and a body of quality technical literature with which to sustain their growth. To meet this need, a number of film-maker-writers have appeared who are willing to communicate their own knowledge of the art to others.

Happily, too, a growing number of quality publishers have set to work to satisfy the expanding market for professional motion picture books. Particularly to be commended is the Communication Arts Series published jointly by Focal Press of London and Hastings House of New York, many titles of which are listed below. These, and others of the same sort, are not inexpensive books; the quality of printing and illustration guarantee that. But they do, for the investment involved, provide an almost complete basic library in motion picture technique for the apprentice outside the industry.

The bibliography which follows is selective. Most of the works are less than five years old; many provide bibliographies of their own as a guide to additional, profitable reading in their specialized fields. Taken together, they represent a point of departure for the serious student.

The Production Process

Spottiswoode, Raymond. *Film and Its Techniques.* Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1951. 532 pp., $8.50.

One of the best-regarded of the general texts, it covers the entire spectrum of film production, from script preparation to post-production phases. Needs revision to reflect current innovations in film technology.

Offenhauser, W. H. *16mm Sound Motion Pictures.* New York: Inter-Science Publishers, 1949. 580 pp.

Similar in scope to the Spottiswoode book, but devoted entirely to 16mm practice. Some of the sections are now out-of-date.

Millerson, Gerald. *The Technique of Television Production.* New York: Hastings House, 1961. 416 pp., $10.00.

Probably the best textbook available on television production. Because of the similarity of many television and film techniques, at least 50% of the text is directly applicable to motion picture production, particularly the sections on lighting, camera movement, composition, sound recording, and visual continuity.

Cinematography

Mascelli, Joseph V. (Ed.) *American Cinematographer Manual.* Hollywood: American Society of Cinematographers, 1960. 482 pp., $7.50.

A pocket-sized manual for the working cinematographer, containing virtually every kind of chart, table, and technical data required for professional practice.

Pittaro, Ernest M. *TV and Film Production Data Book.* New York: Morgan and Morgan, 1959. 448 pp., $6.95.
Similar to the ASC manual, though somewhat less detailed.

Alton, John. *Painting with Light.* New York: The Macmillan Co., 1949. 191 pp., $7.95.
Poorly conceived and poorly written; still, the only book available on motion picture studio lighting. (The Hastings House-Focal Press group has two new books on the subject in preparation—the first on special effects cinematography, the second on standard studio practice.)

Trimble, Lyne. *Color in Motion Pictures and Television.* Los Angeles: Privately printed, 1954. 270 pp., $6.50.
A knowledgeable treatment of the history, theory, and practice of color cinematography by a veteran motion picture engineer. Available from ASUC Bookstore, UCLA, Los Angeles 24.

Evans, Ralph. *Eye, Film and Camera in Color Photography.* New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1959. 410 pp., $8.95.
A stimulating work, incisively written, which relates the psychology of vision to practical photography, written by the director of the Color Technology Division of Eastman Kodak Co. Recommended for both cinematographers and directors.

Elements of Color in Professional Motion Pictures. New York: Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers, 1957. 104 pp.
A slim, but information-filled, treatment of professional color cinematography.

Wheeler, Leslie J. *Principles of Cinematography.* London: Fountain Press, 1959. 472 pp., $12.75.
A detailed review of all cinematographic processes. The new edition is identical to that of 1953, however, and some sections are a little out-of-date.

Editing

Reisz, Karel. *The Technique of Film Editing.* London: Focal Press, 1958. 288 pp., $7.50.
The only publication in print which covers both the theory and practice of editing. Contributors include Basil Wright, Roy Boulting, David Lean, Ernest Lindgren, and other British film-makers.

Film Music

Manvell, Roger and John Huntley. *The Technique of Film Music.* London: Focal Press, 1957. 299 pp., $9.00.
An authoritative study of the film score, compiled with the assistance of a committee of the British Film Academy, comprised of distinguished American and British film composers.

Eisler, Hanns. *Composing for the Films.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1947. 165 pp., $3.00.
A polemic but interesting work by a well-known film composer.

Animation

Halas, John and Roger Manvell. *The Technique of Film Animation.* New York: Hastings House, 1959. 348 pp., $10.00.
The best and most detailed text on the subject, handsomely printed and illustrated.

Levitan, Eli L. *Animation Techniques and Commercial Film Production.* New York: Reinhold, 1962. 192 pp., $11.00.
A fairly detailed review of animation practice in the television-film field. Poorly printed and overpriced.

Make-Up

Kehoe, Vincent J.-R. *The Technique of Film and Television Make-Up.* New York: Hastings House, 1958. 263 pp., $9.00.
The best of the currently published books on the subject, written by a competent and articulate worker in the field. The appendix material is wholly British-oriented.

Sound Recording

Cameron, Ken. *Sound and the Documentary Film.* London: Pitman and Sons, 1947. 157 pp.
A standard, though somewhat out-of-date, work by one of Britain's veteran documentary film workers.

Nisbett, Alec. *The Technique of the Sound Studio.* New York: Hastings House, 1962. 288 pp., $10.00.
A newly published text, specifically devoted to broadcasting practice, but with much relevance to film technique.

Art Direction

Carrick, Edward. *Designing for Films.* London: The Studio Publications, 1949. 128 pp.
An older book, originally published in 1941, but one of the best texts on the subject. Handsomely printed with numerous illustrations.

The serious student of film technique should also be regularly reading the three professional journals in the field which cover contemporary production practice: *Journal of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers, American Cinematographer,* and *British Kinematography.*

CLASSIFIEDS

Film Reviews

THE CABINET OF CALIGARI

Produced and directed by Roger Kay for Twentieth Century-Fox. Screenplay by Robert Bloch. Photography by John Russell. Edited by Archie Marshek. Music by Gerald Fried. With Glynis Johns, Dan O'Herlihy, Dick Davalos, Lawrence Dobkin, Constance Ford.

Who is the camera? Through whose omniscient eyes do we explore the universe? The eyes of God? Metaphysically speaking I suppose yes, since God sees through our eyes as well as His own, if any. But the question has never been settled, nor to my knowledge even more than fragmentarily discussed. The few entirely subjective films, such as Robert Montgomery's *Lady in the Lake,* or the recent *Gentleman in Room Six,* have been obviously exceptional *tours de force.* The constant, instant, immediately comprehensible shift of viewpoint is too valuable, too close to the heart of the medium to be limited by a first-person-singular convention; directors shy away from it. So do actors, for that matter. Like many amateurs before and since, at the age of sixteen I wrote a purely subjective script and submitted it to Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer with the suggestion that it be used as a vehicle for John Gilbert. By miracle it got past the barricade, and even more miraculously reached Mr. Gilbert, who wrote me that no doubt it was an excellent script but that he was not interested in starring in a film in which he would be seen only once, shaving in a mirror.

The Cabinet of Caligari, as Mr. Lippert (with a weather eye on the AMA?) has chosen to call the 1962 version, like its illustrious predecessor, presents its action as seen, or as believed, by a psychotic. Since the psychotic herself is constantly shown, we do not actually see with her eyes. Rather we see with her mind's eye: what we are shown is actually her hallucinatory rationalization of the situation in which she finds herself and the events which take place there. That, the fact that the pseudo-villain proves to be a beneficent psychiatrist at the end, and that the heroine's name is *Jane* (she is here the protagonist) are about all the two pictures share in common — except for one very important thing: neither is more than passingly interested in the clinical facts behind the illness of their principal characters. We never learned what was the matter with poor old *Francis* except that he was suffering from some vague form of persecution mania. Here, the circumstances of *Jane's* "breakdown" are never revealed; we are not told why she thinks herself twenty years younger than she is, why she mistakes her son for a romantic lover, or even very exactly why she is impelled to split the personality of her analyst into two men, who might be called Snow-White and Pitch-Black. The picture's focus is not on explaining the experience of delusion but on forcing us to share it without knowing that it is delusory, right up to the final moment of revelation or as close to it as possible. The design of both *Caligaris* is *tromper l'oeil.*

The provenance of the picture is, pretty clearly, the unparalleled success of *Psycho.* Roger Kay is said to have peddled the idea of a remake for years, without result until Hitchcock's masterpiece sent producers scrambling for similar material, which often means remakes of older successes. The fact that Robert Bloch wrote the script would seem to be the clincher. Is it, then, another piece of brilliant Grand Guignol, a shocker par excellence?

To me it was a great deal more. First, the director held me in his grip almost as long as he intended to. I was completely mystified. I knew that *Jane's* environment was decidedly not what it seemed; at the same time I was aware that there was something decisively wrong with *Jane* herself — only, as the events whirled by, I couldn't figure out what. That she was insane did not dawn on me until the scene in which, dolling up for her striptease before *Caligari,* she turns her atomizer on the mirror and douses her imaged self with perfume. This shot has been removed from the released version, perhaps because the producer felt it

might telegraph the ending. This is a pity; it is a master touch, a moment of unfolding, expanding revelation. Second, the story is not told for its thrills alone, though that is its commercial justification—it is the story, the allegory, of a transference, one of the most devastating experiences to which flesh and spirit can be subjected. In it we see the desperate loneliness of the psychotic, cut off from all real human contact because she is unconsciously afraid that contact will displace her delusions; even more desperately afraid of scientific attempts to help her because they will destroy the fantasies behind which her injured ego hides. Snow-White cannot help her in the way she wants because for her sake he mustn't. Pitch-Black must press her relentlessly to face herself, to the last deepest layer, until she either sees what she is afraid to see or else, as a last resort, she enters "fugue," that extreme flight into a world of demons and shadows from which she may or may not come back whole. So he wanders through her monotony of days — a monotony more telling on second viewing — beseeching everyone except the man who *can* help her to "Help me! Get me away! Let me escape!" Without knowing why at the time, I suffered all this with her. There is something infernal about the tension between the real world and the hallucinations which, in Sisiphus bondage, she must continually spin to keep reality out.

Expressionist sets were the chief feature of the old *Caligari*. Kay has made no attempt to provide this kind of imagery, in which in 1962 he was undoubtedly wise. What we see is a sumptuous mansion, rather on the order of *Marienbad*, though its inhabitants are considerably less elegant. Only two scenes in the picture are stylized: one in which *Jane*, seeing "shock" treatment administered by *Caligari* to another patient, hallucinates it as torture. This is shown as a series of stills. The other is her "fugue," a headlong dream, partly painted, partly naturalistic. Neither of these scenes is altogether successful, and from a point of view of public policy, the first one is most objectionable. The fear of electrotherapy, misnamed "shock" treatment, is one of the leading problems faced by contemporary psychiatrists. Because of their fear of it, patients often delay treatment of any kind until their mental deterioration is far advanced. This was not very responsible of Mr. Lippert or, perhaps, very imaginative of Mr. Kay. But Kay is otherwise most imaginative. The two principal devices Kay uses to build his illusion are light and dialogue. He does not use the overdramatic light of the 1919 film; without the sets to absorb it and tone it down, such light would too quickly have signaled the real nature of the terra tenebrosa through which *Jane* moves. Kay's light — most justly keyed to the problems and opportunities of CinemaScope — only gradually reveals to us that we are in some country of the mind where things are not only seldom what they seem, but often just the opposite.

CABINET OF CALIGARI

The dialogue works toward the same effect. A second viewing exposes the fact that everything that is said to *Jane* by doctors, nurses and other patients, is what they would all say to a known psychotic. It is her rejoinders — often very wide of the mark — which distort the situation and make you see it from her point of view rather than theirs. Bloch's work, both in dialogue and in scene structure, is intricate and cunning, and although its ultimate aim is simply the shell-game trick of postponing

our realization of the truth, along the way to that aim it is often — to me, almost always — psychologically incisive and humanly moving.

To put the corollary to my first question: do either of the two *Caligaris* (how vital the old film still is, and how wrongheaded) contribute anything of moment to the problem of the subjective camera? To me they seem only to confirm the instinct of most film-makers, who are unwilling to allow any limitation to be set on their ability to switch from outer life to inner life and back. The only other way in which a film appears to be able to achieve the first person singular is the ugly and awkward device of narration, invented by Preston Sturges in 1933 and intermittently plaguing us ever since. Bastardly though it is, it is preferable to imprisoning the camera in the eyes of one person. I fear that total subjectivity is not for this medium, except perhaps in the abstract and surrealist modes, which face their own set of quite different problems.

I found *The Cabinet of Caligari* a compelling movie. Apparently few agree. Yes, *Psycho* was more brilliant in its trickery. Yes, the picture's very fidelity to the gray monotony of psychosis sometimes weighs it down as drama. But as a portrait of hell it reached me deeply. I suspect it will last, and grow better, as certain pictures have a way of doing. The years will tell.

—Richard Griffith

SUNDAYS AND CYBELE

Director: Serge Bourguignon. Producer: Romain Pines. Script: Bourguignon and Antoine Tudal, from the novel "Les Dimanches de Ville d'Avray," by Bernard Eschasseriaux. Photography: Henri Decae. Score: Maurice Jarre. With Hardy Kruger, Nicole Courcel, Patricia Gozzi.

Serge Bourguignon has declared that his film portrays the conflict between a cynical world and the pure in heart. This romance sings of an impossible love. We enjoy the luxury of compassion for the sick and the very young. On this level, the story of the amnesic, Pierre, and eleven-year-old Cybele is a moving one, due chiefly to the performance of Patricia Gozzi. The emotional spell is not really in force until the lovers are observed by Pierre's mistress, Madeleine. We need to see them through her eyes. The look in her eyes is human mortality. She knocks over a chair in the apartment of Carlos, Pierre's friend. Poor earthbound Madeleine! Cybele, on the other hand, is the goddess of the earth in its primitive and savage state. Things and creatures obey her.

Despite Bourguignon's careful disavowal ("fantasy" doesn't sell), the film is not realistic, not the story of Pierre and Cybele. Realistic elements like the opening shots of the diving plane, Pierre's amnesia, Madeleine's doctor friend, are not treated in depth. They trick us into accepting as melodrama what is in fact something else. They are irrelevant to a secret mythology.

Cybele, who wore a turreted crown, was introduced into Italy in 250 B.C. when the Romans, terrified by a shower of stones, consulted the Sibylline books which promised that the presence of the Great Mother would drive Hannibal from Italy. Cybele wears a white fur hat like the traditional crown; Pierre offers her stones that he claims are meteorites when he first meets her; Cybele tells Pierre that she will be his mother.

The young and handsome shepherd, Attis, was associated with the goddess Cybele. When she fell in love with him, she chose him as her priest; imposing on him a vow of chastity. However, he betrayed her by marrying the daughter of the river god Sangarius. Hence, she afflicted him with delirium during which he became violent and mutilated himself. This episode appears in the film as the carnival scene. Pierre is riding in a "Dodge 'Em" car with Madeleine. When he sees Cybele watching him, he goes berserk.

The fir-tree is an important symbol in the Cybele-Attis rites. For example, his festival begins with a day of mourning during which a fir-tree, wound with woolen bands, is carried through the streets. Attis had himself been changed into a fir-tree by Cybele. Hence, when Pierre carries the decorated Christmas tree through the street, he is Attis initiating his own

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festival. (The stealing of the steeplecock may be an overthrowing of a "sky-god" for the goddess of the earth. However, this "overthrowing" is associated with fertility gods and goddesses other than Cybele.)

The temple on the hill among the beech trees may be the temple of Cybele at Rome or perhaps, since it is so small, the inner temple where Delphian child-priestesses (or "Sibyls") looked into the fire and smoke for omens. Cybele does exactly this in the café. In the fire, Cybele sees into the past, the future and, above all, the human heart. She belongs with the heroines of Giraudoux, Anouilh, and Cocteau whose works picture innocence in a fairy-tale atmosphere (the rider on the dappled horse, the world seen truly through a distorting crystal, the "home" under the water — this suggests the rites of regeneration by water practiced annually in the cult of Cybele on the 27th of March).

The film moves with the "timeless" rhythm of fairy-tale and myth through images of great beauty. The beech hill with the temple where the rider gallops; Pierre carrying Cybele like a kidnapped maiden who sings of love that lasts "till the end of the world"; Cybele's face as she hangs her gift on the fir-tree. In these moments the film is alive and fused in all its dimensions. Yet these images lack spontaneity. They are too composed. There is often a superimposition of levels — faces reflected in windows through which one also sees a ghostly landscape, scenes played in the reflecting lake — that is explicit authorial comment. Like the composed images and the reiterated symbols (knife, elevator, doves, steeplecock) this device is equivalent to the voice of the story-teller.

We are taken into the fairy-tale or mythic world surreptitiously but cast out with an ending that lacks emotional resolution. Pierre's murder is logical but violates and destroys the spell of Cybele's face; and this indicates that the emotions through which the film carries us are not orchestrated.

All stories are myth but not all are reconstruction of myth. The ingenuity with which a myth is presented does not convince us that a myth survives but rather of the contrary. *Sundays and Cybele* remains somewhat alien to us. But that is less the fault of Bourguignon than of a mentality alienated from the Greco-Roman past.

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BILLY BUDD

Produced and directed by Peter Ustinov; screenplay by Ustinov, from the novel by Herman Melville and the play by Robert Chapman and Louis O. Coxe. Photography: Robert Krasker. Music: Anthony Hopkins.

Billy Budd is not a great motion picture, but it is a very good one—a clean, honest work of intelligence and craftsmanship. It ranks as one of the best films of 1962, and by contrast, it exposes what a slovenly, incoherent production *Mutiny on the Bounty* is. *Billy Budd* not only has a strong story line; it has a core of meaning that charges the story, gives it tension and intellectual excitement.

In the film version of *Billy Budd,* Melville's story has been stripped for action; and I think this was probably the right method—the ambiguities of the story probably come through more clearly than if the film were not so straightforward in its narrative line. The very cleanness of the narrative method, Peter Ustinov's efficient direction, Robert Krasker's stylized, controlled photography, help to release the meanings. The film could easily have been clogged by metaphysical speculation and homo-erotic overtones. Instead, it is a good, tense movie that doesn't try to tell us too much —and so gives us a very great deal.

Terence Stamp is a remarkably intelligent casting selection for Billy. If he were a more feminine type—as the role is often filled on the stage—all the overtones would be cheapened and limited. Stamp, fortunately, can wear white pants and suggest angelic splendor without falling into the narcissistic poses that juveniles so often mistake for grace. Robert Ryan gives a fine performance in the difficult role of Claggart. Ryan has had so few chances at anything like characterization in his movie career

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that each time he comes across, it seems amazing that he could have retained such power and technique. I don't know how many dozens of times I've seen him, but the roles that I remember are his prizefighter in *The Set-Up,* the anti-Semite in *Crossfire,* the vicious millionaire in Max Ophuls' *Caught,* the projectionist in *Clash by Night,* the central figure in *God's Little Acre.* Considering that he is a very specialized physical type—the tall, rangy American of Western mythology—his variety of characterizations is rather extraordinary. Perhaps just because he is the type who looks at home in cowboy movies, critics rarely single out his performances for commendation. The American reviewers of *Billy Budd* seem more concerned to complain that his Claggart doesn't have an English accent than to judge his performance. But it is not at all necessary that Claggart speak with an English accent: his antecedents are deliberately vague in Melville as in the film, and the men on board are drawn from all over. It may even be better that Claggart's accent does not define his background for us.

Ryan's Claggart has the requisite Satanic dignity: he makes evil comprehensible. The evil he defines is the way the world works, but it is also the self-hatred that makes it necessary for him to destroy the image of goodness. In the film Claggart is drawn to Billy but overcomes his momentary weakness. Melville, with all his circumlocutions, makes it overwhelmingly clear that Claggart's "depravity according to nature" is, among other things, homosexual, or as he coyly puts it, "a nut not to be cracked by the top of a lady's fan." Billy's innocence and goodness are intolerable to Claggart because Billy is so beautiful.

Neither Stamp nor Ryan can be faulted. Unfortunately, the role of Captain Vere as played by Ustinov is a serious misconception that weakens the film, particularly in the last section. Ustinov gives a fine performance but it doesn't belong in the story of *Billy Budd:* it reduces the meanings to something clear-cut and banal. Ustinov's physical presence is all wrong; his warm, humane, sensual face turns Melville's Starry Vere into something like a cliché of the man who wants to do the right thing, the liberal. We *believe* him when he presents his arguments about justice and law!

Perhaps it is Ustinov's principles that have prevented him from seeing farther into Melville's equivocations. Ustinov has explained that he was concerned "with a most horrible situation where people are compelled by the letter of the law, which is archaic, to carry out sentences which they don't wish to do. That obviously produces a paradox which is tragic." This is, no doubt, an important subject for Ustinov, but it is not the kind of paradox that interested Melville. Melville, so plagued by *Billy Budd* that he couldn't get it in final form (he was still revising it when he died), had far more unsettling notions of its content. As Ustinov presents the film, the conflict is between the almost abstract forces of good (*Billy*) and evil (*Claggart*) with the Captain a human figure tragically torn by the rules and demands of authority. Obviously. But what gives the story its fascination, its greatness, is the ambivalent Captain; and there is nothing in Ustinov's performance, or in his conception of the story, to suggest the unseemly haste with which Vere tries to hang Billy. In Melville's account the other officers can't understand why Vere doesn't simply put Billy in confinement "in a way dictated by usage and postpone further action in so extraordinary a case to such time as they should again join the squadron, and then transfer it to the admiral." The surgeon thinks the Captain must be "suddenly affected in his mind." Melville's Vere, who looks at the dead Claggart and exclaims, "Struck dead by an angel of God. Yet the angel must hang!" is not so much a tragic victim of the law as he is Claggart's master and a distant relative perhaps of the Grand Inquisitor. Sweet Starry Vere is the evil we *can't* detect: the man whose motives and conflicts we can't fathom. Claggart we can spot, but he is merely the underling doing the Captain's work: it is the Captain, Billy's friend, who

continues the logic by which saints must be destroyed.

Though it is short, *Billy Budd* is one of the most convoluted, one of the strangest works Melville wrote (in some ways even stranger than *Pierre*). Among its peculiarities is a chapter entitled "A Digression," which is given over to a discussion between the ship's purser and the ship's surgeon after Billy's death. Their subject is why Billy's body during the hanging did not go through the movements which are supposed to be invariable in such cases. The absence of spasm—which is a euphemism for ejaculation—is rather like a variation or a reversal of the famous death stink of Father Zossima in *The Brothers Karamazov*. I don't want to stretch the comparison too far, but it's interesting that Melville and Dostoyevsky, so closely contemporary—Melville born in 1819, Dostoyevsky in 1821—should both have been concerned in works written just before their own deaths with the physical phenomena of death. Billy Budd, by the absence of normal human reactions at the moment of death, turns into a saint, a holy innocent, both more and less than a man. Father Zossima, by the presence of all-too-mortal stench after death, is robbed of his saintliness. Melville's lingering on this singularity about Billy Budd's death didn't strike me so forcibly the first time I read the story, but reading it again recently, and, as it happened, reading it just after William Burroughs' *The Naked Lunch*, with all its elaborate fantasies of violent deaths and gaudy ejaculations, Melville's treatment seems odder than ever. Billy Budd's goodness is linked with presexuality or nonsexuality; his failure to comprehend evil in the universe is linked with his not being really quite a man. He is, in Melville's view, too pure and beautiful to be subject to the spasms of common musculature.

Before this rereading I had associated the story only with that other work of Dostoyevsky's to which it bears more obvious relationships—*The Idiot*. It is, of course, as a *concept* rather than as a character that Billy resembles Prince Myshkin. It may be worth pointing out

Terence Stamp, Robert Ryan, Lee Montague in BILLY BUDD.

that in creating a figure of abnormal goodness and simplicity, both authors found it important for their hero to have an infirmity—Myshkin is epileptic, Billy stammers. In both stories the figure is also both naturally noble and also of aristocratic birth: Myshkin a prince, Billy a bastard found in a silk-lined basket. And in the structure of both, the heroes have their opposite numbers – Myshkin and Rogozhin, Billy and Claggart. For both authors, a good man is not a whole man; there is the other side of the human coin, the dark side. Even with his last words, "God bless Captain Vere," Billy demonstrates that he is not a man: he is unable to comprehend the meaning of Vere's experience, unable to comprehend that he will die just because he is innocent.

What's surprising about the film is how much of all this *is* suggested and comes through. What is missing in the film—the reason it is a very good film but not a great one—is that passion which gives Melville's work its extraordinary beauty and power. I wonder if perhaps the key to this failure is in that warm, humane face of Peter Ustinov, who perhaps, not just as an actor, but also as adaptor and director, is too much the relaxed worldly European to share Melville's American rage—the emotionality that is blocked and held back and still pours through in his work. Melville is not a civilized, European writer; he is our greatest

writer because he is the American primitive struggling to say more than he knows how to say, struggling to say more than he knows. He is perhaps the most confused of all great writers; he wrestles with words and feelings. It is probably no accident that Billy's speech is blocked. Dostoyevsky is believed to have shared Myshkin's epilepsy, and when Melville can't articulate, he flails in all directions. Even when we can't understand clearly what he is trying to say, we respond to his Promethean torment, to the unresolved complexities.

The movie does not struggle; it moves carefully and rhythmically through the action to the conclusion. Its precision—which is its greatest virtue—is, when compared with the oblique, disturbing novella, evidence of its limitations. Much of what makes the story great is in Melville's effort to achieve new meanings (and some of the meanings we can only guess at from his retreats and disguises) and it is asking rather too much of the movie-makers to say what he wasn't sure about himself. But as Ustinov interprets Vere, Billy is just a victim of unfortunate circumstances, and the film is no more than a tragedy of *justice*. There's a good deal in the film, but the grandeur of Melville is not there.—PAULINE KAEL

LAWRENCE OF ARABIA

Produced by Sam Spiegel. Directed by David Lean. Screenplay by Robert Bold. With Peter O'Toole as Lawrence; and Jack Hawkins, Omar Sharif, Anthony Quinn, Alec Guinness, Claude Rains, Arthur Kennedy.

From the director of *Great Expectations*, a galumphing camelodrama in *debut de siècle* style. From the producer of *The African Queen*, an Uncrowned King of Arabia suited more for a jester's cap than a coronet. From the writer who gave us a craggily true Sir Thomas More in the play *A Man For All Seasons*, a preposterous golden androgyne.

For his part Bolt is blameless.* Probably Lean is, too. Indeed the acting, dialogue, and direction are all so uniformly elephantine one feels that the film can't have been directed in the usual sense at all. It seems to have been "panavisualized" instead. All vistas, set-pieces, tableaux, its Arabs and Englishmen arrange themselves within the shimmering spaces of Arabia Deserta, pause, pose, deliberate, shout their lines, and dissolve in sunlight and sand.

Those lines! Those curious accents! Africa may produce novelties; but from Arabia, it seems, come only the same old English-speaking sheiks. (Ali to Lawrence, at a perceptive moment: "You are *arn*gry, Eengl*eesh*!") With this kind of thing compounded by an unspeakably turgid score it was a relief to hear now and then an eruptive camel-grunt. Like a fart at a coronation it deflated the reigning splendors of the moment, expressed more vital needs, and the protests of sundry querulous quadrupeds turned out to be by far the most vivid articulations in the whole three and three quarter hours.

In the desert the sun burned down on magnificent oceans of sand. One after the other, each more splendid than the last, a thousand or so incomparable views dazzled the eye. As mere shots they were extraordinary, and should rejoice every Arabist who ever hitched his literary reputation to a camel and rode off to the Empty Quarter. The travelogue has here its apotheosis — with predictable results. Epic requires its setting: but in *Lawrence of Arabia* grand action is dwarfed by hyperbolic grandeurs of locale.

Yet serious matters sometimes intruded, and two hours after the start one began to wonder uneasily whether the stupefying vulgarity of it all wasn't partly distraction. Back of the dunes and foreground posturing, perhaps, Bolt — or maybe Lean — had something to say. We know Bolt dislikes war, has been jailed for impertinently saying so, and the way Lawrence was shown made one feel that a general debunking of military heroes might be meant. At first sight a model of boldly adventurous eccentricity, the unbearably glamorous Law-

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But surely this is coincidence. Bolt's sympathies are one thing, Spiegel's interests another. Bolt may well have seen a pattern uniting aestheticism, sadism, and homosexuality and hoped to examine it in a coherent character. But for the producer these were just spectacular paradoxes to be exploited for whatever millions they might be worth. The legend of Lawrence is full of "contradictions": "I'm not trying to resolve the legend," Spiegel has said of his film, "but to perpetuate it."

Which is fine — until the legend runs afoul of the plot. Disputes as to whether the man on the screen is like the historic original may safely be left to pedants. More to the point is whether the screen Lawrence could ever do what he supposedly does here. How could this mannered piece of bizarrerie persuade a swarm of quarrelsome Arabs to sink their differences and follow him into war? Or still more improbable, how could he talk the buckled Blimps of the British military into letting him try such a scheme? Guerrilla war demands the direction of a sustained, disciplined, intense and flexible intelligence — the sort of mind we glimpse in Lawrence's writings, and the sort barely hinted at in the film.

Mr. Spiegel wants the best of both worlds — the historic action and the spectacular legendary contradictions as well. It can't be done. One or the other must go. O'Toole's tormented hermaphrodite (his cerebral tensions conveyed by such a fierce working of cheek musculature it's as if his nerves were on fire) would have had a hard time directing a revolt of disaffected palace eunuchs — let alone a military campaign.

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Entertainments

R. M. HODGENS

Barabbas. In *King of Kings*, Barabbas asked the stupid question, "That man is dying in my place; why?" In his own film, he (Anthony Quinn) wonders about it for more than twenty years of woe (or two hours and twenty-four minutes), and still no answer. Peter (Harry Andrews) makes some suggestions, but remarkably enough his idea of the matter is not forced upon Barabbas nor upon the audience. This agnostic spectacle is the first since *El Cid* (which was on much safer ground, anyway) to offer its audience anything of idea, character, or drama. Unfortunately, it offers more ordinarily spectacular matter besides: the scenes in the circus, though they have their point, go far beyond it, with unintended effect; and it is hard to forget the scene where Barabbas goes to a meeting of the persecuted Jesus Movement and finds them, in the catacombs, holding some sort of service in Latin. The acting of the international cast is mixed, though their language is the listenable English of Christopher Fry's interesting adaptation. *Barabbas* has been criticized for its lack of originality—a valid point except that only an idiot would expect anything different—and for its "mor-

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The Chapman Report averages out to thirty-one per cent (Glynis Johns) yes, sixty-nine per cent (Claire Bloom, Jane Fonda, Shelley Winters) no. Miss Johns, right out of Caligari's cabinet, is the comic relief, unfaithful in her fashion; Miss Bloom, a divorcee, boozes it up, runs afoul of some musicians, and kills herself; Miss Fonda, a widow, is eventually persuaded that perhaps she isn't frigid after all; Miss Winters is pathetically left with no one but her husband. George Cukor directed. His exquisite tact seems to have been of little use. He has allowed nice long takes for the ladies to squirm about till they come apart, in their various fashions.

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The Manchurian Candidate is another piece of political science fiction, blood and thunder on the "Left," with the "Right" consisting of agents, unconscious and conscious, of the Kremlin. Under the direction of co-producer John Frankenheimer, the film rattles along from unlikely premises, through no less unlikely complications, to an impressive if most unlikely resolution. There are a number of those lapses that occur when the complexity of the source (Richard Condon's novel) proves too great for the ingenuity of the adapter (co-producer George Axelrod), and occasionally the dialogue has a flat, '40's sound (e.g., "I want to marry you more than I want to go on eating Italian food," or something), but Frankenheimer and the cast are able to override all obstacles. To mention only the pivotal antagonists, Angela Lansbury is brilliant and takes magnificent advantage of her big scene, a sort of aria of evil, while even Frank Sinatra comes through rather well. Frankenheimer has done some beautiful things with this wild, paranoiac thriller (e.g., an interrupted press conference, or the assassinations at the Republican National Convention); and if he has overdone some other things (the brain-washed nightmares, or the chaos at the same convention), the frenzy is surely in keeping with the material and the theme.

The Music Man, like most musicals, takes a while to establish itself and comes apart in the middle. Here there is enough talent and substance to put it together again as it draws to a close, but, unfortunately, Morton da Costa has added a big, ruinous finale with seventy-six real trombones, a hundred and ten real cornets, and so on.

Pressure Point. Another courageous and encouraging film from Stanley Kramer. (Courageous of him to have had Hubert Cornfield direct it; and encouraging that he did not direct it himself.) The propaganda this time has been whipped out of Robert Lindner's "Destiny's Tot," by adapters S. Lee Pogostin and Cornfield, and it concerns the fruitless relationship of a Negro psychoanalyst (Sidney Poitier) and a "white Christian" fascist (Bobby Darin) imprisoned for "sedition" soon after the outbreak of World War II. The intentions and the material are at odds, the propaganda requiring generalization, the case-history calling for specific detail. The result is poor drama, with its anticlimactic speech about the American Way, as well as a distortion of psychoanalysis on one hand and of the nation, then and now, on the other. Cornfield has gotten good performances from the stars, and the flashbacks and dream-sequences are effective though heavy-handed.

Requiem for a Heavyweight. Rod Serling's screenplay about a prizefighter who ends up wrestling is adapted from his television play of the medium's "golden age," and it is characteristically workmanlike at best, indubitably sincere, unconvincing, and dull. Under Ralph Nelson's direction, it might still be a TV play, once past the elaborate, pre-credits, point-of-view scene of Mountain Rivera's (Anthony Quinn's) last fight. There are some good performances.

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Films of the Quarter

[We are pleased to announce that Andrew Sarris, who is perhaps the foremost U.S. exponent of auteur *criticism, will henceforth be contributing to the Films of the Quarter section, adding a viewpoint not previously represented. The contributions of Mr. Macdonald and Mr. Mekas did not arrive in time for this issue; we will however have their contributions again in the following issue.]*

Pauline Kael

Yes, yes, yes:

Kurosawa's *Yojimbo* is a glorious film, a comedy-satire of force as his great action-epic *The Seven Sumurai* was a poem of force, Kurosawa has so much joy in movement that he makes us know we're alive: we respond kinesthetically.

Ray's *Devi* is rich, subtle, beautiful, erotic—probably the best film ever made about upper-class decadence and the psychology of religion.

Agnes Varda's *Cleo from 5 to 7* is, of recent film experiences, the most difficult to communicate to others; they *will* see it as banal and chichi. But, if I may steal from *Madame de*, I think it's only "superficially superficial."

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Sundays and Cybele. As the exquisite icy landscapes follow each other, and the audience ohs and ahs, the experience begins to seem like going to one of those theatrical matinees where the ladies of the audience are less concerned with the content or acting than with the star's wardrobe, and each new ensemble is greeted with sighs of appreciation.

Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner. Tony Richardson once again demonstrates that he is a short distance runner. Where is his sense of film rhythm? The movie is just a collection of pieces.

David and Lisa looks like a television program sponsored by a psychiatric association. It's an attempt to do something in decent, human terms, but, lacking toughness of mind and imagination and skill, it becomes sickly sweet. The theme is love conquers mental illness; audiences seem to believe it, they're even willing to believe that earnestness conquers art. The director hasn't learned that thought and speech can be simultaneous; he repeatedly shows us the psychiatrist thinking out his kind, humane thoughts before he delivers them. This throwback to the style of the early talkies apparently impresses a great many people: those words must be loaded with wisdom, they take so long getting out. Only redeeming feature: fine performance by Keir Dullea, but he badly needs a director.

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dress period but with additional material from *Hiroshima Mon Amour, Devil in the Flesh,* etc. Mystery: how could the star marry the director who made her look like *that?*

Stanley Kauffmann

The quarter ending January 31st brought an embarrassment of richly discussable films. *David and Lisa* is the best American low-budget production I can remember and a good picture it its own right. It is somewhat constricted and occasionally clumsy, and its ending is mechanical; but, in general, Frank Perry's direction and Eleanor Perry's script generate compassion and concern. Keir Dullea gives a flaring performance as a compulsive neurotic.

The two most important films of the quarter are its biggest disappointments—and for related reasons. Orson Welles' *The Trial* contains scenes as coruscatingly brilliant as any he has ever done; but, wounded by Anthony Perkins' performance as K., the film is killed by its desertion of Kafka's theme. In *The Elusive Corporal* Jean Renoir deals again with French prisoners in Germany—this time in a later war. Jean-Pierre Cassel invests the leading role with lightness, tenderness, and poetry of motion, and many of the scenes are marvelously made, but this film, too, lacks thematic consequence. It is finally unsatisfying, a series of varyingly successful skits and sketches.

Two more "big" films. In *To Kill a Mockingbird* Robert Mulligan's direction (particularly of the children) triumphs gently over Gregory Peck's performance and, almost, over the sentimentalities of Harper Lee's novel. *Lawrence of Arabia* is the most powerfully photographed color film I know—photography that is not merely decoration but whose beauty is integral to the film. David Lean is, for the most part, in superb command of both the vast action shots and the subjective scenes. Peter O'Toole makes Lawrence a fascinating man, and all the cast, except José Ferrer, are excellent. Robert Bolt's script is too long for what it treats (Lawrence's Arabian career) and does not treat enough (his post-Arabian career); yet much of the dialogue is so good as to give pleasure in itself besides advancing character and story.

Some failures. Kurosawa's contemporary *The Bad Sleep Well* is disappointingly heavy and vacuous, interesting only in further displaying the range of the magnificent Toshiro Mifune. Michael Cacoyannis' *Electra,* despite some intelligence, some pretty pictures, and Irene Pappas' gifted performance, is essentially misconceived. The classic Greek theater does not function in the film form. Serge Bourgignon's first film *Sundays and Cybele* is the most overpraised picture in years. A lot of elements—plainly marked "Poetic"—have been selected and lined up but have not been fused or vitalized. We know what we are supposed to feel but, except for some moments in young Patricia Gozzi's extraordinary performance, we don't feel it.

Some successes. Two unpretentious, solid Italian films: Luigi Comencini's *Everybody Go Home!,* a tart and candid examination of Italian attitudes in 1943 after the Badoglio surrender, with Alberto Sordi superb as a pragmatic lieutenant; and Dino Risi's *Love and Larceny,* with Vittorio Gassman as a chameleon con man, a comedy funnier, though less ambitious, than *Divorce Italian Style.* Finally, the best postwar Russian film I have seen: Josef Heifitz' *Lady with a Dog*—Chekhov completely comprehended and affectingly rendered.

Gavin Lambert

Lawrence of Arabia. This marvelous film is (especially in the first half) one of the most atmospheric biographies ever made. If in the end it seems a little stronger on atmosphere than biography, one can't really be surprised or even disappointed. The problem isn't simply that Lawrence remained an enigma to his contemporaries, but to himself. He thought *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* a failure; incomplete,

he said; minor details obscuring some of the major issues. The source refused to vouch for the source. The film doesn't give me the feeling, anyway, that it tried to be "definitive," it's more a series of impressions on the grand scale, like Lawrence's book. And what it achieves is uniquely exciting. Not only is the desert Lawrence's co-star, so to speak, but the mirror of his own mysterious changeability. You feel these two were bound to fall in love. They meet, there's a *coup de foudre*, quarrels, misunderstandings and reconciliations; they are sad, wild and ecstatic together, and in the end the world, as it's often done with famous lovers, breaks them up. Unforgettable scenes are Lawrence's posturing in his Arab robes, his weird elation over the train wreck, his entrance into the officers' club with the Arab boy, and the tense attraction-repulsion of the encounters with Feisal.

On another, equally difficult level, the film also succeeds completely: ironic contrast of private fantasy (Lawrence) and public intrigue (politics), and the way each mistrusts but makes use of the other. The second half falters here and there, mainly I suppose because of the problems raised by the sado-masochistic episodes. Granted that censorship is an inevitable factor, I think it a pity that in the famous scene with the Turks, the torturers are so joyless and grim. After all, in their own way sadists are out for a good time. As Lawrence described it, the episode was a terrible bacchanal, accompanied by leers, bawdiness and shouts of laughter: not only more strange but more believable than the somewhat zombie-like ritual here. Still, as a whole it's a brilliant and haunting piece of work, equal not only to the enormous difficulty but the ambitious scale of the undertaking. Although Peter O'Toole is too tall and handsome for Lawrence, he captures perfectly that quality of the spiritual outcast, something like, as E. M. Forster pointed out, Melville's Ishmael. Most contemporaries have mentioned the "indefinable" glamor exerted by Lawrence, but this kind of thing is almost impossible to convey on the screen. O'Toole's more definable kind, with his grasp of the character's extremes—from hesitancy to wild megalomania—creates a real and fascinating figure, not a literal portrait but a kind of profile absolutely right for this setting. As for David Lean, this is by far his best work, full of endless and masterly camera-invention. In the past, even when (as in *Great Expectations*) at the top of his form, there's always seemed something elusive and suppressed about him. Now, it's as if one kind of elusiveness has sparked another.

Electra. Michael Cacoyannis has made a creative adaptation of an impossible play. Contrary to what's been written elsewhere, I can't see that a literal movie version of a stage work, whether Greek or O'Neill, presented like a TV Play of the Week, shows either daring or "integrity." A depressing lack of imagination, rather. In this case, it has to be faced that the play seems extremely remote: tiresome girls, these crazed Greek heroines bent with a remorseless lack of humor on abstract notions of Revenge, Justice, etc., and egged on by herds of equally stark women in chorus. However, Cacoyannis has humanized Electra at many moments, and makes much of it exciting and almost believable. Again the atmosphere is strong, in a way opposite to the Lawrence film: bleak, unsensual, grey. The murder of Agamemnon, the reunion of Electra and Clytemnestra scuttled at dawn, are handled with strong dramatic flair.

Andrew Sarris

Jean Renoir's *The Elusive Corporal* and Orson Welles' *The Trial* overshadow most of the films of their time, much less of their quarter. Of the two works, I prefer the Renoir for its expression of the director's moral idealism and unified vision of the world on an aesthetic scale hitherto approached only by the late Max Ophuls and Kenji Mizoguchi. Unfortunately, the film's delicate balance between comedy and tragedy, image and idea, politics and personality will completely elude those American critics who choose to palm off *Corporal* as an inferior

version of *Grand Illusion*. We all know the rules of the game. Each presumably great director is assigned one or two presumably indisputable classics from which he is never permitted to deviate. This form of museumpiece idolatry has been devised by lazy critics who dislike seeing too many movies. How much more orderly and manageable film history would be if Griffith had retired after *Birth of a Nation* and *Intolerance*, Ford after *The Informer* and *The Grapes of Wrath*, Lubitsch after *The Marriage Circle*, and *Trouble in Paradise*, Rossellini after *Open City* and *Paisan*, Eisenstein after *Potemkin* and *October*, and so on. Among major directors, only Jean Vigo was considerate enough to die after his second feature film so that his career could now be screened in one evening.

Unlike Vigo, Welles has arrogantly lived on for twenty years after *Citizen Kane* and *The Magnificent Ambersons*. Since everything he has done in the interim has been denounced as

a betrayal of his talent, I can only sympathize with his decision to hurl Kafka at the culture-mongers.The final irony of this absurd situation is that *The Trial* is the most hateful, the most repellent, and the most perverted film Welles ever made. What seemed even to his steadfast admirers a glorious opportunity has dissolved into a fatal temptation. Welles asserts in the prologue that his story has the logic of a dream, but Welles on Kafka is, like Mondrian's white on white, less logical than superfluous, less a dream of something than a dream of a dream of something. Indeed, *The Trial* is in its brilliantly accomplished way, as much of a dead end as Minnelli's *Ziegfeld Follies,* which demonstrated that the most hackneyed backstage plot was preferable to no plot at all, and as Resnais' *Last Year at Marienbad,* which demonstrated that ambiguity was less compelling as a subject than as an attitude. Paradoxically, what have always seemed the least meaningful elements of a movie—the surface plot, the apparent subject, the objective background—are also the most necessary. Once a director soars off into time and space without a calendar and an atlas, he loses that force of gravity without which a movie cannot address itself to an audience. By this standard and many others, *Touch of Evil* and *Arkadin* are superior to *The Trial.*